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Battle for Sovereignty *...can Britain survive?*

by James McBride

Most political parties lay claim to be a 'one nation party', while radical groups seek to demolish borders between nations. Do the Christian Scriptures have a say?

The print and the broadcast media are increasingly focused on the coming in-out UK referendum: *stay*—or *leave* our association with the European Union. The future of the United Kingdom hangs in the balance, the core question being the vital one of national sovereignty.

The recent attempt to reform the EU was a failure, and the Prime Minister walked away empty-handed. As is so often the case, the public is now drowning in a torrent of misleading statistics designed to persuade, and the date chosen (June 23) avoids angry public reaction to the expected summer influx of immigrants.

The Prime Minister has brokered a deal which he claims secures our sovereignty as part of the Union, while those who wish to leave our political association with Europe believe little has been achieved. Big political and business 'guns' have lined up on opposite sides of the increasingly acrimonious argument.

European Dream

The concept of a 'United States of Europe' was conceived centuries ago—the 'European dream'—and took more concrete form over the last sixty years, now with twenty-eight nation members.

That 'dream' was conceived in the early Christian centuries, and has since been pursued by emperor after emperor, dictator after dictator, Pope after Pope. Napoleon, for example wanted to see '*...one people*

throughout Europe'. Mussolini and Hitler, too, had their dreams of a United Europe. In 1965 Pope Paul VI said: '*...The Holy See hopes to see the day when a new Europe will arise, rich with the fullness of its rich [Catholic] traditions*'. And a decade later he said that the Church alone can '*...re-awaken Europe's Christian soul where its unity is rooted*'. In Austria (1983) the Pope stated: '*...Europeans should overcome the menacing international confrontations of states and alliances and create a new united Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals*'.

Europe was consecrated to Mary by the Vatican in 1309. The European Union is the latest reincarnation of the dream. Indeed the EU flag has the twelve stars—not one per nation—and blue colour associated with the Virgin Mary.

The British people were deceived by the then Establishment led by Prime Minister Heath into joining the Union (under the guise of a free trade area) in the mid-70s, *via* a misrepresented referendum.

Sovereignty

The nation state is a divine institution. Nations develop from original family units that have grown large, each developing its unique language, culture, traditions (*see* Genesis 11). Each has a unique treasure house of God-given intellectual and economic resources and an assigned (by God) geographical territory.

The sixth century BC prophet, Daniel, explains: '*...the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of men, and He gives it to whomever He desires*' (Daniel 4:25). The apostle Paul adds: '*...He made every nation of*

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men of one blood, to live on all the face of the earth, ordaining fore-appointed seasons and boundaries of their dwelling' (Acts 17:26).

Nationhood

The ground rules for successful nationhood are patterned on the ancient nation of Israel—a nation selected by God to fulfil a promise to a faithful (to the LORD) forebear, Abraham.

What set them apart from other nations was their covenant with God: *'...Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine'* (Exodus 19:5). That covenant included their readiness to abide by the divine Law, the foundation of which is the Ten Commandments and the statutes and judgments based on it (*ch 20f*).

This, though neglected, is the gold standard for every sovereign Constitution—throughout the ages.

The fusion of disparate nations—different in language, heritage, culture—in a union flies in the face of God's wise decision to establish mankind in sovereign nations. It is noteworthy that the prophets predict the survival of nation states even during the millennial reign of the Messiah: *'...He will settle arguments between nations'* - Isaiah 2:4.

The resurrected King David, for example, will under Christ then head the Israelite nations, the House (government) of Judah and the House of Israel (Jeremiah 31:33, 30:9). Isaiah, too: *'...He [Messiah] shall judge among the nations'* (2:4). But it will be a time of co-operation and not conflict among the nations, old enmities buried: *'...In that day Israel shall be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth'* (19-24).

[*Note.* This results from the direct intervention of Jesus the Messiah and not from the gradual evangelization of mankind by the Christian church.]

Sovereignty—*'not being subject to the authority of another State'*—is the argument wielded by both sides, and surely must be at the heart of the discussion. The 'ins' claim we won't lose it nor do we need it. The 'outs' claim we have already lost it. But the 'S' word hasn't really been at the heart of the discussion, the focus instead being on the economy

and the relatively small welfare benefits factor.

The God Factor

There is, however, a transcending factor that eclipses such factors as sovereignty, economy or benefits. It's the God-factor: *'...righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a shame to any people'* (Proverbs 14:34). Sin, of course, is any behaviour that conflicts with God's revealed will, and that includes His Law, His guidelines for a successful civilization.

'Righteousness': in the context of nationhood that's the application of divinely-revealed law. Begin to tamper with that foundation and—whether the United Kingdom chooses 'in' or 'out' there will be an on-going deterioration in all aspects of life. The economy. Health and well-being. Financial management both public and private. Law and order. The integrity of the family. Security of our borders. God speaks on all aspects of life.

Citizens of the United Kingdom have, *via* the referendum, been given the challenge of determining the nation's future. A referendum will provide the opportunity to determine whether we remain subject to European Union laws or to again become a sovereign nation.

The nation votes—but *it is God who determines! He '...changes the times and the seasons; He causes kings to pass away, and sets up kings'* (Daniel 2:21).

As notes the recovering (and repentant) King of Babylon: *'...He does according to His will among the army of Heaven, and among those living in the earth. And no one is able to strike His hand or say to Him, What are You doing?'* (*ch 4:35*).

Historically, God, the all-powerful Creator, has manipulated kings and nations to choose to conform to His pre-determined scenario for the 'times and seasons'.

One hundred and fifty years before his accession as king, Cyrus was predicted through the prophet Isaiah to *'...complete all my [God's] pleasure'* (Isaiah 44:28). Foreseeing Israel's future captivity in Babylon, God chose Cyrus to provide the means to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple.

Earlier (c.720BC), the northern House of Israel had

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sunk into idolatry and civil disorder. By way of correction God stirred up the King of Assyria to remove them from the Land: ‘...*Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger! And My fury is the staff in their hand. I will send him against an ungodly nation [Judah]*’ (Isaiah 10:5-6).

Babylon, too, exceeded common decency norms and came under condemnation. God contained them by manipulating the ancient Persian nation: ‘...*I stir up the Medes against them*’ (Isaiah 13:17).

Still in Charge

It is gross error to imagine that God has taken ‘hands off’! He remains in control of world affairs, and is especially concerned with those nations descended from His nation of Israel—several of which are now associated with the European Union.

The LORD, however, is patient, longsuffering. All these nations have strayed far from His prescribed path and are ripe for His correction, long delayed. But it is inevitable, if we are to survive. ‘Israel’ will, unless we turn back to God and His ways, experience a time of severe privation. God’s protective hedge—His Law—has been systematically uprooted from our national polity—how we conduct our affairs.

[God’s correction, note, is focused on our ultimate restoration.]

The Future

Towards the end of the first century, the apostle John was presented with a vision of the end of man’s rule. It envisaged a union of ten nations in Europe, bent on forging the continent into one sovereign nation, a ‘Holy Roman Empire’. This ‘beast’ has, as predicted, raised its head several times over the centuries under a string of dictators from Charlemagne through to Hitler and Mussolini.

The task of harmoniously welding disparate nations, cultures and religions into one by democratic means is impossible. As said a modern proponent, former Belgian Prime Minister Paul-Henri Spaak, ‘...*we don’t want a Committee but a man of sufficient stature to hold the allegiance of all people. Send us such a man, and, be he god or devil, we will receive him*’.

In view of the present parlous financial state and the democratic deficit of the European Union, such an individual will indeed be the catalyst for full union. But it won’t be a ‘god’ (except in his own mind)! Most of the current twenty-eight members will pull out, or be forced out. A letter to the *European Journal* (1996) wrote of ‘...*a European super-state from which there will be no escape short of civil war, bloodier even than the [Balkans] fracas*’.

One World

Such a leader, however, won’t be content with a ‘United States of Europe’. A Resolution of the *Congress of Europe* in 1948 states: ‘...*The creation of a United Europe must be seen as an essential step towards the creation of a United World*’.

That’s what the Christian Scriptures have predicted. And that’s why Jesus Christ must intervene to prevent His precious creation from destruction.

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