



TEAM Global

The European Atlantic Movement

An independent, non-party-political educational foundation. Founded in 1958, TEAM's vision is to promote an understanding and discussion of world affairs, which empowers young people to be active global citizens and to aspire to leadership roles within their communities.

NEWSLETTER

January 2022

**President: Lord Watson of
Richmond, CBE.**

Chairman: Laurence Smy

Vice Chairman: Antony Frost

Registered Charity No 306950

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EDITORIAL

BLAH BLAH BLAH

“Build back better. Blah blah blah. Green economy. Blah blah blah. Net zero by 2050. Blah blah blah With these word, Greta Thunberg condemned those in power around the globe. “This is all we hear from our so-called leaders. Words that sound great but so far have not led to action. Our hopes and ambitions drown in their empty promises.”

It seems that, at conference after conference, whenever the issue of humanity’s future in a world dangerously warming through the use and abuse of the planet, there is only talk, no determination to find solutions, and no action, no decisions: Blah blah blah.

The same might be said of the great Brexit debate. Too much blah blah blah. It was in 2016 that there was a majority in the referendum for the UK to withdraw from the EU. There followed three frustrating years of fraught and complex negotiations between Europe and Britain, and four years of endless and inconclusive debate in Parliament, without any final settlement. Four years of blah blah blah. Then Boris Johnson became Prime Minister. He won the 2019 General Selection. He wanted Brexit done. He rushed to Brussels. No need for blah blah blah – there was an “oven ready deal”. He signed an agreement with the EU, and then returned jubilant and triumphant to a cheering nation. All that was needed was the agreement of Parliament. Impatient of blah blah blah, Mr Johnson ensured the bill for the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement was bulldozed through Parliament with a mere two days for debate, No blah blah blah.

Yet surprisingly (some of us are not surprised) — there is now more blah, blah, blah. The Government wishes to renegotiate whole chunks of the Withdrawal Agreement – more especially, the Northern Ireland Protocol. Apparently, the oven-ready deal was not quite so oven-ready as had been so enthusiastically trumpeted. More particularly, the arrangements that put Northern Ireland into a different relationship with the EU than the rest of the UK. There seemed to be a border down the Irish sea separating the six counties from the island of Britain, and odd matters like the transport of sausages across the Irish sea suddenly



became for many as important in the struggle to defend the sovereignty of this sceptred isle as had the armed invasions of the Luftwaffe in 1940 or the Armada in 1588. And so Lord Frost shuttled urgently back and forth negotiating with the EU, hoping to effect a redesign of an agreement that Mr Johnson had so enthusiastically signed up to weeks earlier and which is now seen to be an imperfect and unfair document that affronts the dignity of a free and sovereign nation. And so -renewed blah blah blah.

Perhaps there is a lesson here: had Parliament had more time to scrutinise and debate the agreement that Mr Johnson had bulldozed through Parliament – had there been more, then, perhaps there would have been no need for seemingly interminable renegotiations now. Impatience begat blah blah blah.

“Of course we need constructive dialogue,” Greta Thunberg said in the same speech that lambasted world leaders. And that is the point. It is indisputably true that empty meaningless argument between opposed groups postpones or prevents decision making, defers action, resists change, and negates reform. But to make decisions on controversial matters without debate, discussion, careful scrutiny, dialogue and consultation, will likely lead to errors being made, wrong courses of action being taken, journeys through perilous landscapes towards wrong destinations being made.

There was an old TV advertisement for BT with the catchphrase “It’s good to talk”. The very word parliament – from the French word *parler* – links with the idea of talking. Parliament is a place where worthwhile policies are proposed and discussed and the future of the nation is decided. But it is good for all of us in our everyday lives to talk, to listen, to seek an understanding of the lives and opinions of others. And it is essential for our education – for everyone’s education. That is why TEAM Global exists. Its aim is to help young adults in school and universities towards understanding issues of the day, to hear the debates and arguments over current issues and affairs in society. That is why in the following pages, there is a lot of talk, talk with a purpose, not empty blah blah blah. Issues are examined and viewpoints offered: might Scotland and Wales leave the UK, and will Northern Ireland leave the UK to join the Republic of Ireland? On the defence or suppression of free speech in universities. Has Mr Johnson’s brought a divided nation together?. There are links to webinar talks arranged via zoom by TEAM Global on such matters as inequality in Britain, the Israel-Palestine relationship, climate change and others. Not blah blah blah - but talk with a purpose.

Michael Ghirelli



Does the United Kingdom have a future? Will it survive into the decades ahead as a single unified state, or will Wales and Scotland break free from Westminster rule and establish themselves as independent countries – while Northern Ireland leaves the union to become part of the Republic of Ireland? The subject of this conference was the political debate centring on the possible breakup of the UK. 135 year 12 students attended heard something of the political debate about the possible breakup of the UK. They came from four schools: the host school was Ursuline High, and the visiting schools included Wimbledon College, Mulberry School for Girls and St Philomena's.

Organising the conference was Polly Harrison, Director of Extended Learning Ursuline, while **John Wilson** of TEAM Global helped find speakers and provided advice and support.

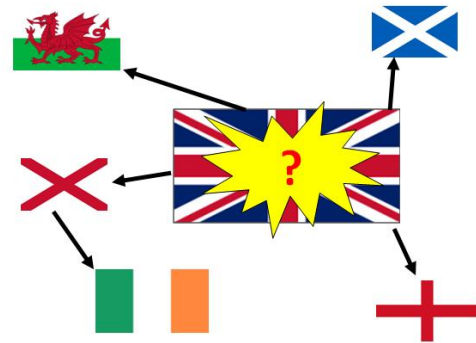
It is difficult to conceive of England declaring itself independent of the UK, it having by far the largest population of the Union, and being itself the home of the London-based Westminster government. For the Scots and Welsh, sharing this island of Britain is like living in a flat with an elephant. But there is a case for arguing that the English regions be given substantially more powers, that they benefit from the same process of devolution that has created the Scottish and Welsh governments and the separate status of Northern Ireland.



Scotland and Wales free?

Ireland united?

And what of England?



The Speakers

Dr Denis MacShane, former MP and Minister of State for Europe. He considered English identity, the distinction between England and Britain, and England's relationship with Scotland, Ireland, and Wales on the one hand, and with the EU on the other.

Dr James Kelly is an Associate Professor at Durham University. He gave an account of the history of relations between Britain and Ireland over the twentieth and twenty first centuries, and considered the issue of the place of Northern Ireland in the UK, Unionism, and possibility of Irish unity especially following the Brexit referendum where the majority of Northern Irish voters were against Brexit.

Rj Batkhuu and Max Kendix are from Durham University. They presented a lively skilled and reasoned debate on the whole issue of devolution of powers to the English provinces. Is England too centralised? Should more powers of government be devolved to the provinces, and do all the provinces have sufficient of a regional identity to justify devolved government?

Andrew Bowie, a Scottish Conservative MP of definite unionist sympathies, had a lively exchange with the SNP MP **Stewart McDonald** who argued that Scotland should be an independent sovereign state wholly independent of Westminster.

Nia Griffith, a Labour MP, presented the Welsh viewpoint. She argued strongly in favour of the continued arrangement of devolved powers to the Welsh Assembly – the Sennedd – but considered the whole idea of complete independence for the small principality was improbable and impractical.



Should the Government Legislate for Free Speech in British universities?

John Wilson is a long time member of the TEAM Executive Committee. He draws attention to the Government's forthcoming legislation that is intended to protect free speech in British universities. These proposals are in response to incidents where speakers have been no-platformed, or meetings disrupted and threatened with violent protest, university authorities intimidation of speakers. These actions have surely been acts of suppression of free speech.

Perhaps we might feel that governments should be keeping their noses out of the internal affairs of universities which should be free to encourage students to explore and debate ideas and opinions freely. However, are not university authorities conniving at the suppression of free speech when they permit disruptions of meetings and acts of no-platforming? Surely students should be exposed to alternative opinions, rather than be protected from them? They should hear, listen, and indulge in reasoned debate, not close their ears to arguments they do not wish to hear.

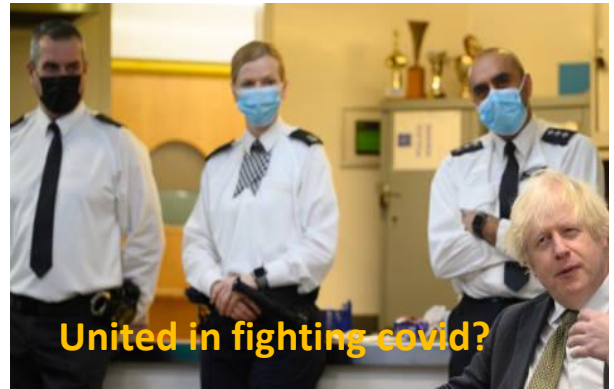
But what of speakers with obvious extreme views - fascists, racists, the ignorant, the bigoted and prejudiced - should not the universities prevent them proclaiming their extreme and noxious opinions to students and staff? Are there not limits to free speech? On the contrary, is it not the case that by imposing censorship upon them, they risk allowing the extremists to present themselves as victims? It is better to let them speak, so that they cannot present themselves as martyrs for the truth. Then, instead, as they utter their poison without hindrance, they will stand as public declaration of the university's commitment to principles of democracy and free speech.

To read "Should the Government Legislate for Free Speech in British universities?" click on <https://www.teamglobal.org.uk/post/should-the-government-legislate-for-free-speech-in-british-universities>



After Brexit, Boris Johnson made the appeal ‘Let the healing begin’. Since the 2019 election, has there been any healing?

Richard Hillebrand is a former member of the TEAM Executive Committee. He now runs a school in India. Richard argues that Mr. Johnson has fostered division rather than healing. By their actions and policies, Mr. Johnson and his government show that they reject consensus politics and take the view that opposition is treachery.



Opposition and disagreement are essential to the functioning of a democratic society, Yet they are not only ignoring legitimate criticism, but also enacting policies that would stifle the voices of their critics.

The Johnson Government creates discord and division, not healing. Since 2019 it -

- attempted to close down Parliament using “Henry VIII” powers.
 - is enacting legislation to deprive the poor of their right to vote.
 - has denigrated the diversity of modern Britain.
 - criticised the black England footballer Marcus Rashford for organizing the feeding of deprived children.
 - is planning to sell off Channel 4 TV to commercial interests.
 - uses consistently and unnecessarily hostile language in dealings with the EU
 - signed up to the Northern Ireland Protocol with no intention of honouring its pledge, so endangering the Good Friday Agreement..
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To read “After Brexit, Boris Johnson made the appeal ‘Let the healing begin’. Since the 2019 election, has there been any healing?” click on <https://www.teamglobal.org.uk/post/britain-since-brexit-has-boris-brought-healing>



TEAM Global launch the International Perspective



September saw the culmination of months of hard work from TEAM Executive Committee members, as we launched our new student-led initiative, the International Perspective. The initiative is run by Hannah Carmody Brown, a MA International Relations student at University of East Anglia, who will be leading her team in the inaugural year of the initiative.

Following a research project conducted by Executive Committee member Chris Poray,

TEAM adapted to student's demands that had grown during the COVID pandemic and had largely been ignored. TEAM decided to establish a working group to implement the initiative and give students what they believed would help them grow as global citizens. TEAM are incredibly proud of the student team running the initiative and we look forward to supporting them through the next year and beyond.

The initiative will be organising various events, podcasts, newsletters and more, with the first webinar already having taken place on Tuesday 12 October, with Paul Adamson OBE our first guest speaker. He was speaking about the future EU-UK relationship and the impact this will have on young people going forward.

The International Perspective team spoke to hundreds of students at the Norwich Freshers Fair, in which students commented on the excitement the initiative brought to them and their peers, something that they felt was sorely missed in their years at university. Since then, the social media channels have had tremendous success and we look forward to sharing their successes throughout the year.

If you are interested in helping support the initiative, please feel free to get in touch with Chris at chris@teamglobal.org.uk, or message our social media channels.





THE INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE: Hannah Carmody-Brown writes:

We are delighted to announce the launch of our student led initiative, The International Perspective! We're a student run international affairs initiative aiming at spreading awareness of international issues through discussion among students and non-students alike, facilitating future international aspirations. We will be run by Hannah Carmody-Brown alongside the team: Maximilian M., Mia Ta, Suhail Woods, Ben Davis, Rory Mcknight, James Branch, Matthew Taylor and Meg James

The initiative is supported by [TEAM Global](#) following the research project conducted by [Chris Poray](#) in February. The team will be putting together various initiatives such as webinars from key international figures, as well as competitions, podcasts and more.



TEAM Global Briefings

The programme of Zoom based webinars with eminent speakers, organised and hosted by Chris Poray

1 and 2 below were closed events for participants on the UEA Focus Groups, and members of TEAM

1: **Cyber Security** - Chelsey Slack, Deputy Head of Cyber Defence at NATO 4 March 2021

Chelsey gave a briefing on NATO's approach to cyber defence and how it helps defend NATO nations and its citizens. She explained that whilst there are threats to NATO, it is well equipped and actively updating its technology to deal with new and emerging threats.



2: **Climate Science from a Climate Scientist** - Dr Paul D. Williams, Professor of Atmospheric Science at the University of Reading, UK 18 March 2021 5-6pm

Paul introduced the science of climate change at an accessible level. Paul unpacked the evidence of how the climate crisis is here and whilst it is a significant issue, there is an optimistic outlook should the right decisions and paths be taken.

Below are the open briefings from The International Perspective, a new student-led initiative based in Norwich, UK aiming to educate and encourage discussion of international issues.

3: **“How NATO Can Tackle China”** - Jamie Shea, former NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges - 6 May 2021 5.30-6.30pm

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TM82j_4HDwQ

Specific clips on TEAM Global YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPVsgTRMhuVPPIUJ636LbyA>

4: **The Effects of Inequality** - Richard Wilkinson, co-founder of the Equality Trust and social epidemiologist. 20 May 2021 5.30-6.30 pm

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLV1vmzXzkU&list=PLT7_iBiCWBDL61UeuScI0ygibJPQOxaUm

Richard gave a brilliant insight into the effects of economic inequality and how we can address these now and in the future. He explained how and why inequality exists in various ways across the globe and the issues these can have on both a micro and macro level.

5: **Our European Future: What's Next for Young People in the UK?**

Paul Adamson (OBE) - 12 Oct 2021, 5:00-6:00 pm

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7y_T_QD1bsY

Paul Adamson (OBE) is the chairman of Forum Europe, Forum Global and EU-UK Forum as well as the founder of European Affairs Magazine Encompass, formally known as E!Sharp. Alongside this Paul is a member of RAND Europe's Council of Advisors.



5: The Israeli-Palestine Conflict: What Does the Future Hold? Toufic Haddad - 30 Nov 2021, 5:30-6:30 pm.

Youfic is Director of the Kenyon Institute. He is a social scientist whose work focuses on the political economy of development and conflict in the Middle East, and Israel-Palestine in particular. His PhD was transformed into Palestine Limited: published by I.B. Tauris in 2016, with paperback edition out in 2018. He has extensively spoken and published on the Israel-Palestine conflict, His research has been sponsored by London School of Economics Middle East Centre, the Arab Council for Social Science, the Palestinian American Research Centre, and CBRL.

<https://www.teamglobal.org.uk/post/team-global-launch-the-international-perspective>

<https://www.teamglobal.org.uk/news>

LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/teamglobaluk/>

TEAM Global YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPVsgTRMhuVPPIUJ636LbyA/videos>

NOTE THIS FUTURE EVENT IN YOUR DIARY

**STUDY TOUR TO LONDON FOR
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

MONDAY 4TH APRIL TO THURSDAY 7TH APRIL 2022.

For further details ask Antony J Frost, Vice Chairman TEAMGlobal:

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