**AMERICAN BREXIT COMMITTEE**

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**BORIS AND BREXIT DISCONNECT**

**ON IRELAND; U. S. SEES GREEN**

One year on, the folly of Brexit endures; its benefits, not so much! For Ireland there is good news and bad news. Thanks to the European Union’s demand for the Northern Ireland Protocol (NIP)of the EU-UK Withdrawal Treaty, there have been significant increases in all of Ireland in commercial activity, financial cooperation, and predictions for growth in many sectors of the economy. The bad news is that Britain’s Six-County colonial carve out known as Northern Ireland still survives. That may be changing. This is the centenary of their misrule consisting of garrison payroll pacification, low wage exploitation, huge public subsidies, industrial scale religious discrimination, corruption of the law, justice and police. The EU protection of the Protocol and America’s demand that Britain fulfill the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) legacy obligations pose a pivotal ‘fish or cut bait’ Brexit moment with serious implications for Prime Minister Johnson, Ireland’s future and US-UK relations.

Unfortunately, Boris and the Conservatives prefer the old ways of bullying Ireland over the Protocol and by ignoring GFA rule of law and human rights requirements and, hopefully, bury its lawless legacy and the label of a State sponsor of terror.

Prime Minister Johnson has instructed his new Foreign Secretary Liz Truss to, if necessary, scupper the Northern Ireland Protocol thus signaling his willingness to bring instability and restore troops and the partition border. Ms. Truss proved her mettle for the job when, as International Trade Secretary, she approved Parliamentary-banned weapons sales to Saudi Arabia not once, not twice but three separate times. With that legacy, she seems perfect for the poisoned chalice of invoking Article 16 of the Treaty and disregarding the legal obligations of domestic and international law. In a recently released report, anti-Irish Baroness Kate Hoey of Rathlin endorsed a basic NI unionist claim that the Protocol violates the Act of Union of 1800. Unionists/loyalists are all about the old days and the old ways!

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Justice Minister Dominic Raab is unilaterally crafting a bill that will permanently defer the investigation and prosecution of the killings of as many as 1000 British Subjects and Irish citizens whose families will be denied truth, justice and the ability to hold Britain accountable. Many of the killings involve British security forces colluding with loyalist death squads like the Glennane gang. The bill will mask the State’s secret campaign to terrorize and kill Sinn Fein voters, elected officials and activists. Britain claims too much time has passed to prosecute. But just last year two German citizens who worked in Sachsenhausen and Stutthof SS concentration camps 80 years ago were charged by Germany with conspiracy to commit murder. The Brexiteers response to such comparisons is to arrogantly insist Britain is a rule maker not a rule taker. This signals ‘Global Britain’s’ new ‘Brexit Light’ foreign policy that fundamentally compromises EU values like the rule of law, democracy, and human rights and undermines President Biden’s advocacy for democratic governance.

Such, UK tactics, of course, include a U. S. media massage. Brexiteer Lord Hannan recently trashed Irish and American hopes for the GFA unity referendum (Washington Examiner 12/21). by claiming that unionists have always accommodated Irish nationalism. That, of course, is a big lie. From the time of Cromwell’s confiscation of 10m acres of land to pay the wages of his marauding soldiers and to import Scottish settlers up to the present undermining of the 1998 GFA, the British have smeared, criminalized, suppressed, dismissed and obstructed Irish culture and nationalism. But Brexiteers, like their Trumper cousins, tend to believe “big lies.”

Americans are in no mood for the reimposition of the unjust partition border or for bailing out Britain from its self-inflicted Brexit maladies. President Biden is selling democracy and the rule of law but Boris isn’t buying. One would expect more from a nation that considers itself a special friend.

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Michael J. Cummings, a native of Springfield, Mass. is a graduate of St. Anselm’s College (B. A., 1968) and New York University (M. P. A., 1970) . He established the American Brexit Committee in 2016 and served as Secretary from 2016-2021. He is a former member of the National Boards of the Irish American Unity Conference (1996-2013), the Ancient Order of Hibernians (2001-2008), and the Irish Northern Aid Committee (1988-1996). He also served as Chairman of the Capital District Irish National Caucus (1979-1982). He worked for the State of New York for 36 years in various capacities including as Assistant Deputy State Comptroller and Director of the Justice Court Fund. He served on the Peace and Justice Commission of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany.

Cummings has appeared on American, English and Irish television and radio and his commentary and letters have appeared in major American, Irish-American, and Catholic print media. He is married 48 years to Nuala Hogan, a nurse and native of Ireland. They have five children and 7 grandchildren.