



The Centre for
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MEDIA WATCH

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Voting to leave Europe would be 'act of wanton destruction' for province

A VOTE to leave the European Union would wreak havoc on Northern Ireland's economy, according to a former head of the World Trade Organisation.

In an outspoken defence of the EU, Peter Sutherland said Brexit would be "an act of wanton destruction" as far as the province is concerned.

It would suffer much more than the rest of the UK, the former European Commissioner and past director-general of the World Trade Organisation added.

"Those who invest in Ireland, **north or south**, are doing so because it provides them with the manufacturing base to sell to the European Union," Mr Sutherland told the BBC's Sunday Politics show.

"The uncertainty, the borders created by Britain leaving and the inevitable period of prolonged negotiation will lead to a drying up of investment.

"It is, to me, incredible that any political force in Northern Ireland could conceivably consider (the UK leaving the EU) could be a good thing for Northern Ireland."

Mr Sutherland also said leaving the EU would "create a border control requirement that we had thought banished to history".

He added: "If in some perverted way there is an ideological desire to recreate that border, it's an act that would be incredibly foolish and very damaging."

Former Alliance minister Stephen Farry also warned that a vote to leave the EU would make any moves to lower the rate of corporation tax pointless.

Mr Farry described it as 'a cruel irony' that just when Northern Ireland was on the brink of lowering corporation tax, a Brexit vote would automatically cancel out any expected benefits.

He said: "In all the meetings I have had with a range of potential investors, both large and small, I have never come across anyone arguing that Northern Ireland and the UK would be better off outside the European Union. For some, it was not a huge issue, but for others it was fundamental."

"The notion that the UK would quickly create its own trade and access to market agreements with Europe and indeed the other main global economies is extremely naïve."

However, Northern Ireland Secretary Theresa Villiers said a Brexit would be "great for Northern Ireland".

"It enables us to take back control of our own trade policies so that we can make deals not just with the European Union, but also with countries around the world where they have huge markets," she told Sunday Politics, "those could create jobs and opportunities for young people."

"There's no reason why we can't press ahead pretty rapidly with trade deals with the rest of the world. It is the EU that's failing economically, not us."

Source: Belfast Telegraph

Brexit 'cannot be good for this island', Taoiseach Enda Kenny warns

The UK's access to some systems it depends on to keep its people and borders safe could be diminished after Brexit, the head of the EU's law enforcement agency has said.

Rob Wainwright suggested that redrawing arrangements around police cooperation tools following a vote to leave may take at least two years.

The Welsh-born director of Europol told the Press Association the need for international police cooperation is "stronger than ever" in the face of terrorism and serious crime.

A highly-charged debate on security has exposed divisions at the top of government and within the intelligence community ahead of next month's referendum.

While some prominent figures have warned about the repercussions of leaving, others have played down the risk and suggested there could be benefits.

Mr Wainwright said threats are now "much more complex and international in nature".

He said: "Drugs are coming from abroad, terrorists are radicalised in Syria and Iraq and coming back."

"Our real security challenges are European in nature so we need to stay strong together to face them together."

EU instruments provide British authorities with "vital information" every day, he said, adding: "If you take that away at this critical time ... then of course you weaken your overall defence mechanisms in the face of those threats."

The UK "would lose some of its access to some of the systems that it currently depends on to keep its borders and its people safe" if it departed, Mr Wainwright claimed.

He continued: "How you mitigate that risk depends on how the negotiations would go afterwards."

"At the moment Britain's security relies on a number of things, which includes access to EU information systems."

"If you put that access under any kind of threat or diminish that access it's bound to have potential negative consequences."

Hundreds of messages are exchanged through Europol channels between British authorities and their European counterparts every day, he said, while 2,500 new cases for **cross-border** co-operation were launched through the body last year.

Other tools include the European Arrest Warrant and the Schengen Information System database.

Mr Wainwright said: "I'm pretty sure because Britain is such a strong partner that it would get a pretty good deal in having at least partial access to most of those systems."

However, there is a "lot of uncertainty" about any deal, he said.

"I'm not saying the sky is going to fall in," he said. "All I'm saying is that we have to accept that EU systems form an instrumental part of the way we protect ourselves these days and if leave we are not going to have the same effective access to those as we have now."

On how long it could take to form new agreements after Brexit, he said Britain is currently participating in around 35 instruments on security, adding: "It's going to take some years. I guess at least two years, maybe longer."

Creating a parallel system for the UK alone would be a "huge logistical exercise", Mr Wainwright said.

Asked about any suggestion of scaremongering over warnings relating to security, he said he was not "part of a political process" adding: "I'm not campaigning for any political party or either side and neither are my fellow colleagues.

"None of them - not one of them who is a current chief that I've spoken to - believes that our security wouldn't be affected if we left."

The Paris and Brussels attacks showed information-sharing levels were "still not great" across Europe, Mr Wainwright conceded.

He added: "Europe hasn't got this perfectly right yet, but what's our response to that - to walk away from that or stay in and continue to improve? I think it has to be the latter."

Home Secretary Theresa May has said the country would be more secure from crime and terrorism if it remains a member of the EU.

However, there have been contrasting arguments from former intelligence chiefs and other cabinet members.

Former head of MI6 Sir Richard Dearlove argued there were potential security gains from Brexit, while Justice Secretary Michael Gove has dismissed warnings about the potential dangers.

Source: The Belfast Telegraph

June 14, 2016

EU Referendum - Brexit would be bad news for north warns Taoiseach

The taoiseach has described the EU referendum as the biggest decision since the Good Friday Agreement, claiming Brexit would create instability and uncertainty and the likely return of border checkpoints.

Enda Kenny said it was not credible to suggest nothing would change at the border if the UK left the EU.

"The reestablishment of customs checks on the border, or indeed of any customs arrangements, would be a regrettable and backward step for north-south trade and cooperation," he said.

In a speech in Belfast, stressing the Irish government's strong support for a Remain vote, Mr Kenny said as the peace process came of age people should take account of the "risks and challenges" that lay ahead.

"My address today is about what I firmly believe is the biggest challenge and the greatest risk - the forthcoming referendum on UK membership of the European Union," he said.

"Later this month the people of Belfast, of Northern Ireland, of the UK as a whole, are being asked to make a momentous decision.

"That decision is as important for the future of this island as when we all voted for the Good Friday Agreement (in 1998)."

Mr Kenny said there was "no doubt" leaving the EU would involve changes to the trading rules between Britain and the Republic.

He said such a change would deliver "bad news" for the Northern Ireland economy.

"We are standing here today less than 50 miles from the United Kingdom's only land border," he told an audience at the Ulster University.

"Can anyone credibly suggest that nothing would change if that became the western border of the European Union?"

"We remember when it was a hard border. We remember the delays, the cost and the division.

"One of the most beneficial effects of the peace process and our common membership of the EU has been the virtual elimination of that border."

Mr Kenny said the decision on the future arrangements at the border would be up to the remaining 27 EU member states.

He said he would do his utmost to preserve the common travel area that allowed people to move freely.

But, in terms of trade, he said: "It is difficult to imagine a situation where there would be no controls or checks on the movement of goods if the UK left the EU.

"Those who advocate for Leave simply cannot guarantee otherwise.

"No matter how successfully we negotiate any new arrangements, we all know that cannot be good for this island."

Mr Kenny said whatever the outcome of the referendum the Republic would continue to be a "committed member" of the EU and of the Eurozone.

The common travel area has been in operation since 1923 and many Brexit campaigners have insisted the agreement will not be impacted if the UK leaves the EU.

Mr Kenny said he would like to see it continue, but warned its future could not be guaranteed.

The taoiseach acknowledged the CTA had worked when both countries were outside the EU and when both were inside the EU.

"It's never been tested with one outside and one inside and I think that's a problem," he said.

Source: The Irish News

May 23, 2016

'Hard border' will return if Britain leaves EU – Kenny

TAOISEACH Enda Kenny has delivered his starkest warning to date that a so-called 'Brexit' could result in the return of a "hard border" with Northern Ireland.

Mr Kenny said the border of the European Union would run "from Dundalk to Derry" if Britain voted to leave.

Describing the June 23 vote as the most important since the passing of the Good Friday Agreement, Mr Kenny said a 'Brexit' would be a "regrettable and backward" step for trade and co-operation between **North and South**.

The Fine Gael leader even cited a number of **all-island** initiatives, such as the construction of a the new national children's hospital and the joint bid to host the Rugby World Cup in 2023, in a clear illustration of the Government's desire for the UK to remain in the EU.

And during a keynote speech at Ulster University yesterday, Mr Kenny warned of the prospect of a return of checkpoints, which he said could have a devastating effect.

"We are standing here today, less than 50 miles from the United Kingdom's only land border. Can anyone credibly suggest that nothing would change if that became the western border of the European Union? "We remember when it was a hard border. We remember the delays, the cost and the division," he said.

"But it is difficult to imagine a situation where there would be no controls or checks on the movement of goods if the UK left the EU. Those who advocate for Leave simply cannot guarantee otherwise."

Mr Kenny said his Government would do its utmost to preserve the free movement of people. But he warned that such a scenario could be difficult if British voters decided to leave.

"The simple fact would be that the border of the European Union would run from Dundalk to www.Derry.No matter how successfully we negotiate any new arrangements, we all know that cannot be good for this island."

Voice Mr Kenny said there would be no voice at the European Council, the "most powerful table of our continent", to speak on behalf of families living in the UK if the Leave side prevailed.

He described the prospect of Britain leaving the EU as taking "a road where there are no signposts.

"Life could not be the same the day after as the day before," Mr Kenny added.

He said that at present, people could drive from the island of Ireland to the border of Ukraine without needing to display much paperwork.

"As the man said to me this morning, 'I can drive a lorry from here to Ukraine with no papers.' " Stressing that his Government was unashamedly pressing for Britain to remain, Mr Kenny said the alternative could damage the economies both **North and South.**

During his 40-minute speech, Mr Kenny expressed his condolences to the family of 24-year-old Darren Rodgers, who died following Northern Ireland's game against Poland in Nice.

The Taoiseach will travel to Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow this week as part of the campaign.

Source: Irish Independent