

Commiserations to Catalonia

Today I am proud to be British and to be leaving the EU. When the UK state and government saw there was considerable pressure for Scottish independence it organised a legal referendum and let the people decide democratically. As someone who wanted Scotland to stay in I always recognised their right to self determination. If they had decided to go I would have wished them well and urged Parliament to a quick settlement.

The lack of reaction by the EU to the dreadful scenes in Catalonia shows their lack of understanding of democracy. The Spanish state is right to say democrats need to accept the rule of law. They are wrong to deny Catalans a vote and voice when they think the constitutional settlement behind that rule of law is wrong. The irony is that polls suggest the Spanish state had a good chance of winning a referendum for the status quo if it had held one in good time with a good grace. Now a legal referendum is more needed, and less easy for the Spanish state to win. Democracy about the rule of law, but it is also about responding to the mood of voters. Leaders of countries need to retain consent to the system for making decisions.

I thought the EU wanted to promote democracy. It has wanted to promote regional identity and encouraged the regions against nations. It has sent regions money over the heads of the states. It is now reaping a bitter harvest. Lets get on with rebuilding our own democracy by taking back control