

The European Political Community

Bizarre that the U.K. hosted the meeting of 46 leaders of European countries at Blenheim. That great British victory against France and Bavaria was an important part of a war against Franco Spanish attempts to dominate Europe. Stressing the associations with the Churchill family made everyone think of the U.K.'s role in thwarting a later German plan to dominate Europe. These are unhappy memories of Europe's centralising thuggish tendencies and of the great loss of life resisting them entailed. Far from showing the U.K. as a friend and partner it reminds of times when the U.K. stood for self determination of people's and states against those who wanted to create a European tyranny.

Today most of the Europeans assembled wanted to believe they are more united. They were willing to give the time of day to the U.K. offer of closer friendship without making any positive moves of their own. It was a mistake to think this was an occasion to reboot the U.K./ EU relationship when there were 18 non EU members there as well and when Commission President Von der Leyen was absent seeking votes from the European Parliament to keep her job.

The EU / U.K. relationship is set out in ghastly legal detail with the EU wanting to enforce it in ways that suit them. It is not normally a way to a happy marriage for the bigger partner to make the smaller sign a pre nuptial agreement they do not like, nor does it help the marriage if either partner wants to renegotiate. If the government does want to change the costly and unsatisfactory Treaty it will find changes come at a price which will not be worth offering.

The government would be wrong to enter a defence treaty with the EU. Let us stick to NATO and collaborate through that. They would be wrong to join Horizon and other EU programmes, It is cheaper and better to run our own. They are quite wrong to think being closer to the EU will boost our growth rate. The EU is mired in slow growth and no growth. The single market is no free market. It is a rule bound customs Union that is hostile to innovation and small business. By all means have a growth strategy. The more you divert from the EU model the faster you can grow.