

BELLA CALEDONIA


[HOME](#)
[CONTRIBUTORS & CONTACT](#)
[SUPPORT US](#)
[BOOKS UPSIDE YOUR HEAD](#)
[INDY LIVE](#)
[HOME](#) > [COMMENTARY](#) > A CULTURE OF CONTEMPT

A Culture of Contempt

 BY [BELLACALDONIA](#) on [FEBRUARY 19, 2014](#) • (41)

By Alastair McIntosh

Like the classroom bully always says, “it’s just for a laugh,” but the satire on “**5 alternative currencies for an independent Scotland**” published this morning might have been mistaken as a poor-taste spoof for the Yes campaign had it not appeared from the Daily Telegraph.

For me, the alarm bells had started sounding back in November when Boris Johnson delivered the **Margaret Thatcher Lecture**. It wasn’t his invoking the “spirit of envy” that surprised me. It was more his jingoistic boast that what had made Britain great in the past, and what Thatcher had recovered for today, was that we had conquered or invaded fully 90% of the world’s countries.

Then came George Osborne, riding into town last week as a latter day Governor General, to reveal that the Union is not the marriage of equals. A single web comment locked into my mind. The respondent asked, and I paraphrase from memory: “What does this visceral fear of Scottish independence tell us about the psychology of those who oppose it?”

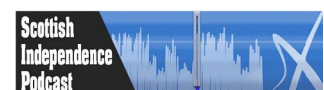
In today’s piece Michael Deacon, the Telegraph’s parliamentary sketchwriter, tells us rather a lot about that psychology. He does so bolstered by many of the reader comments that have thus far accrued to it. Scotland, he suggests in seeming naivety of the sensitivities of poverty and disadvantage, might call its national currency “the radge, the ned, the bampot, the boobie, the smackheid, the schie, the scaff, the scunner, and the English numpty.” At the end of the day, his parting shot concludes, we could resort to barter where, **“for example, if a Scotsman meets an Englishman who has some food, the Scotsman can suggest exchanging the food for the right not to**

Follow our RSS Feed here...


[RSS - Posts](#)

[Indy Scot Radio 8.9](#)

[iScotland Poster Comp: win £1000](#)

[Lady Alba - Bad Romance](#)


be punched repeatedly in the mouth.”

We're meant to laugh. But this is the *Daily Telegraph*, not *Private Eye*. My first email in response came from Nick Duffell, the author of *The Making of Them*, a powerful study of the psychopathology of the boarding school mentality. He was writing in connection with his forthcoming book, even more relevant, called *Wounded Leaders: British Elitism and the Entitlement Illusion*. My good English friend Nick with whom I go on holiday every year was so toe-curlingly embarrassed by what was in the Telegraph that he felt moved to apologise in person for his compatriot. Furthermore, he said that he would be sending a donation to a Glasgow charity that specifically devotes its energies to so-called rades, neds, schemies and other post-imperial collateral consequences of intergenerational poverty.

So – what psychology are we looking at in what might now be called the Deacon Syndrome? The tendency – at times apparent on both sides of the independence debate – to take recourse to ill-humour at an almost lavatorial level of infantile regression. Comments like that from “westheadbanger” on today's *Telegraph* site – “We all know what currency you use to buy things. It's got a hole in it and takes a lot of pound...ing.” Psychohistory (or psychological history) looks at how national or subgroup traits often seem to correlate with unresolved or traumatised aspects of a nation's past. The unhappiness and dysfunctionalities of individuals are the metaphor. Just as a troubled person often had a childhood that blocked or led to the malformation of stages of early psychological development, so too with national identities. “A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle,” said Renan. It comprises a collective of many people. Where a nation or its iconic representatives behave in a narcissistic manner there is reason to suspect a narcissistic wound, a wound to the soul's primal integrity which results in the formation of a false self. (Of course, opponents to a Yes vote would be quick to argue that such is precisely what independence is about, but it is not for me to argue that point at present).

That narcissistic wound – that ego wound – normally has its roots in having been either the recipient of violence in one form or another, or the administrator of violence, or most often, both interwoven. Alice Miller's work on child-rearing and national violence, especially amongst the Nazis, is but the most widely read of a considerable raft of psychotherapeutic literature in this field. Our own Glasgow-born R.D. Laing was a pioneer and especially his seminal study, *The Divided Self* (1959).

 [Open Democracy](#)

Unleash creative energy: save NHS Scotland: (40 reasons to support Scottish independence: 18 & 19)

Scotland Divided! Poverty, class and nation

 [Derek Bateman](#)

Turn! Turn! Turn!

A Poor Show

 [Sluggie O Toole](#)

From the Derry Journal archives...

 [Newsnet](#)

Irish eyes are smiling as Ireland pays less for debt than UK

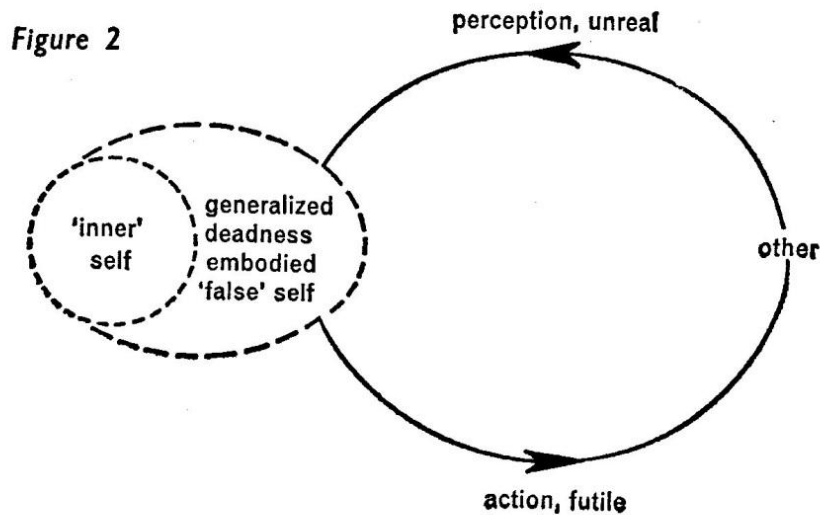
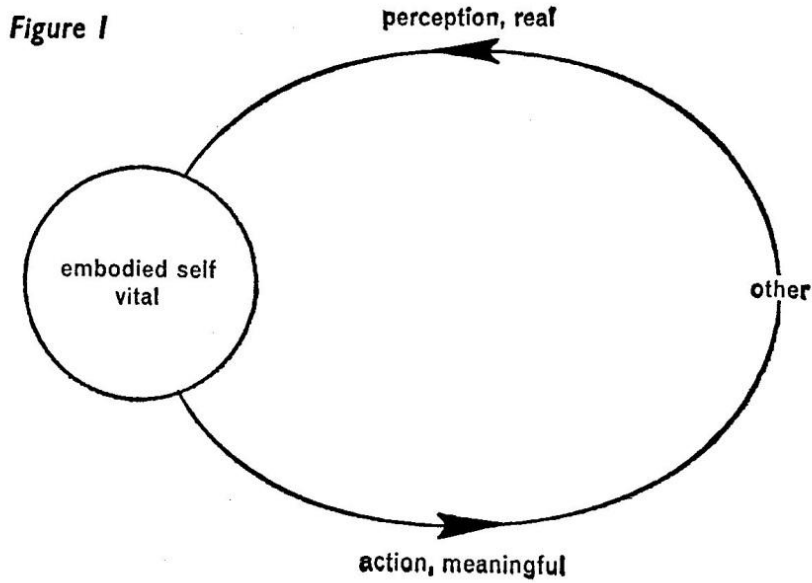
Under Tory control

 [Every Day Rebellion](#)

Everyday Rebellion – Slogans Download

Hot Docs 2014: Everyday Rebellion – Documentary Review

[National Collective](#)



Laing lays out a model of the healthy self in which what he calls the “embodied self”, with its all its vitality, engages with others in the world in a meaningful manner. This results in authentic perception being reflected back and therefore, the maintenance of a stable psyche and one might add, a healthy family or community. In contrast, the “schizoid condition” as he called it lacks this direct relationship to reality. Rather, it is intermediated by a “false self” that embodies a “generalised deadness” – narcissistic and by nature, necrophilic. This need to keep up a mask drains life energy from the real self. Laing’s model supposes that psychic collapse comes about when that process advances to such an extent that the real self, the inner self, the soul, starts to wither and fears death.

Violence in whatever form is always a violation of the other, a disruption of right and respectful relationships to what Thomas Merton called “the sanctuary of another’s subjectivity”. When we live

 **National Colle**
Like

10,746 people like National Colle



Facebook social plugin

Follow us on Twitter

RT @ToniGiugliano:
.@georgelyonmep says we have the 2nd best farming deal in Europe. George - look at the table - we have the worst!
<http://...> **8 hours ago**

@BBCGaryR
@EwanHunter Can no more trusted body in the land! **8 hours ago**

Follow @bellacaledonia

Top Posts & Pages



in a manner that is habituated to using violence to define our reality and create our collective persona we inevitably live from a false self and find ourselves in inauthentic relationship to others. As with any addiction, this can make us feel “great”, or “Great”, for a while, but sooner or later it saps the soul. It fails to develop the wellsprings of love out of which true and sustained life is born. It leaves us, instead, wallowing in the Freudian *id*, the thrashings and threshings of the disconnected ego that, devoid of resourcing from the deeper Self, the soul, becomes increasingly expressive of the shadow and all the dark – including the lavatorial and even sadistic humour that go with it.

Psychohistorians believe that these principles apply as much to the collective, as much to community writ large as nations and their states, as they do to individuals and families. A nation that has built itself, in part at least, on violence, harbours the shadow side to its ego of a narcissistic self, like a child that has never grown through its toddler phase of healthy primary narcissism into an empathetic set of adult relationships. Pick the scab of empire, any empire, and you unleash a disturbing potage of anger, hurt feelings, need to be loved, misunderstoodness, and so on. It would be merely sad were it not also so dangerous.

This is covered over when it can be by flaunting national greatness, past invasions of the world, and claiming, as I’m repeatedly told by some senior military and political thinkers, that we must keep Trident so that we can continue to “punch above our weight” in the world. “Why,” I ask them, “should anybody want to punch above their weight, if it is a world of justice that we seek?” There is no clear answer to that, save questionable presumptions of nobles oblige and manifest destiny, or exceptionalism like [Putin recently challenged](#) with Obama.

As Laing says in his chapter on “The embodied and the unembodied self”:

Such a schizoid in *one* sense is trying to be omnipotent by enclosing within his own being, without recourse to relationship with others, modes of relationship that require the effective presence to him of other people and of the outer world. He would appear to be, in an unreal, impossible way, all persons and things to himself. The imagined advantages are safety for the true self, isolation and hence freedom from others, self-sufficiency and control.

The actual disadvantages ... [are that] being a false hope, leads on to persistent despair ... a persistent, haunting sense of futility [because] this shut-up self, being isolated, is unable to be enriched by outer experience, and so the whole inner world comes to be more and more



SUPPORT BELLA ...

We could do with your support. Because nobody [owns a free press...](#)

Email Subscription

Enter your email address to subscribe to this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

Join 16,726 other followers

From the Bella Vaults

▼

Actions & Campaigns

[Attac](#)

[Autonomous Centre](#)

[ECAP](#)

[False Economy](#)

[Holyrod 350](#)

[Scotland CND](#)

[Stop the War](#)

[The Bridge Network](#)

impoverished, until the individual may come to feel he is merely a vacuum ... so dreadful is his inner deadness.

I have many conversations about these questions with conscientious English friends and colleagues, especially professionals – medical, military, police, clergy – whose work can involve grappling with violence. It goes without saying that much of this dynamic is self-evident to grassroots folk who “watch the street”. The pivotal political question is *how to call back the soul?* My interpretation would be that this is where Scotland is at. We are seeking to redeem the national psyche. However, that puts our teeth on edge, and even more, it puts on edge the teeth of those with whom we are in the closest psychodynamic relationship – our English family and neighbours. For them, it is all the harder, because the very action of us scratching our healing itch picks at the scab on their unrecognised and largely unacknowledged wound.

To me, this is why the blog comments from the English side of the debate in particular are currently so acidic. In their perception, when we touch their “money” and we touch, in psychodynamic terms, their “shit”, their “filthy lucre”, and for psychologically understandable reasons, they’re not going to have us “rolling in it”.

Where from here? We cannot back tread on a healing process. But we must try and be ever so careful – tenderly careful – to ensure that our healing doesn’t entail our backsliding and wallowing in their wound. Mutual awakening needs to be as gentle as possible, and preferably by setting an alternative example, by showing and sharing new openings of the way, rather than a rough un-wooing. A start can be made by considering the points, and perhaps signing, the mediator John Sturrock’s proposed ***Protocol for Respectful Dialogue***. Anything less would leave us vulnerable to a Scotland not worthy of independence. We must respond to the Michael Deacons of this world not by confirming prejudices, but with understanding, and the framing of a bigger picture that offers hope for all, a deepening of authenticity, and a recovery of nothing less than soul.

Share this:



7 bloggers like this.

◀ [Dangerous Games](#)

[Broken Britain: Ending the](#)

[Treasure Islands](#)

[Word Power](#)

[Alt News](#)

[Common Dreams](#)

[Media Lens](#)

[Newsnet](#)

[Pulse Media](#)

[Scottish Review](#)

[Wikileaks](#)

[Blogroll](#)

[107 Cowgate](#)

[Abbeyhill Chronicle](#)

[Abyssia Henry](#)

[Alba Matters](#)

[Andrew Barr](#)

[Andrew McPake](#)

[Baffie Box](#)

[Barefoot Crofter](#)

[Bellegrove Belle](#)

[Better Nation](#)

[Bid for Freedom](#)

[Both Sides the Tweed](#)

[Bright Green Scotland](#)

[Burdzeyview](#)

[Caledonian Mercury](#)

[Calum Cashley](#)

[Carmelo Ruiz](#)

[Chap Chap](#)

[City Strolls](#)

[Cornish Republican](#)

[Austerity Union](#) ›

Categories: [Commentary](#) Tags: [#indyref](#) , [Daily Telegraph](#) , [George Osborne](#) , [independent scotland](#) , [Margaret Thatcher Lecture](#) , [Michael Deacon](#) , [Nick Duffell](#) , [Scottish Independence](#)

RELATED ARTICLES



[Mapping Europe's Future](#)

[A Cup Of Hot Chocolate](#)



[Peace of Mind](#)



[The UK is not Britain; the EU is not Europe](#)

[Getting ready for Scotland!!!](#)



[Reconciliation, and Truth](#)

41 replies



Sneddon

[February 19, 2014 • 17:20](#)

Is laughing at them cruel? I've stopped getting angry when they're angry. It must be hard for them living with that post empire hangups and their deep sense of self loathing. Enjoyable article.

[Reply ↓](#)



Nick Duffell

[February 27, 2014 • 15:33](#)

To go on with the bullying question, it is clear from the reactions that even the idea of Scottish Independence is delivering a severe kick up the pants to Westminster. And some of us welcome it – if only just to feel that someone is listening. As is the case with Europe, and frankly with most matters, our chief Wounded Leader, David Cameron, just

[Cosmopolitan Scum](#)

[Craig Murray](#)

[Daniels Blog](#)

[Debra Storr](#)

[Edinburgh Eye](#)

[Edinburgh Muckraker](#)

[Emancipation and Liberation](#)

[Everyone I Ever Kissed](#)

[FAIR](#)

[Fife Diet](#)

[First Person](#)

[Frankly](#)

[Freedom and Whisky](#)

[Future for Scots](#)

[Future Scotland](#)

[Gaelico](#)

[Gerry Hassan](#)

[Glasgow Anarchists](#)

[Go Lassie Go](#)

[Govan Law Centre](#)

[Green Scotland](#)

[Hythlodæus](#)

[Ian Hamilton](#)

[Illusory Flowers in an Empty Sky](#)

[Inveresk Street](#)

[Jardine's Book of Martyrs](#)

[Jim Jay](#)

[Lalland Peat Worrier](#)

[Left Banker](#)

[LenatheHyena](#)

[Liberal Conspiracy](#)

does not get it.

How could he? As an ex-boarder, Cameron has not had enough of belonging at home and so fails to understand what is going on, what such deep movements in community feeling might mean. Most of his Westminster colleagues are equally bemused. Some think that bullying the Scots is the best response: the recent article in The Telegraph took the low road, reminding us of how much covert bullying is just beneath the surface and normalised in Britain, (see my Chapter 3 in the forthcoming ‘Wounded Leaders: British Elitism and the Entitlement Illusion – A Psychohistory’).

Common as such gross entitlement attitudes unfortunately are, they are actually out of step with the majority in Britain, even in England, but political apathy is now bullying us all. The bullies are winning at the moment, but the hidden truth, which common sense reveals, is that bullying always covers fear. Once you have developed the psychological eyes to see such bullying as it is, it becomes apparent that the very same people who appear to fear and loathe foreigners are also fervently committed to the so-called ‘traditions’ of the Union. It is a reaction from an internal psychic organising centre that is dedicated to defensively denying its own fear and making sure the vulnerable one is outside not inside. As a psychohistorian, I see how a whole culture can get trapped in such a psychic black-hole. Many psychotherapists suggest that the psyche’s leadership can come from one of two posited organisational centres, depending on its self-awareness and maturity: the Ego or the Self. Of course there is much debate as to the nature of these structural concepts, since neither yield to Cartesian measurement. Besides, there are as many psychological schools as there are religious sects, or contradictions in Scottish Protestantism. Good old Ronnie – great to hear mention of him again – tried to change this by putting the person back into psychology, but unfortunately also needed to pour enough spirit down his throat to match the spirit that was already inside him.

Politically, the Ego is more like the state: it is understood as having responsibility for the survival and defence of the realm (or organism), and sometimes as the one who primarily wants things to be seen to be done. In ultra-protective mode, it is the creator of the False Self (which

[Lockerbie Case](#)

[Love and Garbage](#)

[Macnumpty](#)

[Michael Greenwell](#)

[Mike Small](#)

[MissEllieMae](#)

[Moridura](#)

[Munguins Republic](#)

[My Wee Round Box](#)

[Neil Mulholland](#)

[Nippy Sweetie](#)

[Other Aberdeen](#)

[Other Jones](#)

[Our Kingdom](#)

[Patrick Harvie](#)

[Peak Oil Scotland](#)

[Peter Geoghegan](#)

[Pin Up Nights](#)

[Political Scrapbook](#)

[Power and Its Minions](#)

[Re-Press](#)

[Reasonably Raging](#)

[Rebel Scot](#)

[Red Clydeside](#)

[Richard Gunn](#)

[Scot Goes Pop](#)

[Scotland Unspun](#)

[Scots & Independent](#)

[Scots Whay Hae!](#)

[Scottish Republic](#)

[Scottish Republic EU](#)

[Scottish Review](#)

includes the ex-boarders' Strategic Survival Personality), as my first book shows.

The Self, by contrast, concerns itself with values beyond statehood, as it were. Recognising that survival has been achieved, is a more mature locus of intra-psychic governance that assesses choice, direction and values by which to live, often for the good of more than just the individual organism. Pushing the metaphor towards its limits, one might say that the self is concerned with what in current political terms would be called its 'legacy.' The shift from the earlier organising centre to the riper one is what Carl Jung meant by his idea of individuation.

Another word for a sense of deeper leadership is 'Soul' and soul, as Alastair shows us so carefully in the splendid Soul and Soil, reminds us, has to do with soil or place or belonging. Scotland is radically different from England in this respect, because there remains something noteworthy about the indigenous nature of Scotland. An indigenous culture rests on an emotional and cultural reality of a people belonging in their soil, in their identification with place. Despite having been overrun and annexed by their southern neighbours, a fact that remains hidden in the euphemism of the word 'Union,' Scotland retains a huge, live and authentic well of belonging. It is visible in the clan system, in the cultural traditions of music and poetry, in dress, in local legend and in landscape, all of which have a unifying function.

Elsewhere, Alastair passionately argues on behalf of "the perennial ensoulment of people and place ... arising from a grounding that is cultural in the lives of the people in my land who have either been born with, or have come through adoption to acquire, footholds in its bio-regionally bounded communities of place. Some of these people are figures of international repute; others are little known firth of [beyond] their native soil. ... the essential relationship between people and their place, their ecology: the experience of being and/or becoming what the Isle of Lewis poet Iain Crichton Smith described as 'real people in a real place.' "

This grounded reality principle is very much in evidence in the Scottish question. It is about belonging – not existing in your head, which is why your English Wounded leaders will never get it, because the institutionalised abandonment has cut them off from body, and thereby from place, from

Scottish Roundup

Sean McP

Set in Darkness

SFA

Sheridan Trial

Sluggie O Toole

Slummy to Yummy Mummy

SNmr

SPL

Stewart Lochhead

The Early Days of a Bette Nation

The Great Unrest

The Shoogley Peg

The Steamie

The Third Estate

Tocasaid

Two Doctors

Village Aunties

Warren Draper

Wee Beautiful Pict

Wings Over Scotland

Comics

Grant Morrison

Mark Millar

Metaphrog

Sean Wilson

Commentary

Andy Wightman

Chomsky

soil, from belonging. They are not safe in themselves, or to quote one of Ronnie Laing's more theoretical phrases, such people are not, in fact, "ontologically safe." Because, as Leonard Schengold says, their childhood displacement is a kind of "Soul Murder." And the consequence is, as Grotstein said: "When innocence has been deprived of its entitlement, it becomes a diabolical spirit."

But, supposing that reality principle were really honoured, it could lead toward a politics that takes its cue from the community and the land and results in a pragmatic set of desires and aspirations differentiated from the English entitlement mentality. And it would be good for England to have something different mirrored back to them, which is also why – as a man born in London – I support your aspirations.

Wouldn't it be great if the bullying were to backfire and the northern folk said YES!

Let's take the High Road!

[Reply ↓](#)



Gadabout (@justinfayre)

February 19, 2014 • 17:22

Or as I remind my English friends – You were just like the Scots and Irish. Shared the same sense of justice and fairness. Shared the same ability for self-denigration and irony. Then in 1066 you went and got involved with all these guys called Norman and everything changed.

[Reply ↓](#)



James Coleman

February 20, 2014 • 13:23

They didn't get involved. They were conquered and became slaves of the French. (I know, I know, the English prefer to call them Norsemen but)

[Reply ↓](#)

[Chris Harvie](#)

[Civics and Generalism](#)

[Edinburgh Review](#)

[John Pilger](#)

[Mark Lynas](#)

[Mute](#)

[Rob Edwards](#)

[Robert Fisk](#)

[Scottish Left Review](#)

[Turbulence](#)

Culture

[Alasdair Gray](#)

[Anti-Scottish](#)

[Celtic League](#)

[Glasgow Open School](#)

[GRD](#)

[Janie Nicoll](#)

[No Team GB](#)

[NVA](#)

[OoTB](#)

[Play Ethic](#)

[RIB](#)

[Street Art](#)

[Variant](#)

[Wasps](#)

[Wooster Collective](#)

Economics

[Debt Generation](#)

[Meta Mute](#)

[NEF](#)

**liz****February 19, 2014 • 18:42**

That made fascinating reading.

I have long been puzzled at the number of MPs from the Islands – J.Lamont, G. Robertson, B.Wilson – who are staunch Unionists.

Thinking that because of their history they should be shoe-ins for Independence but this helps to explain that paradox.

Reply ↓**Colin Laing****February 19, 2014 • 19:03**

hope your all pronouncing Laing as Layng as the original Scots spelling and not the Glasgow/ English corruption Lang which is a mis spelling and pronunciation of the original.

Reply ↓**Sneddon****February 19, 2014 • 20:06**

Colin Laing – Touchy aren't we, perhaps you have some violence in your past where you feel you 'own' someone else's pronunciation of 'Laing (sucks on pipe and strokes beard)tell me about your childhood'

sorry I couldn't resist

Reply ↓**pictishbeastie****February 19, 2014 • 20:23**

Reblogged this on **pictishbeastie**.

Reply ↓**Maxwell Macleod****Play Ethic****Plenitude****Precarity****Right to Laziness****Steady State Economics****SUPI****This Tuesday**

Film/Video

Autonomi**Camcorder Guerillas****Digital Desperados****Diversity Films****Document Film Festival****Schmovies**

Football

Football Economy**Hibeas Bounce****Left Back in the Changing Room****Obscure Football****Phil Mac Giolla Bhain****Philosophy Football****Pie & Bovril****Scotzine****SFL****Sportsound****Tartan Army****When Saturday Comes**

Gaelic

Acair Earranta

February 19, 2014 • 20:32

Wonderful as ever Alastair, and how refreshing to see a lack of personal insults, but what I would rather see is your solution as to what currency might work in an independent Scotland. The time for the broader discussion on the likes of R.D Laing (whom I remember you looking after when he was drunk!) is over, what so many of us now wish to see from the Yes lobby is a clear definition of what is proposed so that we can decide whether we can support it or not. The white paper did not supply this, Mr Salmond is not supplying it, the entire debate is too wishy washy. We are not so much being offered a pig in a poke as the suggestion that there might be a pig and there might be a poke.

Reply ↓



muttley79

February 19, 2014 • 22:34

We are being offered a choice between where sovereignty over Scottish political affairs should reside: at Westminster or at Holyrood. Do you think we should vote to take responsibility for our own affairs, or should be happy to be ruled by Tory governments we never vote for? Do you want to be part of a state that is one of the most unequal in the Western world, where the welfare state is being dismantled and the NHS in England is being privatised.

Unionist politicians have made it clear that the Barnett formula will almost certainly be scrapped in the event of a No vote. Given the UK governments' attitude to Scotland, what do you think will happen to Scotland's block grant? Do you want to live in a state which has nuclear weapons right next to our largest city, or do you want to live in one where they are scrapped? Do you want to live in a society that cares about its people, or one that dismantles its basic welfare safety net? Do you want to live in a state that supports privatisation of almost all public services, or one that has a strong public sector? Do you want to live in a state which has a written constitution and Bill of Rights, or do you want to live under the shambles of Westminster rule, where the unelected House of Lords remains largely unreformed, despite attempts at reform going back at least 100 years?

Reply ↓

Alba

An Comunn Gàidhealach

Colaiste a' Chaisteil

Comann nam Pàrant

Gaelic Arts

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig

SeoFocanlontach

Green Scotland

FOES

Green Eiggs

H 350

Scottish Renewable Energy

Solar Cities

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

Transition Scotland

Illustration

Alex Aitchison

Chad McCail

Daniel Seex

Harvey Dingwall

Jamie Thoms

Lauren Printy

Stewart Bremner

International

Al Jazeera

Electronic Intifada

Indymedia International

Live from Gaza



James Coleman

February 20, 2014 • 13:28

YES have made it absolutely clear. Scotland WILL continue to use the £ either with a Currency Union or without a Currency Union depending whether rUK is sensible or not. What more do you need? A personal statement signed in blood by AlexS?

Reply ↓



James Coleman

February 20, 2014 • 13:44

I should have stated that what I wrote would be the solution until a new Scottish Independent Government was formed. It may decide to go in other directions, and there are a number of options available. But whichever decision it does make, it will be made by Scots in their own and Scotland's best interests.



SubtleSutton

February 19, 2014 • 20:37

You just set my heather on fire Speaks to a long held feeling that our National psyche is on the line this year. So many parallels to family and the personal.

Reply ↓



BBC Scotlandshire

February 19, 2014 • 20:37

I trust you are not suggesting that we remove the humour from our side of the debate.

<http://www.bbc.scotlandshire.co.uk/index.php/city-news/659-scots-could-be-banned-from-speaking-english-warns-academic.html>

Rabble

Legal

Glasgow Defence Campaign

Journal Online

Scolag

The Firm

Media

All Media Scotland

The Drum

Music

Admiral Fallow

Another Day

Avalanche

Aye Tunes

Aye Tunes

Biffy Clyro

Burnt Island

Celtic Connections

Chemikal

Dear Scotland

Dick Gaughan

Dumb Instrument

Fence

Frantic Chant

Future Pilot AKA

Glasgow Podcart

Glasvegas

Haunted Bird

Is this Music?

[Reply ↓](#)**Sneddon****February 19, 2014 • 20:43**

Maxwell read page 110 of the White Paper. 4 options. Westminster could clarify but won't until actual vote. UK gov won't pre negotiate same with EU question they can end uncertainty but choose not to. But to be honest I could not care about what currency or EU membership. Let's talk about welfare 'reform', the NHS and the plans for them under remaining in UK. Currency and EU membership just pure deflection because there are no positives in discussing issues that are affecting people in Scotland now. Better Together need to clarify position of ATOS. Workfare, Bedroom Tax, retirement age, pensions, banking reform, privatisation of criminal justice system, NHS privatisation, tax collection reform, energy policy and many more. We need details from unionist parties not just reiteration of each others policies on everything. As usual scotgov are expected to supply answers to questions that can't be answered. The voters need this detail now.

[Reply ↓](#)**ianfoulds****February 20, 2014 • 04:41**

Sneddon,

The sidetracking (currency,EU) by the BT side derails us from the first goal of a 'Yes' vote.

These matters indeed will be addressed at the right time by those who have the knowledge of what will help Scotland and also will be dealing with a side who will approach matters from a more pragmatic stance rather than the current tactics.

Is BT's position, regarding the issues you really want to know about, not the status quo (at best) and 'God knows' (at worst – for us), as they renege on every delegated power to date and, then some.

We have to show the World who is the mature and sanguine party in this discussion really is – notwithstanding it certainly goes against – at least – my personality in respect

[Isobel Campbell](#)[Jacob Yates and the Pearly](#)[King Creosote](#)[Malcolm Middleton](#)[Martyn Bennett](#)[McBee \(Soundcloud\)](#)[Michael Marra](#)[Mogwai](#)[Mouse Eat Mouse](#)[Music Foot Notes](#)[Peenko](#)[Propagandhi](#)[Saint Judes Infirmary](#)[Steinberg Principle](#)[The Gothenburg Address](#)[The Pop Cop](#)[Photo Journalism](#)[100 Weeks of Scotland](#)[Blipfoto](#)[Demotix](#)[Foto8](#)[Mark Vallee](#)[Peter McNally](#)[Poetry/Lit](#)[Alan Bissett](#)[Alec Finlay](#)[Anon Poetry](#)[Aonghas Macneacail](#)[Ewan Morrison](#)[Gerry Cambridge](#)

of the passion and love I have for my Country (warts and all – which will be treated after Independence!)

Regards,

GrumpyDubai

[Reply ↓](#)



Jim

February 19, 2014 • 21:09

You do all realise that Michael Deacon is Scottish?

[Reply ↓](#)



kurikat

February 19, 2014 • 22:40

Aye! and they are the worse kind of all! The Scots who talk their own country down, often with insults.

[Reply ↓](#)



Alastair McIntosh

February 20, 2014 • 13:39

If that is the case, then my apologies for referring to him as one of my English friend Nick's compatriots. As can be implied from Liz's comment above, it renders it all the more interesting.

[Reply ↓](#)



Maxwell Macleod

February 19, 2014 • 21:15

Thank you Seddon. I have read the white paper, twice, many of it's pages more than that. My heather was not set on fire. It didn't even smoulder. If that had been Henry's Agincourt speech the French would have won.

[GinsbergBlog](#)

[Gists and Piths](#)

[Laura Hird](#)

[N2](#)

[NWS](#)

[Out of the Blue](#)

[Rodge Glass](#)

[Scottish Poetry Library](#)

[Seeds of Thought](#)

[Sorley MacLean](#)

[Tom Leonard](#)

[Ubu](#)

[Vitamin P](#)

[Word Power](#)

[Public Thinking](#)

[Common Sense](#)

[Guernica](#)

[LRB](#)

[New Left Review](#)

[New Public Thinkers](#)

[Radical Philosophy](#)

[Richard Gunn](#)

[School of Everything](#)

[Publishers & Magazines](#)

[3 am](#)

[AK Press](#)

[Christie Books](#)

[Freedom Press](#)

[Merlin](#)

[Pluto](#)

With respect I find your position confusing. You are anxious that the No voters define their position on a number of matters, and yet your side have not defined their position on them either, and then say that you have little interest in the matters of the currency or EU membership.

I would find it hard to support such a massive change as is proposed without knowing whether it's going to allow us to remain in the EU and what our currency is going to be. If I am going to be asked to walk on a tightrope I want to know if I am allowed to carry a balancing pole. Of course it's all politics. It's a well known strategy in the US that the last Presidential candidate to actually take a position is likely to win. Again I ask Alastair what is it that you are offering as a currency? A promise that we are all going to be jolly happy and will surely work something out is just not enough. Give us a plan .

[Reply ↓](#)



[Alastair McIntosh](#)

[February 19, 2014 • 23:14](#)

Good evening, Sir Maxwell ... you know, I accept that for many people currency is what really matters, and that dismays me, just as much as it did this evening when a SNP newspaper came through the door of our house in Govan appealing to the position that indy will make us all £600 a year better off. For me, and you know how bizarre my thought is having been influenced by your old man, the bottom line currency issue is the petition in the Lord's prayer – "give us this day our daily bread". All else can build up from there, but if you push me on the practicalities, I'd say create our own proxy currency pegged to a basket of the £, € and \$ as befits the balance of our trading links, and then one day bite the bullet and go in with our European neighbours because, you know, firebombing Germany may have won the war, but it's Europe that's kept the peace. Yes, I well remember that remarkable night with Ronnie Laing at Iona Abbey. Strange these things – I have written about it on my website somewhere – it's as if you get touched by these serendipitous encounters and they unfold in your psyche years later. He was dangerously drunk that night, and yet, I was peculiarly blessed.

[Reply ↓](#)

[Product](#)

[Red Pepper](#)

[Spàirn](#)

[Spunk Press](#)

[The Drouth](#)

[Word Power](#)

[Zed Books](#)

Radio/Audio/Pods

[Glasgow Podcart](#)

[Poetcasting](#)

[Radio Free Scotland](#)

Random Brilliance

[Hexayurt](#)

Scots

[Aye Can](#)

[Lallans](#)

[Scots Dictionary](#)

[Scots Language Centre](#)

[Scots Language Society](#)

[Shetland Dialect](#)

Tech/OS/Web

[Electron Club](#)

[Girl Geeks Scotland](#)

[Maklab](#)

[Penguin Factory](#)

[TechHub](#)

[Techmeme](#)

For A That



James Morton

February 19, 2014 • 21:16

you see this sort of thing all the time. Its more of a cognitive bias than anything else – you see it very clearly in Darlings favourite hobby horse defence of the Union: “The bailing out of Scotland’s Banks”

In this odd defence Darling projects his failure as chancellor and the failure of the banking system onto a Hypothetical independent Scotland. Now from the get go this argument is on a shoogley peg. To accept the premise, this Hypothetical situation would have required an Independent Scotland to have made all the mistakes the UK made. Having made those mistakes we then need someone to have tried what he did, and use tax payers money to bail the bankers out. (not to mention a healthy slice of US tarp cash) In fact this hypothetical Scotland would have needed an Alistair Darling to be in charge. The UK would not exist at this point, so its possible we could argue that it would be in fact, Alistair Darling who was charge of Scotland’s Finances. Its important with this false premise to over emphasise Scotland’s role in the crisis and place it as being outside the UK. Having done this, He then; with complete swivel eyed logic, uses this failure as a mark of how superior the UK is.

So what we have is a self inflicted wound by a flawed system, being used to attack a Scotland that doesn’t exist by implying that it could not have wasted tax payers money the way he did. However in the context of a wider UK this failure is seen portrayed as a moment of pride for Darling and the UK.

It is also pretty evident in his other robust defences of the Union. From sport, music and Culture. It is difficult if not outright impossible to debate this sort of position. For a dialogue to take place, based on respect – needs one of the parties to be rational and honest. This false image of Britain is too deeply ingrained I fear.

its ironic really that in its defence, they are inflicting terrible wounds on the union.

Reply ↓



Justin Kenrick

February 20, 2014 • 09:56

James, Could you expand this into an article for this site (Bella wiling)?

I think it’s a really helpful way to get inside this extraordinary way of thinking that is not able to either just

[speaker
type=standard
width=100%
autoplay=false
episode_id=3110644]

inform and watch, or else enter the fray and debate. Instead it pretends to stay aloof while swooping in to lecture and then vanish in a repeat of Thatcher's Sermon on the Mound (what Pat Kane is calling the Sermon on the Pound).

It pretends to know best for us, saying "you're ruined if you try to run your own affairs" and, at the same time, is obviously really fearful of the impact. Fearful of what? Maybe the good example that might emerge north of the border if we continue here with the tradition of British tolerance, welcoming of refugees, NHS etc, rather than the tradition of British warmongering, exploitation, no alternative.

[Reply ↓](#)



[gksw8](#)

[February 19, 2014 • 21:27](#)

For those who prefer their arguments without humour, low or otherwise, Martin Kettle in the Guardian:

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/feb/19/alex-salmond-acting-spoilt-children>

[Reply ↓](#)



James Coleman

[February 20, 2014 • 13:37](#)

The correct term should be "Martin Kettle" who knows FA about Scotland in the Guardian. And it is untrue that what he has written is without humour. It is laughable nonsense.

[Reply ↓](#)



[richardfrazer](#)

[February 19, 2014 • 23:08](#)

Reblogged this on [Richard Frazer](#) and commented:
Alastair McIntosh gets wiser by the day

[Reply ↓](#)

**Alastair McIntosh****February 20, 2014 • 09:17**

That's not what his wife says, Richard.

Reply ↓

**Maxwell Macleod****February 20, 2014 • 02:36**

Prof Alastair, Thank you for stating your case, clarity at last – ” Create a proxy currency pegged to a basket of £ Euro and Stirling and after a while join the Euro”

Let me get this straight. Is this really your formula for creating a stable economy for Scotland in our hugely competitive world? Needs a little sharpening I think. But best as ever.

Reply ↓

**Sneddon****February 20, 2014 • 07:21**

Maxwell you're very good at finding fault in other peoples work but you've you've never provided answers to any questions sent your way. Forgwet the other questions I asked you. Whats your preferred option i,n the event of a YES vote,for the currency?

Reply ↓

**Alastair McIntosh****February 20, 2014 • 09:24**

Sir Maxwell MacLeod – much though I love you very dearly, and have long held you to be one of my venerable Gurus, I am not going to discuss currency further on this page. It is a unionistic displacement activity form the issues raised in this post, which I urge you to engage with. As for currency, I suggest you expend some on a bottle of fine malt, bring it round to my place, and I'll talk currency with you for as long

as it lasts (the malt, not the currency).

By the way, I wrote this piece yesterday afternoon in a rush after I'd commented something to Mike (the site editor) by email, and he asked me for a piece back by return. As such, it's not well written and in one place, a bit garbled, so my apologies for that, but it was a case of striking while the iron was hot such as is the way of internet culture.

Reply ↓



Justin Kenrick

February 20, 2014 • 10:12

Hi Max, Justin here.

Like Alastair I think currency and EU membership are distractions. But, like you (and perhaps unlike Alastair), I think they point to fundamental realities that need to be addressed. These are ones of economic well being (will we be able to feed our kids and take care of ourselves?) and democratic well being (will we be part of democratic Europe?)

But the answer to these hard questions isn't to be found in politicians posturing – politicians of whatever hue.

The value of a currency simply reflects and represents the extent to which others consider an economy soundly run, and given the evidence for the way the conservative and labour parties have decimated manufacturing, replaced it with casino finance, and then used our earnings to bail out those who own the casino, I don't see how we can in any way trust their pronouncements or their management of any economy.

Being accepted as part of Europe has many aspects, but the key one as far as Ukraine, Turkey and all its members is that it is a statement of having been accepted as a fully democratic human rights respecting society. Again, the hard

question here is why are so many in the UK railing against the European Convention on Human Rights that was inspired by Winston Churchill? Why is teh UK likely to have an in out vote on the EU that the 'outs' look likely to win?

As far as I am concerned, I am not voting in relation to any nationalism – Scottish or British – but in relation to the hard question: which kind of society do I want to signal my support for? In voting for independence I would not be voting for Salmond – I have no idea whether he is any different to the rest – but I would be clearly voting against a now corrupt economic and political system, and for the values it pretends to still espouse.



Chris Murray

February 20, 2014 • 03:14

Reblogged this on [The Ego Factor](#).

[Reply ↓](#)



[BampotsUtd.wordpress.com](#)

February 20, 2014 • 03:26

Reblogged this on [Bampots Utd](#).

[Reply ↓](#)



Brian McMullen

February 20, 2014 • 10:34

Dear Al

[Reply ↓](#)



Brian McMullen

February 20, 2014 • 10:52

Dear Alastair

oops that was a very profound comment above ...:-)

This is a very important article in the debate. It is the first time that I have seen the psychological dimension explored so deeply.

“How to call back the soul...?” What a brilliant opportunity for us to heal our community and offer our neighbours a chance to reflect on their history and collective unconscious as a nation.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Osborne et al for calling us to dig deep into our courage and imagination. How we stand firm in the face of insults and bullying is a big test. Each time I hear Blair Jenkins talk at a meeting he repeats the importance of respecting our opponents in the debate.

How we win is as important as a YES vote. And I think the world is watching how we do it. We have the chance to show how hope and courage can overcome fear and negativity.

Thank you for the article. And I bet your wife appreciates it too!

Reply ↓



Em Strang

February 21, 2014 • 10:09

Thanks for this, Alastair. Really spot on. And it makes me think about how Keats' notion of 'negative capability' is so apt just now: how resting in uncertainty, something many of us shy away from, has value because it presupposes an opening into potential. These days we want answers and we want them now. We want security, certainty, reductive thinking to the nth degree. What might happen if we step aside from this perspective? Might it not be worth taking the risk, given how desperate the status quo is? I really appreciate your having brought the soul into the political here.

Reply ↓



Alastair McIntosh

February 21, 2014 • 13:46

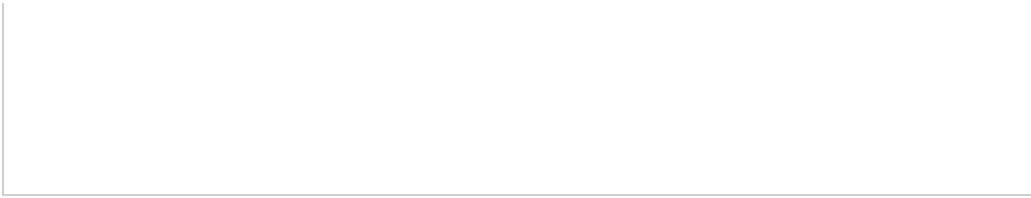
Thank you Em. I often reflect on Ben Okri's remark that every true artist feels a sense of transgression, sensing that if people really understood what s/he was saying they'd be for the high jump. That's how I feel when I write a piece like this. You know you're walking where angels fear to go, and yet, not to do so is to betray truths that need to be spoken. I've had an overwhelmingly positive reaction thus far save for one good friend and colleague who emailed suggesting that perhaps my engine is not burning cleanly on this matter. It's an interesting point. He has not specified what he meant, but it left me wondering whether any of us can burn cleanly on an issue in which we're all so implicated, and sometimes contradicted, in various ways, and that's just where Scotland's and England's destinies are at at present. I also had an Ulster Unionist friend write this week, not about this piece but in another context, very concerned about where an indy Scotland would leave Unionism. That's not my battle. At the same time, this clergyman is a deep and spiritual man, and I wish I could get a deeper grasp on where such sense of need to be "British" is coming from. My own analysis is about the psychodynamics of violent history, but that's not to say I think that's the only answer. I'm also aware an argument can be made that Britain is a great and beautiful entity, a bastion of freedom and democracy in the world. Trouble is, when I look at our imperial history, or our history of warmongering including Trident renewal already in this new century, I struggle to be persuaded by that argument. But maybe I have blind spots?

[Reply ↓](#)

Trackbacks

1. [**A Culture of Contempt - Speymouth**](#)
2. [**A Culture of Contempt | pictishbeastie**](#)
3. [**Scottish Capital: Part 1, Industrial Capital - IT'S GETTING WORSE**](#)
4. [**Let's take the High Road! » Wounded Leaders**](#)

Leave a Reply



CREATE A FREE WEBSITE OR BLOG AT WORDPRESS.COM. | CUSTOMIZED OPTI
THEME.