

The Flemish Republic

A quarterly newsletter explaining why
Flanders is seceding from Belgium



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Football and Beer

The Federal Kingdom of Belgium consists of three regional states: Dutch-speaking Flanders, where 60% of the 10 million Belgians live, French-speaking Wallonia, where 30% live, and the bilingual region of the capital, Brussels, with 10% of the population.

For many decades the free-market oriented Flemings have been subsidizing Socialist-dominated Wallonia and Brussels. Flanders has a GDP nearly 25% higher than Wallonia. Flanders wants to combat welfare abuses, but Walloon politicians refuse to do so. The Belgian Constitution gives the Francophones 50% of political power and a veto over major issues, which makes the French-speakers act as if they are the majority.

The Flemings have had enough. This is not only the opinion of the secessionist *Vlaams Belang*, Flanders' and Belgium's single largest party, but also of the Christian-Democrats. Yves Leterme, the Prime Minister of the Flemish Regional Government and the leader of the Flemish Christian-Democrats, recently told the Paris newspaper *Libération* (17 August) that Belgium's French and Dutch speakers have nothing in common but "the King, the national football team and certain brands of beer."

Atypical

Mr Leterme has a Walloon father and a Flemish mother. His father, however, is an atypical Walloon because he learned Dutch when he settled in Flanders. This explains



Time To Sever Ties

"Mr Leterme's hard-line stance reflect the growing sense among voters in Flanders, the richer and larger half of Belgium, that they subsidise ungrateful French compatriots, in the south and the time to sever the last remaining ties may be near."

(David Rennie in *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 August 2006)

why in the *Libération* interview, Mr Leterme criticised Francophones who move to Flanders and refuse to learn Dutch. He said they are "apparently intellectually incapable" of doing so. Only 19% of the Walloons have any knowledge of Dutch, while 59% of the Flemings can speak French.

The Flemish Prime Minister also criticised Belgian King Albert II for not being fluent in the language of the majority of the citizens. Mr Leterme pointed out that Belgium is an "accident of history" with "no intrinsic value" as a country.

Requiem

The Francophones reacted angrily to Mr Leterme's remarks. The Brussels newspaper *Le Soir* called his comments "shocking, arrogant and embarrassing." *La Libre Belgique* wrote that they are a "Requiem for Belgium". Mr Leterme is generally expected to become Belgium's next federal Prime Minister, but Elio Di Rupo, the Prime Minister of the Walloon Regional Government and the leader of the *Parti Socialiste* said that if he does not apologize the Walloons will not accept him as federal PM. He called Leterme's remarks "insulting."

Olivier Maingain, the leader of the Brussels *Front des Francophones*, the Brussels branch of the governing Francophone Liberal Party, brought charges against Mr Leterme for "racism," "incitement to racial hatred," "slander" and "insults to the King."

The Voice of Freedom

Belgium is preparing for the municipal elections of October 8th. If the *Vlaams Belang* continues to grow (as polls predict) it will be our 13th successive election victory. Over the past two decades our party has slowly but gradually grown from 3% of the vote in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking northern half of Belgium, to over 24%. Our party has become the single largest party in Flanders, as well as in Belgium as a whole.

The VB is putting forward candidates in 250 municipalities. During the previous municipal elections, in 2000, we were only present in 195 municipalities. We hope to be able to double our number of local councillors. By winning these elections we want to create a momentum that will allow us to win next year's elections for the Belgian Federal Parliament and, most importantly, the 2009 elections for the Regional Flemish Parliament. The latter are crucial, because they may result in a majority of Flemish secessionists being elected. 2009 may become the year when Belgium falls apart.

The VB favours Flemish independence, because all the things we and our ever growing number of voters care about, defending moral values, Western civilization and national identity, are only possible in a genuine nation state, as Flanders would be, and not in an artificial construct such as Belgium.

Frank Vanhecke,
MEP

President of the
Vlaams Belang



Roger Scruton: “Belgian citizenship is Not Rooted in a Shared National Loyalty”

On 23 June, the British philosopher and author Roger Scruton delivered a speech for the *Vlaams Belang* (Flemish Interest) party in Antwerp. He spoke about immigration, multiculturalism and the need to defend the nation state. He also granted an interview to *The Flemish Republic*.

TFR: *Are you familiar with the Vlaams Belang?*

Roger Scruton: I have heard of it as a controversial party, with widespread support among the Flemish population of Belgium. I know that the party has been targeted by the liberal establishment, accused of “racism and xenophobia,” and disbanded, in its previous incarnation (the *Vlaams Blok*), by a Belgian court.



Roger Scruton:

“The loyalty that people need in their daily lives is habitually ridiculed by the political élite.”

TFR: *This did not deter you from speaking here in Antwerp?*

RS: No, because there are plenty of explanations for the accusations apart from their truth. It seems likely to me that the true offence of the *Vlaams Belang* has been to threaten the vested interests of Belgium and of the European Union. Reading some of the attacks on the *Vlaams Belang* I cannot help recalling the time, twenty years ago, when I too was accused of “racism and xenophobia” by the left-liberal media in Britain, because I had argued that the official policy of “multiculturalism” was a mistake.

TFR: *Why does the European establishment try to silence those who oppose multiculturalism?*

RS: For a long time now the European political class has been in denial about the problems posed by the large-scale immigration of people who do not enter into our European way of life. It has turned angrily on those who have warned against the disruption that might follow, or who have affirmed the right of indigenous communities to refuse admission to people who cannot or will not assimilate.

The charge of “racism” is constantly levelled against innocent members of the indigenous majority, and almost never levelled against guilty members of

immigrant minorities. Racism is defined as a disease of the indigenous majority, even when they bring with them the visceral anti-semitism that prevails in much of the Arab world.

TFR: *What has caused this double standard?*

RS: Members of our liberal élite may be immune to xenophobia, but there is an equal fault which they exhibit in abundance, which is the repudiation of, and aversion to, home. The loyalty that people need in their daily lives, and which they affirm in their unconsidered and spontaneous social actions, is now habitually ridiculed or even de-

monized by the dominant media and the education system. National history is taught as a tale of shame and degradation. This repudiation of the national idea is the result of a peculiar frame of mind that has arisen throughout the Western world since the Second World War, and which is particularly prevalent among the intellectual and political élites. No adequate word exists for this attitude, though its symptoms are instantly recognized: namely, the disposition, in any conflict, to side with “them” against “us,” and the felt need to denigrate the customs, culture and institutions that are identifiably “ours.” I call the attitude *oikophobia* – the aversion to home.

TFR: *Xenophobia is also a charge levelled against those who oppose the attempts to turn the European Union into a supra-national state.*

RS: Indeed, the domination of our national Parliaments and the EU machinery by oikophobes is partly responsible for the acceptance of subsidised immigration, and for the attacks on customs and institutions associated with traditional and native forms of life, but the oikophobes also repudiate national loyalties by promoting transnational institutions over national governments, accepting and endorsing laws that are imposed from on high by the EU. The oikophobe is, in his own eyes, a defender of enlightened universalism against local chauvinism. And it is the rise of oikophobia that has led to the growing crisis of legitimacy in

the nation states of Europe.

TFR: *Many Belgians do not care whether they be governed by the Belgian authorities in Brussels or by the European authorities in the same city. Belgium or Europe, it does not make a difference.*

RS: Belgium is a state in which two nations are being held together, largely against the will of one of them. Belgian citizenship is not rooted in a shared national loyalty, and has become a purely legal privilege, which can be bought or sold with the passport. It seems that the trafficking in Belgian passports is especially popular, perhaps because there is no pre-political loyalty which the passport represents. For the same reason no efforts are made to ensure that immigrants to Belgium acquire loyalty to the secular state, or respect for the customs that have shaped it: Belgian citizenship has been treated by the political class as a commodity. The Belgian political class has fixed its sights on Europe, as the collective enterprise that will extinguish all those old national loyalties, and put a cosmopolitan indifference in their place. The European Union has meant a lot to the Belgian élite. It places them at the heart of the continent, transforms Brussels from a provincial town in Flanders to the capital of Europe, and provides a project that will distract attention from the growing disintegration of the country, and from the problems which they are determined in any case to deny.



“Irregular” Masons Cannot be Impartial

Belgian political parties are funded by the state in accordance with the number of voters they had in the last elections. It is illegal for parties to accept private donations. On the grounds that it is illogical for the state to fund its own enemies, parties that are considered to be “enemies of the state” can be defunded by the judges of a Belgian administrative court, the *Council of State* (CoS). Last May a procedure was initiated by the Socialist Party to defund the *Vlaams Belang*. The VB is Belgium’s largest party. Some see it as “undemocratic” because it rejects the ideology of multiculturalism and aims for the dissolution of Belgium and the establishment of an independent Flanders.

The CoS is expected to issue its verdict later this year or in early 2007. The *Vlaams Belang* has challenged all the French-speaking CoS judges. According to VB Senator **Jurgen Ceder** a francophone judge cannot issue an impartial verdict in a case involving a Flemish-nationalist party. The party also challenges all judges who are members of “irregular” masonic lodges.

Most Belgian lodges are “irregular,” which means that they are not recognized by the (“regular”) international masonic lodges. Contrary to “regular” freemason, “irregular” freemasons reject the belief in a Supreme Being. “Irregular” freemasonry is dominant in France and Belgium. It is ardently anti-Christian and opposes traditional morality.

Secret Societies

Jacky Goris, the Grand Master of the *Grand Orient of Belgium*, has repeatedly ordered Belgian masons to fight the VB. In an interview in the newspaper *De Morgen* (23 January 2005) he said: “The fight against the VB is one of the most important priorities of the Grand Orient. It is the duty of every mason to fight the VB, both in his social and professional life.” In the weekly magazine *Knack* (26 May 2004) the Grand Master



Senator Jurgen Ceder: “We want a fair trial.”

said: “The views of the VB are so fundamentally opposed to the principles we defend that this party has to be fought at all costs.”

Many Belgian magistrates are masons. “If our judges belong to an irregular lodge we cannot get a fair trial,” Senator Ceder said. “Judges have the right to join whatever organisation they want, but the rights of the defendants cannot be affected.” The VB demands that the CoS remove all “irregular” masons from the case. This may be problematic because the lodges are secret societies.

Under the Leaking Roof

On 31 August, 23-year old Mohammed M., succeeded, for the second time in two months, in burgling *Belvédère*, the residence of Belgian King Albert II in Laken, near Brussels. The thief was caught four hours later on a highway in the Netherlands, when the Dutch police stopped a Mercedes that had previously been stolen in Brussels. In the car documents were found that he had taken from the Belgian King’s palace that same morning. *Belvédère* Palace is guarded by a security force of 150 men and by an army of cameras. Securing the palace costs 12 million euros each year. “It is always possible that security slackens a bit, especially when the King is not at home. It is not enough to have cameras, someone has to watch them,” **Philip Van Hamme** of the police trade union NSPV said. Mohammed M. had already been caught on the royal premises on 13 May.

On 1 September, the Belgian authorities were embarrassed by a burglary in the Brussels headquarters of the country’s National Antiterrorism Group (AGG). Officers discovered that one week earlier thieves had stolen a gun, money and laptops from the AGG building. The thieves entered via a back door that did not have a security camera. The AGG is not scheduled to get an alarm system until next year. In the same week the press revealed that an employee of the Military Intelligence had copied confidential papers on the night before his last day at the agency and taken boxes full of documents out of the office without being questioned.

Last August Interior Minister **Patrick Dewael** admitted that 1,529 Belgian police stations were burgled from 2000 to 2004. The thieves made off with guns, ammunition and bulletproof jackets.

Belgian Prisons are Falling Apart

On 19 August, 28 dangerous East European and North African inmates escaped from a prison in Dendermonde, a Flemish town 40 kms west of Brussels. Nine of the prisoners were later recaptured. The news made world headlines. Dendermonde Prison is an old, dilapidated building. New locks were to be fitted at the penitentiary the following month. However, not only the locks but also the cell doors urgently need to be changed, the prison guards said after the mass escape. They went on strike to protest the lack of investments to secure the building.

Marc Verwilghen, the Belgian minister for Foreign Trade, blamed his colleague, Justice Minister **Laurette Onkelinx**. Verwilghen is a Flemish Liberal who was Justice Minister in the previous government. Onkelinx is a Walloon Socialist. According to Verwilghen the Walloon Socialists have been blocking a prison investments programme in Dendermonde for the past five years.



Bart Laeremans, MP:

“The Belgian state fails in its duty to protect the citizens against criminals.”



Money, Money, Money

Members of the Belgian royal family are lavishly taken care of by the Belgian taxpayers. This even applies to Prince Laurent, only 11th in line for the Belgian throne. The prince gets an annual tax-free stipend of 306,000 euros. Last July, however, he complained that the amount is not sufficient to raise his family and demanded an augmentation. Since the birth of his twin boys Aymeric and Nicolas, the prince has three small children. It is not the first time that Laurent complains about his income. Until 2001 the prince received his income

through the *Royal Institute for the Protection of the Environment and Clean Technologies*, of which he is the chairman. The institute had been set up especially to provide Laurent with an income and a staff. Over half the Institute's budget went to its royal chairman, who was consequently the best-paid of all Belgian civil servants.

Exclusive

As, however, this income was technically a salary, the prince, unlike his siblings Crown Prince Philippe and Princess Astrid, who do not



This is Prince Laurent. We cannot publish a picture of his children because we do not want to pay for it.

have to pay income taxes on their allowances, was taxed at the rate of 55% that applies to every Belgian earning an

annual income of 60,000 euros or more. Laurent publicly complained that the State was confiscating half his income. Consequently, in June 2001 Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt decided to grant Laurent a tax-free allowance of over 300,000 euros, three times as much as Verhofstadt's own salary.

This time the Prime Minister's Office said that raising the prince's allowance is out of the question. In early July the prince sold the exclusive right to publish pictures of princes Aymeric and Nicolas for 15,000 euros to the royalty magazine *Story*.

Belgium Destroys Holocaust Archives

The Belgian authorities intentionally destroyed archives and records relating to the persecution and deportation of Jews in Belgium in the 1930s and 1940s. Some of this happened as recently as the late 1990s. This was revealed during hearings in the Belgian Senate last Spring. The Senate report says that "documents about the period 1930-1950 have been destroyed on a massive scale."

The systematic destructions of the records of the police and judiciary from the 1930s and '40s occurred chiefly in Brussels and Wallonia, the French-speaking south of Belgium. The Senate report states that in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking north of the country, archives have been saved thanks to conscientious archivists. While the records about the persecution of the Antwerp Jewry have been kept intact, documents about the fate of

the Jews in Brussels and in French-speaking cities with large pre-war Jewish communities, such as Charleroi and Liège, were destroyed. In Charleroi all the archives relating to the 1930s and the



Senator Joris Van Hauthem: "We want to know who ordered the destruction of the holocaust archives."

war years have vanished. In Brussels the judicial archives are present "until the early 1930s, while there is (almost) nothing left of the period thereafter."

According to the Senate report some archives disap-

peared very recently, during the reform of the Belgian police forces in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when the *Gendarmerie* was abolished and the Federal Police was instituted. Crucial parts of the *Gendarmerie* archives vanished in the process.

In Charleroi the archives of both the municipal police as well as the judicial police were completely destroyed in the late 1970s. Before the war Charleroi had a relatively large Jewish community which was all but exterminated during the war, while in Antwerp a significant proportion of the Jews managed to survive. Yet in Belgium no-one is familiar with the extermination of the Walloon Jewry, while Antwerp is regularly blamed for having been a "center of anti-Semitism."

The *Vlaams Belang* demands an official inquiry to ascertain at whose orders the archives were destroyed.

An Ambassador's Worries

Luc Teirlinck, Belgium's ambassador to the Netherlands, recently told the Dutch weekly *Elsevier* (24 August) that he will refuse to serve his country any longer if the *Vlaams Belang* gets into the government. Mr Teirlinck is a member of the Liberal Party. He has had a difficult time in The Hague, where he was called to account when, first, the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Karel De Gucht (a Liberal) and, later, Vice Prime Minister Freya Van den Bossche (a Socialist) insulted Dutch Prime Minister Jan-Peter Balkenende.

These things are not going to happen with the VB in government. Flanders was part of the Netherlands until it was conquered and occupied by Frenchmen and Walloons and annexed to Belgium in 1830.



Karim Van Overmeire, MP: "Flanders and the Netherlands used to be one nation. We regret that Belgium tore them apart."

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