

The Flemish Republic

A quarterly newsletter explaining why
Flanders is seceding from Belgium

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The Belgian Stalemate

Belgium, the last artificial state in Europe, has begun to unravel. For months after the elections of 10 June 2007 its politicians were unable to form a government.

Belgium consists of 6 million Dutch-speakers in Flanders, its northern half, and 4 million French-speakers in Wallonia. While Flanders is free-market oriented, Wallonia is predominantly socialist. An ever increasing amount of Flemish subsidies (currently some 10 billion euros per year) is flowing to the south. Flanders has been funding Wallonia since Belgium's establishment in 1830-31. The Flemings have had enough.

Arrogance

40% of the Walloons are civil servants, compared to only 20% of the Flemings; almost 20% of the Walloons are unemployed, compared to only 8% of the Flemings. However, the Walloons refuse to pull their act

together because the Flemings pay for their welfare schemes. They consistently refuse to reform social security. The Walloon arrogance has backfired in a growing appeal of the Vlaams Belang (VB) party, the most outspoken Flemish independence party.

Pressured by the VB, all the Flemish parties have radicalized, demanding larger autonomy over welfare issues. Last June's general elections were won by **Yves Leterme**, the leader of the Flemish Christian-Democrats. Mr. Leterme,

who is the son of a Walloon father and a Flemish mother, hopes to save Belgium by enlarging Flemish autonomy within Belgium.

The Walloon politicians, however, refuse to join a government led by Yves Leterme if he insists on granting the Flemings a greater say over their own money.

Democracy

The Walloons are backed by Belgium's very powerful trade unions. Even Mr. Leterme's own Christian-Democrat trade union backs the "Save the Solidarity" petition launched to oppose the splitting up of Belgium's welfare system along linguistic lines and to keep Flanders paying for Wallonia's welfare.



"The Flemings insist that they are entitled to live in a democracy."

Walloon Socialists, was asked "What will happen if the Flemings use their majority in Parliament?" He answered: "That would be the end of Belgium." The journalist objected: "That would be democratic rule, a majority in Parliament." Whereupon Mr. Di Rupo said: "Then democracy will be the end of Belgium."

The Flemings insist that, like other free nations, they are entitled to live in a democracy. Belgium should be abolished exactly because it cannot be a democracy.

The End is Nigh

The Belgian government has sent a memo to all Belgian embassies with instructions on what to say if questioned about the difficulties between Flemings and Walloons in the home country. Belgium's diplomats are told to answer that the country is not about to fall apart because "Dutch-speaking and Francophone inhabitants have always strived and managed to live together peacefully. It's still important to them to avoid any kind of violence."

One wonders if the Belgian authorities have ever heard of Czechoslovakia where the Czechs and Slovaks strived and managed to separate peacefully? They avoided any kind of violence and currently live together as good neighbours. The Vlaams Belang strives for the establishment of Flanders and Wallonia as independent nations. It does not advocate any kind of violence, but wants a peaceful separation. Flemish independence does not equal a bloodbath, as the Belgian establishment claims. What was possible in Czechoslovakia is possible in Belgium, too.

We are convinced that the differences between Flemings and Walloons are so great that they should establish their own states. If they fail to do this, Belgium will become ungovernable and chaos will follow.

Even if the Belgian parties succeed in putting together a new government Belgium is bound to fall apart. In two to four years from now it will be confronted with another political crisis. The end is nigh for Belgium. The sooner the Flemings and Walloons start building their own nations, the better.



Frank Vanhecke
President of the Vlaams Belang

Press Review: A Praline Divorce Is in Order

Flanders is more a mixture of social conservatism and free-market thinking, while Wallonia is a bland of social liberalism and socialism. The economic development of both regions is dramatically different. Thriving Flanders feels it is subsidizing bankrupt welfare policies in Wallonia. Wallonia feels that greedy Flanders is abandoning solidarity in her hour of need.

(Prof. Marc De Vos, The Wall Street Journal, Oct. 10, 2007)

Belgium was formed as a constitutional monarchy where the non-French speakers were mostly treated as second-class citizens. Even today, 177 years later, there are no national figures or national political parties. Each party represents its own ethnic, linguistic or regional enclave. But, although the Flemish majority is somewhat more prosperous, the Walloons have a perceived stranglehold on Belgian politics.

(Jonah Goldberg, The Los Angeles Times, Oct. 9, 2007)



Unemployment in Flanders is 9 per cent compared to the 17 per cent in Wallonia and over 15 per cent of the receipts of the French-speaking south come from the wealthier north. "Why should we pay for these lazy left-wingers" is an oft repeated complaint in Flanders.

(A leader in The Hindu [India], Oct. 3, 2007)

While the Flemish make up the majority, with almost 60 per cent of the population, political power must be shared equally with the Walloons. And if half the country's 40 per cent of French speakers, making up only a fifth of the total population, want to block a new government coalition,

they can. This is the mix that is making the formation of a new Belgian government next to impossible.

(Bruno Waterfield, The Daily Telegraph, Oct. 3, 2007)

What enables Wallonia to block formation of a government is a parliamentary system where Flanders and Wallonia must each assent to any government. Which means that

ones, that is — and the quicker the Flemish majority gets rid of bums like Louis Michel, the better for the rest of us Europeans.

(Taki, The Spectator, Sept. 22, 2007)

Almost every second Flemish person, or 46.1 per cent, wanted Belgium to split, indicating separatists in the region are gathering momentum.

(Reuters, Sept. 18, 2007)

The tectonic plates of Germanic and Latin Europe rub up against each other along the line that separates Flanders from Wallonia just south of Brussels. The tremors are getting worse.

(Ian Traynor, The Guardian, Sept. 17, 2007)

Taxation and underrepresentation are the essential watch-



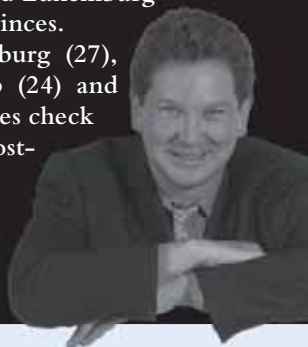
Sick Leave

Belgians who are sick receive generous sick leave payments. In Wallonia there is hardly any inspection of those who claim to be too sick to work. Last year postmen in the province of Hainaut were sick during on average 43 working days each. The other provinces with high sick leave numbers for postmen were Walloon Brabant (36 working days), Liège (35), Namur (35) and Luxembourg (34) — all of them Walloon provinces.

In the Flemish provinces, Limburg (27), Flemish Brabant (26), Antwerp (24) and West Flanders (24), the authorities check more frequently whether sick postmen are really sick.

Senator Yves Buysse

"Walloon postmen are too sick to work."



half of the Walloons, 20 per cent of Belgium's population, holds veto power over a national government.

(Patrick J. Buchanan in his syndicated column, Sept. 28, 2007)

To me there is no denying that Belgium can seem like an argument between the more "Anglo-Saxon" Flemish and their French-speaking neighbours

(Mark Mardell, BBC, Sept. 27, 2007)

Belgium is about to break up, something I fervently pray for. Belgian politicians are a disgrace — French-speaking

words. Capitalistic and Dutch-speaking [Flanders] generates about 70 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). With the top income-tax rate at 50 percent and the nation's public outlays constituting a staggering 46 percent of GDP, it is not hard to see who benefits from tax-and-spend Eurosocijalism and who is hurt by it.

(A leader in The Washington Times, Sept. 14, 2007)

Flanders was a long-standing friend. Let's bring it back.

(A leader in The Daily Telegraph, Sept. 8, 2007)

The Flemish Republic Takes Shape

The Vlaams Belang strives for an independent Flemish Republic. This republic will comprise the territory of the present-day Belgian region of Flanders (6 million inhabitants) as well as the Belgian capital region of Brussels (1 million inhabitants), a historically Dutch-speaking city which is a territorial enclave within the Belgian region of Flanders.

The Flemish Republic guarantees that the existing bilingual status of Brussels will be preserved. The same applies to all the existing linguistic rights that French-speaking citizens currently enjoy in the Flemish region.

The Flemish Republic will take over its share of the Belgian state debt.

Obligations

The Belgian divorce will not affect third nations. The Flemish Republic will dutifully fulfill all its international obligations. It will remain a member of NATO, the EU and other organizations that Belgium currently belongs to.

Three years ago Romano Prodi, the President of the European Commission, stated that if Scotland were to break

away from the United Kingdom it would have to reapply for membership of the EU. "A newly-independent region would, by the fact of its independence, become a third country with respect to the [European] Union and the treaties would not apply any more in its territory," Mr. Prodi said.

The Vlaams Belang considers it highly unlikely that Flanders will be ousted from the EU. Flanders belongs to the eurozone. Moreover it is a nett contributor to the EU. Though the EU costs the Flemish Republic money, Flanders accepts all its obligations under the current treaties.

Boundaries

The Flemish Republic accepts all existing international boundaries within Europe. It accepts the internal boundaries of the present-day Belgian regions, thereby abiding by the international principle, applied during the break-up of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, that the internal boundaries of the regions will not be altered when they become new international boundaries.

The Republic will respect the decisions of the Walloon citizens regarding their future territorial status.

What Is the Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde Question?

The immediate cause of the crisis between Flanders and Wallonia is a 2003 ruling of Belgium's Constitutional Court concerning the bilingual electoral constituency of Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde (BHV). This constituency is made up of bilingual Brussels

on the one hand, and Dutch-speaking Halle-Vilvoorde (HV) on the other hand. Halle and Vilvoorde

administratively belong to the province of Flemish Brabant. Apart from Brussels, a bilingual enclave surrounded by Flanders, Belgium consists of unilingual regions: French-speaking politicians can only stand for election in Wallonia, while Dutch-speaking politicians can only stand for election in Flanders. The BHV-constituency violates the

constitution because it allows French-speaking politicians to stand for election in parts of Flanders, while Flemish politicians are not allowed to stand for election in Wallonia.

A severe beating

In its 2003 ruling the Belgian Constitutional Court exhorted the government to rectify the situation by July 2007 at the latest.

Belgium's Liberal-Socialist government led by Prime Minister **Guy Verhofstadt** was unable to set things straight. The Walloon ministers vetoed any change in the existing situation.

Following last June's elections, in which the Flemish electorate gave Verhofstadt's Liberals and his Socialist partners a severe beating, the Flemish parties refuse to join a coalition that does not agree to split BHV. In Wallonia, however, where the

Liberals won the elections, all parties refuse to join a coalition that divides BHV without the Flemings paying a heavy price for it.

This has led to the current situation where it is impossible

to form a government. King **Albert II** cannot even call the Belgians to the ballot box again because new elections are unconstitutional as long as BHV has not been split.

Only in Belgium

Abbès Guenned is a Belgian of Moroccan origin. He is the former husband of **Laurette Onkelinx**, a leading Walloon Socialist and Belgium's minister of Justice. In July 1997, when still married to Onkelinx who was a minister of Education at the time, Guenned was arrested at Brussels airport for drug trafficking. The police had to let him go, however, because he was carrying a diplomat's passport.

After his divorce in 1998, he was arrested in Turkey. Belgian diplomats and **Marc Uyttendaele**, the lawyer of the Belgian Socialist Party, managed to get him out of the Turkish prison. One year later, Onkelinx married Uyttendaele. Guenned acted as best man at the wedding. Today, Guenned works at the Belgian ministry of Justice.

The Vlaams Belang wants an end to the corruption of Belgium's socialist leadership.



Senator
Hugo Coveliers

"Walloon socialism is utterly corrupt."



In the Name of the Father

Only 55.8% of the children in Antwerp, Flanders' largest city, have an indigenous Flemish father. Mohammed is the most popular name for male newborns in the city. Our cities are rapidly turning Muslim.



Bruno Valkeniers, MP
"Flanders is losing its cities"

More Criticism of Prince

Prince Laurent of Belgium, the second son of King Albert II, is at it again. The prince is the president of the Royal Institute for the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Promotion of Clean Technology (KINT-IRGT), a government-sponsored non-profit organization. Last August, Jacques Wirtgen, the director of KINT-IRGT, was sacked after criticizing the prince for using the institute's money to pay for his private commercial activities. "Laurent is preoccupied more

with his own private finances than with the environment. He abuses the institute for his own profit," Mr. Wirtgen told the Belgian press.

Last December 2006, Prince Laurent was implicated in a corruption scandal in which funds of the Belgian Navy were spent on his villa. The prince was called up as a witness in the corruption trial against the officers who diverted the Navy's money to the prince's villa, but was not personally charged. He said he knew the money for his

villa came from the Navy but claimed not to have known that there was something wrong with this. After the trial, King Albert paid the sums taken from the Navy for Laurent's villa back to the state.

Media reports in March 2007 suggested that, due to his role in the Navy corruption scandal, Prince Laurent was no longer welcome at the royal palace. Meanwhile, however, the relations between the prince and his father have improved.

Democracy Belgian Style

On September 11, the Brussels police beat up a peaceful demonstration in front of the European Commission headquarters. The demonstrators protested against the islamization of Europe and intended to hold one minute of silence for the victims of the 2001 9/11 terror attacks in America. The demonstration, organized by an international group, had been prohibited by Freddy Thielemans, the Socialist mayor of Brussels. The mayor argued that the demonstration would upset the many Muslim immigrants that live in Brussels. Many demonstrators were maltreated by the police officers, including several members of the European and Belgian parliaments. Amongst those arrested were an Italian and a French member of the European Parliament.

Frank Vanhecke, the leader of Vlaams Belang (VB), who is also a member of the European Parliament, was subjected by the police to a vicious genital grip, which as Diana West, a Jewish American newspaper columnist who knows Mr Vanhecke personally, wrote "would get any American po-



liceman thrown off the force." Goedele Devroy, a journalist of the Belgian public television, said she was amazed by the brutality of the police against the peaceful demonstrators "who were just standing there." Vladimir Palko, a leading Christian-Democrat politician and former Interior Minister of Slovakia, wrote to the Belgian authorities to express his indignation at the violence, which reminded him of the former Communist dictatorship in his own country.

Bra

Video footage shows how Mr. Vanhecke, when being arrested and forced into a police bus, asks "What is happening in Brussels today, is this democracy? Is this freedom of speech?" whereupon the policemen drag him off the bus, saying "Haven't you finished yet? This is not a political platform here." They throw him on the ground, start beating him up, tie his hands behind his back, kick him in the kidneys and grab him in his private parts. Filip Dewinter, the group leader of



the VB in the Flemish Regional Parliament, was beaten up. The police dragged him away while he was giving an interview to journalists a few yards from the demonstration.

Linda Vissers, a VB member of the Belgian House of Representatives, was also arrested. In prison she was forced to take off her bra in front of the police officers, allegedly to prevent her from "hanging herself with her bra while in jail."

No apology

The demonstrators were released after having been kept in cells for eight hours. Among those arrested were a woman with an Israeli flag and a German carrying a small wooden cross.

Following the police brutalities, Franco Frattini, the (Italian) European Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security, admonished the Belgian authorities that democracies should only ban demonstrations when the latter incite to violence or glorify Nazism. The Belgian government formally apologized to Italy for maltreating an Italian member of the European Parliament. The Belgian authorities, however, did not apologize to Mr Vanhecke or to the other demonstrators.

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