

A tragic split—How to minimise the damage of Britain's senseless, self-inflicted blow



1) HOW quickly the unthinkable became the irreversible. A year ago few people imagined that the legions of Britons who love to whinge about the European Union—silly regulations, bloated budgets and pompous bureaucrats—would actually vote to leave the club of countries that buy nearly half of Britain's exports. Yet, by the early hours of June 24th, it was clear that voters had ignored the warnings of economists, allies and their own government and, after more than four decades in the EU, were about to step boldly into the unknown. (whinge 泣き言、不平を言う 豪・英方言)

2) The tumbling of the pound to 30-year lows offered a taste of what is to come. As confidence plunges, Britain may well dip into recession. A permanently less vibrant economy means fewer jobs, lower tax receipts and, eventually, extra austerity. The result will also shake a fragile world economy. Scots, most of whom voted to Remain, may now be keener to break free of the United Kingdom, as they nearly did in 2014. Across the Channel, Eurosceptics such as the French National Front will see Britain's flounce-out as encouragement. The EU, an institution that has helped keep the peace in Europe for half a century, has suffered a grievous blow. (vibrant 力強い austerity 緊縮 Eurosceptic 欧州統合に懐疑的な人 French National Front 国民戦線 (反EU、移民排斥を掲げる政党) flounce 身もたえ grievous 嘆かわしい)

3) Managing the aftermath, which saw the country split by age, class and geography, will need political dexterity in the short run; in the long run it may require a redrawing of traditional political battle-lines and even subnational boundaries. There will be a long period of harmful uncertainty. Nobody knows when Britain will leave the EU or on what terms. But amid Brexiteers' jubilation and Remain's recriminations, two questions stand out: what does the vote mean for Britain and Europe? And what comes next? (dexterity 器用さ、抜け目なさ、利口さ jubilation 歓喜 recrimination 非難、しっぺ返し)

Brexit: the small print

4) The vote to Leave amounts to an outpouring of fury against the "establishment". Everyone from Barack Obama to the heads of NATO and the IMF urged Britons to embrace the EU. Their entreaties were spurned by voters who rejected not just their arguments but the value of "experts" in general. Large chunks of the British electorate that have borne the brunt of public-spending cuts and have failed to share in Britain's prosperity are now in thrall to an angry populism. (small print=fine print 細事部分 (契約者に不利と思われる契約条件を細かく印刷する注意事項) entreaty 懇願 spurn にべもなく拒絶する bear the brunt of への矢面にたつ)

5) Britons offered many reasons for rejecting the EU, from the democratic deficit in Brussels to the weakness of the euro-zone economies. But the deal-breaking feature of EU membership for Britain seemed to be the free movement of people. As the number of new arrivals has grown, immigration has risen up the list of voters' concerns.

6) Accordingly, the Leave side promised supporters both a thriving economy and control over immigration. But Britons cannot have that outcome just by voting for it. If they want access to the EU's single market and to enjoy the wealth it brings, they will have to accept free movement of people. If Britain rejects free movement, it will have to pay the price of being excluded from the single market. The country must pick between curbing migration and maximising wealth.

7) David Cameron is not the man to make that choice. Having recklessly called the referendum and led a failed campaign, he has shown catastrophic misjudgment and cannot credibly negotiate Britain's departure. That should now fall to a new prime minister.

8) We believe that he or she should opt for a Norwegian-style deal that gives full access to the world's biggest single market, but maintains the principle of the free movement of people. The reason is that this would maximise prosperity. And the supposed cost—migration—is actually beneficial, as Leave campaigners themselves have said. European migrants are net contributors to public finances, so they more than pay their way for their use of health and education services. Without migrants from the EU, schools, hospitals and industries such as farming and the building trade would be short of labour.後略【June 24,2016/The Economist】

★Ice breaker for active discussion

1. What was your reaction when you heard about the result of the referendum on Brexit?
2. What's the significance of EU? What are the merits and demerits of being a member to the Union?
3. How do you imagine the future of England after exiting EU?
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of accepting migrants?
5. Make sentences using the following words: austerity, vibrant, grievous, jubilation and dexterity.