



Daniel Hannan MEP for South East England

PO Box 99
Hassocks
BN6 0DY

daniel.hannan@europarl.europa.eu
Read Daniel online everyday in **The Telegraph**
www.hannan.co.uk



Making the case for a referendum in enemy territory

Referendum Bill passes



At the AECR Messina Conference with Italy's leading Eurosceptic, Antonio Martino

Common Market only, please

In 1955, in the Sicilian town of Messina, six foreign ministers agreed the outline of what was to become today's EU. In 2012, under the auspices of the Alliance of European Conservatives and Reformists (AECR) of which I am Secretary General, Centre-Right MPs from 28 countries met in the same hotel to map out a completely different kind of Europe.

The AECR is campaigning for a continent-wide free trade area, stretching from Iceland and the Faroe Islands to Turkey and Georgia (all states represented at our conference). This European Common Market would concern itself narrowly with trade and market issues, but individual members would be free to pursue political integration in smaller groups, either through today's EU or in any other configuration they pleased.

Our conference was opened by the most prominent Thatcherite politician in Italy, the former defence and foreign minister Antonio Martino. It was his father, Gaetano Martino, who, as Italy's foreign minister in 1955, chaired the original Messina Conference. Though he might be called a heretic for repudiating his father's memory, Antonio told us, he felt bound to point out that the EU had failed, that the Eurocrats had lost their legitimacy and that the project was doomed.

I am now working, through the AECR and others, to make that "common market only" option an institutional reality.

Thanks to every MP who voted in favour of James Wharton's Referendum Bill. Thanks, too, to everyone who backed the campaign outside Parliament. Of all the organisations I have led, the People's Pledge, the campaign for an In/Out referendum, has been much the most satisfying. Three years ago, the idea of a national poll was dismissed by every commentator. Now, it has been approved by the House of Commons.

The Wharton Bill is a well-crafted piece of legislation, laying down an eminently fair question ("Do you think that the United Kingdom should be a member of the European Union?") and restricting the franchise to people who can vote in general elections.

The 2017 date was chosen to maximise the Bill's chances of passage, and should please Eurosceptics. With every passing month, the EU's share of our overseas trade declines, making the case for continued membership harder to sustain.

It's possible that Labour and Lib Dem cowards will try to talk the Bill out in the Lords, but the momentum for a national vote is starting to look irresistible.

We often write to our MPs when we're cross about things. If yours voted to let Britain decide – and every Conservative in the South East did so – it might be nice to say thanks.



The other Conservative MEPs for the South East are Nirj Deva MEP, Richard Ashworth MEP and James Elles MEP.

Liability remains with the author. The European Parliament is not responsible for any use of the information contained herein.



How we invented freedom – and why it matters

We are still experiencing the after-effects of an astonishing event. The inhabitants of a damp island at the western tip of the Eurasian landmass stumbled upon the idea that the government ought to be subject to the law, not the other way around. The rule of law created security of property and contract, which in turn led to industrialisation and modern capitalism. For the first time in the history of the species, a system grew up that, on the whole, rewarded production better than predation.

Why did it happen? Why, after thousands of years of oligarchy and tyranny, did a system evolve that lifted the individual above the tribe rather than the reverse? How did that system see off rival

models that elevated collective endeavour, martial glory, faith and sacrifice over liberty and property? How did the world come to speak our language?

I set out to answer these questions in my new book, *How we Invented freedom and Why it Matters*, available in bookshops and through Amazon. I trace the lineage of liberty back through the campaign against slavery, back through the American war, back through the resistance against the Stuarts, back even through the Great Charter to the extraordinary folkright of Anglo-Saxon common law. “Remember of what nation it is whereof ye are”, John Milton pleaded with parliamentarians in 1644. Remember indeed.



New campaign launched for over-regulated businesses

As a Conservative MEP for the South East I am a huge supporter of British business. Can I commend to you “Business for Britain” launched in April this year and supported by over 500 business leaders? Its objectives are summarised below in their joint statement:

“As business leaders and entrepreneurs responsible for million of British jobs, we believe that the Government is right to seek a new deal for the EU and for the UK’s role in Europe. Far from being a threat to our economic interests, a flexible, competitive Europe, is essential for growth, jobs and access to markets. We therefore welcome the launch of Business for Britain’s campaign for real change in the EU and urge all political parties to join in committing themselves to a national drive to renegotiate the terms of Britain’s membership of the EU.”

If you would like more information on Business for Britain or would like to offer them your support please go to www.businessforbritain.org



I would like to wish all South East members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

The other Conservative MEPs for the South East are Nirj Deva MEP, Richard Ashworth MEP and James Elles MEP.

Liability remains with the author. The European Parliament is not responsible for any use of the information contained herein.

Published by: Conservatives in the European Parliament (ECR Group), 32 Smith Square, London SW1P 3EU. December 2013.

Printed by: Culverlands Press, Winnal Valley Road, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 0LN.