

## Reports from the European Parliament (received 19 March 2014)

### **Ukraine**

Debated by the parliament last week - here is the link - but the situation is moving so fast, that the debate already begins to look out of date. See

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20140312IPR38707/html/European-Parliament-calls-on-Russia-to-withdraw-military-forces-from-Ukraine>)

There is a summit in Brussels of the 28 national leaders of the member states on Thursday and Friday this week. Let's hope they can put aside their nationalistic differences and agree on a strong united response to Putin.

### **American espionage**

The USA's universal spy system was also debated - see

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20140307IPR38203/html/US-NSA-stop-mass-surveillance-now-or-face-consequences-MEPs-say>

The American response will be interesting. It is possible that there may be a very important visitor to the parliament next Wednesday who will be able to tell us their response in person.

### **Current controversial legislation**

- Many people have been concerned about the possibility of MoT tests being required for caravans, because of east European vehicles coming on to our roads. That threat has been thrown out. See <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20140307IPR38424/html/MEPs-back-new-common-standards-for-vehicle-checks>
- Seeds - a proposal also thrown out . See <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20140307IPR38202/html/MEPs-reject-draft-seed-regulation>
- Tighter restrictions on smoking of tobacco were passed, while keeping electronic cigarettes available. See <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20140221IPR36632/html/Tobacco-Directive-Parliament-approves-plans-to-deter-young-people-from-smoking>

### **The cost of the EU for the UK ?**

On 1st April , the UK government will publish a chart to go out with the tax demands from the Inland Revenue which shows how our taxes are spent. People will notice how small is the cost of the EU.

**The International Criminal Court** - of which the EU is the largest financier - was debated in a committee. The USA and Russia do not support it but 122 other countries do. It came into effect in 2002. Currently there are eight situations under investigation, all involving the African continent. The atrocities in Syria will be a challenge for the court. One controversy is the question of immunities for national heads of state, which is opposed by the EU. An excellent briefing, with many recommendations for improvement, was given by a professor from Nottingham, Olympia Bekou.

### **The approaching European elections (on Thursday 22nd May)**

A new website is interesting. [www.EUtwentyfourteen.com](http://www.EUtwentyfourteen.com) monitors the state of opinion polling in many different EU member states.

And [www.VoteWatch.eu](http://www.VoteWatch.eu) continues to monitor the voting record of every single MEP.

**Nick v Nigel live debates** about Britain's membership of the EU

On LBC radio on Wednesday 26th March between 7 and 8 pm

On BBC2 tv, live, at on Tuesday 2nd April, between 7 and 8pm, hosted by David Dimbleby.

***Roger Helmer ducks (or chickens out of) my challenge to debates.***

I have challenged Roger Helmer to debate anywhere in the East Midlands whether the UK would be better IN or OUT of the EU. He has refused to even give me the courtesy of a reply. He also declined to set out his views in the Parliament Magazine - see

<http://www.theparliament.com/latest-news/article/newsarticle/british-eu-exit-would-fly-in-the-face-of-reality/>

***Need a Postal Vote ?*** Telephone the Electoral Registration Office at your local council. See [http://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/about\\_us/elections/electoral\\_registration.aspx](http://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/about_us/elections/electoral_registration.aspx)

**Finally...**

If you can, possibly, help me with the cost of the European election campaign, I would be exceedingly grateful.

The Lib Dems are the only party which is saying loud and clear that the UK must remain inside the EU - in order to keep Jobs and to exercise influence.

To make a donation, of whatever amount, please click onto

<http://eastmidslibdems.org.uk/en/donate>

What might you get in return ? If I am re-elected, more of these reports ! And a rebuff for the ignorant populism of UKIP who want to destroy the millions of jobs which depend on our continuing membership of the EU.

**All good wishes  
Bill Newton Dunn**