

# Lies and freedom

In the debate on the independence of Catalonia from Spain some people equate the aspiration of the people of Catalonia for an independent state to the recent populist movements and conclude that all nationalism is the same. But is that really the case? The answer is a categorical no. Firstly, there is no model of nationalism, each type is different.

It is quite clear that the Catalan independence movement—democratic, peaceful, pro-European and open to the world—is very different from the protectionist, anti-EU vision of Marine Le Pen. Another example is the tolerance regarding corruption. In France, François Fillon suffered an electoral punishment, as did CDC in Catalonia. However, in Spain, with much higher indicators of corruption, the political party more implicated in matters of corruption, the PP, won the election. I must say that tolerance of corruption also has an important economic impact, since it affects economic efficiency.

However, there is a universal principle in this area: the right of nations to self-determination, a right that trumps the constitution of any oppressive state. Here we find a fundamental difference between nationalism visions: the imperialists and

those who want national freedom. Catalonia is a nation with characteristic elements: a defined territory and population, its own language and culture, and a thousand-year history. It also has a long democratic tradition, with Catalan courts in the Middle Ages that can be considered the first parliament in Europe.

## Small is good

In the 21st century global economy, being a small country is not a hindrance to being independent. Small countries tend to be more open and adaptable. Thus, the European Union countries with a higher per capita income—Luxembourg and Denmark—are countries of comparable size to Catalonia. And they have less than the 7.5 million inhabitants of Catalonia. Yet, these countries are very prosperous. On the other hand, none of the former Spanish colonies ever wished to return to the Spanish empire after achieving independence, despite sharing the same language.

What characterises the Spanish imperialists is the denial of their (aggressive) nationalism. This lie leads to a chain increasingly larger lies to the point that they have become unsustainable. Thus, they deny the economic viability of an inde-

pendent Catalan state. Mr. Rajoy, the Spanish prime minister, even said at the end of May that Catalan GDP would lose 30% with independence. The truth is that with independence, and the removal of the huge fiscal plundering of the Spanish state, which is a genuine bleeding for the Catalan economy, and with an appropriate economic policy not subordinate to the hyper-centralist, neo-Francoist, anti-democratic, embezzling, corrupt and inefficient Spanish state, Catalonia will become a dynamic hub in southern Europe and Catalan GDP could double in a decade.

This explains Spain's refusal to allow a referendum on independence, unlike in Scotland in the United Kingdom or Quebec in Canada. They know their lies have no credibility and that the referendum result can be no other than a clear vote in favour of independence. In fact, it already became clear in the election on September 27 2015, when independence candidates achieved a majority in the Catalan parliament. With Catalan independence, Spain loses the annual colonial income it draws from Catalonia and so is not interested in it. This is the real reason and not the non-viability of a Catalan state. In the end the truth always prevails and with it freedom.

## RANDOM THOUGHTS

TERRY PARRIS Writer

# Newness means the possibility of change

Have you ever considered the word 'new'? For me, it means life, creativity, truth, excitement. The word 'new' comes to mind in July, a time for sea, sand and sunbathing. After a Spring of frosts, sunshine, and showers, July brings with it a new feeling.

When I wake up and go outside, I often hear the song, It's a New Day, in my head: 'I woke up this morning feeling brand new, 'cause the dreams that I've been dreaming

have finally come true...'. This 2008 song was a tribute to President Obama's victory, and with it the possibility of change, of newness. My granddaughter Rachel suggested in her online magazine that readers try new experiences. Exotic ones! Rachel says '...be sure to try chicken tikka massala in India, Smirnoff in Russia, and Foster's beer in Australia...'

We less travelled beings can try so many new experiences this July: New Consciousness

in New-Age beliefs, new knowledge from watching something like BBC documentaries, a baking course, or even just exploring our own surroundings more intensively.

And what does this 'newness' give us? The possibility of change. My editor friend was made redundant after 17 years and had to find a new job and a new life. Through cooperation instead of resistance, 'new' can mean 'opportunity', and that can mean 'change'.

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*"Europol should be able to directly contact all the proper security authorities in each [EU] member state,"*  
Àngels Bosch, head of the European Confederation of Police, EuroCOP

Hear, hear! One thing is political tit-for-tat, another is preventing the police from dealing with such serious issues as international terrorism or organised crime merely to score points. A huge fail from the Spanish government for freezing out the Mossos.