

In Varietate Concordia
By Elizabeth Bailey

The mighty ship of Brexit is departing as you read this. Slowly but steadily the white star line of foreign policy is setting sail on its maiden voyage. A strong and stable ship built from patriotism and the will of the people, captained by Theresa May and her keen eyed crew. A luxurious ship with a strict entry policy and sovereignty to sail where it sees fit. Papers are calling it the unsinkable ship, a modern Britain at the pinnacle of prosperity. No one knows where this ship will sail or how far it will go what we only know for sure is that safe dry land is slowly fading into the distance.

Europe. Although sad to see this mighty vessel depart now is the time to act. Free from the chains of an unyielding ally the European Union now has an unprecedented opportunity. In an increasingly unpredictable political climate now is the time for action. Now is the time for all the remaining European nations to unite for the common good. Now is the time for the European Union to take its rightful place in the world stage. No more stepping on egg shells or special allowances towards the UK. With the biggest economic force on the planet and core European values at its heart, the European Union has the capacity for continued positive change.

The Maastricht Treaty established the European Union in 1993 and gave way to a true supranational body by definition; transcending national boundaries, authority, or interests. With this the European Union has done countless things for your grandparents, your parents, your siblings, your children and for you. A war torn continent woven together with the dream of a better future. A continent ravaged by the biggest wars in modern history rose from the mud and decided no more. The founding six members (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Germany) pooled together their resources with the sole purpose of preventing war. Allies made of enemies. Far more successful than hoped the European Coal and Steel Community went on to pave the way for treaties, human rights and further European integration. It was never perfect but by working together the European Union has accomplished far more than the individual member states could have done on their own.

Free movement of people, goods, services and capital has improved the lives of European citizens for decades. Widespread regulations that keep our food safe to eat, our air clean and the environment protected. The European Union spends hours and hours formulating new regulations so that we don't have to. Everyday when we wake up in the morning and make a cup of tea with some digestives we don't think anything of it. We don't question if those biscuits are safe to eat, if our tea bags contain harmful chemicals, if the milk comes from a reputable source or if the kettle will spontaneously combust next time we turn it on. Almost everything in our day to day life is made safer with the work of the European Union. Risk prevention rather than risk management. Can any other government or group of states say that they have food specific regulations that have halved salmonella cases in Europe in the past five years? No, because no one has time or resources to change anything so trivial. (<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/aboutefsa>) When states come together they prosper and instead of focusing just on survival the EU gets stuck into the mundane parts of policy that would otherwise go unchecked.

With the weight of 27 states (Farewell UK) and a plethora of expertise behind it the EU should keep aiming higher. Domestically or globally the EU can make great contributions to

ending poverty, diseases and human rights abuses. Either in the form of soft power or hard power the EU can have a lasting positive impact in these areas and more. Trade, aid, intervention, guidance, regulation standards, institutions dedicated to fighting piracy, you name it the European Union has it. Only through continued cooperation can the EU go on to do great things but I have no doubt that even with the loss of the UK, the European Union can be as successful as ever.

As the Brexit ship disappears into the distance the UK can relinquish those pesky regulations and decide itself whether or not to have chicken fit for human consumption. The country will be pushed by competition, as this ship doesn't have enough life boats for everyone. It is sad to see an ally depart from the EU, together we have done so much and could've achieved so much more. But the EU will stand together and stand tall to continue its accomplishments with or without the UK. As a British citizen who has a great amount of respect and passion for the EU I am saddened to forcibly board this Brexit ship and wave goodbye as I watch the EU fade into the distance. Icebergs ahead but we had a good run.