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Europe's unity shattered

The Brexit vote for Britain to leave the EU shatters the stability of the continental unity forged after WW2. It also dilutes the 70-year-old 'special relationship' Britain has with the United States, and strains the strong ties to its nearest and oldest trading partner, Ireland. ('Profoundly in Ireland's interest to stay in EU' Taoiseach, Irish Examiner, June 24, 2016)

The British people who voted to divorce the EU must have suffered acute amnesia. Nearly one-half million US soldiers, and 10,000 Irish ones, died to save Britain and Europe in WW2. The EU, also known as the Common Market, was born out of that experience, so that there would be no war again among its member states. Winston Churchill's victory broadcast, on May 13, 1945, underscored the US contribution. "But never since the United States entered the war have I had the slightest doubt, but that we should be saved and that we had only to do our duty in order to win."

Who will the Brits call when next they are in trouble? During the Emergency, thousands of Irish crossed over to save Britain and Europe. History Ireland magazine reported that, "In April, 1995, the then Taoiseach, John Bruton, spoke movingly of the 150,000 Irish people, from north and south, who volunteered to fight the Nazis. He pointed out that 10,000 had died while serving in the British forces. This had a particular significance, he maintained. 'In recalling their bravery, we are recalling a shared experience of Irish and British people... We remember a British part of the inheritance of all who live in Ireland'." (Issue 1, Spring, 1998) This Brexit carcass of empire leaves an unpleasant aroma wafting across the Atlantic, as well as the Irish sea.

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