Funding the Future

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Unlike many, I am not inclined to celebrate the return of power-sharing in Northern Ireland as yet.

I heard Sam Coates on Sky last night saying that the EU are still in the dark about what the supposed new agreement between the UK government and the DUP might mean, and I think there is very good reason for caution as a result. If there was no reason for checks on food and other items moving from GB to Northern Ireland, I cannot see why a provision for such checks was included in the Windsor Agreement, and I cannot see what changes might be taking place now that the EU can agree as a result. But I might be wrong, of course: maybe a route has been found.

That said, I think that Sinn Fein is now right to say, as it is reported that they have in the Guardian, that:

a united Ireland is "within touching distance" as the party prepares to claim the post of Northern Ireland first minister for the first time.

This is a seismic change that fundamentally challenges the whole basis on which Northern Ireland was created. It was always meant to be a protestant enclave; now it will have majority rule by a nationalist. To diminish the significance of that would be impossible.

Sinn Fein does, however, overstate its case. It is the most popular party in Ireland now, but the reality is that the powers that be there, represented by Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, are doing all they can, including entering into their own power-sharing agreement, to keep Sinn Fein out of government. The fact that the coalition government between these two normal enemies is a miserable failure is not helping their cause, but Irish reunification may not be on the cards just yet.

That said, the day when it will happen has to now be on the horizon. I won't deny that I would be pleased to see that happen.

Next will be Scotland. Wales might take a little longer. But the days of the Union are over: the imperialism inherent within it will be its downfall. The only question is how long it will take for that to happen.