

## United Kingdom could break up, warns ex-leader

13th August, 2019



A former prime minister of the United Kingdom, Gordon Brown, has warned that the union of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is "sleepwalking into oblivion". He also warned of a serious economic disaster ahead after the UK leaves the European Union. He wrote about the dangers of the UK leaving the EU after Brexit. The UK will leave the European Union on

October 31st (which is also Halloween). Mr Brown believes that if the UK leaves the EU without a deal, the four nations of the UK could be in trouble. He is blaming nationalist thinking. He said many people in each country want their independence. He said the United Kingdom is no longer a totally united kingdom.

The United Kingdom consists of four countries - the three nations of Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) and the fourth being Northern Ireland. The full title for all four countries is "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland". Gordon Brown believes that Brexit has made people in each country want independence. Most people in Scotland voted against Brexit. They want to stay in the EU. There are talks of a vote for independence for Scotland. There are also worries over a possible physical border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. People are talking about a possible reunited Ireland. Mr Brown said: "We must recognize that nationalism is now driving British politics."

Sources: [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) / [dailymail.com](http://dailymail.com) / [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com)

## Writing

The four countries of the United Kingdom should always stay together. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

former / prime minister / union / sleepwalking / oblivion / dangers / deal / nationalist / countries / England / Scotland / Wales / Northern Ireland / independence / border

## True / False

- a) The UK's prime minister has warned the UK might break up. T / F
- b) The UK will leave the EU on Halloween. T / F
- c) A former leader said the UK would be in trouble with a no-deal Brexit. T / F
- d) A former prime minister said the UK is not a united kingdom. T / F
- e) The United Kingdom is a union of three countries. T / F
- f) Gordon Brown said Brexit has increased Scottish calls for independence. T / F
- g) There are no worries about an Irish border. T / F
- h) Gordon Brown said globalization was driving British politics. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1. <b>former</b>      | a. accept        |
| 2. <b>warned</b>      | b. agreement     |
| 3. <b>serious</b>     | c. is made up of |
| 4. <b>deal</b>        | d. remain        |
| 5. <b>totally</b>     | e. cautioned     |
| 6. <b>consists of</b> | f. potential     |
| 7. <b>nations</b>     | g. ex-           |
| 8. <b>stay</b>        | h. completely    |
| 9. <b>possible</b>    | i. countries     |
| 10. <b>recognize</b>  | j. grave         |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about the United Kingdom?
- b) Should the countries of the United Kingdom stay together?
- c) Should the UK leave the European Union?
- d) Why is the UK leaving the EU?
- e) What are the benefits of the UK leaving the EU?
- f) What happens in a serious economic disaster?
- g) What do you think of nationalism?
- h) How proud are you of your country?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. A former prime                            | a. of four countries  |
| 2. He also warned of a serious economic      | b. for independence   |
| 3. the four nations of the UK could          | c. united kingdom     |
| 4. many people in each country want          | d. disaster ahead     |
| 5. the United Kingdom is no longer a totally | e. border             |
| 6. The United Kingdom consists               | f. minister           |
| 7. Most people in Scotland voted             | g. politics           |
| 8. There are talks of a vote                 | h. their independence |
| 9. a possible physical                       | i. against Brexit     |
| 10. nationalism is now driving British       | j. be in trouble      |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Why is the UK a kingdom when it has no king?
- Why do people in Scotland want independence?
- What is the history of your country's independence?
- Should Ireland and Northern Ireland be reunited?
- What are the best things about the UK?
- What can your country learn from the UK?
- What questions would you like to ask Gordon Brown?

## Spelling

- sleepwalking into lovibion
- serious economic isastder
- the four aitnons of the UK
- if the UK leaves the EU without a lade
- blaming ntinalaoist thinking
- want their dipednneecne
- The United Kingdom snciotss of four countries
- The full lteti for all four countries
- people in Scotland toved against Brexit
- a possible hspciyal border
- a possible einutred Ireland
- driving British tlpioics

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. j	4. b	5. h
6. c	7. i	8. d	9. f	10. a

## Role Play

### Role A – More Jobs

You think more jobs is the most important thing to vote for. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): lower taxes, better education or the environment.

### Role B – Lower Taxes

You think lower taxes is the most important thing to vote for. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): more jobs, better education or the environment.

### Role C – Better Education

You think better education is the most important thing to vote for. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): lower taxes, more jobs or the environment.

### Role D – The Environment

You think the environment is the most important thing to vote for. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): lower taxes, better education or more jobs.

## Speaking – Voting

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things to vote for at the top at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| • leader's personality | • jobs        |
| • education            | • lower taxes |
| • health               | • environment |
| • welfare              | • security    |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.