

### 3/Britain, the symbol of resistance against Nazi Germany

- **a) Churchill was a prominent figure of the great Alliance**
- Shortly after the German attack on Russia in June 1941, Churchill offered Britain's support to Stalin. He later reported a conversation he had with Stalin in November 1943 at the very beginning of the Tehran conference (November 28th- December 1st, 1943, the first inter Allied conference where the three met (Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin)).
- He also reinforced British links with the US thanks to the Lend-Lease agreement and the Atlantic Charter (March and August 1941) which laid down the fundamental principles for world affairs after the war. The Charter stipulated freely chosen governments, free trade, freedom of the seas and it condemned territorial changes against the wishes of local populations. When the US eventually went to war in December 1941 the “special relationship” between the two countries grew even stronger.
- See film *Churchill*, [Jonathan Teplitzky](#), 2017

## ■ Churchill justified British support to Nazi-invaded Russia

"Any man or State who fights against Nazism will have our aid. Any man or State who marches with Hitler is our foe. [...] His invasion of Russia is no more than a prelude to an attempted invasion of the British Isles. He hopes, no doubt, that all this may be accomplished before the winter comes and that he can overwhelm Great Britain before the Fleet and air power of the United States may intervene. He hopes that he may once again repeat, upon a greater scale than ever before, that process of destroying his enemies one by one by which he has so long thrived and prospered, and that then the scene will be clear for the final act, without which all his conquests would be in vain – namely, the subjugation of the Western Hemisphere to his will and to his system. The Russian danger is therefore our danger and the danger of the United States just as [it is] the cause of free men and free peoples in every quarter of the globe."

Winston Churchill, BBC broadcast, June 22nd, 1941,  
*The Churchill Papers.*

## ■ Churchill met Roosevelt to sign the Atlantic Charter

Churchill and Roosevelt on board HMS *Prince of Wales* during the Atlantic Conference off the coast of Newfoundland, Aug. 10th, 1941.



## ■ Before the end of the war, Churchill and Stalin considered the future of Germany

"After dinner [...] I led Stalin to a sofa and suggested that we talk for a little on what was to happen after the war was won. [...] 'Let us', said the Marshall, 'first consider the worst that might happen'... He thought that Germany had every possibility of recovering from the war, and might start on a new one within a comparatively short time. He feared the revival of German nationalism. After Versailles peace had seemed assured, but Germany had recovered very quickly. We must therefore establish a strong body to prevent Germany starting a new war. [...] Stalin thought we should consider restraints on Germany's manufacturing capacity. [...] Our duty is to make the world safe for at least fifty years by German disarmament, by preventing rearmament, by supervision of German factories, by forbidding all aviation, and by territorial changes of a far-reaching character. It all comes back to the question whether Great Britain, the United States and the USSR can

keep a close friendship and supervise Germany in their mutual interest."

Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 4, 1951.

## b) Stalingrad, a turning point of WW2

- The Battle of Stalingrad was the largest and bloodiest confrontation of World War II, in which Nazi Germany and its allies fought the Soviet Union for control of southern Russia and its oil fields. From August 1942 through February 1943, more than two million troops fought in close quarters – and nearly two million people were killed or injured in the fighting, including tens of thousands of Russian civilians.
- The protracted fight was unprecedented in terms of duration and scale, and became a turning point for the war and a symbol of steadfastness and heroism of the Red Army, who, in the words of Churchill, "tore the guts out of the Nazi war machine." . The loss at Stalingrad was the first failure of the war to be publicly acknowledged by Hitler. It put Hitler and the Axis powers on the defensive, and boosted Russian confidence as it continued to do battle on the Eastern Front in World War II. In the end, many historians believe the Battle at Stalingrad marked a major turning point in the conflict. It was the beginning of the march toward victory for the Allied forces of Russia, Britain, France and the United States.

## WORD BOX

**Caucasus** [ˈkɔːkəsəs]

**To scourge on** = to go on flogging or chastising

**Pincers:** *tenailles*

**Scarce:** *peu abondant*

**Typhus** [ˈtaɪfəs]

## Churchill's account of the battle of Stalingrad

"Hitler's orders to seize the whole of the Black Sea Littoral could not be carried out. In the Centre the Germans reached the foothills of the Caucasus, but not farther, Russian resistance, reinforced by fresh troops was everywhere firm [...]. The German generals, long uneasy, had good cause for their anxiety. After three months of fighting the main objectives of the campaign, the Caucasus, Stalingrad and Leningrad, were still in Russian hands. Casualties had been very heavy and replacements insufficient. Hitler, instead of sending fresh contingents forward to replace losses, was forming them into new and untrained divisions. In military opinion, it was high time to call a halt, but Hadler, Hitler's Chief of Staff, finally resisted his master, and was dismissed. Hitler scourged his armies on.

By the middle of October, the German positions had

markedly worsened. [...]

Paulus' Sixth German Army had been caught by the Russian pincers and encircled as the result of the November conflict. [...] There was no hope of further success for Paulus. Great efforts were made to supply him from the air, but little got through, and at the expense of heavy losses in aircraft. The cold was intense, food and ammunitions were scarce and an outbreak of typhus added to the miseries of his men. [...] The German fought strongly [...] but at last they began to crack and by January 17 [1943] the Russians were within 10 miles of Stalingrad itself. [...] This crushing disaster to the German arms ended Hitler's prodigious effort to conquer Russia by force of arms and destroy communism by an equally odious form of totalitarian tyranny."

Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 4., 1951.

# The battle of Stalingrad as seen by the British press

Cartoon by David Low, *The Evening Standard*, November 2nd, 1942.



More dismissals  
are threatened in  
Germany over the  
delay in taking Stalingrad

EMBER 2, 1942

**SO YOU DIDN'T KEEP MY PROMISE! YOU'RE FIRED!**

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Claire Devèze, Lycée Jean Moulin, Pézenas.

## In Great Britain, this battle became an important factor of social and political life

- The UK is the only country in the world, which organized a massive popular movement to collect donations for the destroyed Stalingrad. Clementine Churchill, the Prime Minister's wife, was a distinguished Russian nurse. The title, together with an Order of the Red Banner was bestowed on her by the Soviet government for services in helping Russians survive the hardship and devastation of the Nazi invasion. She was at the helm of the "Aid to Russia Fund", collecting donations from British people to the needs of the wounded and the sick. There was a real danger of epidemic due to a lack of hospitals and equipment. Researchers of the "Battle of Stalingrad Foundation" traced 307 towns and villages across Great Britain that donated money for the new hospital in Stalingrad. The Queen Mother was awarded the title of Honorary Citizen of Volgograd with the wording "for special merits in organizing assistance to Stalingrad by the inhabitants of Great Britain during World War II and the development of friendly relations with Russia".







INTERNATIONAL CHARITABLE FUND  
"THE BATTLE OF STALINGRAD"



**STALINGRAD**  
IN BRITISH HISTORY

**#STALINGRAD-UK.COM**



On the same day, British Prime Minister W. Churchill in a radio message to the British people said:  
"At 4 o'clock this morning Hitler attacked and invaded Russia.  
... we shall give whatever help we can to Russia and to the Russian people.  
We have offered to the Government of Russia any technical or economic assistance which is in our power and which is likely to be of service to them...  
The Russian danger is therefore our danger... just as the cause of any Russian fighting for his hearth and home is the cause of free men and free peoples in every quarter of the globe."  
From the W. Churchill's speech on BBC, 22 June 1941



Celebrating the delivery of the first of many Valentine MK2 tanks produced for the Russian front, attended by the Russian Ambassador to Britain Ivan Maisky and Harold Macmillan, the parliamentary secretary of the Ministry of Supply. The first British tanks went into action on November 20, 1941 at the Battle of Moscow.

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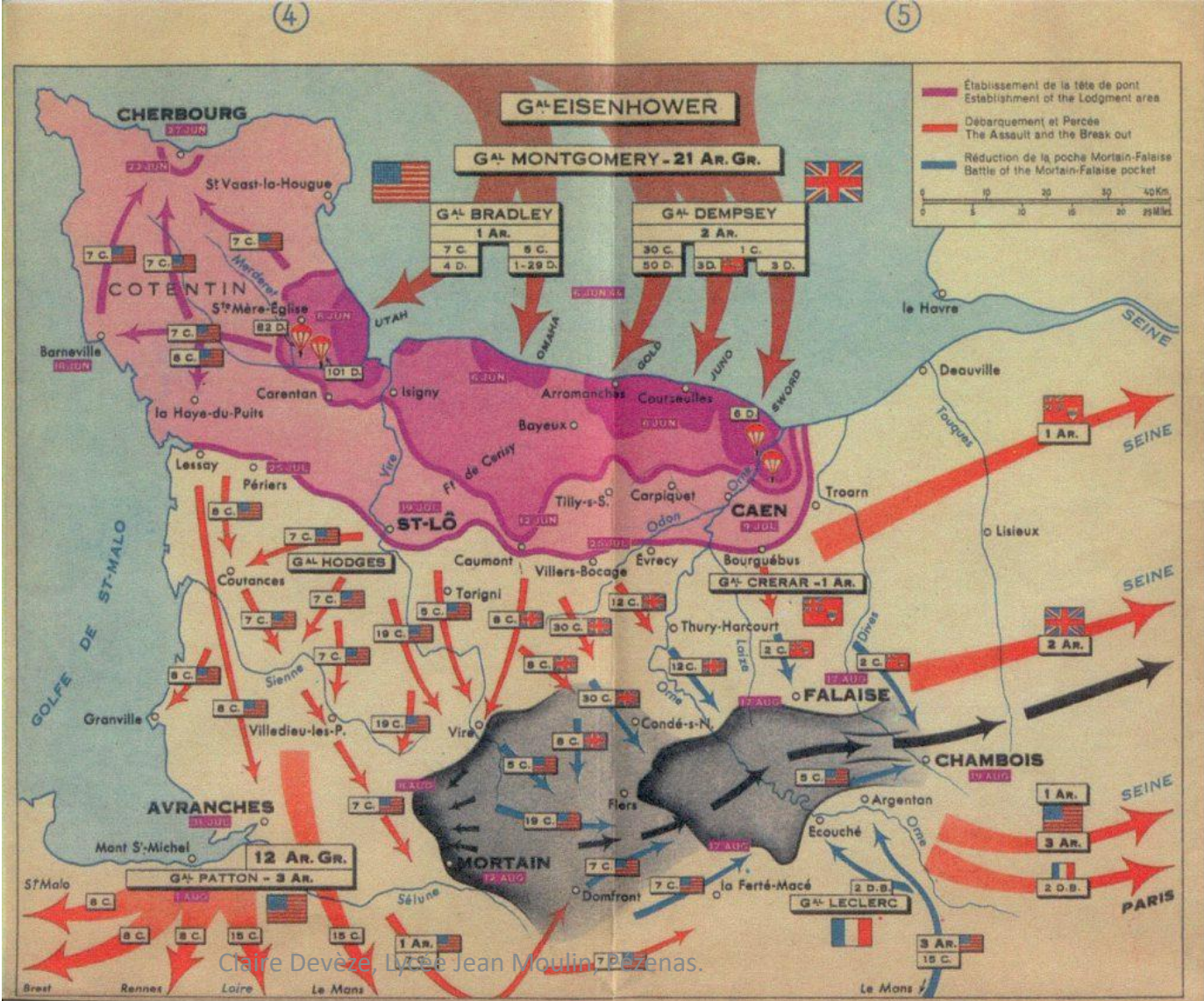
- The scale of the devastation was witnessed by Clementine Churchill when she visited Stalingrad in April 1945.
- “What an appalling scene of destruction met our eyes. My first thought was, how like the center of Coventry or the devastation around St Paul’s, except that here the havoc and obliteration seems to spread out endlessly.”  
"When one is in a city like Stalingrad the staggering loss of life and suffering produced by Nazi aggression almost overwhelms one. The imagination is baffled by the attempts to encompass calamity on so vast a scale.”
- As a result of their devastating war experience, Coventry and Stalingrad started the twinned, or sister, cities movement around the world.

## b) D Day



- On June 6, 1944 the Allied Forces of Britain, America, Canada, and France attacked German forces on the coast of Normandy, France. With a huge force of over 150,000 soldiers, the Allies gained a victory that became the turning point for World War II in Europe. This famous battle is sometimes called D-Day. To prepare for the invasion, the Allies amassed troops and equipment in Britain. They also increased the number of air strikes and bombings in German territory. Right before the invasion, over 1000 bombers a day were hitting German targets. They bombed railroads, bridges, airfields, and other strategic places in order to slow down and hinder the German army.
- The Germans knew that an invasion was coming. They could tell by all the forces that were gathering in Britain as well as by the additional air strikes. What they didn't know was where the Allies would strike. In order to confuse the Germans, the Allies tried to make it look like they were going to attack north of Normandy at Pas de Calais.
- Although the D-Day invasion had been planned for months, it was almost cancelled due to bad weather. General Eisenhower finally agreed to attack despite the overcast skies. Although the weather did have some affect and on the Allies ability to attack, it also caused the Germans to think that no attack was coming. They were less prepared as a result. The first wave of the attack began with the paratroopers. These were men who jumped out of planes using parachutes. They jumped at night in the pitch dark and landed behind enemy lines. Their job was to destroy key targets and capture bridges in order for the main invasion force to land on the beach. Thousands of dummies were also dropped in order to draw fire and confuse the enemy. In the next stage of the battle thousands of planes dropped bombs on German defenses. Soon after, warships began to bomb the beaches from the water. While the bombing was going on, underground members of the French Resistance sabotaged the Germans by cutting telephone lines and destroying railroads. Soon the main invasion force of over 6,000 ships carrying troops, weapons, tanks, and equipment approached the beaches of Normandy.





Claire Devèze, Lucie Jean Moulin, P. Pzenas.

- American troops landed at Omaha and Utah beaches. The Utah landing was successful, but the fighting at Omaha beach was fierce. Many US soldiers lost their lives at Omaha, but they were finally able to take the beach. By the end of D-Day over 150,000 troops had landed in Normandy. They pushed their way inland allowing more troops to land over the next several days. By June 17th over half a million Allied troops had arrived and they began to push the Germans out of France.
- The Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces was Dwight D. Eisenhower of the United States. Other Allied generals included Omar Bradley from the United States as well as Bernard Montgomery and Trafford Leigh-Mallory from Britain. The Germans were led by Erwin Rommel and Gerd von Rundstedt.

## a) Jewish immigration during WW2

- The Historical investigation of Jewish immigration began with the opening of archives in the 1970s.
- The first book was *Island Refuge*, 1973 by Allan James Sherman. It concluded that Britain had been lenient (indulgent) in permitting entry to as many refugees as it did.
- But a more recent book *Whitehall and the Jews, 33/48*, 2000, by Louise London emphasizes the government's reluctance to admit Jewish refugees.



- However, some personal initiatives were led by people who criticized Churchill for this unfit policy of asylum such as Eleanor Rathbone, who wanted to inform with severity the government of testimonies of an ongoing genocide.



- Feminist **Eleanor Rathbone**, elected to parliament as an independent MP in 1929, had long campaigned against injustice. During the 1930s she was one of very few MPs, along with Churchill, who **spoke out against the antisemitic policies of the Nazis**.

- When Jan Karski reached England late in 1942 bringing word of extermination camps in Poland and the early use of gas, Rathbone was among those he contacted.
- She founded a new organization, **the National Committee for Rescue from Nazi Terror**, to press the government to mount efforts to rescue those threatened with annihilation.
- Until 1944 at least its efforts met with very little response: officials adopted a dilatory, “wait and see” attitude and, to Rathbone's fury, tied the question up

- An original initiative was the kinder transport. It was the organization of the transport of 10,000 Jewish children from Germany and Austria to England through the Netherlands just before the war, in 1938. Moreover, they had to come alone and with money. They were hosted in families; most of them were Jewish English.
- See the outdoor bronze memorial sculpture by Frank Meisler, located in the forecourt of Liverpool Street station in London, unveiled in 2006.

The first 200 Kindertransport children from Germany in Harwich, England in December 1938.



Claire Devèze, Lycée Jean Moulin, Pézenas.

# The kindertransport

- Over the following nine **months** **10,000 unaccompanied**, mainly Jewish, children travelled to safety in Britain. This mission became known as the ‘kindertransport’

# The kindertransport

- The children had been allowed to pack a small suitcase containing clothes and their cherished possessions.
- Their journey saw the children travel by train across Germany, through Holland and on to the Hook of Holland. From there they travelled by boat across the English Channel to Harwich in England.

Source : cercleshoah.org,  
memorial sculpture by Frank Meisler,  
Liverpool Street station, London



Claire Devèze, Lycée Jean Moulin, Pézenas.



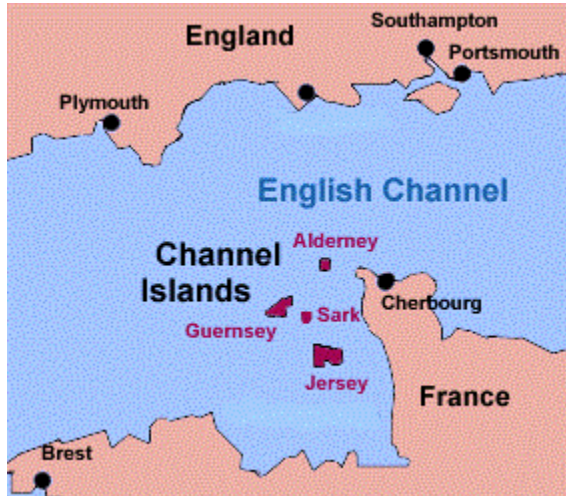
# The kindertransport

- In 1988 Bertha Leverton, a Kindertransport child living in London, began to plan a local 50th anniversary reunion of the Kindertransport.
- In June 1989 over 1,200 people, Kinder (as they now called themselves) with spouses and children, arrived from all parts of the United Kingdom, Israel, the United States, Canada, Australia, and other countries including Nepal.
- The majority of Kinder had never seen their parents again

## b) The Channel Islands

- Hitler considered the Channel Islands: Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney etc. a valuable landing stage for the invasion of France. Churchill decided to leave them undefended: on July 1st 40 German troops arrived in Guernsey.
- Four concentration camps were built on Alderney, the only one on British territory. The atrocities perpetrated on the inmates (Jews, Poles, Spaniards and Russians) have been known since 1997 but the chief of these camps: Max List has never stood trial.
- See film *Another mother's son*, Christopher Menaul, 2017 and *The Guernsey literary and potato peel pie society*, Mike Newell, 2018

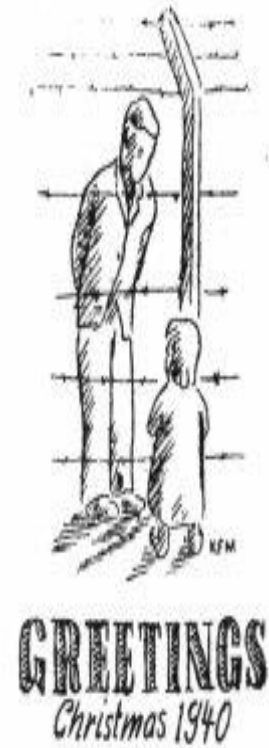
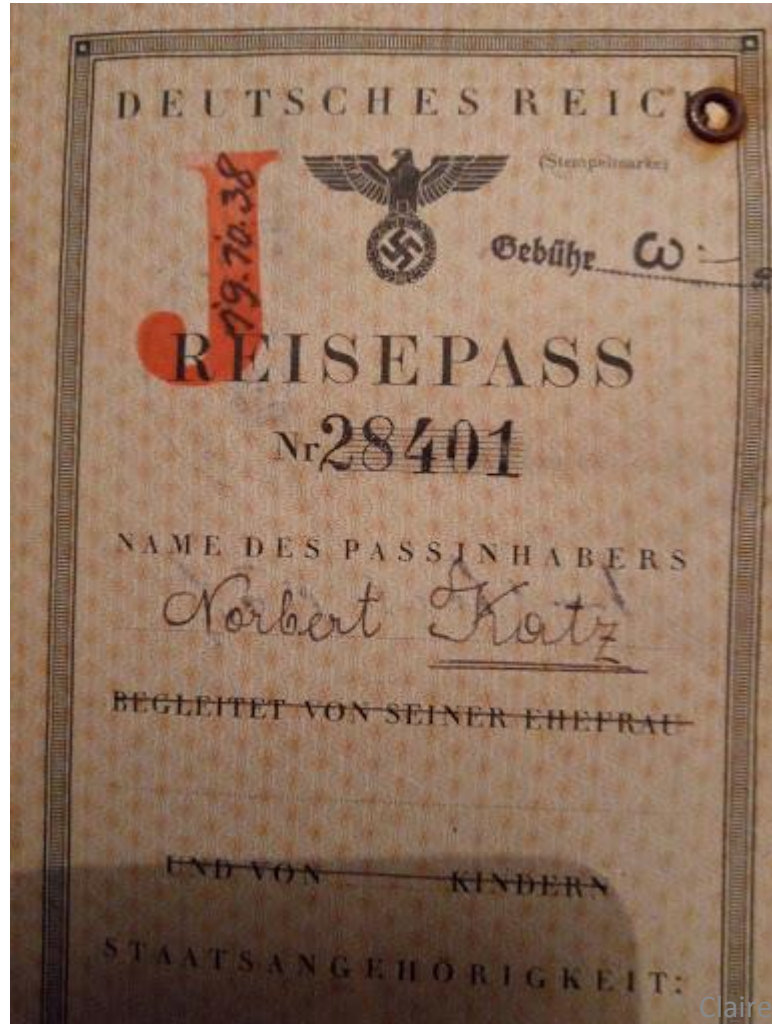
# German soldiers in Jersey, wikipedia



## c) The refugees from the German Reich became victims in the UK.

- As they belong to enemy countries, they were seen as possible spies and called 'Enemy Aliens' in a context of collective fear of invasion. Hundreds of German's families were sent by boat to the isolated Isle of Man (in the Irish Sea, between Britain and Northern Ireland). and put into concentration. These refugees felt unfairly punished they were separated - men to some camps and women and children to others and while they hoped to find asylum in the UK.
- By the end of 1940, 14,000 'enemy aliens' were interned on the Isle of Man.

Source: central european economic and social history/timewitnesses.org



Isle of Man exhibition features history of WW2 internment camp ...source: BBC news



Claire Devèze, Lycée Jean Moulin, Pézenas.

BEER AT ITS BEST!

THE TERRY  
CLINCH'S  
HOME BREW  
at night  
next day  
merry & bright

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# Internment of Aliens Demanded

## KEYS TAKE ACTION

**T**HERE is only one place for the enemy alien while the war lasts. That place is behind barbed wire.

This opinion was expressed with the strongest possible emphasis by the House of Keys on Tuesday, when it was unanimously decided to ask His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor if all enemy aliens in the Island had been interned, voluntary or otherwise, and under what conditions; and if not, was it the intention of His Excellency to order the immediate internment of all such aliens now at large in the Isle of Man.

# CONCLUSION

A “less heroic side” has been discovered by Louise London while Angus Calder criticized the abuse of “the Myth of the Blitz” by the politicians to hide the disunion of the UK and to build a common myth, source of reunification.

Last but not least, some fascist ideas are still alive in the British Far Right. This extremist ideology reemerges through political parties such as the UKIP, especially in time of economic and social crisis, in a context of globalization which enlarges the gap between the rich and poor citizens. This can explain why the British Far Right is so anti-European: it is an ideal excuse to find a scapegoat to the current British problems and dream of an imperial past time which does no longer exist. The difficulty to face reality around a fair and efficient political project for all is the real challenge for the UK.