

If we continue to drift into totalitarianism—I don't mean a regime of Hitlers, Mussolinis or Stalins, but a regime of petty official bosses—the last defence of freedom in Europe may be the crofters of the north-west sea-board who can mock authority pointedly and privately—in Gaelic!

Whether these ideas are sound or not, "Whisky Galore" has passed into what one might term the contemporary folklore of Europe. It was in Oslo, at the end of a formidable Norwegian banquet, that my host produced a bottle of good Scotch whisky. After such a gargantuan dinner it seemed superfluous to say the least of it, and I politely but firmly declined.

He was half offended, half amused, and altogether astonished. He looked at me in amazement and said, a little sadly, "For the first time I meet a man from Todday and by God, he will not drink my whisky."

To Europe today Todday, the mythical Hebridean isle, represents not only the home of a scarce and divine liquor, but the civilised off-taking sense of humour which refuses to take the "big shots" quite as seriously as they take themselves.

ag aotromachadh dha cuing na Co-maoineachd.

Ma leanas sinn oirnn a' dol leis an t-sruth gu uile-riaghladh—chan eil mi ciallachadh leithidean Hitler no Mussolini no Stalin os ar cionn, ach gafairean breòite an riaghaltais—faodaidh e bhith gun tog na croitearan an iar-thuath na h-Albann am balla-dìon mu dheireadh air saorsa na h-Eòrpa, is air a chùl nì iad magadh gu h-eirmseach agus os n-iseal—an Gàidhlig.

Biodh sin mar a bhitheas e, tha "Whisky Galore" air àite a ghabhail am beul-oideas na h-Eòrpa 'san là-an-diugh. B'ann an Oslo, an déidh cuirm mhóir Lochlannaich, a thug fear-antighe am follais botal de'n stuth chruaidh. An déidh na cuirm mhóir eagallaich shaoil mi gum b'ann leis a' bharrachd a thairg e e, agus rinn mi diùltadh an dòigh cho modhail 's a b'aithne dhomh.

Cha mhór nach do ghabh e 'san t-sròin e, ged a thug e gàir air, ach chuir e fìor iongantas air. Thug e an t-sùil mhiorbhuileach ud orm 's thuirt e—car brònach—"Tha mi coinneachadh ri fear de mhuinntir Todday airson na ceud uaire, agus, gum beannaicheadh Sealbh mi, chan òl e an t-uisge-beatha agam."

'San Roinn-Eòrpa an diugh, tha ainm aig Todday, eilean nach robh riamh an Innse Gall, airson dà nì—chan e mhàin deoch a tha prìseil agus gann, ach cuid-eachd an seòrsa àbhachd agus tarruing-as nach leig le daoine a bhith cho umbail do na h-urracha móra 's bu mhath leo fhéin.