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# MEPs shocked by Van Rompuy's ignorance

## EFA press release

EU Council President Herman Van Rompuy's declaration that he knows of 'no pro-European nationalist party in Europe' has provoked shock and anger amongst many in the European Parliament.
The comments made in Flemish TV programme *Ter Zake* (26 October) were met with dismay by MEPs from the European Free Alliance Group in the European Parliament, which draws together pro-European, progressive nationalists and regionalists.
President of the EFA Group in the European Parliament, **Jill Evans** (Plaid Cymru - The Party of Wales) said:
***"Mr Van Rompuy's comments are simply wrong. I met Mr Van Rompuy several months ago representing the European Free Alliance (EFA) parties to explain our nationalist and regionalist movements in Europe and the recent constitutional developments.***
***"One of the characteristics of EFA parties is that we see our future as equal partners in Europe. I want to see Wales as an independent member state playing its full part in building a better European Union. Our vision of a "Europe of the peoples" reflects that. Our conference on "Independence in Europe" on 17 November will examine this very issue. I invite Mr Van Rompuy to attend so he can learn about the politics of many of the parties and citizens in the EU which he is choosing to ignore".***
Scottish National Party MEP **Ian Hudghton** said:
***"Mr Van Rompuy is an intelligent man who's always seemed politically astute. I can only imagine that his comments were provoked by his frustration at the situation in Belgium. But he needs to remember that in saying what he said, which is so plainly wrong, he has stepped far outside his remit as EU Council President.***
***"As an MEP from a pro-European, democratic nationalist party, which has fought for decades to restore democratic and progressive government to Scotland, I look forward to the day when an independent Scotland will play a constructive and equal role in EU decision-making."***
Catalan Nationalist MEP **Oriol Junqueras** (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya) said:
***"My own party has been fighting for freedom and democracy for Catalonia since its foundation nearly eighty years ago. This has continued since the restoration of democracy in the Spanish state in 1977. Many people in Catalonia will be shocked by Van Rompuy's comments given the pro-European nature of the Catalan nationalist movement, and our nation's attachment to the European Union.***
***"Van Rompuy has made a serious error of judgement in allowing himself to be drawn back into the domestic Belgian political debate. I hope he recognises his error and makes an apology as soon as possible."***
Corsican MEP **François Alfonsi** (U Partitu di a Nazione Corsa) said:
***"We are a Corsican political party which is nationalist, ecologist, progressive and pro-European and which campaigns through exclusively democratic and peaceful means. We want to see a Europe that rejects the centralised power of the big member states, in favour of a Europe of the peoples, nations and regions working together.***
***"Van Rompuy's statement is unfair and inaccurate. This is inappropriate behaviour for someone in his***

***position."***
**Frieda Brepoels** MEP (N-VA, Flanders) said:
***"I fully agree with the sentiments expressed by my colleagues and share their shock at Mr Van Rompuy's comments. As EU Council President he should remain above this kind of behaviour which has more to do with Belgian domestic politics than the requirements of his current role.***
***"We have to ask whether Van Rompuy is suffering from a sudden attack of political amnesia? Has he forgotten his own political party's close co-operation with the N-VA over many years? From his background in Flemish politics he will know very well that the N-VA is a firmly pro-European party. Is this the best he can do? He really should know better."***

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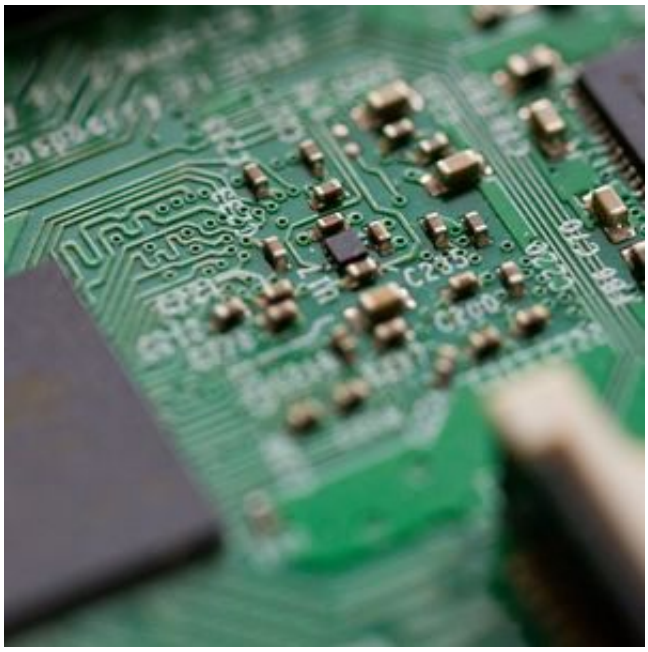


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Jill Evans

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