

The IMF, BRIC, Prince Philip and working in teams

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FINANCIAL TIMES



Martin Wolf
Europe should not control the IMF



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ECB's invidious range of choices over Greece

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LONDON -- Last night there was an interesting recounting of a discussion in a television interview. It went roughly like this:

"I asked him about his son and started to imply differences and he stopped me and he said...

'Ah, yes, but he is a romantic. And I am a pragmatist.

Sometimes romantics think that pragmatists are unfeeling.' "

The exchange was between an interviewer and the 90 year-old [Duke of Edinburgh](#). His son, of course, is the much maligned [Prince of Wales](#). (UK residents [can see it here](#).)

It is a single line, in an hour long show, that sticks with you. It explains a relationship of 60 years between father and son. It shows how people who work together day-in and day-out can

start to think and act alike. It also shows how some relationships can never overcome basic *perceived* differences.

Today the [Financial Times](#) published a headline that I suspect will look silly in a few years time (see above). They talk about Directors of the International Monetary Fund from Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) who have worked together in a "rare example" of cooperation and coordination.

Who is to say that they cannot and should not work together? Yes, it might seem incongruous in a world with a [Dr Strangelove](#) view of international relations. But it's not unreasonable. In fact, it seems obvious. These countries should actually be running the world. And before long they probably will. Why not work together?

We often see style, language and culture as a barrier to cooperation. That's not really the case. You can never expect two people -- even who share the same genes and history -- to agree on everything. No two people share a brain.

However, circumstances and objectives push people together and language, culture and style are no barrier to good work coming from their joint efforts.

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