

LaRouche Allies Join Anti-Lisbon Meetings

by Michelle Rasmussen

From March 7-9, TEAM (www.teameurope.info), the umbrella organization of EU-critical movements from 23 European nations (though none from Germany), held their annual meeting, and anti-Lisbon Treaty activities, in Copenhagen. The Schiller Institute in Denmark, the Danish section of the LaRouche movement, and members of the LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM), participated in three of those events. This enabled us to bring to the other participants a deeper understanding of the current historical importance of preventing the Lisbon Treaty from being adopted: first, the larger issue of the international financial collapse; and second, the necessity of defending sovereign nations from the brutal austerity demanded by oligarchical financial interests.

The Status of the Treaty in Denmark

In Denmark, although there is a tradition of having referenda on EU questions, as in the other EU member-nations, the Treaty will only be voted on in the Parliament. In 1992, the Danish population actually voted NO to the Maastricht Treaty, the predecessor of Lisbon. This time, the pro-Treaty government, with the agreement of the opposition Social Democrats, offered the excuse that much of the loss of sovereignty could be offset by the four Danish “opt-outs” (designed to deal with the 1992 NO vote, which involves not participating in the joint military or legal EU pillars, and no euro currency, or EU citizenship), thereby circumventing the constitutional requirement for a referendum any time there is a reduction of national sovereignty.

The two Danish EU-critical organizations, the People’s Movement and the June Movement, have so far collected about 43,000 signatures for a Danish referendum on the Treaty, which is not yet enough to pressure the Danish parliament to agree. An expected court case before the Danish Constitutional Court can only be initiated after the ratification of the Treaty. Before voting, however, the government must first answer more than 700 questions about the interpretation of the Treaty, from Jens-Peter Bonde, the June Movement’s member of the European Parliament (MEP), and also many from Søren Søndergaard, the People’s Movement’s MEP. Now, the Schiller Institute has also joined the effort to demand a referendum in Denmark, and will make that a central issue in our upcoming 60,000-run campaign newspaper.

On March 7, three Schiller Institute organizers, including Danish chairman Tom Gillesberg, went to the small get-

to-know-each-other party for TEAM delegates, held at the office of the Danish People’s Movement against EU, and met delegates from Slovenia, Estonia, and Switzerland, as well as Denmark, where they were able to talk with them for several hours about the crucial larger issues involved.

The following morning, three LYM members joined about 20 TEAM delegates and members of the Danish movements in an action for a referendum on the main pedestrian street in downtown Copenhagen. Under a large banner demanding a referendum, they offered “Irish whiskey,” with just as little whiskey as the Treaty is without democracy. Signatures were collected for a referendum, and copies of the Treaty were distributed. LYM organizers collected around 100 signatures in just over an hour, which greatly impressed the organizer of the action.

That afternoon, there was a four-hour public debate attended by about 50 people, which 8 Schiller Institute/LYM members participated in. We distributed the article by Helga Zepp-LaRouche calling for a Lisbon referendum; the latest issue of *Prometheus*, the monthly newsletter of the Danish Schiller Institute, with the headline, “No to the Lisbon Treaty”; and a notice about Lyndon LaRouche’s March 12 webcast. Inside, we were able to raise the questions of the international financial collapse and the need for advanced technology, during the discussion periods, and meet the other foreign delegates who had arrived from Ireland, Finland, Sweden, England, Italy, and Denmark, including two Danish members of the European Parliament, from the two Danish EU critical movements, all of whom received a more in-depth literature package.

Assault on National Sovereignty

The meeting opened with speeches against the Lisbon Treaty from the two Danish MEPs. Jens-Peter Bonde’s speech was based on his books, *New Name—Same Content: The Lisbon Treaty—Is It Also an EU Constitution?* in English, and *From Constitution to Lisbon*, in Danish (available in the “Bonde’s Books” section of his website www.bonde.com). The MEPs especially stressed the Treaty’s elimination of the role of the national parliaments, representative democracy, and the destruction of national sovereignty. That, Bonde said, is the strongest argument against the Treaty in all member-states. In addition, they brought up the threat to the right to strike, the reduced role of small countries, the Treaty’s similarity to the rejected EU constitution, and the difficulty of finding out what the Treaty says.

Also, importantly, Bonde listed some of the country-by-country difficulties ahead to get the Treaty approved. In Slovakia, it has to pass a court case; in the Czech Republic, the parliament has demanded a consolidated version of the Treaty in the Czech language, and then they will pose questions before voting on it; in Germany, there is already a court case which may give a surprising result. The leader of the Karlsruhe court has already written against the Treaty. The differ-



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political establishment is for a YES, with only five Irish parliamentarians for a NO, but there are other movements campaigning for a NO throughout the country. The hitherto undefined position of the trade unions will be important, not only for their own members, but also because many others look to them for advice. Although the NO side has a lot less money for posters and literature, he said that their best chance is to organize debates, because if they are held, the YES side will always lose.

What World Financial Collapse?

While the speeches brought out many important reasons to defeat the Treaty, yet, there was no men-

The Danish Schiller Institute is part of a continent-wide campaign of the LaRouche-affiliated organizations in Europe, which are mobilizing for national referenda against the Lisbon Treaty. Here, organizers of the BüSo in Germany, campaign on the streets of Berlin, against the Treaty.

tion of the world financial collapse, nor why there is pressure to eliminate national sovereignty. In the discussion period and during the breaks, Schiller Institute/LYM organizers helped to remedy that. During the first discussion period, this author introduced herself, and brought up that it is important to take up the economic issue and the specific historical context of the fight against the Lisbon Treaty: The international financial system is collapsing now. The financial interests want to eliminate the nation-state in order to prevent the institutions of the nation-state from protecting the common good, as President Franklin Roosevelt did in the 1930s. This is why the European branches of the Schiller Institute have decided take up this fight, and why we are fighting to prevent the fascist Michael Bloomberg from becoming President in the United States.

During the discussion, this author challenged the Swiss economist Urs Schuerch, who spoke about the EU's economic policy, on the already ongoing financial collapse. The economist, who works in the financial sector, interrupted and said that the bubbles are already bursting and we don't know if it is over now, or just beginning. The organizer then explained the creation of massive speculative financial growth at the expense of the physical economy and the standard of living of normal people. The financial interests want to protect the value of this massive debt through a brutal austerity policy, and want to eliminate any institutions which could defend the living standard of populations. She reiterated the necessity of national governmental intervention to implement bankruptcy reorganization and a new system.

There were many other discussions in smaller groups during the breaks, and the weekend of activities gave the Schiller Institute/LYM the opportunity to meet anti-Lisbon Treaty leaders from throughout Europe, and to encourage them to join our fight.