

van Bommel: Yes, it is.

EIR: This is making a more dangerous world. We need cooperation among the major powers, including the U.S., Russia, China, India, and Europe.

van Bommel: It is leading to a new Cold War. That is what I said this morning, in a debate with our Secretary of Foreign Affairs. But they disagree. They say a missile defense plan in Europe is not a threat to Russia. There is no willingness to look at it from Russia's standpoint, and that leads to impossible debates, when it comes to enlarging NATO with Ukraine and Georgia. They are creating facts on the ground, so that there are no alternatives, and that we have to accept the American missile defense, and even take part in it. And force Russia to also accept that.

Prospects for the Treaty's Passage

EIR: How do you consider the prospects for de-ratification, if the treaty passes?

van Bommel: I think it is very hard to de-ratify a treaty. We haven't seen that happening with former treaties. I would much rather put it to a referendum, than rely on the possibility of de-ratifying treaties.

EIR: Can you say something more about what you see as a danger of this treaty for the Netherlands?

van Bommel: The fact that we are giving up sovereignty by handing over veto rights, accepting the qualified majority vote, is seen as something that we should have never accepted. And therefore, we feel we are betrayed by our own government, because the steps towards a federal Europe, where the position of smaller countries such as the Netherlands would be endangered, is something that they should have taken into account and they haven't. They simply accepted a treaty that is 95% the same as the old constitutional treaty, and thereby they fooled everyone who said "no," by saying it is not a constitution anymore—the flag and the hymn are out of it, there are no symbols that have to do with a federal state. So it is not just what is in the treaty; it is also what they have taken out that makes us feel betrayed.

One of our arguments is that we have enlarged Europe so quickly, that the difference between the new states and the old states, have grown so much that it would be far wiser to let the 27 [member nations of the EU] now come and grow towards a European average on many aspects—social, economical, political in the fight against corruption, etc.—and then see if we want to change the rules on how we govern Europe. As long as that is not the case, we will face many differences of opinion, and by giving up veto rights, you force countries to accept policies that many people would not otherwise have accepted. Meaning that in the future, heads of state will go home saying, "We were against it, but the majority was in favor," and thereby endangering the public support for Europe even more. So in the short term, it might seem to

be good not to have a referendum, and change the rules on how the decision-making process takes place; but in the long run, this does not help the people who want to build a strong Europe. Because no entity can survive without public support, and Europe lacks public support more than it lacks the ability to govern.

Gianni: Lisbon Treaty Is 'Anti-Democratic'

The following statement was issued on March 26, by Alfonso Gianni, Undersecretary to the Economic Development Ministry in the outgoing Prodi government, to Movimento Solidarietà, the LaRouche organization in Italy.



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Alfonso Gianni

I would like to take this occasion to once again emphasize, as I have written and stated numerous times, my opposition and my party's (the Rifondazione Comunista) opposition to the Lisbon Treaty, because that treaty is the result of a 'marketist,' liberalist, elitist, and anti-democratic view of the process of European integration.

The Europe which we would like to see, a political entity which promotes peace, is one that must be constructed through a process in which the peoples of our continent have a voice. We cannot accept an institutional framework based on the primacy of governments over parliaments.

For these reasons, I would like to point out that during the discussion of the legislative calendar in Parliament, our group stated its opposition to placing the Treaty on the calendar during the period preceding the upcoming general elections, when the Parliament is only to deal with minor business.

Unfortunately, our Constitution does not foresee the use of a referendum for international treaties. This is the real problem: The proposal has been presented as a treaty, when it is actually a proposal for a Constitution, and a profoundly flawed one at that. Thus, the request for a referendum has been avoided.

For these reasons, it is even more necessary to spread awareness of the contents of the proposed treaty, broaden the debate, and increase the popular opposition in every country in Europe.

I wish you success in your efforts.

Alfonso Gianni