

# Eurocrats Fall Flat At Alpbach Conference

by Harley Schlanger

Sept. 5—With one bailout plan after another falling apart; non-stop demands from banks for more liquidity, as their stock values crash; and growing opposition among the citizens of the European nations to the protection of the banks in the name of “Euro-Solidarity,” beleaguered European Union officials and central bankers came to the Austrian village of Alpbach last week to sell their absurd and dangerous view of the future to an audience of more than 500 people, among whom were bankers, economists, government officials, professors, and students.

Many members of the audience, including those who wished to be believers, left very unsure of the future—thanks to the role of representatives of *EIR*, who repeatedly intervened, to bring reality—and real solutions—to the event.

## An Agenda of Lies

There were two main themes presented by speakers defending the bailouts, and the bankrupt banks of the City of London:

1. All is well with the eurozone; we are making progress, as long as,
2. We address the “sovereign debt crisis,” through such measures as “fiscal discipline” and “enforcement of tough rules” that are backed by “harsh sanctions.”

To do this, speaker after speaker demanded curbs on national sovereignty, and that governments slash spending for social programs under the rubric of EU “governance,” that is, dictatorship to be imposed by supranational agencies.

In response to a question from this author, about why anyone should listen to a representative of Deutsche Bank talk about demanding austerity from governments and their people, when Deutsche Bank is receiving nearly daily infusions of bailout mega-funds, its chief economist spluttered arrogantly, pointing to the audience, “You are the problem,” because you wish to consume too much!

Another prominent financier who was exposed by *EIR* was Mario Monti, former EU Commissioner for Internal Markets, Financial Services and Taxation, and also EU Commissioner for Competition, who spoke on regulation. “Why should we believe anything you say, when you were among the ones who helped bring on the crisis?” he was asked. That’s a good question, he said.

## Mont Pelerinites

Backing up the Eurocrats, with even sharper attacks on sovereignty and defense of the population, was a gaggle of hard-core representatives of the libertarian von Hayek and Mont Pelerin societies, who insisted that one can never define what is meant by the “general welfare”: Thus, markets must be even more *de*-regulated, with the state role virtually eliminated.

Among the EU officials who spoke and presented the “party line” were Monti; Joaquín Almunia, vice president of the European Commission; Thomas Wieser, chair of the EU’s Economic and Financial Committee; and two officials of the European Banking Authority.

When confronted by the *EIR* representatives, who briefed the audience on the reality of the crisis—which the speakers were attempting to cover up, to push their agenda of a fascist Europe—the audience saw the truth: that they had no answers, but instead, that they repeatedly changed the subject, declined to comment, or told more lies!

This was especially true among the youth attending, as many were from eastern European countries who were wondering what the future would hold for them if their nations joined the EU. Many of them applauded the *EIR* interventions, and admitted afterwards, in private discussions, that they are extremely worried about the demands for cutting consumption, when they are searching for a better future for their nations.

Of special note was the growing response to the “LaRouche solution” of a return to Glass-Steagall-type banking regulation and an American System-style credit policy. Austrian Finance Minister Maria Fekter responded, “That’s a good point, we should do that,” while others admitted, from the podium, that re-regulation is coming, and, in private discussion, that they agree that the crash is on, and a real change is needed.