

ther undermining popular support for the whole European project.

Under this treaty, moreover, the already dominant influence of multinational corporations will be reinforced. Privatisation, liberalisation, and deregulation will cease to be matters which may be voted for or against at national elections, becoming instead articles of constitutional writ. Social ownership, even of essential services, will come under ever-increasing pressure.

There is an idea, completely false, that the new treaty will address the problem of the democratic deficit. The vaunted increase in powers for the European Parliament provides no effective substitute for those lost by national parliaments. Most of these powers have not been transferred to the European Parliament at all, but have, along with those of other institutions directly or indirectly answerable to the people, been placed in the hands of centralised, undemocratic, bureaucratic institutions. In addition, there is no real European public or political space, and no European public media. Indeed, a recent Eurobarometer survey shows that the majority of the Dutch people does not even know that Euro-MPs are directly elected. Under these circumstances, granting national parliaments the right to block EU legislation is a clear sop, especially as to do so they will need the support of either the European Council or European Parliament.

Under the Lisbon Treaty, the European security and defence policy will acquire expanded “aims and ambitions,” in particular as regards Member States’ military capabilities; an expansion in the list of “Petersberg tasks”—the humanitarian, crisis management, and peace-building tasks which the EU may undertake; a reference for the first time to the European Defence Agency, a body aimed at encouraging greater and more co-ordinated defence capabilities; the possibility of “subcontracting” of security and defence tasks to “coalitions of the able and willing” among the member states; and the possibility of instituting special arrangements among a group of Member States possessing greater military capabilities. The treaty directly undermines Ireland’s neutrality, stating that “The Union and its member states shall act jointly in a spirit of solidarity if a Member State is the object of a terrorist attack or victim of a natural or man-made disaster. The Union shall mobilise all the instruments at its disposal, including the military resources made available by the member states. . . .”

In sum: this treaty does not differ significantly from its rejected predecessor. It is a treaty desired by the elite, not by the people. Ireland could play an important role, since its citizens, uniquely, have the right to vote. This is a plea for you to seize this opportunity and vote for all of us.

Harry van Bommel MP, The Netherlands; Jeremy Corbyn MP, United Kingdom; Jean-Paul Lecoq MP, France; Lars Ohly MP, Sweden; Paul Schäfer MP, Germany.

Dutch Citizens Hold Poll on Lisbon Treaty

by Vyron Lymberopoulos

What is going on in Europe?

More specifically, what is about to happen in my country, the Netherlands, in June 2008? There is a strong push to reform the close cooperation between the nation-states of Europe into a centrally governed United Europe. In this scheme, the Netherlands, as all other nations in the European Union, will lose all remnants of sovereignty. As a citizen of the Netherlands, I can say my country has a long tradition of holding dear its ancient rights, and when the proper leadership was on hand, fighting for those rights, during the long course of our history.

The Romans failed to fully conquer us when we were known as the Batavians. The great poet and historian Friedrich Schiller documented his famous *Revolt of the Netherlands*—the attempt by the Habsburgs to take away our ancient rights. Under the able leadership of William the Silent, the Dutch people defeated the Habsburgs and founded the Republic of the Seven Provinces of the Netherlands, while at the same time, we enjoyed a great Golden Renaissance. Our revolt against Spanish rule demonstrated that there is hope when people unite for a just cause.

As a result of Napoleon’s failed adventure of building a European empire, the Netherlands lost its republican form of government at the Congress of Vienna (1815), becoming a monarchy; nonetheless, it preserved its sovereignty. In the last century, the Nazis defeated the Netherlands in their quest of empire, but under the leadership of the United States, this attempt was defeated once more, by a coalition of sovereign nations of the world. After the war, the Netherlands, with other sovereign nation-states, promoted European cooperation to avoid any recurrence of the horrible wars of the past.

In 2005, the Netherlands, along with every other nation in the EU, once again was threatened with the loss of its sovereignty by the launching of a scheme to transform the EU into a super-state, an ultramontane empire of the 21st Century. A European constitution was drafted, and countries were invited to join in the process, which would change the character from close cooperation into centralized government. All the major political parties in the Netherlands Parliament, including the ruling Christian Democratic Appeal and the Labor Party, voted for the Constitution. Only the small Socialist Party and several small Christian parties voted against. In their own exuberance, the ruling parties, supporting the constitution, decided to hold a referendum, confident that the majority would vote in favor of European unification.

The same occurred in France, where then-President Jacques Chirac, in the tradition of Charles de Gaulle, also decided to hold a referendum. In the Netherlands, the institutions of the state and the media, were all marshalled into organizing, what in fact became a great national debate, in the run-up to the referendum. Live debates, led by party leaders who supported and opposed the constitution were organized throughout the country. But to their surprise, which would later turn to horror, the people fully engaged themselves in the debate. Lecture halls which seated 500 people found as many as 2,500 citizens at the doors demanding to participate.

The people heard both sides of the debate and exercised their sovereign right and voted. Over 60% voted "no." In some districts over 90% voted "no," as did the people of France. Thereby, the unification process was aborted.

So the designers of this European constitution went back to the drawing board, and decided to repackage their next attempt to create an European ultramontane empire. Thus on Dec. 13, 2007, the Lisbon Treaty was signed by the heads of state of 27 European nations. This time there was to be no popular referendum, because the Treaty was no longer a constitution, according to this well-organized piece of sophistry by the Pan Europeans, who therefore decreed that no referenda would be necessary. Nonetheless, Ireland was mandated by law to hold a referendum because of the constitutional nature of the changes in the Treaty.

So, the argument was put forward in 26 countries, that the Lisbon Treaty was no longer a constitutional treaty, while Ireland, apparently seeing through the sophistry, stated that it was in fact constitutional, and a referendum is mandatory! Elected officials and scholars, those who have read it, have admitted that 95% of the Treaty is the same as the rejected European constitution. How do they get away with this?

The founder of the Schiller Institute, Helga Zepp-LaRouche said: "The Lisbon Treaty is to be implemented by stealth, with a minimum of fuss." This time, the institutions of government and the media are used to "avoid" an honest debate in the public domain.

Citizens' Initiative

In the Netherlands, as in all states other than Ireland, the powers of the state, as well as the media, were employed not only to suppress a call for a referendum, but to suppress all open debate. This time, no lecture halls were hired, the government parties are committed to suppressing legislation by the Socialist Party of the Netherlands, the nation's third-largest party, calling for a referendum. Citizens that voted for the Labor Party (PvdA) in 2006 were promised that there would be a referendum. There was outrage when Labor joined the new cabinet on the promise not to sue for a referendum. A similar stunt was pulled by the British Labour Party. The news media is all but mute on the question. All has been done to keep the population in ignorance.

And since none of the great polling agencies have been

commissioned by the government or anyone else who could afford to hire them, this author, with the help of two other citizens, his parents, one of whom has worked in the polling business, decided to take up the challenge. We improvised on this subject. The poll was held in the central part of the Netherlands during the first part of April. We interviewed 89 people. The pollster stated that the poll did not meet standards of representation and quality. At the same time, she said that the results might not have been much different if we would have polled a 1,000 or 10,000 people.

The first question we asked: "Are you familiar with the Lisbon Treaty?" Sixty-four percent answered "No!"

The strategy of stealth, media blackout, and lack of a public debate thus bore its bitter fruit.

The second question: "Would you like to have a referendum on this Lisbon Treaty?" A demoralized 49% answered "No." Of the remainder, 40% said "Yes," being unsure and undecided. But even with this figure, it is not hard to believe that, if people would have had the opportunity to know more about the Treaty, the results to this question, would have been similar to that of 2005.

The third question informed people that: "Under certain conditions capital punishment will be reinstated in Europe," and asked, "Can you live with that?" 67% disagreed with this idea, while 24% supported it; 9% were undecided. Traditionally, the idea of the penalty of death is universally abhorrent to most Europeans.

In May 1940, The Dutch people resisted Nazi conquest. The country capitulated after five days and was subjected to rule of tyranny for five years. Next question: "Can you live with the fact that important decisions on the future of the Dutch people will be made in Brussels?" Forty-four percent had capitulated already to this centralized European government, while 44% would rather keep sovereignty of their own nation; 12% were undecided at the time of the poll.

Our poll demonstrated that an absolute majority of the population does not support this treaty. Given the fact that an absolute majority of 60% of the population voted against the Constitution in 2005, it is not unreasonable to assume that, if a high-profile campaign were begun today, as in 2005, the numbers in any subsequent poll would change in the direction of opposition to the Treaty. That is why the supporters of the EU are now using the powers of the state and the "fourth estate" to suppress the will of the people.

The Dutch Parliament will vote on the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty on June 5. Up until now, no public announcement has been made about the specific date in public!

It is expected that the Netherlands will fall in line with the other nations who have capitulated to the unification scheme. The last line of defense is the Irish referendum to be held on June 12.

Pockets of resistance in the form of legal battles will continue, outside the view of the public. Count on us to keep you informed.