

terrors in short order.

Battle Rages Over EU's Lisbon Treaty

by Rainer Apel

If the European financier oligarchy has its way, the European Union's Lisbon Treaty, which would strip member nations of any vestige of sovereignty, will be ratified this Spring, without debate, without anyone ever reading its 277 pages, and certainly without any popular vote. If only one EU member nation fails to ratify the treaty, it cannot be put into effect. But since mid-February, resistance to the treaty has been mounting, at the same time that its proponents are moving to silence dissent. Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the chairwoman of the BüSo party in Germany (Civil Rights Solidarity Movement), issued a call on Feb. 23 for a referendum on the treaty in Germany (see *EIR*, Feb. 29).

Ireland, as the only country so far that has scheduled a referendum, is the particular focus of political countermoves. EU Commissioner Margot Wallström went to Dublin on Feb. 27, in an attempt to defuse Irish concerns over the loss of neutrality under the "solidarity clause" of the treaty, which would oblige nations to unite to combat "terrorist activities." On Feb. 28, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, in a scarcely veiled attempt to corrupt the Irish population into accepting the treaty, proposed that Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern would be an ideal candidate for the new post of EU president. But there's a sleight-of-hand here; similar offers have been made to several other nations, implying that if they voted "yes" to the treaty, the first EU Presidency would go to one of their politicians.

Ahern went so far as to argue that the only way to cope with "global warming" would be for Europe to be strengthened as a world player—and for that, the Irish would have to vote "yes" to the treaty.

The pro-treaty camp in the European Parliament also organized a vote of 499 against 129, to defeat an Irish motion for an amendment that would have obliged the Parliament to respect the outcome of the Irish referendum. The message here was that no matter how the Irish voted, the European Parliament would stick to its own majority vote of Feb. 20, in favor of the treaty.

Opposition Takes to the Streets

On the anti-treaty side, in Britain, the "I Want a Referendum" cross-party alliance rallied more than 2,000 protesters for a day of action on Feb. 27, with picketing in front of the British Parliament, "test" referenda in ten regions, as well as

press conferences and lobbying of Members of Parliament. Those referenda, some of which were held in election districts of three British government members, yielded a majority of up to 90% in favor of a referendum. Therefore, the fact that on March 5, the British Parliament voted against two amendments that called for a referendum, one with 311 to 248, with 14 abstentions, and the other with 311 against 247, and 15 abstentions, is only a Pyrrhic victory for pro-treaty Prime Minister Gordon Brown and his Labour Party, as the defection of 29 Labourites to the pro-referendum side shows. It is interesting to note that hints are being made about "deratification" being on the agenda, should the opposition Tories come to power in the next election, which is still a year away. That does not stop the treaty in Britain now, but there are probably legal ways left to block the enactment of it, even after ratification.

This is also under discussion in other European countries, for example in France, where 1,000 lawyers have filed suit against the treaty with the European Court of Justice in Strasbourg, and in Germany and Austria, where legal experts are thinking about lawsuits in their own constitutional courts. Two such suits are expected to be filed in Germany by the Linkspartei (Left Party), and by Peter Gauweiler, a conservative Christian Social Union (CSU) party Member of Parlia-

IRELAND DESERVES BETTER
VOTE NO! to Lisbon Treaty
TÁ FEABHAS TUILLTE AGAINN

DELIVERING FOR IRELAND'S FUTURE
SAOIL - CEART - CHÁIN

10 REASONS WHY THE LISBON TREATY IS BAD FOR IRELAND

1. It puts at risk our automatic right to a referendum on future changes to existing treaties.
2. It gives the EU too much power and reduces our ability to stop decisions that are not in Ireland's interests.
3. It gives 105 additional powers to the EU on issues such as international relations, security, trade and economic policy. And in more than 60 of these areas we will lose our right to stop laws not in our national interest.
4. It creates an EU Foreign Minister and common defence and foreign policies, and allows the EU to act on the international stage in the same way as a state and to speak on our behalf.
5. It erodes neutrality by drawing us into a common defence and obliging us to increase military spending.
6. It puts our voting strength on the Council of Ministers by more than half.
7. It ends our automatic right to a Commissioner.
8. It seriously undermines workers' rights and public services.
9. It enables the EU to promote nuclear energy.
10. It undermines the EU's commitment to tackling global poverty and inequality.

IRELAND'S PLACE IS IN EUROPE

Ireland's place in Europe. Co-operation with our European partners is valuable and must continue. The challenge for us is to build a modern, democratic Europe for a modern, democratic Ireland. The Lisbon Treaty, like many of the treaties that went before it, does not deliver reform, lift dignity or democracy. Ireland deserves better.

The Lisbon Treaty involves a massive transfer of power to the EU. It significantly accelerates the militarisation of the EU, and contains proposals which will be lost for our economy, public services and workers' rights. The simple fact is that the Lisbon Treaty gives the EU too much power.

You only have to look at events over the last few years to see what giving more powers to the EU means in practice:

- Water charges with disastrous consequences for schools
- Irish farmers without a subsidy
- The government was unable to prevent the shutting down of the Irish sugar beet
- Bircan and Aer Lingus are prioritised
- Stalling the roll out of broadband and

reducing the withdrawal of the Shannon service. The ESB and Aer Post face the same fate.

- Irish troops are involved in EU battle groups
- The Irish Government has no control over rising interest rates
- Workers' rights to equal terms and conditions in the member state in which they work are no longer secure as a consequence of European Court of Justice rulings
- The records of all emails sent and received and the times you log on and off the internet will be held for three years.

What has become clear over the last few years is that the Irish Government has less and less power to reject laws that are not in our interests. If the Lisbon Treaty is allowed to go ahead the situation will become worse.

It is crucial to remember that if the Lisbon Treaty is passed it will put at risk our automatic right to a referendum and our future ability to get a good deal for Ireland.

"Aistriú cumhachta ollmhór don AE"

Sinn Féin
www.sinnfein.ie

Ireland's Sinn Féin party is circulating this poster in opposition to the European Union's anti-national treaty.

ment. The moment their suits were admitted by the Constitutional Court, German President Horst Köhler would not be legally allowed to sign the Lisbon Treaty, even if it were ratified by mid-May, as planned by the government, because the entire case would be pending before the court.

The treaty ratification has run into other difficulties in Germany, because the Federal government faces resistance among the state governments, relating to the “accompanying law” which the Merkel Cabinet wants to have passed by the Parliament, in order to have a smooth ratification of the treaty there. But this new law involves questions of Article 23 of the Basic Law (Germany’s constitution), concerning the delicate balance of powers between the Federal and state governments. Therefore, all 16 state governments have declared that they will not ratify the treaty for the time being.

Austrian labor unionists issued an appeal on Feb. 26, to all politicians who are also members of a labor union, to recall that in 2004, labor throughout Europe opposed the original EU Constitution draft, on the grounds that it was anti-labor and would lower wages, and to recall that this “no” laid the groundwork for the defeat of the Constitution in referenda in France and the Netherlands in the Spring of 2005. The EU Constitution therefore never went into effect (and was, in fact, resubmitted, as the current EU Treaty). Labor leaders spoke up at a hearing of the Labor and Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament on Feb. 26-27. The Austrian initiative also exposes the threat which the Lisbon Treaty poses to the nation’s neutrality status.

In the Netherlands, the opposition Socialists, who hold almost 25% of the seats in the Parliament, are at the core of a cross-party initiative to pass legislation making a referendum mandatory.

The Higher Stakes

This resistance to the Treaty is intersected by the interventions of the LaRouche movement, which is the only institution making the crucial point that the struggle against the treaty, and against the Bloomberg-Rohatyn Presidential conspiracy in the United States, are one and the same fight. That point is beginning to attract more and more interest among anti-treaty activists, as demonstrated at two events at the end of February: The LaRouche BüSo party held a joint German-Austrian event against the Lisbon Treaty, on Feb. 29, together with representatives of the pro-referendum movement of Austria (see accompanying article). The day before, Helga Zepp-LaRouche gave a presentation on the treaty at an event in Rome (see *EIR*, March 7). There she exposed the “intertwining of NATO and the European Union” under the solidarity clause of the treaty, placing this in the context of the pro-fascist conspiracies in both the United States and Europe: “If you have a Bloomberg fascist government in the United States and a Lisbon [Treaty] dictatorship in Europe, I have fear that we are on a road to World War III,” she said. Furthermore, her Feb. 14 statement calling for Europeanwide resistance to the treaty, was pub-