

## New drink driving plans have their origins in Brussels

*But the real story has to do with the way in which journalists and civil servants collaborate over news management exercises to suit the purposes of the EU*

A single glass of wine or pint of beer will push drivers over the legal drinking limit if proposals being considered by the Department of Transport become law. Police will also have the power to stop motorists at random and breathalyse them.

According to the *Daily Telegraph* on 1st December, a departmental 'consultation' is to be launched in the New Year which is likely to lead to measures that will reduce the legal blood alcohol limit almost by half. James Kirkup, the *Telegraph's* political correspondent revealed that Ministers believe that the limit could be cut from 80 mg of alcohol in 100 ml of blood to 50 mg. This could put drivers over the limit after a single large glass of wine.

### Full Competence

Kirkup, who had enjoyed an exclusive Whitehall briefing, reported that the measure "would bring Britain into line with most other European countries". However, it was that incomparable political blogger Richard North who pointed out that the move is almost certainly the consequence of pressure from the EU Commission to harmonise road safety laws throughout Europe. The EU now enjoys full competence in this area and is able to use the threat of legislation to bring member states into line. There is no way of knowing but on this occasion it may well be that it was not even

necessary to make the threat: officials at the Department of Transport know better than the ordinary citizen where power resides and what is expected of them without being told.

The real story, as North implied, has to do with the way in which journalists even on avowedly eurosceptic papers, allow themselves to be used by Whitehall as part of a news management exercise that serves the purposes of the government in Brussels and with how civil servants gear up well in advance to achieve this.

### The Spin Habit

The reason why politicians find it hard to kick the spin habit - even when they try to do so - is that spin has become institutionalised, a term which is much misused, but is entirely appropriate in this context. The transfer of powers to Brussels is largely if not totally to blame. Ministers and senior civil servants cannot say: "*We are going to introduce draconian laws to curb drink driving because our political masters in Brussels have so decided although Gordon Brown won't thank us for pointing this out*". That would give the game away. So in order to achieve their objectives they dig up dodgy statistics which are leaked to journalists who are either unsuspecting or simply prepared to play ball. And then they pretend that they are engaged in a

process of public 'consultation' when the outcome has long been ordained.

In the present instance it is not clear whether Kirkup was ignorant of the powers of the EU on road safety issues or whether he was simply unwilling to allow the facts to influence his "exclusive" front page story. But he should have been aware just how inadequate the case for substantially reducing the blood alcohol limit - as presented to him by the Department of Transport - actually is.

To begin with road safety and motoring organisations are divided about the matter - the Safe Speed road safety campaign, for example is strongly opposed to the proposed measures.

### Proposed change

More important the statistics given to Kirkup do not support the case for the proposed change. These include data showing a 25 per cent increase in the number of 17-19-year olds involved in drink driving accidents. But such figures are meaningless in the absence of data about the number of those in this age group on the road. Even if correct they do not provide a logical reason for supposing that the proposed change would have a positive impact on drink-related accidents.

Moreover, Kirkup did not think to include the most important data - the

**Continued on p.2**

**INSIDE: MEPs to spend more of our money p.2 - Britain caves in over Galileo p.2 - Working in EU Commission means never say sorry p.3 - What Britain's EU contribution could go on p.3 - Abba Eban quote p.3 - Constitution: parliament side-lined p.4 - Could credit crunch destroy euro? p.4 - Virtuous to a degree? p.4 - British fight to save cash for the few p.5 - Brown's claims about Lisbon Treaty p.6 - Referendum how Labour could still smell of roses p.6 - EU diplomatic service: governments kept in dark p.7 - Don't tell the voters p.7 - Euro-enthusiasm replaces socialism on Labour benches p.8 - Thousands may die because of EU ambitions p.9 - European sports police p.9**

# MEPs to spend more of our money to make themselves seem 'relevant'

European Parliamentarians have approved by a huge majority plans to make themselves appear more 'relevant' and to halt the down-drift in voter turnout at EP elections.

The plans boil down to enabling European political parties, which currently number ten, to use public money to finance campaigns which it is hoped will engage public interest. A further million in public funding will also be available to political parties which wish to set up political foundations to assist them

Voter turnout has drifted downwards in virtually all EU countries. In Britain

only 24.1 per cent of voters turned out to participate in the 1999 elections. This rose to 38.8 per cent, the highest figure ever, in 2004 - but this was largely explained by UKIP's much higher profile and the fact that local elections were held on the same date.

The most recent election to be held in the EU was that in Romania on 19th November. Despite the fact that it was the first such election and that a host of European VIPs stressed the historic nature of the occasion only 29 per cent of the electorate voted.

Welcoming the EP's backing for her plans Margot Wallstrom, the

communications commissioner said that the point of the new measures was "not to ask everybody to love the European Union, but to say: 'There is something going on, you had better participate'".

She added, somewhat plaintively, "Well, we need to do something".

Mrs Wallstrom made one other suggestion for increasing public interest in EU politics - that of promoting the idea that one of the top jobs up for grabs in 2009, either as EU foreign minister, president or head of commission, should go to a woman.

Who *can* she have in mind?

## Britain caves in over Galileo

First, the Government said that it would only back Galileo if there were to be private funding. Then when the project - surely destined to be the biggest EU white elephant after the CAP - ran into acute funding difficulties it said it found the proposals to divert unused funds from the CAP and the EU administration budget "completely unacceptable".

But on 29th November Britain meekly caved in and supported the project whose estimated total costs are put at £10 billion over 25 years. Britain's contribution - providing there are no further increases in costs - is

likely to be 17 per cent or £1.7 billion.

The decision to back the project flies in the face of criticism from the House of Commons Transport Select Committee whose recent report could not have been more scathing (*eurofacts* 30th November).

In the knowledge that the matter was likely to be decided by qualified majority voting the Committee strongly urged the Government to hold up progress on other projects unless EU ministers agreed to a review all possible options including the zero-option of cancellation. In the event Britain did not raise a squeak of protest and went along with the majority. Only Spain voted against the new funding

proposals - because its demand to host a ground control centre for Galileo was turned down - but subsequently announced that it had changed its mind.

Welcoming the decision, which followed six hours of wrangling, Mario Lino, the Portuguese Transport Minister said that it represented "*an indication of power on the world stage*".

But the project is already five years behind schedule and grossly over-budget. If there are further delays, technical hitches, or rows about cost-sharing leading, as seems very likely, to the collapse of the project, what will that indicate?

Continued from p.1

## Drink driving plans have their origin in Brussels

official figures for those killed in drink related accidents. These show a recent gradual decline in the number of drink-drive deaths. Last year the number fell to 540 from 560 in 2005 and 590 in 2004.

Kirkup also claimed - presumably at the behest of the DfT - that the situation has worsened because there is now no recollection of the 'highly effective anti-drink driving campaigns' of the 1980s. To repeat, the situation has not worsened, it has recently got

better. But if ministers want to demonstrate their 'concern' it would be better to repeat that campaign rather than to pass laws that will turn moderate drinkers - many with impeccable driving records - into criminals.

The consequences of the proposed change are not difficult to predict. It will damage the lives of moderate drinkers. It will make life drabber and it will wholly destroy social life in rural areas while impoverishing that of

those in many outer suburbs. It will involve a change in police priorities and a diversion of police resources. It is likely to damage relations between police and public, while also increasing public antipathy towards authority generally.

Meanwhile the real story about the corruption of government and the acquiescence of much of the media in this process - a much more profound matter than the current scandal over party funding - remains largely untold.

# Working in the EU Commission means never having to say you are sorry

It is a truism that governments that have been in office a long time become arrogant - but governments, like the one in Brussels, that are not democratically accountable - simply have no sense of shame.

On 3rd December the *Times* reported that disabled people who rely on motorised scooters are to be hit with a £300 tax. This follows an EU ruling that these should be categorised as leisure vehicles along with jet skis, racing cars, snowmobiles and golf buggies.

The electric power-driven wheelchairs with flexible handlebars are used by many disabled people with mobility problems including disabled servicemen.

Jim Dooley, a former pop singer who runs the Mobility Bureau, which provides motorised wheelchairs and scooters for hundreds of disabled servicemen, complained about the ruling to Mr Brown last July and received a reply from the Treasury

which promised to look into the matter. EU spokesmen have declined to comment.

Without joining the steadily dwindling camp of Brown admirers, we suspect that authority in the matter did not rest with the British government. In this instance it would have made a show of concern and might even have put matters right. Even when evading responsibility for major blunders British ministers tend to be at least polite when responding to public concerns. Since their jobs don't depend on the voters EU Commissioners evidently feel no such need.

Here is another example. Last month the European Court of Auditors pointed out that the 2003 reform to the CAP has resulted in the allocation of cash to landlords who have never practiced agriculture, such as railway companies, horse riding and golf clubs.

You might have thought that in the circumstances Mrs Mariann Fischer Boel, the EU Commissioner for

Agriculture would have wished to apologise or to express sincere regret that millions of euros in taxpayers money had been so wantonly misused. You would be wrong.

According to *EUObserver* Mrs Fischer Boel reacted angrily when pressed on the subject by reporters, dismissing the criticism as a "stupid message" which was "completely out of the question". It was never "our intention" when pursuing the CAP overhaul, she insisted.

"It's a pity that all the efforts and all the improvement that we have made in agriculture to secure that money is totally overshadowed by a history of golf courses. And that's why I'm pissed off with that discussion", she announced.

It seems that one consequence of the democratic deficit is bad manners and bad language as well as arrogance. If they choose to reply at all to criticism the response of EU officials can be effectively summarised in two words - and the second of these is "off".

## What Britain's European Union contribution could go on

As we pointed in earlier issues, under the EU Financial Perspective for 2007-13 Britain's contribution after the partial surrender of the Thatcher rebate will be a staggering £10.2 billion a year. In an excellent briefing note published ahead of a Commons debate on the European Communities (Finance) Bill on Monday 19th November *Open Europe*

pointed out that the money could alternatively be used for the following:

- Cut council tax by nearly 50 per cent.
- Build 40 brand new general hospitals each year.
- Employ an extra 320,000 nurses each year.
- Cut the main rate of corporation tax

by 11p.

- Cut the basic rate of income tax by 3p.
- Raise the inheritance tax threshold from £300,000 to £2,925,000.
- Raise the income tax personal allowance by £2,000.
- Cut petrol duty by 75 per cent.
- Pay the total bill for the London Olympics in less than one year.

## Well, how much longer do we have to wait?

*History teaches us that men and nations behave wisely once they have exhausted all other alternatives.*

Abba Eban, Israeli (S. African-born) diplomat and politician (1915 - 2002).

*eurofacts wishes its readers the compliments of the season.  
Our next issue will be published on 11th January 2008*

# Constitution: parliament sidelined and public kept in the dark

## *Commons European Scrutiny Committee casts further doubt on the Government's 'red lines'*

In its follow-up report\* on the revised Constitution the House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee provides highly convincing evidence for thinking that the Government's red lines are worthless. The report is also scathing about the secrecy surrounding the IGC at which the treaty was approved and the ruthless manner in which national parliaments were sidelined. The report states: "We again recall that as recently as June this year the European Council not only emphasized the 'crucial importance of reinforcing communications with the European citizens and involving them in permanent dialogue' but also stated that this would be 'particularly important during the upcoming IGC and ratification processes'. Such statements now ring hollow, and we reiterate our earlier comment that the process could not have been better designed to marginalize the role of national parliaments and curtail public debate, until it has become too late for such debate to have any effect on the agreements which have

been reached." (p.5)

The conclusion of the report is printed in full below:

71. In this report, we make a number of detailed observations on aspects of the Reform Treaty, notably on the 'red-lines' identified by the Government as preconditions for agreement, and on the less than transparent way in which the IGC has been prepared and conducted.

72. We remain concerned that the provisions on the role of national parliaments are still cast in terms in which a legal obligation can be inferred, despite the undertakings given by Ministers; and we repeat that, given its constitutional significance, this is not an issue where any ambiguity is acceptable.

73. We express doubts on the effectiveness of the Protocol on the Charter of Fundamental Rights and do not consider that it guarantees that the Charter can have no effect on the law of the United Kingdom when it is combined with consideration of the

implementation of Union law.

74. We draw attention to the provisions relating to the 'opt-in' on amendments to existing EU measures, where we consider that a stronger position could have been achieved.

75. We are concerned that the interpretation of the red line to "protect UK civil and criminal justice" as only requiring control of the decision to opt in or not does not recognise the loss of protection that will occur every time jurisdiction is transferred from UK courts to jurisdiction by the European Court of Justice and the Commission.

76. Having drawn these matters and our recommendations to the attention of the House we now consider that the matters raised should be debated on the Floor of the House before the Treaty is signed and we therefore hold the document under scrutiny.

\*European Union Intergovernmental Conference: Follow-up report, Third Report of Session 2007-8.

## Could credit crunch destroy the euro?

Interest rate spreads between nations like Germany can't be reconciled with much weaker debt-driven members like Ireland and Spain. Government bonds in France, Spain, Germany and Italy have lately got wider and wider. In other words, believe it or not, the markets are increasingly betting on the eurozone breaking up - as political tensions rise, and the needs of inflation-averse

held together with a federal tax system. It sounds far-fetched, I know. But the ultimate victim of this sub-prime crisis could be nothing less than the single currency's existence.

Could it happen? Why not? Every other currency union in the history of man has broken up - unless, like the US and UK, it has been preceded by generations of political union, and

Liam Halligan, Economics Editor, Sunday Telegraph, 2nd December 2007.

## Virtuous to a degree?

Eurosceptic Tory MEPs are claiming that the ousting of Timothy Kirkhope as Conservative leader in the EP and his replacement by Giles Chichester represents a victory for euroscepticism. But it can be hailed as such only if the law of marginal virtue is evoked. Asked by Daniel Hannan

MEP whether if elected they would commit to making a public statement in favour of David Cameron's pledge to leaving the EPP both men declined to do so. Mr Hannan promptly abstained.

Mr Kirkhope is reported to have had hoped that his part in securing the

defection of Sajjad Karim from the Lib Dems would save his embattled leadership but he lost the vote of the Tory MEPs by just one vote. Mr Karim is thought to have voted for Mr Kirkhope.

# British officials fight to save cash for the few not the many

As we go to press we can observe the unedifying spectacle of British officials fighting to save one of the worst of the many unattractive aspects of the CAP - its propensity to hand out lavish aid to rich landowners and booming agri-businesses. Like the rest of the cash that goes on EU projects the money being handed over comes from the net EU contributors, to be more precise from taxpayers in Britain, Germany and the Netherlands. Such is the structure of taxation that most comes from low to medium earners for the simple reason that there are many more of them than there are millionaires. The present policy discriminates in favour of rich countries as well as some fabulously rich individuals. Sixty per cent of the money goes to France, Spain, Italy and Germany. In other words, the money flows from the relatively poor via Brussels to mostly very rich people in mostly rich countries. Poland, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria where there is high unemployment and real poverty in rural areas receive only the small change.

## Business Development

However, under the Commission proposals published in November all individual farm payments above £70,000 would be cut by ten per cent, those above £140,000 by 25 per cent and those over £210,000 by 45 per cent. This will still be a Robin Hood story in reverse - 85 per cent of funding under the CAP will go to 18 per cent of farmers and landowners - but at least the rich will be gifted smaller sums. The Queen, for example, would lose £280,000 of the income from her estates. The money saved is intended to be ring-fenced to pay for conservation and rural business development.

Why should British officials oppose such a change? Doesn't Brown constantly assure us that the whole point of his government and indeed his entire existence is to help "the many

not the few"? Moreover, it is only a matter of weeks since the government in a publication entitled *Global Europe* roundly condemned the CAP and said it would fight for the end of agricultural support and protection.

In order to understand the present situation it is necessary to go back to the beginning of the campaign by non-governmental organisations and newspapers for greater openness about where the money from the 55 billion CAP budgets goes. Following an action under the Freedom of Information Act by the *Guardian* in 2005 revelations about farm subsidies to the Queen (£466,000 in 2005), the Duke of Westminster (£526,136) and Sir Richard Sutton (£917,650) received wide publicity, as did similar revelations in other countries.

As a result 18 countries now publish at least partial data about recipients. Among the fabulously wealthy continental recipients are the Duchess of Alba, the Prince of Monaco and the opulently named Johannes Adam Ferdinand Alois Josef Maria Mark d'Aviano Pius who presumably needs large income just to support his name. The latter is Prince of Lichtenstein and not even an EU citizen but last year received 1.7 million euros for his Austrian estate.

## Media attention

In Spain the rich list is dominated by many affluent '*agriculturas de sofa*' as well as by tobacco and alcohol producers.

Media attention about the recipients of the fund about which the Commission has shown more and more irritation have led directly to Commission's proposals which, of course, do not change the fundamental character of the CAP. These, it hopes, will become law in the spring of next year.

British officials are opposing the plans because they claim the present recipients will respond by using clever

lawyers and accountants to help them split up their holdings even if their resistance makes Brown look hypocritical. They also maintain it would be perverse if, having encouraged efficiencies of scale, they now support measures which would discourage them.

Since payment under the CAP goes to landowners (many of who let their land to farmers who receive no EU funding) rather those who farm the land it is not clear that the British officials are correct. And in the case of recipients who still do farm one suspects that with the help of those clever lawyers and accountants they will find a way to ensure that the division of their property is a formal matter only and does not impinge on farm operations. For that reason, one suspects the British opposition really reflects a fear that Britain will receive less in total and that in seeking a short term national advantage it is doing what national officials do most of the time at the instruction of their governments.

## Weak and Hypocritical

Instead of expressing root and branch opposition to a policy which it acknowledges is indefensible, both morally and economically it ends up opposing proposals which, although we don't want to exaggerate the point, might improve matters at the margins. As a result, Britain looks both weak and hypocritical. The CAP is not a minor defect in the EU design; it is one of its principal defining characteristics. Moreover, it is one which provides a sufficient reason for Britain to withhold its contribution to the EU until the CAP is scrapped and to face up to the consequences when our demands are not met. If Britain needs to pick a fight with the EU in order to place its relationship with continental Europe on a fundamentally different basis the CAP is the issue over which to fight; it should be a matter of shame that the battle was not waged long ago.

# Brown's claims about the Lisbon Treaty: some historic parallels

On 9th October last the Labour-dominated House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee published its report on the Lisbon Treaty in which it confirmed that the revised document is indeed the Constitution. If signed in Lisbon on 13th December, and if ratified, it will come into force in 2009.

Of Mr Brown's position, (that this is not the Constitution and that the red lines protect UK interests), the kindest thing that can be said is that it stands in the tradition of great political canards.

Looking back through post-war British political history for parallels, Harold Wilson's assertion that the sterling devaluation he'd just announced "*wouldn't affect the pound in your pocket*" is one example. Another, given the evidence to the contrary that has already come to light, is Mr Blair's claim to be "*a pretty regular sort of guy*". But given the scale of the deception involved both rank as minor porkies compared to Mr Brown's.

Looking beyond our shores for a parallel, the events of June 1940 come to mind. The present deception is rather like Marshal Pétain signing the Instrument of Surrender and proclaiming to the French people that it was perfectly alright because he'd signed with a French fountain pen not a German one.

When drawing up a league table of recent British porkies it is striking how many of them have to do with Europe. For example there is Keith Vaz's claim that the Charter of Fundamental Rights

was of no more significance than the Beano. Also Jack Straw's suggestion that we should not be alarmed by the prospect of a European constitution "*because golf clubs have constitutions*". Then there was the solemn assurance of Margaret Beckett, then Foreign Secretary that if Europe was granted legal personality this would be "*no big deal*".

The deceptions of the Major, Heath and Wilson years are too numerous and familiar to repeat, but the tradition of deceiving the public about Europe goes back at least until 1962. Then, in a pamphlet in favour of joining the Common Market, the Conservative Prime Minister, Harold MacMillan, wrote:

*"...joining the EC will not alter the position of the Crown, nor rob our Parliament of its essential powers, nor deprive our law courts of their authority in our domestic life..."*

As we now know, at least two of his three predictions turned out to be wrong. In contrast, in that same year, the Leader of the Opposition, Hugh Gaitskell, in his speech to the Labour Party Conference, got it right:

*".....it [joining the European Community] does mean, if this is the idea, the end of Britain as an independent European state.....it means the end of a thousand years of history..."*

Charles de Gaulle also got it right - magisterially so. On 7th April 1960, in his speech to the combined Houses of Parliament in Westminster Hall, in a tribute to British democracy and

stability, he said:

*"...lacking meticulously worked out constitutional texts, but by virtue of an unchallengeable general consent, you find the means, on each occasion, to ensure the efficient functioning of democracy..."*

"Lacking meticulously worked out constitutional texts." Such days are now gone. Our governments knowingly rejected what worked and are about to impose on us what doesn't: the mother and father of all "*meticulously worked-out constitutional texts*".

Later, on 14th January 1963, de Gaulle was asked at his press conference at the Elysée to explain his position vis-à-vis Britain's application to join the Common Market. His reply was lengthy and carefully thought-out. *euofacts* readers will be familiar with its key passage:

*"...England is...insular, maritime, linked through its trade, markets and food supply to very diverse and often distant countries. Its activities are essentially industrial and commercial, and only slightly agricultural. It has...very marked and original customs and traditions. In short, the nature, structure and economic context of England differ profoundly from those of the other States of the continent..."*

If only our political leaders had possessed an equally clear understanding of Britain's place in the world.

## Referendum: how Labour could still smell of roses

*Even at this late stage, it must surely be worth the government's while rethinking its strategy on refusing a referendum on the Lisbon treaty. Letting one be held with the very probable No vote result, would provide the government with the leverage it needs to resist further integrationist moves, which it is hard to believe that most members of the government - any more than most other people in Britain*

*- want to see implemented. Having a referendum would fulfil the promise given at the last general election to allow the people a say. It would certainly be a popular move with most people. It would deprive the Conservatives of their current advantage in supporting a policy on having a democratic vote on the Lisbon treaty, which the current government opposes. It is true that agreeing to a*

*referendum in the UK would make our government unpopular with many of the leaders in other countries but there are worse things in the world than that. Wantonly and unnecessarily surrendering our national sovereignty to Brussels is one of them.*

Labour Euro-Safeguards Campaign Bulletin, November 2007.

# EU diplomatic service: national governments will be kept in the dark

*Europe's new diplomats will enjoy a relationship of confidentiality with Europe's foreign policy suprema - and it is to him alone that they will be accountable*

Diplomacy is necessarily conducted behind closed doors - progress is not possible if negotiations on sensitive issues take place under the full glare of publicity. A mature liberal democracy can live with this reality in the knowledge that democratically-elected ministers have ultimate responsibility for the deals to which secret diplomacy may lead and that these are likely to be subject to a process of parliamentary scrutiny.

However, in 2009 the revised EU constitution will come into force and a new breed of European diplomats will be born. According to the Lisbon treaty the job of the newly created diplomatic force - to be known as the European External Action Service (EEAS) - will be to assist the EU's foreign minister (who, to avoid offending delicate British sensibilities, will actually be called the High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy).

The new Eurocrats will include officials from the secretariat of the EU Council, Commission staff and seconded diplomats from member countries. There is no agreement about how many there will be or how they are to be recruited or how the EEAS will be funded, but the aim will be to mould them into a single supra-national diplomatic service with its own ethos, structure and career opportunities. There are expected to be big rows over the coming months as EU members fight to get as many of their nationals into senior positions as possible. In the long run the outcome may not be that important: the allegiance and career interests of

members of the EEAS will depend on their standing in Brussels, not in their home capitals. For they will be answerable to the newly appointed High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy who will wear a double hat and cover the existing post of High Representative to the European Council (Javier Solana) and that of the EU external relations commissioner (Benita Ferrero-Waldner).

The members of the EEAS will enjoy a confidential relationship with the new Foreign Policy suprema and it is to him and him alone that they will be accountable.

Member states will not necessarily know about what is going on in negotiations between the EU and other governments.

## Similar Ignorance

*"Member states should not expect to see everything the External Action Service produces - you cannot run a foreign policy like that,"* Bob Crow, a former senior aide to Javier Solana, said recently at the launch of a report on the modus operandi of the EEAS by the Brussels-based European Policy Centre (EPC).\*

In other words the only people who will know what is going on in negotiations about the EU's external relations will be the newly created and unaccountable European diplomats and the unaccountable foreign policy suprema. So it won't be just the European electorate's that will be in the dark about what foreign policy deals are being struck in their name; their national governments may very well be

in a similar state of ignorance.

Brussels insiders are keen - desperate would not be too strong a word - to ensure that the preparations for the new service are to be kept from the public at least until such time as it is too late to protest (see below).

The EPC describes itself as "an independent think-tank at the cutting edge of policy" but its declared aim is to "make European political integration work" and its committees, study groups and working parties are stuffed full of Jean Monnet professors and former high-ranking Commission employees; part of its funding comes from the EU.

Although the French President is almost certain to try shape the EEAS in such a way as to serve French interests when France takes over the presidency of the EU in the second half of 2008, the EPC is staking out a role as a major influence on the evolution of the new service and as a potential recruiting ground for staff. The EPC's publications are written by Brussels insiders for Brussels insiders. None of them are much fun: their authors are to familiar with the ways of Brussels to place anything controversial or interesting in the public domain. Indeed the best that we can hope for by way of information about the development of the EEAS may be the odd tit-bit of knowledge that it emerges from its well-funded seminars and conferences.

*\*Working Paper No.28: The EU Foreign Service: how to build a more effective common policy.*

## Don't tell the voters - or you will ruin everything

*"...we have to make sure that there are no discussions taking place in the open air,"* Guenter Burghardt, a former EU ambassador to the US, warning that

details of the new EU diplomatic service (officially to be known as the External Action Service) should not be discussed in public before the UK

parliament had ratified the reform treaty and Ireland has held its treaty referendum early next summer (source: *EUObserver* on 27th November 2007).

## Euro-enthusiasm has replaced socialism on Labour benches

**Mr Austin Mitchell** (Great Grimsby) (Lab): The basic problem that we face with this Bill [European Communities (Finance) Bill] is that it adds to the costs of belonging to the European Union, which are already unacceptably high for this country. After Germany, which is much more generous and committed towards Europe, we have long been the second highest contributor. That situation has been compounded by the concessions made on the rebate by our previous Prime Minister, whose name slips my mind temporarily, earlier in the year without much consultation with Labour Members...

Europe is a matter of continuous negotiation, albeit a rather annoying and embittering one. In the negotiation, one must play one's cards and games in return for sacrifices. My concern is that there were no reciprocal gains and we got nothing in the negotiations, either on the treaty, which was also in play and being negotiated at the same time, or on the budget situation that has been so damaging to this country. Before those concessions, our contributions, which will increase under this Bill, were between £7 billion and £8 billion gross over the past few years.

What benefits do we get? We certainly cannot claim the common fisheries policy as a benefit. No one would defend that. Nobody seems to claim the CAP as a benefit, apart perhaps from the hon. Member for Dundee, East who said it brought stability, but it brings stability at enormous cost and distorts our market.

Nobody would say that the other common policy - foreign and defence policy - has achieved much. How successful was it in Yugoslavia? It was largely responsible for breaking up Yugoslavia. The EU was pushed into intervention in Kosovo by President Clinton. Look how united and solid the EU was on Iraq, where it fell into squabbling camps. In Afghanistan, we

are being left to bear the brunt of the fighting and death while German troops have to clock off for tea at 5. Again the burdens fall on us...

I want to know what benefits we are getting from the contribution enshrined in the Bill. Euro-enthusiasm has in some respects replaced socialism as a credo on the Labour Benches. The Liberals believe in "My Europe, right or wrong", or perhaps "My Europe mainly right, very occasionally wrong but we don't talk about it". However, the wealth of nations is built by hard-headed realism, not by impulsive romantic gestures, not by naivety and certainly not by being the slave of a dead ideology - Keynes' critique - repeating a pointless mantra about the inestimable benefits of EU membership.

We have to be realistic and hard-headed. The reality is that we would be better off out, sloughing off the burdens of Europe, trading with the wider world and co-operating with the nations with which we share problems rather than achieving that co-operation by financing a huge superstructure of marble palaces in Brussels, a play-away Parliament, a massive bureaucracy and all the failed programmes that go with it. That is the reality.

**Mr John Redwood** (Wokingham) (Con): In 1984, as a young man, I was the chief policy adviser to the then Prime Minister. One of my proudest moments in that job was when she returned from a difficult negotiation in the European Community where, thanks entirely to her skill, determination and perseverance, she obtained for the UK a most important reduction in the amount that we had to pay into the European Economic Community.

It was a great negotiation because to achieve that rebate, that lady had to persuade all the other member states to

her point of view. She could not block the payments that we were making because a Labour Government had agreed them. She knew they were far too high, and it was her consummate skill as a negotiator and politician that slowly persuaded all the other member states, reluctantly and gradually, to the view that Britain was getting an extremely raw deal; it was paying far too much, and justice required that more of the money should be left in the United Kingdom...

When the former Prime Minister moved his position, from the excellent one that there was no need to give up the rebate and that it was not negotiable, to the position that it was negotiable, I and many of my right hon. and hon. Friends had misgivings...

Some of my right hon. and hon. Friends withheld their criticism to wait and see whether the then Prime Minister had some negotiating skills. It beggars belief that he had absolutely no negotiating skills at all. Armed with the veto, he threw it away. Armed with a strong case to win over the new member states and the Nordic member states to the proposition that the common agricultural policy was bad and should be reformed, he was unable to persuade any of them. Tonight, we have a House of Commons with Labour Members almost in denial and about to vote through a disaster for the United Kingdom in the form of an extremely large bill that we cannot afford and do not want.

I notice that the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, who is on the Treasury Bench, has no intention of intervening, because she knows that I am absolutely right about the huge expense. The documents reveal costings of £7.4 billion at the current euro-sterling exchange rate. Given the parlous state of the national accounts, we know that every penny of that £7.4 billion will have to be borrowed. If it were

Continued on p.9

# Thousands may die because EU ambitions exceed its capabilities

Escalating violence in the central African republic of Chad could turn into a genocide similar to that in Rwanda in 1994, the UN refugee agency has warned...but the EU peace-keeping mission which was supposed to arrive in October has been further delayed for the lack of ten helicopters and support assets.

The UNCHR says the killing tactics from neighbouring Darfur have been transported to eastern Chad which now provides a shelter for an estimated 200,000 refugees from Darfur.

The conflict has followed them across the border with attacks by Janjaweed Arab militia on camels and horseback leaving hundreds dead and 110,000 homeless. Eastern Chad and Darfur have a similar ethnic make-up, with nomadic Arab groups and black African farmers competing for land

and water.

In all Chad provides shelter for more than 400,000 refugees and for more than a year aid organisations have been calling for international measures to protect them.

Chad and Sudan have recently accused each other of supporting rival armed factions.

EU forces were due to have arrived in Chad at the end of the rainy season in October under a UN resolution but the refusal of EU members to make up the shortfall in helicopters, medical assistance and practical support has prevented this from happening. According to Reuters a meeting of EU officials on 26th November failed to solve the problem.

Apart from France eleven EU countries have come forward with offers of troops and equipment. Britain and Germany have refused because of

their commitments in Afghanistan.

The present delay has been exacerbated by a British refusal to back a French decision to permit the rules to be changed so that common funding can be used to compensate member states that supply assets. The Reuters report says that the UK government is arguing that more funds discourages countries from buying their own defence assets and penalises those that do since they effectively pay twice over.

As *eurofacts* goes to press there are mounting diplomatic efforts to break the deadlock for fear that EU credibility will suffer ahead of the EU-African summit. A rather more serious consequence is that hundreds, even thousands, may die because the EU's military capabilities fail to match its ambitions.

## First step to create European sport police

Portuguese Interior Minister Rui Pereira announced that the EU Council on 14 December would adopt a text on better police co-ordination on

exchanging information on racist or violent supporters, with European travel bans for these individuals and the creation of joint police teams in

charge of operating during international events. He said, "*It's a first step towards a European sport police*".

Continued from p.8

## Euro-enthusiasm has replaced socialism

borrowed over, say, a 20-year period at 5 per cent -the Government might be able to do that - there would be another £7.4 billion of interest on top of the £7.4 billion of capital that will need to be paid and then repaid over the 20 years of the debt. I leave out the interest on the interest, which would add to the sum even more. On the Government's own admission in the explanatory notes to the Bill - they are riddled with errors, of course, but I do not think that this figure is an error - the minimum cost to the state and the taxpayer will be £7.5 billion, which, in practice, will mean £15 billion or more, because they will have to borrow

it and we will have to pay interest on it.

If we look beneath the Government's guidance, we see that the true bill to the taxpayer and the British Government will be far bigger. This Government have signed up to a set of spending plans that mean that, on average, every year over the seven-year period the United Kingdom will have to pay £10 billion into the European Union, after knocking off the smaller rebate, which is still in place thanks to Baroness Thatcher. That means that, in practice, there will be an underlying spending increase of £70 billion over a seven-year period. Using my simple sum, if the Government borrowed that over 20

years at 5 per cent., we are talking about £140 billion of first-round interest payments and capital repayments, just to see us through the seven years. At the end of the seven years, of course, we know that we would be on another escalator, because our bargaining position would be greatly weakened thanks to the Government's foolishness in giving away this most important principle and allowing the rebate to be weakened.

*Source: House of Commons Hansard, 19th November 2007. Parliamentary copyright 2007.*

# LETTERS

Tel: 08456 12 12 65 Fax: 08456 12 12 75 email: [eurofacts@junepress.com](mailto:eurofacts@junepress.com)

## UKIP's Impact

Dear Sir,

Sir George Earle argues that UKIP's policy is to "enfranchise" all those voters who want to leave the EU. (Letter, "Harsh Attack", November 16th.)

A worthy aim, in general, but not if the practical outcome assists the EU in the pursuit of its own, infinitely more important, aims.

Which was the result in up to 27 marginal constituencies in 2005, where intervention by UKIP invariably helped the worst of the two leading candidates to gain a voice and a vote in the Commons, and in his parliamentary party, plus privileged access to the media to spread pro-EU lies.

By fielding candidates in those constituencies UKIP "enfranchised" fewer than 40,000 voters, at the price of making it significantly easier for the EU to impose its revived Constitution on 60 million people in this country, and nearly 500 million across the EU.

Turning from the past to the future, consider the fourth step in the forward plan outlined by Frederick Forsyth.

("My four-point plan to win a referendum on the EU Constitution", *eurofacts*, November 16th page 3.)

No doubt a Labour MP in a marginal constituency would be seriously perturbed by the prospect of a pro-referendum "independent Labour" candidate standing against him at the next election.

However that nagging concern would be countered by the reassuring thought that he could probably rely on UKIP to come to his aid.

UKIP members are encouraged in the delusion that the way to "target" such an MP must be to put up a UKIP candidate. But the Labour MP would certainly believe the opposite, judging that the net effect would be to disadvantage his Tory opponent.

UKIP has amply demonstrated that, at the margin, it can affect the

composition of the House of Commons, and the balance of power within the parties.

But it has yet to demonstrate that it understands how to use its limited resources in the best interests of the British people.

Dr D R COOPER  
Berkshire

## What People Want

Dear Sir,

Your correspondents who argue about UKIP's electoral effect on the Tories now are engaging in shadow boxing - on both sides.

UKIP, despite the good intentions of most of its membership, has been the great disaster of British politics. It has sterilised the whole European argument and taken it out of the mainstream. People don't talk about the EU in terms of British politics. They lump it with UKIP as a quite separate issue, in effect putting the issue in a ghetto.

Is this the result of a plot hatched in Brussels? If so it has worked brilliantly. If it hadn't existed the Tory party would have been anti-EU by now because all the anti-EU Tories who went to UKIP would have made it so. As it was, it was hamstrung by the europhile element who had more influence than they would otherwise have had. Those europhiles could have been Tories but wasted all their energies on UKIP.

I was - as some will know - part of UKIP and am now ashamed of being so naive.

The argument now should be entirely focussed on how best to repair the damage done and the reality of politics is that the best we have on offer is what Cameron has said.

*"Such a situation [a ratified Constitution] would mean that, in our view, European integration would have gone too far and, of course, the new situation would lack democratic*

*legitimacy. Accordingly, this would not be acceptable to a Conservative Government and we would not let matters rest there. But we believe that we should determine our precise response to that situation, if it comes to pass, nearer the time."*

The logic of this is - as all the polls show is what people here want most - an associate status.

CHRISTINA SPEIGHT  
London

## Constitutional Truths

Dear Sir,

Mr Forsyth puts his case with his customary elegance and lucidity. However he is wrong on two counts. He is assuming that a referendum will be conducted honestly when we know from experience that our masters in Brussels will contribute enough of our money to ensure their preferred result and ignore it anyway if it is not to their liking. Secondly, he is implying that our own Constitution is negotiable. Our Constitution is not negotiable. Just as our membership of the European Union is illegal under the 1559 Act of Supremacy, any attempt to overthrow the sovereignty of the Monarch and Parliament is illegal under the 1351 Treason Act and the 1848 Treason Felony Act. Rather than canvassing MPs for their opinions, it would be more profitable to remind them of the penalty for Treason and campaign for the re-introduction of the death penalty.

The Queen, too, should be reminded of her duty to her subjects. If she is unwilling or unable to uphold her Coronation Oath, it should be pointed out to her that under Article 61 of the Magna Carta, we are entitled to replace her using force if necessary.

We have the right to expect that our laws are obeyed, our Constitution is upheld and that public money is accounted for.

PETER HOWELL  
Wiltshire

# MEETINGS

**Gresham College**  
020 7831 0575

Monday **7th January 2008**, 6.00 pm

“Demonisation and Witch Hunts in Religion and Politics”

**Rodney Barker**, *Gresham Professor of Rhetoric*

PUBLIC MEETING

Barnard’s Inn Hall, Holburn, London  
**Admission Free**

**UK Independence Party**  
01684 541533

Saturday **12th January**, 7.30 pm

**Michael Shrimpton**, *Barrister, special - ist in national security, constitutional law and strategic intelligence*

SOCIAL EVENING

Powick Parish Hall, Powick, Worcestershire

**Admission £12.50 on the door**

(Includes buffet, wine and soft drinks)

**The Freedom Association**  
0845 833 9626

Tuesday **12th February**, 1.00 pm

“Freedom in the City”

**Jeffrey Titford MEP**

PUBLIC MEETING

The Function Suite, The Counting House, 50 Cornhill, London EC3V

**Admission Free**

**The Democracy Movement**

(Surrey North and Spelthorne Branch)  
01372 465379

Thursday **7th February**, 8.00 pm

“EU - Give us a Referendum”

**Marc Glendening**, *Campaign Director, Democracy Movement*

**Daniel Hannan MEP**, *Columnist, Daily Telegraph*

PUBLIC MEETING

Claygate Village Hall, Claygate, Surrey  
**Admission Free**

**UK Independence Party**  
01626 831340

Saturday **8th March**, 10.00 am

**Further details including Speakers to be announced shortly**

SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE

The Great Hall, Exeter University, Exeter, Devon

**Admission Free**

**Gresham College**  
020 7831 0575

Wednesday **16th April**, 6.00 pm

“The British and American Constitutions”

**Vernon Bogdanor CBE FBA**, *Gresham Professor of Law*

**Professor Cristina Rodriques**, *New York University*

PUBLIC MEETING

Royal College of Surgeons of England, 35-43 Lincoln’s Inn Fields, London WC2

**Admission Free**

## SELECT COMMITTEE

**House of Lords**  
020-7219 3000

Tuesday **18th December**, 4.15 pm

Evidence will be heard on *Inquiry into the Impact of the EU Reform Treaty on the EU Institutions* from Jim Murphy MP, Minister for Europe.

*Note:*

*Committee Meetings can change from Public to Private without warning*

## DIARY OF EVENTS

**2007**

UK Parliamentary Recess Begins **18th December**

**2008**

Slovenia takes over EU presidency **1st January**

UK Parliamentary Recess Ends **7th January**

## USFULL WEB SITES

**Better off Out Campaign**

[www.betteroffout.co.uk](http://www.betteroffout.co.uk)

**British Declaration of Independence**

[www.bdicampaign.org](http://www.bdicampaign.org)

**British Weights & Measures Assoc.**

[www.bwmaOnline.com](http://www.bwmaOnline.com)

**Bruges Group**

[www.brugesgroup.com](http://www.brugesgroup.com)

**Campaign Against Euro-Federalism**

[www.caef.org.uk](http://www.caef.org.uk)

**Campaign for an Independent Britain**

[www.cibhq.co.uk](http://www.cibhq.co.uk)

**Democracy Movement**

[www.democracymovement.org.uk](http://www.democracymovement.org.uk)

**EU Observer**

[www.euobserver.com](http://www.euobserver.com)

**EU Truth**

[www.eutruth.org.uk](http://www.eutruth.org.uk)

**European Commission (London)**

[www.cec.org.uk](http://www.cec.org.uk)

**European Foundation**

[www.europeanfoundation.org](http://www.europeanfoundation.org)

**European No Campaign**

[www.europeannocampaign.com](http://www.europeannocampaign.com)

**Foreign Affairs**

[www.foreignaffairs.org](http://www.foreignaffairs.org)

**Freedom Association**

[www.tfa.net](http://www.tfa.net)

**Global Britain**

[www.globalbritain.org](http://www.globalbritain.org)

**Global Vision**

[www.global-vision.net](http://www.global-vision.net)

**June Press (Publications)**

[www.junepress.com](http://www.junepress.com)

**Labour Euro-Safeguards Campaign**

[www.lesc.org.uk](http://www.lesc.org.uk)

**New Alliance**

[www.newalliance.org.uk](http://www.newalliance.org.uk)

**Open Europe**

[www.openeurope.org.uk](http://www.openeurope.org.uk)

**Regional Assemblies**

[www.regionalassemblies.co.uk](http://www.regionalassemblies.co.uk)

**Speak Out Campaign**

[www.speakout.co.uk](http://www.speakout.co.uk)

**Sovereignty**

[www.sovereignty.org.uk](http://www.sovereignty.org.uk)

**Statewatch**

[www.statewatch.org](http://www.statewatch.org)

**The People’s “No” Campaign**

[www.thepeoplesnocampaign.co.uk](http://www.thepeoplesnocampaign.co.uk)

**United Kingdom Independence Party**

[www.ukip.org](http://www.ukip.org)

**Thinker Tailor Soldier Spy**

by *Harry Beckhough*. **£18.99**  
A remarkable book about a soldier, code-breaker, intelligence officer, teacher and political activist.

**A Democratic Europe: An Alternative to the EU**

by *Richard Body*. **£10.00**  
Sir Richard lays out the case for a truly democratic European Union as opposed to an undemocratic super power.

**Scared To Death**

by *Christopher Booker & Richard North*. **Hdbk £16.95**  
This latest book by the famous duo explores the tricks used to extend EU power and control.

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by *Peter Gardner*. **£9.99**  
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by *J Brian Heywood*. **£9.99**  
This novel clearly shows how easy it is for good intentions to be used by anyone with ambitions for a world government.

**The General Rule**

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The author reflects the needs for imperial units in every day usage.

**The State Of The Union and Other Articles**

by *Christopher Luke*. **£4.50**  
A thumb-nail sketch of the issues affecting the throne and constitution of the UK. Including the acts of devolution.

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Scholefield argues that while immigration increases a nation's GDP it must inevitably reduce per capita income.

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by *Ian Senior*. **£12.50**  
Senior shows how corruption in the EU is becoming worse and why the UK should not sign up to the proposed European Constitution.

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Selected works by Alexander Litvinenko  
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<b>Global Vision</b>	<b><a href="http://www.global-vision.net">www.global-vision.net</a></b>
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Robin Tilbrook (Chairman)	
<b>Green Party</b>	<b>020 7272 4474</b>
Richard Mallender	
<b>Labour</b>	<b>020 7783 1000</b>
Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP	
<b>Liberal</b>	<b>01562 68361</b>
Mr Michael Meadowcroft	
<b>Liberal Democrats</b>	<b>020 7222 7999</b>
Dr Vincent Cable MP	
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<b>UK Independence Party</b>	<b>01626 830630</b>
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