

## New year, new games in the Brussels playground

*As the various 'presidents' jockey for position and the empty rhetoric spills out, the ridiculous pantomime of the Lisbon Treaty becomes increasingly obvious*

So here we are in the first few weeks of the brave new year of the post-Lisbon EU and already it is evident that we have been, not to put too fine a point of it, sold a pup.

They told us that the Lisbon Treaty would make the EU more efficient and more effective. What it has actually done is add yet another layer to the confusing and expensive bureaucracies and power bases that have become the Brussels stock-in-trade.

"The new system is no less complex and multi-layered than the previous one. Making it work will not be an easy task," according to Antonio Missioli, an analyst at the European Policy Centre. Other observers have described it rather more succinctly as a Hydra-headed monster.

Its first effect has been to produce the spectacle of the two new EU "presidents" – Herman Van Rompuy of the Council and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero of Spain at the head of the rotating presidency – jostling to raise their public profiles while Commission President José Manuel Barroso works quietly in the background reinforcing the influence accumulated over his previous five-year term.

Mr Zapatero lost no time in organising a series of high-profile EU summit meetings, including one with US President Obama to take place not in Brussels but in Madrid. "Mr Van Rompuy will preside," conceded the Spanish Foreign Minister, "but Mr

Zapatero will be beside him playing a key role." It is like a game of musical chairs, as one commentator put it.

Mr Van Rompuy's attempt to establish himself prompted him immediately to call an EU economic summit for 26th February, trumping the announcement by Spain that the focus of its six-month presidency would be tackling the economic crisis.

Neither side can be taken really seriously as the EU grapples with financial and economic problems that it seeks to control but apparently fails to understand.

For a start, few people will wish to take economic lessons from Spain, where unemployment has hit almost 20 per cent, the housing market has collapsed and Europe's favoured policy of economic convergence has been a disaster for the country.

As for Mr Van Rompuy, he must surely be aware that, while China has overtaken Germany as the world's leading exporter, economic growth across Europe is at best tentative, unemployment continues to rise and the EU Growth and Stability Pact has all but disintegrated under the mountain of public debt incurred in the wholesale bailing out of financial institutions and economic pump-priming.

This Commission itself has forecast that average national debts across the eurozone could hit 84 per cent of GDP in 2010 – while in shaky Greece, it is expected to reach 120 per cent. Such

figures take no account of the possibility of the double-dip recession that many are predicting.

At these levels of borrowing, the financial markets are bound to react and raise interest rates and bond yields. Equally, the heavy-handed financial stimulus packages embraced by the EU have led to the creation of new asset bubbles likely to produce problems similar to those of 2007.

And this is the moment when Brussels is cooking up its latest 10-year plan amid the ruins of the last one, with the euro more of a hindrance than a help, as evidenced by the meltdown in Greece, Spain and Ireland. Some wonder whether the euro can survive.

It seems to us that the Eurocracy lives in a parallel universe in which second-rate politicians merely play out their fantasies of power and international statesmanship. Our expectation is that all the "presidents" will fall over themselves trying vainly to regulate Europe's way out of deep financial crisis – and that, as Spain has hinted, the EU will actually spend more time and money fine-tuning its institutions than facing the world-changing shifts in economic and political power that threaten the very existence of the EU.

It was perhaps darkly symbolic that the web site set up by Spain as part of the €12 million publicity machine for its "presidency" had to be shut down on its first day when a hacker inserted a picture of Mr Bean.

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# Moving deckchairs on the ship of state

*As we go to press, MEPs are interrogating the EU Commissioners Designate. In the public interest, we present the little-known runners and their form. The new Commission is expected to be approved by MEPs on 26th January.*

**Catherine Ashton**, High Representative. *UK* – enough said already.

**Viviane Reding**, Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship. *Luxembourg*. Former journalist, MP, MEP and Commissioner for Information Society and Media. Changing deckchairs.

**Joaquín Almunia**, Competition. *Spain*. Lawyer and former minister in the Socialist government. From 2004, Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, so merely a change of hat.

**Siim Kallas**, Transport. *Estonia*. Former banker and prime minister and, until 1990, member of the Communist Party. Was Commissioner for Administration, Audit and Anti-fraud. Another portfolio switch.

**Neelie Kroes**, Industry, Research and Energy. *Netherlands*. Former MP, minister and transport expert. Since 2004 Commissioner for Competition. No portfolio in her particular area of expertise, then.

**Antonio Tajani**, Industry, and Entrepreneurship. *Italy*. Ex-journalist, founder with Silvio Berlusconi of Forza Italia and MEP. Was Commissioner for Transport. No apparent connection with either industry or entrepreneurship – or transport, for that matter. Simply changing jobs.

**Maros Sefcovic**, Inter-institutional Relations and Administration. *Slovakia*. Former diplomat and foreign affairs specialist. Since October 2009, Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth. Does his new job remind one of Jim Hacker's in *Yes, Minister?*

**László Andor**, Employment and Social Affairs. *Hungary*. Academic economist, former adviser to World Bank. Since 2005, board member of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. At least has some experience of social affairs research.

**Michel Barnier**, Internal Market and Services. *France*. Former government minister, including Agriculture and

Foreign Affairs. Elected MEP in June 2009. Well placed to interfere in the activities of the City of London.

**Dacian Cioloș**, Agriculture and Rural Development. *Romania*. At least he would be a Commissioner in his area of special expertise – but given the unreformed state of Bulgarian agriculture, in which he has been heavily involved, there are doubts about his interest in CAP reform.

**John Dalli**, Health and Consumer Policy. *Malta*. Former minister (social policy, finance, economy, industry). A chartered accountant, has no apparent expertise in health policy.

**Maria Damanski**, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. *Greece*. Former Greek MP and human rights campaigner. Trained as a chemical engineer, which might not seem the ideal background for fixing the mess of the Common Fisheries Policy.

**Karel De Gucht**, Trade. *Belgium*. Lawyer and veteran politician, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid since July 2009. Said to be very sure of himself and to deliver opinions accordingly, but could run into trouble with the EP, which now has to approve trade agreements.

**Stefan Füle**, Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy. *Czech Republic*. Former Communist, diplomat and government minister. Parachuted into this Commissioner's job in December 2009.

**Máire Geoghegan-Quinn**, Research, Innovation and Science. *Ireland*. Former teacher, journalist, TV presenter, etc. etc. Longtime member of Dáil Éireann, with various ministerial posts. Member of the European Court of Auditors.

**Johannes Hahn**, Regional policy. *Austria*. With a degree in philosophy and an industrial management background, his qualification for the job appears to be his experience with the Vienna Regional Parliament and Government.

**Connie Hedegaard**, Climate Action.

*Denmark*. Former journalist whose career in government specialised in environment and climate. Minister in charge of the Copenhagen Conference, which did little to enhance her reputation.

**Rumiana Jeleva**, International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response. *Bulgaria*. Foreign Minister of Bulgaria since July 2009. Little political experience and questions over her husband's business affairs.

**Janusz Lewandowski**, Budget and Financial Programming. *Poland*. Former minister of post-Communist privatisation, MEP since 2004. At least he's an economist.

**Cecilia Malmström**, Home Affairs. *Sweden*. A political scientist, has been EU Affairs Minister in Sweden since 2006. Will be responsible for civil liberties and justice...in EU terms, of course.

**Günther H Oettinger**, Energy. *Germany*. Former minister-president of Baden-Württemberg, he is thought to be likely to be on the side of Germany's big energy companies.

**Andris Piebalgs**, Development. *Latvia*. A physicist and former government minister, he simply moves from Energy.

**Janez Potočnik**, Environment. *Slovenia*. A scientist and economist, former government minister, he switches desks from Science and Research.

**Olli Rehn**, Economic and Monetary Affairs. *Finland*. Longtime committed European, MEP and former head of cabinet at the Commission. Moving over from Enlargement.

**Algirdas Semeta**, Taxation and Customs Union, Audit and Anti-Fraud. *Lithuania*. Former finance minister, he was made Commissioner for Financial Programming and Budget in July 2009.

**Androulla Vassiliou**, Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth. *Cyprus*. Moves from Health into what looks like a pretty confusing job.

# UKIP: no deals with the Tories

In December *eurofacts* asked the question, “is it (UKIP) a campaign group merely seeking our exit from the EU, or a broader political party? Potential voters should be told”. This follows Lord Pearson’s revelation in *The Times*, the day after his election as UKIP’s new leader, that some months ago he had offered to stand UKIP candidates down if the Conservatives would give a referendum on the Lisbon Treaty/EU membership. Unsurprisingly the offer was rejected.

Lord Pearson has come in for severe criticism for this offer, including from me, but he is not primarily to blame. He was merely acting as a messenger for our previous leader, Nigel Farage. The issue of a UKIP deal with the Tories is one that keeps coming back from the dead with as monotonous regularity as Count Dracula.

Such offers achieve nothing. If the Tories want to offer a referendum on EU membership, they have no need to be prompted by UKIP. Indeed, David Cameron has knowingly damaged his electoral prospects in 2010 by breaking his “cast iron guarantee” of a Lisbon referendum.

If the Tories really want an

overwhelming victory in 2010, they only have to offer a referendum on EU membership, or outright withdrawal. A majority of voters believe Britain would be better off out. This strategy applies equally to Labour. It will never happen because the cross-party political elite believes in the European project, whatever the financial, economic or democratic damage to Britain.

The only thing the major political parties take notice of is the loss of votes and seats. That might even one day make them change their policies. UKIP has to keep up the pressure. It doesn’t matter which of the three main parties forms the next Government because our real government is in Brussels.

When Lord Pearson made the offer, the Tory promise of a referendum on Lisbon had not yet been withdrawn. So why make it at all? The offer was against our Party Constitution, which clearly states that the Party will contest elections – it says nothing about doing electoral deals. It would be just as unconstitutional even if it had been authorised by the Party NEC.

When the prospects of such deals are

put to the UKIP membership, they overwhelmingly reject them, as they did at the 2004 Party Conference. This most recent offer has done the party no good. How can we expect our candidates to put in time, effort and money for months prior to the election if they are uncertain whether they might be stood down?

Such offers send out the wrong message. UKIP is not a stick to beat the Tories with. The vast majority of our activists, members and voters want it to be a serious political party. Even when Britain leaves the EU, who among our members and voters wants to go back to voting for the parties who have betrayed our country for decades?

Lord Pearson has an easy solution to this problem. His position merely has to be: he made the offer as a messenger for the previous leader; it was rejected, and no such offers will ever be contemplated again under his leadership. The whole issue would then be dead and buried – with a stake through its heart. UKIP can then go forward and achieve our best general election vote in 2010 and grow stronger still.

*Article by Gerard Batten MEP*

## Brussels goes to law to give itself a pay rise

One effect of the Lisbon Treaty was supposed to make the EU a more democratic institution, but this appears to have fallen at the first hurdle. The unelected Commission is taking the elected governments of member states to court to force through an inflation-busting pay increase for its 50,000 or so featherbedded civil servants.

They earn basic salaries of between £2,289 and £15,898 per month, enjoy tax rates ranging from 8 per cent to 45 per cent (the latter only on earnings above about £72,000 a year). Their pay is based on rates in Brussels and civil service salaries in the eight richest EU countries and they receive generous pensions and allowances.

The civil servants are demanding a pay rise of 3.7 per cent, at a cost to us taxpayers of some £81 million. We are, in the midst of the worst recession

since the 1930s, but this did not appear to deter the EU officials. It did, however, give the leaders of some member states – including the UK – pause for thought. Mindful of the fact that many of them would have to cut the pay of their own civil servants, they agreed that the European crew could receive no more than 1.8 per cent.

This infuriated both the functionaries and the Commission – after all, the Commissioners themselves will benefit from the same pay increase. The civil servants organised “warning” strikes and threatened to disrupt the work of the European Parliament. The Commission, however, had another trick up its sleeve: it would take the member states to court.

“We are talking here about the respect for agreed rules,” Commission spokesperson Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen

said sanctimoniously. “It is not an issue where political discretion is at play.” When tens of millions of people across the EU are losing their jobs or else struggling to pay their bills, there is no room in Brussels for political common sense or sentiment for the feelings of suffering populations?

Apparently not. The Commissioners were unanimous in the decision to refer the countries upon which their positions and livelihoods depend to the European Court of Justice. They have asked the court for a “speedy” judgement, that is within six months, but experts say the case could drag on for a year, by which time the lower rise will have been paid.

The judges might wish to give the matter longer consideration since their incomes, too, will be affected by the outcome.

# Where sheep may safely graze?

*House of Lords, 3rd November 2009.*

**The Lord Archbishop of York:** To ask Her Majesty's Government how they intend to provide additional support to sheep farmers following the implementation of the new electronic identification requirements in 2010, given the current inaccuracies in tag reading equipment.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (**Lord Davies of Oldham**): My Lords the Government are aware of concerns about the ability of electronic reading equipment to capture the individual information on every animal passing through central point recording centres particularly where it could impact on keepers single farm payments.

The Government do not think that it is reasonable to penalise a keeper in these circumstances. I am pleased to confirm that keepers will not be penalised through their single farm payments when incomplete data are provided by a central point recording centre.

**The Archbishop of York:** I am grateful for that Answer and for the Minister's assurance that a failure of

equipment will not result in penalties through single farm payments. If it did it would not be good for those farmers' well-being. If tagging equipment fails on prisoners those who use that equipment are never penalised in their pay, so why should the farmers be?

**Lord Davies of Oldham:** My Lords I know that the most reverend Primate has taken a keen interest in those matters, which are of course of the greatest concern to sheep farmers particularly those on hillsides and upland areas I am grateful for his interest, which has occasioned letters to my highest authority – namely, the Prime Minister; who is perhaps not the most reverend Primate's highest authority – as well to my Secretary of State. I am pleased that we have been able in our discussions to reach a position of some improvement.

**Lord Vinson:** My Lords one must acknowledge that the Government have done their best to stop this unnecessary, expensive and crazy EU regulation, which they are now enforcing reluctantly. However, does the Minister not agree that it is a tragedy that we are debating the matter

at all? Is it not a triumph of EU bureaucracy over our democracy and an example of the democratic deficit at the heart of the EU experiment, which will surely lead to its downfall?

**Lord Davies of Oldham:** That was a modest question, my Lords, to which my response is straightforward; namely, that the regulation has been imposed against the will of the British Government, because we have been largely in a minority of one in our concern about EID, not least because we have one of the largest sheep populations in Europe. Others have embraced the regulation more enthusiastically. The Spaniards and the Italians, for example, are already implementing the system. However: the noble Lord will give credence to the fact that it is being introduced as an animal health measure, against a background where, in 2001, Britain in particular paid an enormous price for foot and mouth disease. Europe has pursued a strategy which is not fully consonant with what we would have wished. That is why we have worked so hard to effect the policy in a way that minimises its impact on farmers.

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## How to get out of the European Union

**H**ere is an interesting extract from the *Legal Working Paper "Withdrawal and Expulsion from the EU and EMU: Some Reflections"*, written by the Legal Counsel of the European Central Bank, Phoebus Athanassiou, and published by the ECB in December 2009:

Until recently, to talk of "secession" from the European Union (EU) would have been next to absurd, considering the EU's contribution to lasting peace and stability in Europe, its strong attraction all along its constantly shifting borders and the success of its enlargements hitherto...

Recent developments have, perhaps, increased the risk of secession (however modestly), as well as the urgency of addressing it as a possible scenario... The Union's slow but continuing progress towards a more advanced level of integration, involving closer political and economic ties between its Member States and the transfer of an ever-increasing share of their essential sovereignty to the supranational European institutions, in conjunction with the EU's declared ambition (unpopular with the public of some

Member States) to bring new members within its fold, have created new tensions or exacerbated existing ones, testing the Member States' commitment to the furtherance of European integration...

Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty explicitly makes provision for the voluntary secession of a Member State from the EU. Specifically, the exit clause provides that a Member State wishing to withdraw from the EU must inform the European Council of its intention; the Council is to produce guidelines on the basis of which a withdrawal agreement is to be negotiated with that Member State; and the Council, acting by a qualified majority and after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament, will conclude the agreement on behalf of the EU. The withdrawing Member State would cease to be bound by the treaties either from the date provided for in the withdrawal agreement or, failing that, two years after notification of its intention to withdraw. A former Member State seeking to rejoin the EU would have to follow the same admission procedure as any new candidate country.

# Lisbon only the start of the battle, says Klaus

Brussels might be congratulating itself on forcing through the Lisbon Treaty, but that is not the last battle it is going to have to fight, according to President Vaclav Klaus of the Czech Republic.

The last hold-out against the treaty after Ireland's volte-face, Mr Klaus told Czech television that Lisbon will merely serve to encourage the Eurocracy's efforts to sideline national politicians and rule Europe unencumbered.

"They are permanently dealing with only one thing: the strengthening of their powers," the President told Prima Television, adding that the Czech presidency of the EU in the first six months of 2009 had shown him that the EU was in a worse state than he had expected it to be.

He said he was convinced that there

would be further attempts to extend and deepen the reach of Brussels into national sovereignty, and these would have to be opposed.

The creation of a new EU president and foreign minister marked a new phase in the Eurocrats campaign to reduce the influence of national leaders on European policymaking, he said.

He accused some leaders of abetting this process by spending too much time dealing with domestic affairs while visiting Brussels and paying too little attention to what happened in EU meetings.

Speaking to law students in Prague, Mr Klaus said that his ideal scenario would be to return the EU to its condition before the Maastricht Treaty of 1993 – it was Maastricht that had fundamentally changed the functioning of the EU and set it on the path

towards its current and growing limitations on democracy and freedom in Europe.

He revealed that he had considered resigning from the presidency when he realised that he would not win his battle to stop the Lisbon Treaty. He had not done so because of the realisation that it was actually Maastricht that had really damaged any European ideal.

After a series of legal challenges to Lisbon by Czech senators fearful of a dramatic loss of sovereignty, Mr Klaus refused to proceed to ratification of the treaty until 8th November last year, having gained at least a Czech opt-out from the EU Charter of Fundamental Human Rights. He said he had been concerned that the charter might open the way to property claims against the country by German former residents of Czechoslovakia.

## Voters the big parties are ignoring

Labour and the Conservatives began this new, election year with carefully selected highlights of what might be appearing in their manifestos when the campaign proper begins. The Lib Dems found it necessary to announce that they would make no back-door deals in the event of the hung Parliament that figures prominently in the commentators' speculations. But has any of the main parties thought seriously about what could really influence the outcome of the election?

A Populus poll of 8th November 2009 showed that support for minor parties is now running at 14 per cent, while in the polls for the two months before the 2005 election, these parties obtained about 7 per cent of the projected vote in the polls and actually obtained 8 per cent at the election. So support for these parties, which excludes Northern Ireland but includes Scots and Welsh nationalists (static in the polls), the Greens, UKIP, BNP, and so on, looks to be about double what it was in 2005.

If we deduct the 2.2 per cent vote obtained in the 2005 election by the Scots and Welsh nationalists from each

of the 2005 polls and the 2009 polls, we can see the support for the other minor parties has risen from about 5 per cent of the vote in 2005 to about 11 per cent now.

This trend was confirmed by the Angus Reid poll on 6th November for Political Betting. It put the minor parties in Great Britain (excluding Northern Ireland) at 18 per cent of the GB vote. Of this, UKIP had 6 per cent and the BNP 4 per cent, while for all the minor parties, exclusive of the Scottish and Welsh Nationalists, the total was 15 per cent – a record? Apparently, 2.6 million people are intending to vote UKIP or BNP, on this poll's evidence.

What these polls highlight is that there are now two groups of floating voters. The first of these is the traditional million-plus swing voters, who switch among Labour, the LibDems and the Conservatives. The second group is those who are willing to vote for one of the new parties.

With Labour polling at 29 per cent and the LibDems at 18 per cent in the Populus poll, these two parties have seen a loss of 12 per cent of the total vote compared with the 2005 election

total. The Conservative vote is up from 33 per cent to 39 per cent – so the Conservatives are projected to have an extra 6 per cent of the vote while the minor parties are also up 6 per cent.

In other words, the Conservatives are gaining only 50 per cent of the votes shed by Labour and the Liberal Democrats and the other 50 per cent is going to minor parties. Six per cent of the vote is 1.5 million voters (actual voters on a 60 per cent turnout) so there is likely to be as big a swing parcel of voters willing to vote for the minor parties as the traditional parcel of swing votes in the middle of the three major parties.

When you consider the effort put in by the major parties to attract the two parcels of swing voters, it is hard not to think that 95-plus per cent of the efforts of the Conservatives and the Labour Party are trying to attract the traditional one million plus swing voters in the middle. This seems old-fashioned, a pre-1970 approach. Why is the second parcel of voters – an extra one and a half million since 2005, and now three million in total – being ignored by the main parties?

*Article by Anthony Scholefield*

# LETTERS

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## Puppeteers behind the EU

Dear Sir,

On your front page of 18th December 2009 you demonstrate clearly the EU technique of “creative ambiguity” whereby policies and new Lisbon titles can mean whatever the EU bureaucrats want them to mean. However, we must also remember national puppeteers behind the European screen.

With Brown so satisfied to have Britons in new EU roles – currently little more than Gilbertian titles – the Franco/German axis has been allowed to carve out the most powerful EU Commissioners. The Germans have Energy, while the French take over Internal Affairs and Finance, there to undermine the “Anglo-Saxon” free market and encourage business to move from London to Paris.

If despite such evidence we hesitate to accuse our “partners” of self-aggrandisement behind the EU façade, we have conclusive evidence quoted recently by our former Ambassador to the US, Sir Christopher Meyer. In a moment of arrogant candour, former Chancellor Kohl told his Rhineland in 1997: “Europe has best served German interests because it allows Germany to dominate the continent without recreating fears of German hegemony” (*Getting our way 500 years of ... diplomacy*, p 261.)

C FRANCIS WARREN  
Lancashire

## The English patient

Dear Sir,

Correspondents, particularly UKIP members, claim that getting out of the EU is a top priority and no doubt most in a Eurosceptic England will agree,

but UKIP is charged with taking the whole UK out – therein lies a problem. There may well be Eurosceptics in the Celtic countries, but their devolved governments are wedded to the EU, particularly to the big-money Objective One funding.

Devolved inhabitants do not contribute to the EU (a non-devolved matter) owing to excesses of annual “devolution settlements”, so all contributions come from England’s taxpayers. Also, being “national” regions, they are courted and indulged by the EU, which bypasses Westminster in its dealings with them. Each has its own pro-country political parties, national MEPs and EU Commission offices in its capital city. With such vested interests devolved countries may well oppose any exit from the EU.

So the big-time losers are England’s 52 million inhabitants, paying through the nose for the UK’s contributions but still politically anonymous and virtually non-existent within the EU.

For the sake of its future generations independence should be England’s aim, then, freed of UK constraint, it would control its own finances both at Westminster and to the EU, with its regions rightly reverting to English, not UK regions.

English self-governance is the key to exiting EU if need be. A pro-England political regime is the top priority.

RUSSELL HOPKINS  
Gloucestershire

## Sceptics are the source

Dear Sir,

In response to David Rowlands’s suggestion that UKIP is the political

movement Britain needs, I refer to the editorial note at the bottom of the Letters page in the December 2009 issue: “...*the dilemma at UKIP’s heart: is it a campaign group merely seeking our exit from the EU, or a broader political party?*”

What Britain needs, of course, is the latter. And its foundations should be laid now. UKIP should be part, bringing in its experience since 1993. Withdrawal from the EU would be a cardinal policy, having a bearing upon the whole spectrum, not least economic and financial crises.

In turning our minds to these matters, sceptics will be aware that every relevant opinion poll has recorded elector disenchantment with the present state of politics and a yearning for genuinely clear leadership that can put Britain where it should be: in firm control of its own destiny.

Where might the source of leadership be if not among the sceptic movement that has evolved since Black (or White) Wednesday in 1992?

RALPH MADDERN  
Warwickshire

## Europe’s comic opera

Dear Sir,

The “EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs” sounds like someone from the cast of *The Mikado*. G & S could have had a field day with the pretentious and extravagant EU. There would be a “High Treasurer” capable of producing unauditible accounts; “Strasbourg” as an Act all on its own, and a stately *Trial by Jury* made up of corrupt MEPs.

L G HOLT  
Kent

## Britons are the leading Eurosceptics

Britain is the country with the least confidence in the EU, according to an end-of-year Eurobarometer poll. The survey found that 64 per cent of British respondents thought the Union was either a bad thing or neither good

nor bad, while only 30 per cent opted for “good”. Asked whether the country had benefited from membership of the EU, 49 per cent of Britons said “no” and just 36 per cent thought membership had brought advantages.

Only Hungary and Latvia are more negative. Across Europe, 53 per cent of the populations of member states think the EU is a good thing, while 15 per cent say it is bad and 28 per cent don’t care about it.

# MEETINGS

**Marlborough Group**  
01672 515275

Sunday **24th January**, 2.00 pm

Video presentation by  
**Tony Gosling**

PUBLIC MEETING  
The Bear Hotel, High Street,  
Marlborough, Wiltshire  
**Admission Free**

**Gresham College**  
020 7831 0575

Tuesday **26th January**, 6.00 pm

“Confessions of a regulatory head-  
hunter: How we led ourselves into  
financial crises”  
**Douglas Board**, *Maslow's Attic Limited*

PUBLIC MEETING  
Barnard's Inn Hall, Holborn, London  
EC1N 2HH  
**Admission Free**

**Gresham College**  
020 7831 0575

Thursday **4th February**, 6.00 pm

“The Wars of German Unification,  
1864-1871”  
**Richard J Evans FBA**, *Gresham  
Professor of Rhetoric*

PUBLIC MEETING  
Museum of London, London  
**Admission Free**

**Gresham College**  
020 7831 0575

Tuesday **23rd February**, 6.00 pm

“The New Consensus of the Governed -  
Re-imagining Corporate Governance”  
**Kenneth Costa**, *Mercers' School  
Memorial Professor of Commerce at  
Gresham College*

PUBLIC MEETING  
Museum of London, London  
**Admission Free**

**UK Independence Party**  
(South Dorset  
Constituency Association)  
01929 439099

Friday **9th April**, 7.00 pm

**William Earl of Dartmouth MEP**  
**Nigel Farage MEP**  
**Mike Hobson**, *PPC for South Dorset*

PUBLIC MEETING  
The Pavilion, Esplanade, Weymouth,  
Dorset  
**Admission Free**

**FREE**

## Advertising Space

Should you be planning a meeting  
and/or conference dealing with the sub-  
ject of UK-EU relations we may be able  
to advertise the event without charge.

## Contact Details

**eurofacts Phone: 08456 12 12 65**

**or Email: eurofacts@junepress.com**

## SELECT COMMITTEES

**House of Lords**  
020-7219 3000

Thursday **21st January**, 9.40 am  
Evidence will be heard on the *Inquiry into  
the European Social Fund* from the Welsh  
Assembly Government and the Scottish  
Government.

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

## DIARY OF EVENTS

**2010**

EU Economic Summit **26th February**

Commonwealth Day **8th March**

Last date for UK **4th June**  
General Election

Belgium takes over **1st July**  
EU presidency

## USEFUL WEB SITES

**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.eurosceptic.org.uk](http://www.eurosceptic.org.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)

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