

# Vote No to the Treaty of Lisbon!

This year the Irish people will have the chance to vote on the Treaty of Lisbon to form a constitution of Europe. The eyes of Europe will be on Ireland, as only we have the opportunity to express our democratic voice at this critical moment in history. The Dutch and French people have previously rejected this treaty, but now it is being forced upon us, again under a different name.

*"Thankfully, they haven't changed any of the substance."*  
—Bertie Ahern, June 2007

## For democracy

This Constitution would further increase the power and control of unelected EU elites and civil servants. It takes power away from our elected national governments and reduces our influence within the Union's own structures. In short, it builds a "United States of Europe."

*"The Constitution is the capstone of a European federal state."*  
—Guy Verhofstadt, Belgian Prime Minister, June 2004

## For sovereignty

The Constitution gives primacy to EU law and directives over domestic law. But more importantly, it gives primacy to the European Court of Justice over national courts in interpreting laws and hearing cases. The ECJ will be answerable only to EU institutions and not to our national parliaments. Its interest will be to extend its powers; and as the Constitution is amendable once passed without need of referendum or parliamentary ratification, we are in fact handing a blank cheque of our sovereignty over to unelected bureaucrats.

*"Of course there will be transfers of sovereignty. But would it be intelligent to draw the attention of public opinion to this fact?"*  
—Jean-Claude Juncker, Prime Minister of Luxembourg, July 2007

## For public services

A very significant feature of this Constitution, and one that makes it stand out from western-style constitutions, is that it is an *economic* blueprint for a privatised Europe. It puts into constitutional law a right-wing economic model, designed by European industrial and business elites to maximise their profits at our expense as workers and consumers. The Constitution opens our health, education, and

transport services and our natural resources to privatisation and for sale to multinationals.

*"A European framework law shall establish the measures in order to achieve the liberalisation of a specific service."*—Article III-147

## For workers' rights

The European Court of Justice recently ruled that a Latvian company, Laval, operating in Sweden can legally pay the Latvian minimum wage. This ruling serves to undermine completely the terms and conditions won by workers in their own countries, it furthers the erosion of workers' rights and the race to the bottom in conditions, and it will serve to increase racism and xenophobia. The further powers granted the ECJ, the court of final appeal, by the constitution are a very real attack upon workers' rights.

*"The ECJ's ruling runs roughshod over trade union rights . . . The rulings are poorly reasoned and inconsistent."*—Richard Arthur of Thompson's (one of the largest law firms in Britain), December 2007

## For neutrality

This treaty establishes a military-industrial complex in Europe. Political and military elites will form a common defence and foreign policy, with an army capable of "peacemaking" missions far from European borders. All this will be done in conjunction with and compatible with the nuclear-armed and nuclear-focused NATO. While Irish neutrality is more a myth than reality at present, it does not mean we condemn young Irish soldiers to die far from home for EU interests.

*"Battle groups could be used to go to war. Why did the EU create the battle groups? It is not just to help rebuild a country. The battle groups are not for building schools. We shouldn't think the EU is for soft power and NATO for tough power."*—Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, secretary-general of NATO, March 2005

***The Connolly Youth Movement asks all those who support democracy to reject this treaty and to vote No in the referendum.***