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**Lisbon - Someone Should Make the Case for Change**

Within the past week or so, Ireland has kicked off its campaigning for and against ratification of the Lisbon Treaty by popular referendum, scheduled for Thursday 12th June. This is evidenced by a proliferation of posters on lampposts everywhere. Within central Dublin, I counted roughly two YES posters for every NO poster, and outside Dublin you see even fewer NO posters, though you can't hide from the lampposts festooned with YES posters. On the other hand, the NO posters are twice as varied.

I have been struck by the utter insipidness of the slogans on these posters, which amount to little more than platitudes. Indeed most of them are so meaningless you could apply the YES posters

equally to the NO campaign and vice-versa.	
<b>YES Slogans</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>
"Let's make Europe work better"	<a href="#">Irish Alliance for Europe</a>
"For jobs, the economy and Ireland's future. A Europe that works better"	<a href="#">Irish Business and Employers Confederation</a>
"Good for Ireland, good for Europe"	<a href="#">Fianna Fáil</a>
"Europe: let's be at the heart of it"	<a href="#">Fine Gael</a>
<b>NO Slogans</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>
"For a better Europe vote No"	<a href="#">Campaign Against the EU Constitution</a>
"Europe's been great for	<a href="#">Libertas</a> <small>(an anti-Lisbon</small>

<i>Ireland, let's keep it that way"</i>	<small>organisation)</small>
"For a better deal in Europe"	<a href="#">Sinn Féin</a>
"People died for your freedom. Don't throw it away"	<a href="#">Cóir</a> <small>(an anti-Lisbon organisation).</small>
"Lisbon - it'll cost you more tax, less power"	By the way, "Cóir" is an Irish word with a bewildering array of translations: crime, due, fair, justice, suited, right, proper, treatment.
"People died for your freedom - don't throw it away"	Used adjectively, it can mean body-odour, toilet requisites, taxpayer, office accommodation, an unwelcome guest, engine capacity, super-heated water boiler.
"The new EU won't see you, won't hear you, won't speak for you"	As a non-scholar, I can't tell you which of these translations is most proper, or most cóir

What is striking is that none of these posters and almost no-one on radio, TV or print, seems to want to quote directly from the actual Treaty of Lisbon in support of their arguments.

This is understandable because the text is, as I have pointed out previously, so impenetrable, and deliberately so in order to obstruct comprehension.

There is also a curious dynamic in play. Apart from the incessant, vacuous slogans, the Naysayers are a lot more vigorous in voicing their objections to specific bits of the treaty than the YESsirs are in explaining exactly why Lisbon is good for Ireland.

It's all very well for the YESsirs to proclaim - incessantly - that Ireland has gained huge benefits and profits Ireland through membership of the EEC/EU, which no-one disputes. (Indeed as a Naysayer I am wildly enthusiastic about both the EU and the Euro). But this is an argument for the current EU not the post-Lisbon EU, which will be a very different animal.

The other main campaigning approach used by the YESsirs is to try to shoot down the Naysayers' objections, calling them myths or whatever.

So the YESsirs tell the voters they shouldn't worry about the Naysayers's fears of

- the EU forcing Ireland to raise its competitive corporation tax rate of 12½%,
- Irish youngsters being conscripted into an EU army to be killed in foreign adventures,
- the introduction of EU-sponsored abortion-on-demand,
- loss of protection for Irish workers from EU-induced globalisation,
- the deliberate, cynical impenetrability of the treaty's text.

Of course, some of the Naysayers arguments are so difficult to refute that they have to be ignored. For example, Ireland will (supposedly) be safe from EU tax-meddlers and army recruiters because it will retain its vetoes in these two areas. However, if these vetoes are so important, why is the surrender of vetoes in 32 other areas (including international trade) something to be welcomed? Indeed, Britain thinks it will lose no fewer than 61 vetoes. Surely vetoes are either worth having or they're not, and it's not easy explaining why it's in Ireland's interest to give away this

crucial element of its decision-making. So the YESsirs stay quiet.

In other areas, they skate over the hard bits. For instance, Lisbon will turn into law the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights, which is full of good stuff like

- “*human dignity is inviolable*” (I-1),
- “*everyone has the right to life*” (I-2.1),
- “*the right to marry and ... found a family is guaranteed*” (I-9).

(And needless to say, not one of these rights is accompanied by any duties. Rights without duties? Pure Utopia!)

But the hard bit is that the EU Court of Justice will rule on these rights and definitions and the constituent countries (eg County Ireland) will have to meekly obey. So, distant unelected judges can decide, for example, what dignity means, when life begins, whether the rights of marriage/children extend to partnerships of gays, triples or other combinations. They could thus oblige County Ireland to embrace euthanasia, embryo technologies and fatherless conception, without regard to the wishes of its people and with no right of appeal to

Ireland's own (now demoted) Supreme Court.

But, frankly, all this should be irrelevant. Under any system of justice worth the name, it is up to those who want to make the change to make the case for change. This the YESsirs are patently failing to do. Of course, unless voters are prepared to take them at their word, their task is insuperable because it is almost impossible to back up statements with relevant clauses from the impenetrable treaty.

Quite apart from those mindless, platitudinous posters, it's true that there is a ton of Lisbon explanations in websites, newspaper columns and leaflets, and a consolidated version of the relevant treaties - of Rome (1957), Maastricht (1992) and Lisbon (2008) - has been produced. But who is to say they are not all stuffed full of lies and distortions designed to push a particular view of Lisbon? How can you know the information is correct? After all, none of these documents are what the various EU ministers have signed.

So we keep coming back to the text of the actual treaty which the 54 of them have signed. If you can't understand it in its totality, and I guarantee you can't (which is why the authorities have made no hard-copies freely available to the public), then it would be mad to vote “Yes”. It would be no different, no less

insouciant, no less irresponsible than signing a blank cheque.

Ireland's current EU Commissioner Charlie McCreevy confesses

*“I have not [read the treaty]. I don't think there's anybody in this room who has read it cover to cover. I don't expect ordinary decent Irish people ... will be sitting down spending hours reading sections about sub-sections referring to other articles and sub-articles. But there is sufficient analysis done and people have put together a consolidated text which is quite easy to read. People such as the Referendum Commission have done explanations.”*

But he doesn't set forth how a 269 page treaty can be “*explained*” in a few pamphlets even in the unlikely event they are honestly and competently written, for which there is no guarantee at all. And if they can, then why didn't the ministers sign the pamphlets instead of the treaty?

Vote “No” or tumble into an unknown black hole.

## Cruel and Unusual Abortion

The British parliament last week shamefully approved a new piece of legislation, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill, which

- failed to reduce the abortion-on-demand limit from 24 weeks to 20 (the age at which a baby is said to be sometimes viable outside the womb),
- facilitates the creation for research purposes of human/animal hybrid embryos (to be killed at 14 days),
- approves the selection of so-called saviour sibling embryos to provide body parts for a stricken brother or sister, whilst killing the remaining embryos,
- no longer requires artificial insemination procedures to require prior consideration of the resultant child's right to and need for its father.

This appalling and morbid bill, combining both killing and creating, emphasises the secular amoral direction in which modern Western society in some countries such as Britain is wandering.

Moreover, experience shows that once something is permitted, the scope of this permission steadily expands. When Britain first introduced abortion in 1967 it was principally in order to “*save the mother's life*”. Nowadays it can be merely to “*save the mother's lifestyle*”, in other words abortion on demand. Likewise, reasons for divorce have drifted from strict criteria such as proven infidelity to unproven incompatibility, which is effectively divorce on demand.

So we can expect, for instance, that the stricture that human/animal embryos be destroyed at 14 days will be steadily loosened and the role of biological parents in their children's lives will be similarly suppressed over time.

Much of this new legislation, moreover, flagrantly breaches the vaunted EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, destined to become law once the Lisbon Treaty is smuggled through ratified. For example, there is supposed to be

- the right to
  - dignity (Chapter I-1),
  - life (I-2.1),
  - be not condemned to death (I-2.2);
- the right of a child to have

- its best interests as a primary consideration (III-24.2),
- a personal relationship with both its parents (III-24.3).

But this is of no concern to British legislators because the court of last resort will no longer be the House of Lords, but the far-away judges of the EU Court of Justice, who can be relied upon to rule in favour of the modernist secular consensus that privileges abortion, divorce, gay adoption and suchlike.

One of the more ghoulish details that came to light during the British debate is that for late-term abortions, the living child must first be killed - the polite word is foeticide - by lethal injection to the heart before being removed (sometimes piecemeal) from the womb. If it were killed after delivery, the abortionist would lay himself open to a charge of murder.

- It's hard to see why a mere journey of some centimetres through the birth-canal should turn legal foeticide into illegal infanticide.

As from 18 weeks, many doctors agree that babies are sentient, that is to say conscious and able to feel pain. Scanned pictures show them thumb-sucking and the kicking in typical baby fashion.

Nevertheless, this way of killing the 24-week old baby got me thinking about capital punishment in the US, which is usually also carried out through lethal



injection, as this is considered the most humane way of taking a life. Strapped down on a gurney in sight of an array of witnesses, the murderer is given a series of three injections via an intravenous catheter spiked into his arm.

1. The first is sodium thiopental, a barbiturate anaesthetic, in a dosage some 40 times greater than a hospital would use for surgery.
2. Then comes pancuronium bromide, which stops breathing by paralyzing the diaphragm and lungs.
3. Finally toxic potassium chloride is introduced which delivers the coup de grâce by causing cardiac arrest.

You are supposed to die within a couple of minutes of the final dose, but the whole grim procedure takes between five and eighteen minutes.

But over the last couple of years, following some botched executions, fears

have arisen in America that death by lethal injection might in fact inflict “*substantial unnecessary pain*” and “*result in a terrifying, excruciating death*”. This would put it in contravention of the US Constitution's Eighth Amendment which prohibits “*cruel and unusual punishments*”. As a result, a seven-month moratorium was imposed across the US last year until a Supreme Court decided this month that executions could resume.

The USA is indisputably the world's technological leader in pretty much any sphere you care to mention, which includes pharmacology. I have no expertise in killing people, but I would warrant that the three-injection approach, notwithstanding the misgivings, is indeed the most humane that anyone has been able to dream up, even though the journey to death might last a few minutes longer than the guillotine or the gallows or the firing-squad.

If on the other hand a single injection directly into the heart were more humane, you can be sure the American Supreme Court would insist on it in place of the triple injection into the arm. Since it doesn't, you would have to conclude that were execution by

cardiac injection ever tried, it would quickly be classified and outlawed as “*cruel and unusual punishment*”.

So if this is unacceptable as a means for permanently removing convicted multi-murderers from the face of the earth, why is it OK for killing innocent, sentient 24-week-old babies?

No amount of euphemisms such as termination, woman's choice etc can hide the ugly fact that the deliberate slaughter by cardiac injection of thousands of unborn children, fully capable of feeling pain and perhaps even fear, is “*cruel and unusual abortion*”.

#### **My (ahem) Latest Crime Novel**

Last year, I shared with you the essence of what I modestly called my (ahem) new crime novel, a colourful story set in Ireland and the Czech Republic, which involved armed robbery, amputation, screaming schoolgirls, a commandeered bicycle, post-traumatic stress disorder and a liberal dose of pimping. Somehow, at the last minute I seemed to have been pre-empted in my storyline so had to abandon my work of fiction.

So I am now having another go.

My latest crime novel will also take place mainly in Dublin. How about

this as an imaginative if preposterous narrative?

A winsome blonde, by now in her mid-40s, let's call her Sharon, goes to work for a much older boss, PJ, who is a wealthy property magnate. He has two grown sons in the business, but is separated from his wife. Sharon and PJ have an affair and in due course she shacks up with him. Most conveniently, after a few short years his wife dies.

Sharon then wonders what would be the easiest way to get her hands on her boyfriend's wealth and dreams up a cunning plan.

She decides to marry PJ. But he is not eager because this might complicate his inheritance, since his two sons also work in his business which he wants to pass to them. So she marries him anyway, using an obscure Mexican website to facilitate the process. For a thousand US dollars she procures a valid Mexican wedding certificate, without the inconvenience of having to involve - or indeed inform - the lucky groom, and no further expense for a white gown and champagne reception.

Then, again via the internet, using the mysterious internet name of *LyingEyes98*, she contacts an Egyptian poker-dealer and hit-man living in Las Vegas, who employs the (very Las Vegas) name of *Tony Luciano* for his proper job and *HitmanForHire* for his moonlighting. Sometimes describing

herself as “*the devil in the red dress*”, she offers him a triple contract on her new husband and his pair of sons, stipulating that the sons' deaths be “*accidents*” and her husband's a “*suicide*”. The boys would by chance end up poisoned in a country pub and their distraught father would then “*jump*” off the roof of his holiday high-rise apartment in Spain. The whole family needs to be eliminated to avoid any difficulties over the substantial legacy to be inherited by the grieving widow.

A deal is agreed, and she sends her *HitmanForHire* (later to become yet another of her lovers) a down-payment of €15,000 in cash.

The Egyptian flies to Dublin as a tourist in order to carry out his assignment and checks into a modest hotel on the outskirts. But he evidently forgets to read the small print in the contract, because when he goes to visit the first of the sons, Robert, instead of killing him he offers to spare him, his brother and his dad, in exchange for €100,000. Oh, and as a sideline he can't resist the temptation of breaking into the family business and stealing some computers and other items.

However Robert then further spoils the narrative by informing the police who set up a surveillance operation and sting. In due course, the plot unravels, the Egyptian and Sharon find themselves in

court charged with all kinds of crimes and the news media get wind of the story.

Do you think anyone would buy my book? What's that? This isn't fiction? It's actually true? No, not again! ... Incredible!

### Jet-Man

If you haven't already seen it, you have to watch this exhilarating five-minute video clip of Yves Rossy, the Jet-Man, soaring at 300 kilometres per hour over the Swiss Alps, with the help of his £123,000 strap-on carbon-fibre wings and four model-aircraft jet-engines.

### **Issue 176's Comments to Cyberspace**

Just a few, varied contributions over the past couple of weeks.

- If Muslim men like the veil so much, let them wear it  
*Comment in the Irish Independent site in relation to a column by Martina Devlin*  
Without question, there is no culture superior to the Western liberal democracy we enjoy here in Ireland, and never has been. Every vestige of another culture dilutes and pollutes this, and that includes the gross affront that is the hijab.

We should stop trying to tell each other that all cultures are equally "valid". They are not and you combine them at your peril. As someone once said, if you mix a gallon of ice cream with a gallon of dog faeces, you can be pretty sure the mixture will taste more like the latter than the former.

We should never lower our guard.

- Saudi Arabia: Woman Changes Sex, Dreams of Driver's Licence  
*Comment in the Topix on-line news journal*

Doodzy wrote: "OMG, where do u get this nonsense from? And Mohammed was a PEDO!?! There's Non-Muslims historians commending him as being one of the most protective and generous men EVER! He married them so that they wouldn't get harmed and have food and sustenance in his house because some of their husband's had died at war. Nothing to do with lust at all."

Hmmm. Well, how do you explain the fact that Mohammed married his (favourite) wife Aisha when she was just five years of age, but with great self-control

did not copulate with (rape) her until she was nine years. Ayatollah Khomeini also married a nine-year-old, and lowered the age of consent in Iran to nine years, which stands to this day.

Does all this make Mohammed and Khomeini and no doubt many devout Iranians Pedos?

Make your own mind up!

- Can someone please tell me wtf the Lisbon Treaty is all about?  
*Comment in journalist Sarah Carey's blog, GUBU*  
Your analysis, Sarah, amounts to vote YES to Lisbon for just five – mostly very thin – reasons.

1. Enlargement means new rules are needed because the EU is becoming unwieldy – though all the evidence is that EU legislation-making has become MORE slick not less since enlargement, so no new rules are in fact needed. See for example this Charlemagne article in the Economist,
2. It reduces our commissioner-count but we'll be no worse off than anyone else. Why is it nevertheless good to reduce our commissioner-count?
3. No need to worry about harmonisation of direct taxes, defence, abortion, neutrality or

agriculture. It's great that retention of two vetoes defends those tax and defence worries. But if retaining two vetoes is so valuable, why is it also supposed to be great to surrender no fewer than 32 other vetoes?

4. A prosecutor will chase up fraud issues – and this from an outfit whose multi-billion Euro accounts have not been audited for fourteen years because the EU is rife with institutionalised crookery. I wouldn't expect much from the fraud-chasers.
5. New laws and institutions will prosecute cross-border trafficking in drugs and humans – very laudable but we don't need a Lisbon treaty for that.

The (insuperable) task the YES advocates face is that the onus is on THEM to make the case for change, and they simply cannot do it, as you yourself demonstrate in your five-item shopping list. Moreover, the deliberately obscure language is designed to prevent the case being made because it is obviously so dodgy.

It is not up to the Naysayers to disprove Lisbon – they are innocent until proven guilty.

If the YESsirs can't make a convincing case, any mature person will vote NO.

NO to Lisbon, but this is at the same time a big YES to the EU as currently constituted.

**NOTE:** This response generated further heated discussion, to which I added a second and third comment

- A Buried Truth (about the value of biological parenthood) Comment in the Spectator-hosted Melanie Philips Blog Many people regularly dispute the claim (self-evident truism) that “kids have a better chance in life if reared by their married biological parents”.

So I collated a number of pieces of evidence for this here, which others might find useful.

## Quotes for Issue 176

----- U S -----

Quote: “Some seem to believe that we should negotiate with the terrorists and radicals, as if some ingenious argument will persuade them they have been wrong all along. We have heard this foolish delusion before. As Nazi tanks crossed into Poland in 1939, an American senator declared: ‘Lord, if I could only have talked to Hitler, all this might have been avoided’. We have an obligation to call this what it is - the false comfort of appeasement, which has been repeatedly discredited by history.”

George W Bush in Tel Aviv to celebrate Israel's 60th birthday, makes an unmistakeable - though instantly denied - rebuke of Barak Obama's intention to enter presidential talks with the tyrants who run Iran, North Korea and Cuba.

Quote: “Actually we like Mr Obama. We hope he will [win] the election”

Top Hamas political adviser Ahmed Yousef says his terrorist group supports Barack Obama's presidential ambition.

Another reason for Americans to vote for Hillary or McCain.

----- B U R M A -----

Quote: “Our message is to the military rulers. Let the United States come and help you, help the people.”

In the wake of Cyclone Nargis, Asia's deadliest since 1991, President George Bush urges the illegitimate junta running Burma to accept humanitarian help from the US Navy nearby, just as it and the Australian Navy provided immediate, practical onsite aid following the 2004 tsunami.

The junta refused. They prefer direct cash infusions, no questions asked, and typical UN fact-finding missions

----- B R I T A I N -----

Quote: “Does he [the Prime Minister] agree with me that Labour is working?”

Prime Minister Gordon Brown (Labour) faces another tough question, this time from MP Chris Ruane (Labour), at the weakly Prime Minister's Questions at the House of Commons

Quote (Minute 22): “It's important to me that the Irish people are deciding the future of Britain. Now that's a turn-up for the book!”

Britain's veteran, maverick, socialist, former MP Tony Benn (Labour) comments on Ireland's

Lisbon Treaty referendum, which is being denied to the British.

----- B U S I N E S S -----

Quote: “I am not getting a bonus. I felt it would be inappropriate in the context of the very disappointing opening of Terminal 5 in March ... despite the fact it was a record year in terms of our financial performance.”

Willie Walsh, chief executive of British Airways, voluntarily declines the £700,000 bonus he is entitled to for having led BA to record profits of £883 million. The other 42,000 BA staff members will share a bonus pot of £34 million.

Mr Walsh's honourable precedent will make him extremely unpopular among his peers in the FTSE 100, and also among those in his native Ireland where he once headed Aer Lingus.