



The People's Movement campaigns against any measures that further develop the EU into a federal state and to defend and enhance popular sovereignty, democracy and social justice in Ireland.

Lisbon Treaty sacrifices agri-business to “price stability”

The Lisbon Treaty (in article 245a) would give the European Central Bank the over-riding task of maintaining “price stability.” Food prices are a fundamental driver of price inflation, so other treaty provisions complement this article. Primary among them is article 105, which establishes the “principle of an open market economy with free competition.”

But more detrimental to Irish agriculture in the long run are article 10a, which encourages “the integration of all countries into the world economy, including through the progressive abolition of restrictions on international trade,” and article 188b, which reinforces and expands this objective through a commitment to “contribute, in the common interest, to . . . the progressive abolition of restrictions on foreign direct investment, and the lowering of customs and other barriers.” The main vehicle for achieving these tasks is the WTO process.

The policy being followed by Mandelson in the present Doha round would become EU policy, established by treaty, if Lisbon were to be carried. Irish negotiators, who have shown no tangible gains in the present talks, would be powerless. Further measures in the treaty—such as the loss of an Irish commissioner and his cabinet for a third of the time, reduced voting power in the Council, and the loss of a veto in more than sixty new areas—would only make matters worse.

This Lisbon policy would result in a race to the bottom in production standards and environmental practices so that the European Union could export services and higher-value consumer goods while ensuring price stability. It would compromise our food security in a period of growing international scarcity and lead to an accelerated flight from the land and job losses in indigenous processing. The winners would be transnational corporations, commodity traders, and corporate ranchers.

Is this the sort of Europe we want? Rejecting Lisbon would send them back to the negotiating table and give a clear message that uncontrolled “free trade” is too big a price for the Irish people to pay.

Patrons: Robert Ballagh, Ald. Declan Bree, Cllr Neil Clarke, Raymond Deane, Cllr Betty Doran, Tony Gregory TD, Rev. Terence P. McCaughey, Finian McGrath TD, Prof. John Maguire, Cllr Bronwen Maher, Dervla Murphy, Joe Noonan, Cllr Chris O’Leary.

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