



What is the point of the European Union?

Afterword – September 2005

Since writing the above, the proposed Constitution has been voted down by the French and the Dutch people. Treaty changes have to be unanimous among the member states, so this means that it cannot be adopted legally.

This is not good news for Eurosceptics. The British people will not now be offered a referendum by the present Government on any aspect of our EU membership, so our chance to distance ourselves from the other member states has disappeared.

And the Project will continue largely as though the French and the Dutch people had not spoken, with the Eurocrats using ambiguous wording in the existing Treaties to justify their actions. If necessary, these will of course be validated by the Luxembourg Court, against which there is no appeal. One example of the Project carrying on regardless is the continued build-up of the agency to enforce the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which aims to deprive us of most of our remaining legal independence by imposing the EU's social model on our economic, employment, welfare, education, health, environment and cultural policies. This is the initiative which Keith Vaz told us would have no more force than the *Beano*, and the Prime Minister assured us would not become justiciable in Luxembourg. Yet the Court is already deferring to it in its judgements, and the Commission has ordained that all new EU legislation must follow it. There are also a number of very worrying military initiatives aimed at undermining NATO and the USA, which are proceeding with dubious legality and are not easy to reverse. These include a procurement policy which favours EU over US equipment, an independent command centre in Brussels, and a US\$10 billion space programme, including the Galileo satellite system, which is designed to compete with the US Global Positioning System, and in which China has a 20% stake.

It is true that Chirac's demand for the UK to abandon our rebate under the Common Agricultural Policy has forced Blair to reveal the full iniquity of that policy, and to challenge the whole EU budget. But the budget does not have to be agreed until 2007, and Blair has already signed up to the CAP until 2013. So we can expect a period of fudge, but not much change. The octopus will not retreat, or change its nature; too many lush jobs, fraudulent practices and second-rate political careers are at stake.

Can we dare to hope that the Conservative Party might get the obvious message from the French and Dutch 'no' votes, and move to a policy toward 'Brussels' which renders UKIP redundant? At the time of writing there is alas no sign of this.

Time will tell.

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