

The Irish People have spoken. Lisbon Is Dead

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On Friday, Ireland delivered a knockout punch to European elites and corporatists shattering their plans for an EU Superstate. The so-called Lisbon Treaty was nothing more than a repackaging of the European Constitution that was defeated by French and Dutch voters in 2005. The treaty was loaded with the typical “democratic” gobbledygook to conceal the vicious neoliberal policies at its heart. If it had passed, the treaty would have paved the way for greater privatization of public services, diminished workers rights, less state control over trade policies and civil liberties, and an aggressive plan to militarize Europe. Ireland’s entire political and corporate class stood foursquare behind the treaty, but the Irish people shrugged off the fear-mongering and bogus promises of prosperity and voted No. The referendum results showed 53.4% voted No, while 46.6% voted Yes. Despite the massive public relations campaign; the vote was not even that close.

A spokesperson for the No campaign put it like this:

“The Irish people have spoken. Contrary to the predictions of social and political turmoil, we believe that hundreds of millions of people across Europe will welcome the rejection of the Lisbon Treaty. This vote shows the gulf that exists between the politicians and the elites of Europe, and the opinions of the people. As in France and the Netherlands, the political leaders and the establishment have done everything they could to push this through – and they have failed. The proposals to further reduce democracy, to militarize the EU and to let private business take over public services have been rejected. Lisbon is dead. Along with the EU Constitution from which it came, it should now be buried.” (Socialist Worker online)

News of the defeat has not been well received in England where the neoliberal government of Gordon Brown has already indicated that it will reject the election results and “press ahead” in an effort to ratify the treaty. Neither Brown nor his friends in Brussels are likely to be deterred by anything as trivial as the will of the people. Labour MP and former Europe Minister Denis MacShane summed it up like this:

“I personally think that a vote in a foreign country should not determine the democratic decisions taken in the British Parliament.”

MacShane’s view is apparently shared by EC President Jose Manuel Barroso who said that EU member states should continue ratifying the Lisbon treaty even though more than half of Ireland’s 43 constituencies rejected it outright. So much for democracy.

The Irish have plenty to celebrate today. They’ve thrown a spanner in the plans of the bankers and corporate mandarins who want to replace representative government and

national sovereignty with their own skewed vision of capitalist Valhalla; a Euro-Utopia where short-term profits always take priority over the needs of ordinary people.

Bravo, Ireland.

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