

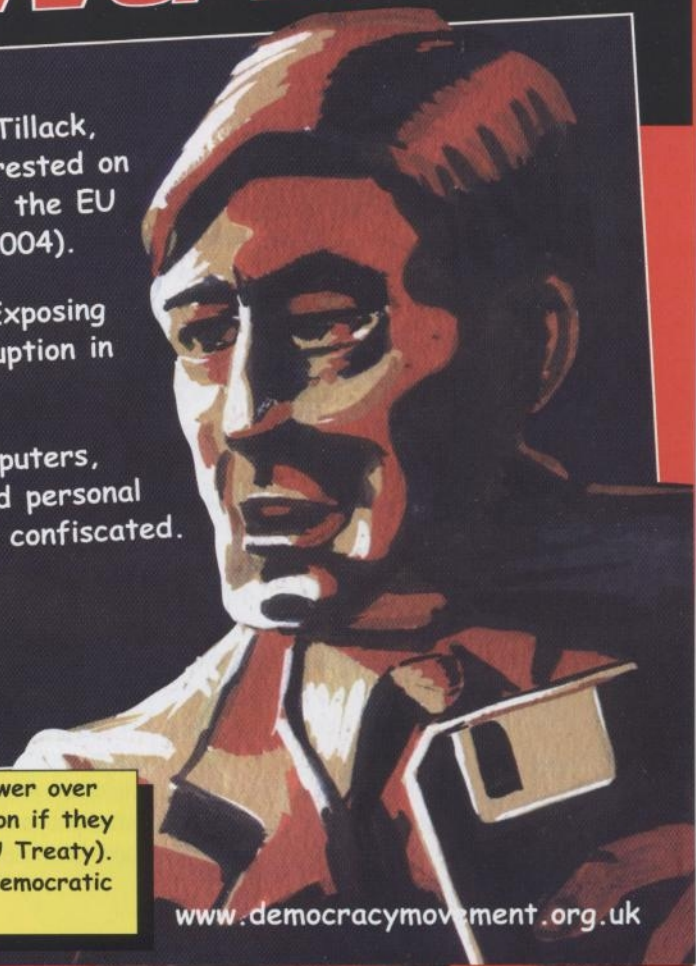
TAKING LIBERTIES



Hans-Martin Tillack, journalist, arrested on the orders of the EU (March 19, 2004).

The crime? Exposing massive corruption in Brussels.

Tillack's computers, archives, and personal papers were confiscated.



The forthcoming EU Constitution will give Brussels more law making power over your life. Yet, EU officials will remain immune from criminal prosecution if they steal taxpayers' money and break the law (Chapter 5, Protocol 36, EU Treaty). The peoples of Britain and other European countries deserve a more democratic and modern vision for the future.

TAKING

The arrest of Hans-Martin Tillack, *Stern* magazine's Brussels correspondent, demonstrates the EU's lack of respect for the rights of individuals (www.EUobserver.com). The gap in power between ordinary Europeans and the political rulers in Brussels will be made even worse by the EU Constitution. It's a massive step in the wrong direction.

The EU Constitution will centralise more power

Voting 'yes' to the EU Constitution will mean handing the Union more powers in many new areas. That means more decisions being made in Brussels rather than by those we elect.

To give just two examples, **Article I-14** says that the EU can impose 'broad guidelines' telling member governments how to run their economies. This could have significant implications for spending on public services. The EU has in the past demanded that Gordon Brown cut government spending. Also, **Article III-32** will give the EU the power to impose privatisation in a particular area, even if an elected left of centre government has no wish to introduce competition. A recent EU Commission white paper has confirmed that essential public services such as postal services, health, education and social services cannot be exempted from competition.

A growing number of people in Britain and Europe already feel that the political elite is too remote. Decisions need to be taken closer to the people, not further away.

The EU Constitution will not make the EU more democratic

Article I-25 confirms the sole right of the unelected European Commission to initiate new laws. The elected governments of the member countries will also lose the power to block EU laws they don't like in over 30 new policy areas. This is a huge cut in our influence over EU decisions. What will be the point of voting if all the major decisions over your life are decided by people who are not directly answerable to you?

The EU Constitution will not reduce corruption

The Union's accounts have not been passed by the Court of Auditors for nine years. The EU's former chief accounting officer, Marta Andreasen, was removed from office by Commissioner Neil Kinnock when she revealed the massive waste of taxpayers' money taking place. The Constitution does not remove the immunities from prosecution that corrupt officials enjoy (**Article III-340**).

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The EU Constitution will make Brussels even more authoritarian

There is already an EU Arrest Warrant that means citizens can be speedily extradited to other parts of the Union without any proof of wrongdoing having to be produced in court. The EU Constitution builds on this move towards a common criminal justice system. **Article III-175** provides for the creation of an EU Public Prosecutor. **Article III-177** gives the EU the right to extend the 'structure, operation, field of action and tasks' of its police force Europol, whose agents also enjoy immunity from criminal prosecution. **Article II-52** even allows the EU to 'limit' basic human rights if deemed to be in the 'general interest' of the Union (www.statewatch.org).

**DEMOCRACY
MOVEMENT**

www.democracymovement.org.uk

Real 'Pro-Europeans' oppose the EU Constitution

There are groups in France, Ireland, Scandinavia, Poland, and all other member countries fighting to stop the move towards a centralised Brussels based state (www.teameurope.info). Being critical of the EU is not the same as being 'anti-European'.

We are all working for a more modern and positive vision of Europe: one in which most decisions are taken closely to the people by elected parliaments and there is freedom of trade across the continent. We want all Europeans to enjoy basic civil liberties such as freedom of speech. This is the *real* pro-European vision.

However, the BBC, like government ministers, refers to those of us in Britain who oppose the EU Constitution as 'anti-Europeans'. Bizarrely, the Corporation calls those that want to further limit our democratic rights 'pro-Europeans'. The impression given is that EU-critics are motivated by a cultural antipathy towards our fellow European citizens when the opposite is in fact the case. The BBC, quite rightly, does not claim that Scottish and Welsh nationalists are 'anti-British' simply because they object to political rule from London. So why does the BBC continue to refer to EU-critics in this way?

Please write to the BBC to demand, as a licence fee payer, that it instigate a policy of replacing the term 'anti-European' with 'EU-critic' and commit itself to a fair, even handed approach to its coverage of the EU issue. Write to: Mark Thompson, Director-General, BBC Executive Committee, Broadcasting House, Portland Place, London W1A 1AA.

