

**Conversation on the Future of Europe**  
**Declan Ganley**  
**July 17, 2008**

**Simon Rosenberg:** Thank you for being here. I'm Simon Rosenberg from NDN and I'm very honored to be able to introduce Declan Ganley today. This was hastily thrown together and we got a call from a mutual friend of ours the end of last week and asked if we could host Declan, and I think we were excited to do it as he's a longtime entrepreneur and somebody who's built telecommunications and cable businesses and all sorts of those all over Europe, and acted in NGOs and in the way of NGOs and private consulting firms for our government and so on and he really is someone who has thrust himself into a very important political debate about the future of Europe. He's one of the leaders of the Irish "No" campaign which has now gotten lots of attention, and those of you who have been following this closely saw that President Sarkozy this week said that there's going to be a second Irish vote, and we know that you're going to have something to say about that today in a minute and also that there is institute, the Libertas Institute is now talking about taking the principles that we're going to be talking about today and try and create what really may be the first Pan-European political party and so what we have is we have a young, dynamic, uh, remarkable man who's really making his mark and really trying to create an important and spirited debate today about the future of the EU and the future of Europe, and we're just honored to have him here with us today and we're just anxious to hear from him.

**Declan Ganley:** Thank you to Simon for those kind words and thank you to the NDN for hosting this get together. NDN is a new and exciting center, and a great network across this great nation championing progressive ideas and vision, and a new vision for America and I congratulate you on the great work that you do here. One of the inspiring things about America and about what you do here is that democracy is so much at the core of everything. That one of the interesting and admirable traits of this country is that however off-track it may tack for a while, however slightly in the wrong direction it may go from time to time, it has this great self-correcting ability, and I think if there is a secret to America's success, it is the ability to self-correct. But yes, like every nation, it can make its mistakes and can go slightly wrong here or there, but it can always tack back. And the mechanism is democracy. Real democracy, accountability to each of its citizens, the fact that people have to present themselves before the citizens of the United States every once in a while and ask them for a vote. It's an old fashioned idea now, but it works, I like it, and I don't see any reason to change, at least that principle, the principle of democracy.

It's something that I witnessed as a very young man, I'll be forty in another week, on the 23rd of July, but in my young days in going to the then-Soviet Union in the end of the '80s and the early '90s, I spent a lot of time in Latvia, a little time in Lithuania and Estonia, but a lot of time in Latvia, where I knew members of the Latvian Popular Front, which was their independence movement. And these are people that managed to break away from the Soviet Union in August of 1991. And I saw young, idealistic, progressive people with huge amounts of energy, and maybe even a healthy degree of naiveté. They

didn't know what they couldn't achieve by aspiring to freedom and by aspiring to set up a real democratic system of government where their people were able to hold accountable with the ballot box the people that make decisions for them. And that affected me and it affected me deeply because I saw the Soviet Union in its dying days and what an unaccountable government can do in the wrong hands. It can rob a nation of its soul, of its sense of being, of any vision and replace it with at best mediocrity and at worst lies. That what the dying days of the Soviet Union, that's what I witnessed there and I witnessed young, principled people tack up to that and succeed. One of the first Prime Ministers of Estonia was 26 years old. Only somebody that young and that principled would dare to take on a job like that because I don't think he realized the risks that were involved. But they made it work and that was inspiring. That stayed with me through my career, which has been primary in the telecommunications business in Europe.

In 2004, Ireland had the great honor of holding the rotating presidency of the European Union. I think we did a very good job of it, that the Irish government did a very good job of it at the time. While that was happening, I took it on myself to have a Forum to Debate the Constitution of Europe and the Irish government very kindly got involved and sent the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and we had the participation of 16 universities, and Al Gore came over as a guest and talked about the constitutional process in the United States. It was a very enlightening speech. I had that event and that was part of the process to bring focus to something called the European constitution which, at that time, was being drafted and prepared which was (inaudible) presidium which was chaired by d'Estaing, the former President of France, which wrote the European constitution. In 2005, that document was put to the people of France and The Netherlands in a referendum and nine days before the referendum vote in France, every home in France received a copy of the constitution. Jacques Chirac had it sent by mail. It hit every doorstep with a thud, it is a big document. In surveys afterwards a large number of people had actually read some of the document. I've always said that if you read at least some of the European constitution that was drafted, you would vote "No" if you were a democrat, if you believe in democracy and accountability. The Dutch people a few days later voted "No." So now we have tens of millions of my fellow European citizens who, (inaudible) a significant majority voted "No." So what happened in Brussels? Remember that these people in Brussels never have to present themselves to a ballot box to anybody; never have to ask for a vote. What did they do? They looked at the results and they immediately started to delegitimize it. We've seen the same thing happen now in Ireland. "Well, they didn't actually vote on the Lisbon Treaty. They voted on the price of apples or the weather or..." All of these excuses are trotted out.

The Irish government is about to spend a half a million Euro to figure out why the Irish people voted "No." Let me save them the money. They voted "No" because they didn't want the Lisbon Treaty. That's why they voted "No." But this is the effort we see once again, for the third time, to rewrite history. To try and talk about a Europe that does not aspire to democratic accountability. That does not have the audacity of hope for transparent, accountable and responsible government. No, they do not want to be accountable. They do not want the inconvenience of having to explain themselves, to seek mandates from the citizens. Because here is another really good idea about

democracy: The fact that the power is vested in the people, in the citizens -- you've written it in one of your documents here a couple hundred years ago -- power is vested in the people and it is devolved, it is lent, on the condition that it is used wisely to elected officials and if they use it wisely they come back and they ask you for a "yes" vote again. If it's not used wisely, you can vote them out as you have done here from time to time, actually on a fairly regular basis. The French and Dutch decisions, were they respected? Absolutely not. They went back to Brussels. The lawyers got to work and they worked their way around. Clearly they wanted to preserve the constitution just to avoid the necessity to have another referendum in France or The Netherlands so they removed some very superficial facts but even now former Prime Minister Bertie Ahern and our Minister for European Affairs confirmed that the Lisbon Treaty was 90% or more the same as the European Constitution. Let me tell you how much the same it was: the typos in the document were the same (because I read both). The typos were even the same, that's how much the same it was. They managed to work their way around having to go back and have a referendum and avoided the necessity of having to ask the people. They deliberately disrespected the democratic choice of the people of France and of The Netherlands in a very audacious way.

The only constitution, the only nation that they could not get their way around was Ireland. Why? Well, for a number of reasons. There were some court judgments but all of them were based on a constitution that was written by some very smart people who knew about disputes over treaties. We had a civil war in Ireland over the signing of a treaty early in the last century. And our political establishment was born in the conflict of that civil war. In fact, the two major parties still derive themselves from that identity from a fight over a treaty that one sided agreed with and the other didn't. So we know how important treaties can be. And having read this document and studied it and seen that it was not just undemocratic but anti-democratic, I and others decided to set up Libertas as a campaigning organization at home knowing that we were taking on the establishment -- every major political party in the country, the establishment media, everybody -- knowing that they were going to come after me, that they were going to pour fire and scorn us. We were taking on the Brussels establishment, 27 governments, my own government, a major opposition party, and those people that were familiar with them but sometimes you've got to do the right thing. I've got four young children. I want them to grow up in an Ireland, in a Europe that is a place that is capable of leading the world to a place that is worth going to. Yes, I have the audacity to believe that Europe can go through a renaissance. It's capable of having the confidence, the strength, and the unity to once again lead the world or at least help lead it in a responsible way. I believe that. Call me naive; call me an idealist, fine. That's the audacity of hope.

I think we can do better. I know we can. But when I read this document of almost 400 pages and all of the addendums that added up to thousands of pages, you know what, it's an insult to European citizens. It's an insult that tens of millions of my fellow citizens who said "no" to this anti-democratic document are being ignored. Now we have the president of France apparently a couple of days ago say that the Irish people will have to vote again. This is the fellow who, in his presidential election campaign, promised that instead of a constitution, that he would deliver the French people a mini-treaty. Instead

what we got was almost 8,000 words longer than the European constitution. So what did they do? They reduced the font size and closed the line spacing and made it 60 pages shorter. Viola, a mini-treaty. How cynical is this? How stupid do they think the Irish people are? I was doing a media interview just before I came in here with a paper at home. I think the next thing that Libertas is going to do is produce t-shirts, really simple t-shirts, saying, "It's about democracy, stupid" so people finally get the message in Brussels that this is a vote against Europe, it's a vote for Europe. What is Europe? Is it a small cabal of elites, unaccountable bureaucrats in Brussels or is it almost half a billion people? The Europe that I know and love is almost half a billion citizens. That's Europe. And if the European Union is going to succeed -- and it has to succeed, it absolutely has to -- it will only succeed if it draws its legitimacy and its energy from those hundreds of millions of European citizens because -- guess what -- they're not going to be dragged backwards without knowing where they're going by a bunch of people who never have to ask them for a vote. It's not going to work. That formula will guarantee failure.

There was something called Article 50 in the Lisbon Treaty and for the first time it clearly stated how a member state could withdraw from the European Union. Had the Lisbon Treaty been approved, it would have exacerbated this lack of accountability and proven that European institutions were not just undemocratic but that they were anti-democratic, that they did not want to listen to citizens. Parties on the national level would have ended up running campaigns to withdraw from the Union. The recipe for the dismemberment of the European Union was in this treaty and now that we have voted "no" to this anti-democratic formula, we signed the death warrant on Euroskepticism. I said this before and I will say this again because it was not widely reported because some people don't want to hear this message but I lead the "no" campaign in Ireland and I can tell you, having spoken to the Irish people and spoken to people right across Europe, including in the U.K., that Euroskepticism is dead. People realize that the only viable future for Europe's citizens is in a union but a union that responds to the needs and aspirations of its citizens, not of an unaccountable elite in Brussels. That's how we get credibility, that's where we will get legitimacy. What we have in Europe today, when you see somebody like Sarkozy say that the Irish will have to vote again or when you see the thing that the German Foreign Minister said, criticizing us and saying that the Irish should leave the European Union, it's not his European Union, it's my European Union, it's every European citizen's union. It belongs to us, not to them. Sarkozy says we need to have a vote again, which is a ridiculous proposition because we voted in huge numbers, the big majority of voters on a very high turnout in an Irish referendum and he's telling us that we have to vote again. Well, if we have to vote again, then so does France. Then the citizens of France whose lost "no" vote on this same formula was ignored, they need to have another vote. So do the citizens of The Netherlands. And you know what? So do all of Europe's citizens because Europe needs a constitution. The tip that I would give -- maybe it's naive in the way that the Latvians were naive in thinking that they could get independence from the Soviet Union, maybe this is naive -- but the tip that I would give those thinking about the kind of constitution that Europe needs is how about making it something that people can read? Making it legible? Making it something that people can understand? How about, instead of making it 400 some odd pages, making it 20 pages or 25 pages? Maybe we can even start with something like "We the People..."

Maybe we could -- but that's not what they want because it's not about the people, it's about them, the elite.

A 25-page constitution that could be put to all the citizens of Europe for a vote that upfront sets out the aspirations of the European Union that doesn't try to hide things, I believe, is something that the citizens of Europe can buy into and support. I think the citizens of Europe will respond very well to vision, to some ideals being set down, to some objectives being laid out instead of thinking and knowing that there is some hidden agenda. This isn't a conspiracy theory, Giscard D'Estaing boasted to La Monde last summer, when he didn't realize that I was going to have to have a referendum. He said with regard to the Lisbon treaty public opinion will be led to adopt without knowing it. The policies we would never dare present to them directly. All of the earlier proposals will be in the new text, Lisbon, but will be hidden or disguised in some way. Does that sound like a democrat to you? It doesn't to me. The Belgian Foreign Minister, I think it was, said about the Lisbon treaty, "It is unreadable. It is a success." It's sad. And it's very sad that the word, the phrase "European leadership" is an oxymoron today, when you think about it, in so many respects, that we have a need for mediocrity in Europe, a need for mediocrity, that is fearful, or even contemptuous of its need to draw its legitimacy from the citizens of Europe, and that has to change, because we don't want Euroskepticism to rise from the grave that we put it into. And if they tried to dig up the Lisbon Treaty from the grave that we've just put it into, Euroskepticism will arise with it, and I don't know how we're going to put it back in its box. We mustn't do that.

Simon mentioned Libertas as a possible Pan-European party. How is this, what is this concept? What does this idea, suggestion come from? When you see what Ireland did when a big majority voted "No" and when you look at numbers across Europe and you gauge public opinion... Nicholas Sarkozy himself a few months ago said that if there were a referendum in France, people would vote "no." Then why is he telling us that we need to vote again? We just did what his own people would do. I mean, who does he work for? That's what he said, that if there were a referendum in France, people would vote no. Austria? Italy? Czech Republic? Poland? Sweden? Netherlands? Denmark? So on and so forth... The U.K.? It would be a "no" to the Lisbon Treaty. So why are they trying to foist something on the people of Europe that they don't want? Is that democratic? Does that sound like a democratic thing to you? It doesn't to me.

So how do we harness what Libertas has done in Ireland and how do we harness that to turn the tables on this Brussels elite? Perhaps, perhaps the way to deal with this is rather than listen to Mr. Sarkozy tell us that we have to have a second referendum (because it now seems that you can only have one answer in a referendum), if we have to have a second referendum, wouldn't it be interesting to say that since you don't have to give your own citizens a second referendum, we will. So how do you give a sitting government a referendum that it doesn't want on a European issue? The European elections are in June of next year, 2009. If you look at the turnout for these, the European elections, they are very low in all member states. They're even low in places where you legally have to vote. Low turnout. Ask people, the average person, what are the issues that people vote

on in a European election. Are they European issues? No. Most people don't vote because they don't know what the issues are about or they just vote for their regular party loyalty. Ask people in most member states to name their member of the European Parliament and they can't do it, they don't know who it is.

There is a mechanism and an interesting opportunity to give all of the citizens of Europe in all 27 member states a referendum where, if the message can be delivered to them, they get their opportunity to vote for candidates who commit that if they are voted for, they will act as a proxy vote. It becomes a proxy referendum on the Lisbon Treaty. If you want to vote "no" on the Lisbon Treaty vote for, for example, the Libertas candidate number 1, 2, 3, or 4. That's a possibility. It may be a way to turn the tables on these Brussels elite and redefine the debate because at the very minimum, it's going to force people to talk about what's in the Lisbon Treaty and the effects that it's going to have on them. Maybe some people might even read it. Maybe people who are saying that it's absolutely necessary, like my Prime Minister and our European Commissioner, and you can be sure all of their colleagues across Europe -- they, Brian Cowan and Charlie McCreevey, were honest enough to admit that they hadn't read it or they hadn't read it all. They were honest. I wonder how many leaders of Europe actually read the treaty that they are shoving down the throats of their citizens. Very few, I imagine. I imagine that the founders of this country read every document that they put their signatures to and thought very hard about it. I imagine that if the American people were asked to vote on a new constitution, that they would want to know what was in it and they would probably read it. That's why it's a good idea, for the European people, let's set out a 20 or 25 page constitution that can set out vision, which can set out a road map for the future, and that has the audacity of hope for a Europe that is capable of leading the world to a place worth going to. And now I'll take any questions that you might have.

*Questioner from audience: In terms of the fifty three percent who voted against the Lisbon Treaty in Ireland, how did it break down in terms of ideology – conservative, progressive, traditional socialist support? Was it across the board or was there a dominant theme?*

**Declan:** It was all over the place. I did not want to count any chickens but the morning passed and some of our people were in the RBS in Dublin watching the ballot boxes turn out. Within 45 minutes I had a telephone call to say that the “No” vote had just won. I said, “No, you can’t tell me this. It’s just ridiculously early. You can’t say this.” They said, “It has. You should see the number of ‘No’ votes that are coming from what we had considered the heartland of the ‘Yes’ vote,” the prosperous areas of Dublin. They weren’t majorities but they were big, big numbers. When you add them up in terms of population and votes, it’s very significant. So we knew in 45 – well I didn’t know, but the people that work for me knew in 45 minutes from looking at the turnout from those -- I will call them prosperous -- areas that there was going to be a “No” vote. Um, the establishment in Ireland is -- I don’t like calling it that because it’s really, it’s not fair but what is generally considered to be the establishment was “Yes” -- largely on the “Yes” side, with exceptions. On the left, there was proportionately a higher “No” vote probably on the left; certainly in the case of Labor Party supporters, that was the case. It was very interesting:

You had me and people from business, all sides of the (inaudible) sitting down and campaigning for the “No” vote when there are many issues on which we couldn’t agree at all, like neutrality for example. But the unifying theme amongst all of those voters was democracy. That was the unifying theme. So you couldn’t say it was the conservatives or it was the Left. It was people coming out and voting for democracy and for a better Europe because we could sense a “No” vote to Lisbon was a “Yes” vote for something better, for a better Europe.

*Questioner from the audience: (inaudible) with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. It’s very interesting to get your perspective. We were fortunate in Washington to have John Ruden here as well, the Irish on both sides of this issue. Some of the points that he made (I saw him last week) were interesting points, many of which are not dissimilar from what you’re saying. He was saying, for example, that he thought it would be very useful to have a president of Europe that was popularly elected and a number of other initiatives of that sort that would introduce a level of electoral dynamism. What’s fascinating to me, in the Irish case, about the “No” initiative, is that Ireland has done extraordinarily well under the European Union. You’d have to look really hard to find another European country that has done as well under the European Union. So, within that context, I and I think many other people in the United States were sympathetic to concerns about the lack of transparency and the lack of accountability that exists in the European Union and yet they have been quite successful in bringing in a period of peace, prosperity, and stability in Europe that is almost unprecedented in its history. So what type of principles would you put forward that differ from all the European Union has accomplished and, in a positive sense, if you were to write a 25-page draft that you spoke about, what would be substantively different. I imagine that you would be more concise in your phrasing but what would be substantively different from what the European Union has already done?*

**Declan:** What would be substantively different is that the people exercising power and making laws would be democratically accountable powers. That if Europe is to have a president, needs to have a foreign and security minister set out in the treaty, those people need to be accountable to the citizens that they are representing. If Europe is to have a president who is traveling the world, representing me as a European citizen, I’d love them to have to present me with a manifesto, an idea, and run for election so I can vote for or against them. This is a right that every European citizen should have. So these are really basic things and that’s the t-shirt, “It’s about democracy.” That’s it, democracy. That’s the issue.

Two, your point about peace – unprecedented peace – in the European Union, I would say that even the most ardent Euroskeptic would have to admit that the European process, as we often call it, the European Union has been the most successful peace process in history in the world. We said this right throughout the campaign. It has. I think, I know that it’s done much more than that. I’m able to live in Ireland. I do business in the United States of America. I do business with the U.S. government, with state and local governments. To think that I could have done that from Ireland, that my parents could

ever have done that – no. I speak with an English accent because my family’s story is the story of economic immigration from the west of Ireland. My grandmother picked potatoes in Scotland and lived in something called a Boffy, a communal live-in place, as a farm laborer. She was a maid in London at the beginning of the Second World War. She moved back to (inaudible) Ireland, in the west of Ireland. That’s what I come from, that’s the Ireland that I come from: rank poverty, desperation, oppression. The European Union – and our own hard work and ingenuity, by the way – has got us to where we are today. This is in recognition of that fact, of how Ireland has been so good for us -- I remember having to get up for work myself, so it didn’t do it all for us, and so does everybody else in Ireland.. get on the streets of Dublin at six o’clock in the morning and there’s all this traffic, but the fact is that Europe has been great for us. It is through a very mature, pro-European reflection. Polls after show that 85% -- I think the second highest in Europe – favorability, favorable disposition towards the European Union. It was very mature, reflective vote. If you see a member of your family making a huge mistake, going awry, and you’re responsible and you’re mature and you care about that, you’re going to say, “Stop.” You’ll do that even if they attack you, even if they criticize you. That’s what the Irish people did. They didn’t do any sort of “Little Ireland,” Euroskeptic, (inaudible). They did it in very mature, careful reflection. When people say that people “didn’t know” what was in the Lisbon Treaty, they knew that they weren’t supposed to know. Jean Luc Dehaene went into the Constitutional Affairs committee of the European Parliament a few weeks before the vote and said that he did not want to publish or release his plan for the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. The reason he gave was we don’t want to give these arguments to the Irish “No” side. He didn’t want us to have a properly informed debate in Ireland. People knew this. Does that answer your question?

*Questioner from the audience: I think you might have just answered my question but I will ask it anyway. Um, first all, I’m (inaudible), Director of European Affairs for Verizon. I’m sure you have experienced that one of the difficult parts of providing communications is that the European Union is not really a single market. Different regulations apply in different places. (inaudible) I think I’ve heard the answer to this already but what would you say to those who say that the “No” vote to the Treaty is an expression of nationalism, that it has set back the course of a single European economic market.*

**Declan:** That’s not true. You can’t get more nationalist than a republican in Ireland, than Sinn Fein, who was on the “No” side of this campaign. And if you look at the language of Sinn Fein through this campaign, it wasn’t nationalistic. It was very, very interesting. That you had Sinn Fein candidates talking about tax competition and how important it was to economic vibrancy. So you saw Sinn Fein tacking quickly to the center in all sort of things because they knew that that’s the logical, that’s where common sense lies on this issue – in the center, I mean the Irish center. In respect to the regulatory environment, I rolled out WIS licenses in 10 countries across the European Union so I have painful with familiarity with the issues that you’ve mentioned but at the same time I rolled out a table business in Eastern Europe where the regulatory environment coming in from Brussels really helped those member states move along before the came and afterwards. It was a huge benefit. The fact is that we have rules in the European Union about the

single market that are written down in black and white but people just ignore them. The fact is if we're going to have these rules, let's follow them. What's the point in having laws if you're just going to ignore them all the time? Don't have those laws – or have them, but make sure that they make common sense. That, for example, in the telecommunications sphere, something you and I are very familiar with, that people have the ability to go out and supply a low-cost and accessible service to telecommunications or anything else to any member state of the European Union on an equal basis. Equal access to services, goods, freedom of movement, etc. It's something that's there in theory but it's not there in practice, as you know, and we have to get that right.

*Questioner from audience: I think that was some paradigm that Americans view about the European Union -- what was so astonishing about the "No" campaign was how quickly it seemed to grow. It was a major groundswell that just blew up in the media across the world, in the States. What were -- kind of a hokey phrase – what were the "methods of success" for getting the message out there on an issue that, as you said before, that not many people were very versed on the issue like you are?*

**Declan:** Telling the truth, even though I got called a "liar" every single day. Just staying on message and telling the truth. If you look at the Libertas literature still on the website – do we still have the eight points on the website? -- yeah it's still on the website, Libertas.org, www.libertas.org. There are eight bullet points that were on the front page of the leaflet that we handed out which were factual, people read it, and we were we were called liars every day, as we would expect the opposition to do to us. People could see it for what it was. The only group handing out copies, of the contract that the Irish people were being asked to sign, the Lisbon Treaty, was us, we were the only ones handing out copies to people on the streets of Ireland, was us. That was the contract they were being asked to sign, but nobody else sent it to them. We, we wanted people to read it, or at least read some of it. I mean, how more truthful and open and honest can you be than that? So that's, that's why. And, and the other, I suppose, the other reason was we started off, when we were very small, when we started off and we said Libertas was a think tank to bringing greater democracy, accountability, and transparency to European government, and then we saw what you recognized, which was this groundswell of support and volunteers. We were printing T-shirts, and we ran out, hats, pens, and stuff like that. We had volunteers in Sligo, which isn't the biggest city in Ireland by any means, but it is a great vibrant place, we had over forty volunteers, out walking the streets. You can see on blog postings, the only people who knocked on doors, in many places in Ireland, were Libertas volunteers. These people, they weren't paid anything, they didn't even get a cup of tea. Hard to get anything done on a cup of tea. They didn't get a cup of tea, and they were out there, knocking on doors, out there at 10 o'clock at night asking people to vote "no" to this.

*Question from audience: So what are the central positive planks (inaudible) of the Libertas Institute (inaudible) of the European constitution, of the Libertas .... (inaudible)*

**Declan:** Engage the citizens. Draw your energy from them, and the way you can do that is put a pen in their hand and a ballot paper in front of them and have them vote for the people who are running the European Union. I know it's not a really inspirational idea, it might sound really simple, because it is, but we've got to get back to those fundamental principles of democracy. That's the big idea now. In terms of regulatory situations, how Europe should project itself in the world, should it project itself in the world, what are the principles and values it should stand for -- they say, first and foremost: democracy, accountability, freedom. The real meanings of those words; not the trumped up, manipulative meanings of those words but what they really mean. The types of ideas that inspired people on this continent to take extraordinary risk. It's interesting about that. I haven't spent that much time in Washington, DC but I've already made five or six trips to Mt. Vernon. It's quite an education to go out there and see where these people came from that had the audacity of hope to think that people could have self-determination, could throw off the shackles of unaccountable rule and (inaudible) and that's what informs, if you will, what Libertas is about. And anything derived from democratic accountability -- and that's something I hope what happens, by the way, in Europe -- that we will catalyze the formation of the European continent, a real one. It's very important that we bring focus and shed a penetrating light on the institutions of the European Union and European governments so that people can see what's going on. The amount of corruption there would just blow your mind; it's amazing what's going on there. It's not being talked about. It is from time to time but it's not the focus. Let's shed, from time to time, some light in there. Let's force the debate because if we're out there, championing a pan-European position and argument, others are going to have to come out there and respond to that on the same battlefield. If that's the only thing that we do, that will be a great achievement.

*Question from audience: I am an Irish citizen and I was just wondering that if there were to be a second election, would you be completely confident that the "No" vote would win a landslide victory as opposed to 3% [victory]?*

**Declan:** Yes. And why? Look, I mean, I know the Irish government and that we have someone from the Irish embassy here today and I know that they must have been spinning when Sarkozy came out and said that we had to vote again and the way he did. This is the thing -- I'd say this to my friends. I have some great friends in the Irish government and I've been very close to them. I've been a very active supporter of the main government party for years. I was on the Futures Commission for Telecommunications. I am very, very involved. I love my country and I'm a proud Irishman. Maybe even the people in Lester House, before even, maybe they were given pause to think when they hear Sarkozy say that you're going to have to vote again. They don't respond well to that in Ireland. If you vote today, that's absolutely the way to guarantee an 85% "No" vote in Ireland. It's going to take them months to dilute down and shed off that statement so people can forget about it. Months. And you can be sure that in another two or three weeks that there will be another thing and another thing. The reason is that it's not that people are trying to sabotage. I mean, these are people who liked the "Yes" vote but they are showing, in a very open way, exactly the traits that we

say are the problem. I'm saying, 'No more of this, thank you very much.' I hope that answers your question.

*Question from the audience: You see Libertas as being very progressive. Do you not have any worries that your party will result in Euroskepticism? That a lot of people rooting for you will be the Euroskeptics and not those progressives?*

**Declan:** Do I worry about it? No. I would say that I've sat down with those who have been viewed as Euroskeptics, even those who have been viewed as Euroskeptic media, and we've sat down and gone through this issue with them. Some Euroskepticism is just really dumb. We can't go back there again. Some of it is very honest in so far as it is Euroskeptic or it has been Euroskeptical of (inaudible) of these problems that I've pointed out. If you shed that penetrating light on the institutions, if you make it so that these individuals are accountable at the ballot box, those Euroskeptics - what I would call the "mild Euroskeptics" - can be brought over to what you call progressive view of the future of Europe. The fact is that today, through experience, most Europeans -- we all recognize that this has been a really good thing. So Euroskeptics are in the minority anyway and they're going to be an ineffective minority henceforth unless the Lisbon Treaty is revived. That will be oxygen and transfusion that they need to get back to life. Otherwise, a stake has been driven through old-fashioned Euroskepticism by setting this Lisbon Treaty into the grave.

**Simon:** Declan, thank you. I hope you have a few minutes to stick around. That was great, thank you very much.