

Comment on the News 5

What next for Europe?

In Comment on the News 4 I wrote about the failure of the French referendum on the proposed EU Constitution. In response to this failure, coupled with the similar failure of the Dutch referendum held shortly afterwards, Mr Blair has sensibly suspended preparation of the change in British law needed to enable us to hold our promised referendum. What to do next will be discussed at the summit of EU ministers to be held on 16 June.

Meanwhile the BBC have chipped in with the following announcement-

We've asked **Conservative MP David Heathcoat Amory** to come up with an alternative text. Mr Heathcoat Amory was a British representative on the convention on the future of Europe, which drew up the constitution. He opposed the final version and helped produce a minority report outlining a different vision of Europe. His proposed treaty - a term he prefers to constitution - is based on that report. In the run-up to the summit on 16 June, we're seeking suggestions for amendments to his treaty.

The so-called treaty provides for a Europe of Democracies (ED) not cemented into a union but linked merely by treaty. I approve of this idea and have commented on it at some length in a Blog (see [FBBB120](#)). My chief point is that Mr Heathcote Amory has forgotten to put in one of the prime necessities of such a treaty, a statement of the purpose of the whole exercise. For that I am suggesting the following.

The purpose of the ED shall be to facilitate co-operation between the member states on matters concerning trade, finance, communications, the environment, climate change, immigration and asylum, policing, extradition, and such other matters as may be agreed by unanimous vote of the member states.