

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2221/09
by Roger Helmer (NI)
to the Commission

Subject: Commission meeting with Mr Martin Territt

According to the Irish Times, a meeting took place in Brussels on 18 March 2009 between the Commission and Mr Martin Territt, Head of the EU's Representation in Dublin, to plan an 'information' campaign ahead of the proposed second Irish referendum on the Lisbon Treaty.

The Commission will recall that in 2007 the Irish Broadcasting Complaints Commission ruled that the Commission's radio and TV 'information' commercials were in fact political and likely to influence the outcome of the referendum, and it consequently banned them as political advertising.

Does the Commission agree that any proposed EU 'information' campaign, ahead of the proposed second Irish referendum, would inevitably have the effect of influencing the outcome of the referendum, and would indeed be designed and intended by the Commission to promote a 'yes' vote? Does the Commission not agree therefore that the use of taxpayers' money to influence the outcome of a referendum is scandalous, improper and anti-democratic? Is it not effectively equivalent to a national government using taxpayers' money to support the governing party in a general election?

Will the Commission now reconsider its position in this matter and refrain from improperly seeking to influence the outcome of the Irish referendum?