

# Lobbyism – the Modern Corruption

In old days, corruption was perhaps widespread but, since criminal, concealed. Today it is not just widespread but universal and has got a less incriminating euphemism, lobbyism, and the advantage obtained is not through black money but so-called sponsoring and less intriguing advantages (but often also through travels and other expensive presents). Since the 1990ies, the European political arena has been overshadowed by the influence from Big Brother's home-country. This has influenced both the national parliaments and in particular the European parliament in Strasbourg and governing structures in Brussels.

Of course, it is possible to create a lobby within legal means: politicians may create a lobby for propagating certain issues. However, when the lobbyists are non-elected persons, and they invest a large sum (including their own salary for the time spent) for influencing the elected representatives to support a mercantile or political cause, the delineation towards corruption becomes obscure.

With the presence of some 20,000 lobbyists in Washington D.C., 15,000 in Brussels and thousands in other capitals, lobbyism has now reached a huge dimension, where it causes sceptical people to question the content of modern democracy.

Conversely, the lobbyists and their receptors see it differently. A commission of the British Parliament stated, "The practice of lobbying in order to influence political decisions is a legitimate and necessary part of the democratic process" [1]. However, the fact that lobbyism is not illegal does not make it morally correct.

## The Jewish lobby in USA

The efficacy of lobbyism is nowhere more convincingly demonstrated than by the achievement of the Jewish lobby in USA. Millions of dollars are spent on supporting politicians of both parties, and further amounts – more difficult to evaluate – are spent on expensive travels to Israel of politicians, generally accompanied by their families.

Judged from the budget spend by the **American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)**, this is spent on a very fruitful soil, if comparing the official spending of 3-4 million dollars annually to the direct economical support to the state of Israel of 3-4 billion dollars, in addition to the political support. To those who refuse the sweet support, another organization, the **Anti-Defamation League (ADL)** is dealing with whipping of those who might have something against the deal and are therefore termed 'anti-Semites'.

## The European Corruption

We did not notice, but the crowd of lobbyist also infiltrated the European parliaments. Some of them even took measures to avoid some of the worst abuses, but just tolerating extra-parliamentary influence upon decisions, which should have been taken alone by the people's representatives (an if they do not understand the laws, how can they vote for them?) is an important step against democratical solutions.

In Germany, the process has deteriorated further. More than a hundred "Assistant Co-workers" ("externe Mitarbeiter") are found in various ministries [2], graciously paid by industrial sources. It is claimed that their presence is necessitated by the complex matters, they are dealing with, and the state saves money on their wage, which is privately paid. If societies are really saving money in this process, is another question.

## European Union – a Democracy?

Formally, the European Union is a democracy, which elects a Parliament, seated in Strasbourg. The real centre of power is, however, Brussels, where a number of commissions are headed by a kind of ministers (commissioners) who are appointed. They

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1 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobbying>

2 <http://www.heise.de/tp/r4/artikel/27/27714/1.html>

are not formally approving the laws but drafting them, often in unreadable technical language (and then it does not help, that this text in the modern Tower of Babel is translated to numerous languages). The overwhelmed parliamentarians are then guided by an army of lobbyists to give the formal nod. About 20 lobbyists for each politician fight for influence, and with good reason and spectacular success, as some examples can show. What could still be scandalous in the national parliaments is safely performed in Brussels, there are hardly any rules there to be broken. It is our fault only to use the less incriminating word (bureaucracy) for the process, rather than a more appropriate designation, e.g. corruption and hidden dictatorship.

As part of the European 'constitution,' European common laws have preference to national law. This has been abused to introduce unpopular laws (e.g. about genetically modulated crops and about restriction of civilian rights) after these assaults have been rejected in the national parliaments. The problem is, that these laws then have been pushed through in the commissions and thus without the shadow of a democratical process.

The European constitution, which has been brought to the politicians, is not like any other constitution. It is, in fact, quite unreadable without additional reading stuff and much time for intensive studies, and it has hardly been read by any of the politicians who voted for it. Take the German version: in 300 pages is described how this and that text is altered (additions and deletions).

## **The Solution ...**

Solving a problem demands that it is recognized as such. Then there can only be one solution, a biblical one: 'throw the merchants out of the Temple' – only it was not very effective then (the initiator was brutally killed) and it is naive to expect it to succeed this time.