

# EGZAMIN RESORTOWY Z JĘZYKA ANGIELSKIEGO

maj 2008

1. *Summarize the article below. Use your own words. Do not quote from the article.*

## **The parable of the presidents**

### **The Lisbon treaty leaves Europe with a plethora of presidents**

KING SOLOMON, relates the Bible, acted wisely and decisively when faced with two women claiming the same baby: his threat to cut it in half swiftly revealed the real mother. The European Union is different. Faced with two rival plans, its approach is to say yes to both, delay a reckoning for years and then throw money at the compromise. If EU leaders were running Solomon's court they would award both women custody, build parallel nurseries with public funds and review progress in 2014.

As a strategy, this has a big flaw: it does not work. Just ask EU diplomats and politicians as they ponder dozens of questions left unanswered by the Lisbon treaty that their bosses signed last year and pledged to ratify by the end of 2008. Some potential clashes have been obvious for a long time. Thus, two new figures created by the treaty have been promised overlapping jobs speaking for Europe: a new foreign minister (called the "high representative" for foreign and security policy, to avoid scaring the British); and a full-time president of the European Council, to be chosen by the 27 national leaders to chair their summits and speak for them inside the EU machine.

More recently, governments have woken up to another fudge, described by several officials as "the real problem" with Lisbon, "the really delicate question" or simply "a mess". It too concerns the two new posts, but this time how exactly they relate to the rotating six-month presidency. This is the system under which each EU country takes its turn in charge: its transport minister chairs EU transport councils for half a year, its environment minister chairs environment councils and so on (Slovenia has the job at the moment).

The presidency offers a country a mix of drudgery and real clout. Its foreign minister chairs the powerful general affairs and external relations council or GAERC (elegantly known as the Gurk), which prepares summits as well as policies on such matters as Iran and Kosovo. Its head of government gets to chair EU summits in Brussels and be seen on television hobnobbing with the American and Russian presidents. At best, this gives each country a stake in the system, and an interest in playing by the rules (because every now and then it gets to be referee). Rotating presidents may also emerge sadder and wiser from their stints, because they learn about the selfish, furtive national interests that often block EU policies for years. At worst, however, the system lacks coherence and even dignity (seasoned observers still shudder when they recall Silvio Berlusconi's stint in 2003).

Such horrors led France and Britain, when the constitutional treaty (Lisbon's precursor) was being drafted, to push for the rotating presidency to be abolished and replaced by the creation of a full-time president. Other ministerial councils, it was proposed, would either be chaired by a brighter-than-usual national minister, elected by his peers, or divvied up among three or four countries clumped together in a "team presidency". But smaller EU members correctly feared that they were being trampled on, and mounted furious resistance.

There followed what one official calls a "cynical stitch-up". Germany backed a full-time president in return for getting agreement to an EU foreign minister who (despite French and British qualms) will represent national governments and also serve as a member of the European Commission. However, the smaller countries also won a deal to retain the rotating six-month presidency. And the text describing the full-time president's mandate was pared down into gibberish. As a result, his or her role remains unclear: a globe-striding "Mr Europe", a low-profile broker of Brussels deals, or merely a ceremonial figure (German officials talk of their president as one possible model).

The role needs to be defined in time for the first president to take office on January 1st next year, assuming Lisbon is ratified on schedule.

But it is now trapped in a closed loop of EU logic. The nature of the job will determine who applies (Tony Blair, for example, might not fancy a post that amounts to putting out chairs at Brussels summits). Yet the identity of the first president will also help to determine what the job is.

The victory of the tiddlers is also looking hollow. True, rotating presidencies will retain as much as 90% of their present duties. But they will lose the best 10%. The GAERC is to split, creating a foreign-affairs council (“the FAC”), chaired by the high representative, who will lead on foreign policy and defence, and may end up overseeing discussions on trade and development as well. The foreign minister of the rotating presidency will be left with a general-affairs council (“the GAC”), but the treaty is vague on exactly what this will do.

Astonishingly, says one official, it is also only just sinking in that, although rank-and-file ministers will still chair specialist EU councils, heads of government have been left with no role at all. This matters: political leaders of countries holding the rotating presidency will have little incentive to invest their energies in the project if their underlings get all the glory (an especially sore point in coalition governments).

If the treaty is ratified by December, the first countries to hold this headless rotating presidency will be the Czech Republic and Sweden. The Czechs are “very upset”, it is reported. Visiting the European Parliament, the Swedish prime minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt, pointedly said that government leaders needed “a clear role” during their presidencies, floating the idea of “a co-chair situation” with the new full-time president.

This is not going to happen. Brussels types instead talk of possible sops: letting the prime minister of the rotating presidency speak first at summits, or host the odd informal summit at home, or sit on the podium at summit press conferences. The EU has only a few months to sort this out. King Solomon would know what to do. Unless he was a European.

2. *Translate the following text into Polish.*

AT THE World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2001, the mood was sombre. The dotcom bubble had burst spectacularly, the Nasdaq stockmarket had crashed, and the American economy was tipping into recession. Yet most continental Europeans were breezily optimistic. The long years of being lectured about their inadequacies by the Anglo-Saxons were over. Europe had wisely skipped the dotcom mania, and its new currency, the euro, was giving the continent a boost. Some Europeans even dreamed of taking over as the motor of the world economy. But it was not to be, as Europe promptly fell into a deeper recession even than America.

The Economist 13 March 2008

3. *Choose one of the following topics and write an essay of about **200** words.*

- A) What, in your opinion, is the ideal mode of cooperation between the Polish President and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs? Are the existing regulations concerning this cooperation with regard to the country's foreign policy sufficient, or should they be amended?
- B) The current government is making attempts at privatizing some so far state-owned companies and industries. What would be your reaction if it announced the privatization of the Polish health service, including hospitals, railways and the post office – three very important organizations of public good? Is privatization a way, or are there some other means of improving their services?
- C) Sportspeople and journalists have been discussing various ways of making a strong statement criticizing China's policy on Tibet, without, at the same time, compromising the idea of Olympic Games as peaceful and apolitical. How can the world's opinion be symbolically manifested during the Beijing Olympics? Do you think such a manifestation is advisable or necessary? Why?

4. Complete the numbered gaps with one word each time.

### **SICK BUILDINGS**

Like people, buildings get sick. When they (1)\_\_\_\_\_, the people inside them also get sick. They suffer from coughs, colds, wheezes, skin rashes, sickness, tiredness, headaches, eye troubles. They work slowly and inefficiently. They stay away from work. Sick buildings (2)\_\_\_\_\_ a 40 per cent drop in productivity and a 30 per cent rise in absenteeism. Management in North America and Europe have (3)\_\_\_\_\_ slow to respond (4)\_\_\_\_\_ the need to maintain a healthy environment for office workers, just as (5)\_\_\_\_\_ as for blue collar workers. In a typical case in a large London office block, about 25 years old, staff complained about constant lethargy and lack of natural light. The complaints dragged on (6)\_\_\_\_\_ years. Management were unwilling to admit to the problem because of the bad publicity (7)\_\_\_\_\_ would result. They preferred to think that workers (8)\_\_\_\_\_ malingerers or hypochondriacs. What (9)\_\_\_\_\_ happen to rental values if a building were admitted to be sick?

The trouble is the difficulty of knowing (10)\_\_\_\_\_ it is the people who are sick, or suffering from hysteria, or if something (11)\_\_\_\_\_ gone seriously wrong with the place they work in. A professor of design analysis at Cornell University gives the example of a building in Anchorage, Alaska, (12)\_\_\_\_\_ three women, all heavy smokers, developed bronchitis. One of (13)\_\_\_\_\_ was advised to wear a mask to work. The reaction of her colleagues led to an evacuation of the building, an investigation by consultants wearing full protective clothing, newspaper reports, and many lawyers. (14)\_\_\_\_\_ cause was ever found. On the (15)\_\_\_\_\_ hand, he also cites the example of the headquarters of the US Environmental Protection Agency where 70 people fell ill. The outbreak was traced to 4PC, a chemical produced (16)\_\_\_\_\_ the interaction between adhesive and foam backing on new carpets.

(17)\_\_\_\_\_ goes wrong? For a start, the whole place can be at the wrong temperature, usually too warm. A four degree rise above a comfortable 20C can half productivity. It is almost certainly (18)\_\_\_\_\_ dry, with a relative humidity below 40 per cent, (19)\_\_\_\_\_ in stuffy and stale air. Equally certainly, the air is dirty: too many people (20)\_\_\_\_\_ smoke, and smoke containing phenols and hydrogen cyanide circulate is breathed by nonsmokers.

## KLUCZ

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