

Socialists oppose quick Barroso naming

by UPI

BRUSSELS -- There won't be enough time between European parliamentary elections and a move to confirm a new European Commission president, Socialist critics say.

Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, leader of the European Socialist Party and former Danish prime minister, told the French newspaper *Le Monde* over the weekend that a push by European Union heads of state to confirm a new EC president only a month after the June 4-7 elections doesn't allow enough time for debate, the *European Observer* reported.

"This does not give enough time for the new parliament to express itself," Rasmussen said. "The elections take place on June 7th. We would need a longer time afterwards."

Rasmussen's party opposes a new term for conservative Portuguese statesman Jose Manuel Barroso as the head of the European Commission. EU heads of state could decide at a June 18 summit if Barroso is to receive a second mandate, provided the center-right EPP-ED party keeps its majority in Parliament, the *Observer* said.

"(Barroso) will never represent the opinions of the Socialist family, even if some social-democratic governments back him, for national reasons," Rasmussen said. "But the Parliament has to have the last word after the elections."

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