

Launch Editorial:

It is the Right of the People to Rule

Dáil Representatives and Government must Carry Out the Will of the People, and not just at Election Time!

With the publication of this first edition of *Convention*, we take the next step in the programme to create the new way for Irish Citizens to exercise our constitutional and democratic rights.

The People's Convention is not another political party, that is the last thing needed.

The basis for all electors coming together is simply that we are **citizens**, and it is our shared responsibility to decide the policy of our State so that the aspirations and dreams of all its citizens can be realised. We can come together regardless of any 'ism' or ideology, regardless of any 'left' or 'right' label or policy preferences and regardless of party-political affiliation - if any.

This is not a protest or campaign, it is simply a movement for democracy. This is not a proposal to destroy existing democratic processes. Nor is it a proposal

for some clever reforms, none are required at this stage. Unless the Citizens are empowered, any reforms are meaningless.

The question is, will we empower ourselves or should we continue as a people who are ruled over by some power group or other of vested interests, from home or abroad?

Everything we need in order to exercise our sovereign entitlement, to decide the policy of our State, is contained in Bunreacht na hÉireann, except that we must implement it.

Convention will record, constituency by constituency, the movement to build this organisation of an electorate which chooses to select, elect and mandate people's representatives rather than surrender our mandate to political parties as we have done to date.

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Editorial Policy of 'Convention' Newspaper

The content of 'Convention' is determined by the single objective of The People's Convention, democracy itself:

- To Secure
 - To Exercise and
 - To Defend
- the people's (our) democracy.

To secure our democracy means to end the abuse of the people's mandate by the clique of political parties - which are actually private member clubs. To do this we must give effect to the Constitutional provision which says that TD's "represent constituencies", not any party or themselves individually.

To exercise our democracy means that we must create a single organisation of all electors to select, elect, mandate and if necessary re-call our representatives. Our entitlement must not be restricted to voting once every few years, we must assert it on a continuing basis and build the organisation required to give effect to this.

To defend our democracy means that we must impose on the current TD's their obligation to "represent constituencies" according to the electors' specific mandate.

We are a sovereign people, no interest group and no party has a right to rule over us, to impose policy or usurp our democratic process for their own gain.

'Convention' will contribute to the community wide discussion and inform.

'Convention' will support those in the constituency who are advocates of the people and are helping to build The People's Convention.

This is the editorial guideline for 'Convention'. We hope all will support it. (Also Published online at www.cppc.ie)

Important Challenge to SIPO:



"Let's discuss the Lack of Standards in Public Office and the 'party system', in Court!"

Diarmaid Ó Cadhla (above) has called the Standards In Public Office (SIPO) legislation a fraud and a:

"smokescreen that masks the corruption and backroom dealings of the party system".

In a statement The Peoples Convention in Cork South Central challenges SIPO to proceed with prosecution against Ó Cadhla because he has refused to return Statutory Declarations arising out of participation in the election last year. The statement says:

"the SIPO legislation is discriminatory and based on Electoral Acts which are unconstitutional and a denial of the rights of citizens to elect and be elected."

This is an issue of concern to all citizens, it is fundamental to our democracy.

Prosecution of the alleged offence offers the opportunity to clarify this serious matter before a court of law. SIPO has already used Garda time in repeated visits to the home of the candidate, itself a misuse of

valuable resources. All that is required is for a summons to be issued, which Ó Cadhla has told the Gardaí he is happy to answer in court.

If the SIPO legislation means anything then prosecution should proceed as provided for, otherwise the law means nothing and the cost of SIPO is itself a waste of public funds.

Despite SIPO, loopholes are easily found to hide political donations. The Fine Gael party itself refuses to disclose any corporate donations at all. In addition, the political party system is funded directly by the State, to the tune of €90m in the 6 years to 2010.

Accounting for these funds by either the parties or SIPO is either not required at all or is so inadequate as to be meaningless.

SIPO treats individuals or organisations of the people with less rights than these private clubs which get State funding.

(Full text of statement is available online at www.cppc.ie)

Will Campaigns, Protests or Petitions make Citizens the Decision Makers?

Brendan Doris of Dublin Mid-West attended a local meeting recently on the issue of household charges and has some thoughts on the wider problem this throws up



The citizens of this country are being increasingly forced to mount campaign after campaign against one type of deprivation or another due to decisions and actions of successive governments.

People are rightly opposed to the new household and water charges for many sound reasons. These new taxes, for that is what they are, are being levied at a time of unprecedented financial difficulty for more than one million people who are in households dependent on social welfare and unemployment payments and others who are struggling with huge mortgages.

The politicians cynically justify these "local" charges as being a "fairer" way to pay for local services and a means to "widen the tax net". How is extracting more taxes from people on fixed income, wages or salaries going to widen the tax net while speculators get billions to subsidize their gambling?

These decisions have been made without any mandate from the citizens of this State. It is a system of "taxation without representation".

The question must be asked as we face yet another campaign. Who does it serve to agitate in this way? How is it that we, the electorate, are increasingly being forced to

protest against our own State power even to the point of breaking the law? Where is the democracy in that?

The political parties of every type have been making a big noise about their reform agendas during and after the election. Yet the fact is that taken together all these so-called reforms will not bring about the one critical reform that the people need - the empowerment of the citizens of this State!

Citizens all over the country are looking at a different approach as to how we can defend our interests against the austerity programme and achieve our own empowerment - an approach which is not piecemeal but one which roots out decades of abuse of our mandate and our democracy.

As it is, people put huge amounts of time into unselfish voluntary work, raising funds, providing services and facilities because of neglect by the State.

If even a fraction of this effort, or of time spent campaigning, was re-directed into solving the underlying problem (lack of democracy) then we would have the means to solve all problems.

Working for the empowerment of the citizens is the key to a better future.

Policy of 'Bailout' is Imposed on the People

The anti-bailout protesters in Ballyhea/Charleville in Cork have passed the first anniversary of their weekly march. All the time they have demanded an end to the bailout, saying that it has no mandate from the people, and that it was wrong that the public should have to pay the gambling debts of bankers and speculators.

Diarmuid O'Flynn (organiser) has been critical of media coverage of the issues involved:

"Those of us who protest are asked again and again – 'what else can we do, what will happen to us all if the ECB pulls its funding of our Central Bank?' Wrong questions, to the wrong people – Do you ask the oppressed to accept their oppression or do you ask the oppressor to stop, do you ask the oppressor to justify legally or morally what they are doing?"



O'Flynn also criticized the current Government, stating that it had been elected on the promise of rejecting the bondholder impositions but that now they had accepted it. Rather than act on the mandate of the people they were:

"Like Fianna Fáil/The Greens, instead of forcing our just cause on the Troika they are forcing the cause of the Troika on us."

The Ballyhea/Charleville Says No! protest is determined to continue. Their reputation has spread far and wide.

Whatever we may think about the bondholder bailout and the accompanying IMF/ECB intervention, it has compromised our sovereign rights - citizens have every right to be concerned.

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Distribution

If you can help to distribute 'Convention' in your local area, either door-to-door or through placing in newsagents or at other drop-off points please contact us to discuss

PDF copies are available on the website www.cppc.ie

Join the Discussion

Letters, email & Tweets help build the discussion in our community
(see contact details on back page)

Call to Get Organised

CPPC was formed in November 2010 and following public meetings in Cork, Dublin, Carlow-Kilkenny and Wexford four candidates contested the General Election standing on a platform for democracy, winning over 1600 first preferences.

The Peoples Convention has brought the issue of empowerment to the fore. We have declared that not only is it the right of the citizens to direct the affairs of our state and decide its policy, but we have also proposed how a reality can be made of this sovereign right.

With 'Convention' we are focusing the work in constituencies where citizens come forward to assist this effort. We regard it as our social responsibility to contribute whatever we can to the effort, we invite you to join with us in the cause.

Secure, Exercise and Defend Our Democracy!

Referendum May 31st

Since 1997, the Stability & Growth Pact (SGP) was the system to deal with the debt crisis. It limited deficits to 3% and debt to 60% of GDP - an initiative of Germany.

The SGP failed and both budget deficits & national debt are in crisis throughout the EU, thanks to a frenzy of unlimited lending by the largest banks. The principal defaulters on SGP were Germany and France. Yet last year, Merkel and Sarkozy went solo to propose a stricter policy, with penalties, even

to depriving member states of the right to vote, but that wasn't accepted by others. This has now become the Fiscal Compact Treaty (FCT). This and the last Government tried to ensure that we did not have a vote on this issue.

Thanks to our Constitution, it is our choice to say whether we have confidence in this proposal and its implications or not.

Some say this whole approach is wrong. We are already in a hole and should stop digging!

Some say we need to stick with the 'European Project' - It is our right to decide.



@vcortexworkers on Twitter
<http://vitacortexworkers.wordpress.com/>

If the People ran Our Country, would the Vita Cortex Workers be Abandoned?

The treatment of the staff at Vita Cortex must be of concern to us all.

One of the revealing aspects of this dispute has been the manner in which the political party representatives behave, particularly those elected and in government. Without hesitation, they are all in 'support' of the workers in their just and legal demand... it's just that there are 'complications' that make resolution difficult. But employees are entitled by law to redundancy, and to the deal agreed when closure was announced, yet this employer is somehow untouchable! The wealth created by these same workers is hidden away and protected, and they are denied their rights.

The vested interests get their way, and the employer is left with substantial wealth but it seems our State is unable to protect the employees, despite the laws in their favour and despite statements of support, even from the Taoiseach!

To add insult to injury, threats of court orders are used to criminalise their just struggle and to further facilitate the employer.

If we hadn't seen it before, what we are witnessing is the selective application of law. When citizens interests are at

stake there are 'complications', the law is ineffective and no one is to blame for it. But when its the banks or other vested interests - laws, by-laws, statutory instruments, regulations and rulings can be created overnight.

What all this highlights sharply is that citizens rights matter very little.

When the state took over Anglo-Irish Bank they decided, without any legal obligation at all, that they would cover the outstanding debts, including those due to unsecured, nameless, bondholders. They decided to do this, mortgaging the future of the entire State, without even asking the citizens ... there were no 'complications' in the way.

Despite overwhelming popular support for the Vita Cortex workers it is clear that the will of the people doesn't count. We citizens have no say in deciding even the main questions of State policy, let alone the outcome of such disputes. The system of political parties, 'whips' and vested interests make the decisions in our names. We matter little.

Meanwhile, politicians of every party have their pictures taken with those in the occupation. Such photo opportunities will be useful for election leaflets in the future!

Sidelines

- During the referendums held at the time of the Presidential elections both Alan Shatter and Brian Hayes distinguished themselves by their arrogant dismissal of concerns raised by previous office holders at the Attorney General's office.

- *Pat Rabbitte in response to the BAI finding that RTE had mishandled the Gallagher presidential tweet on Prime Time and afterwards could only dismissively ask if he should 'take the programme team out at dawn and shoot them'!*

- A few weeks ago the same Pat Rabbitte's response to the children's hospital planning refusal was to offer an opinion that it is the planning laws which needed changing or "finessing" as he put it.

- *Enda Kenny for his part brushed aside the growing fear of many over the septic tank registration with his comment that the cost was less than the price of a pint a week.*

- To celebrate their first year 'in office' both Fine Gael and Labour TD's are to send out newsletters to their constituents outlining their "achievements" so far. The sting is that we citizens have to pay the cost of this exercise in self praise.

- *It took 15 years and a cost of €300m for the Fianna Fáil leadership to admit and act on the obvious... What can we say?!*

- At their Ard Feis, the FF leader declared the "empowerment" of their members, he made no mention of the empowerment of the citizens! Entirely appropriate for what is a private member club.

- *The European Stability Mechanism (ESM) is a Treaty we have signing without referendum. ESM establishes a fund for 'bailouts' (we have committed €11bn plus to it). However, it still requires ratification by Dáil Éireann.*

- Despite the Government making every effort to avoid a referendum, we have a vote on the Fiscal Compact Treaty.

- *The Government has pre-empted a 'Yes' vote by agreeing that access to the ESM fund is conditional on a 'Yes' outcome, because we have already committed to paying €11bn into it!*

- Jean-Claude Piris, who helped write the Lisbon and other EU Treaties has warned that the 'Fiscal Compact' will **not** be enough to end the financial crisis.

- *The policy on Household Taxes is being imposed despite massive opposition from the citizens, where is the democracy in this? Where is the mandate?*



Is Fúinn Féin Rudaí a Chur ina gCeart

Is léir go bhfuil an tír seo saibhir, cé nách deirtear go rómhínic é, agus b'fhéidir gurb é sin an fáth go bhfuil suim ag an gcóras idirnáisiúnta airgeadais ionainn?

Tá bia á sholáthair againn do leath an Aontas Eorpaigh (AE) agus taobh amuigh de sin freisin. Ag an am céanna nílimid ag baint úsáid ceart as na farraigí timpeall orainn, tá siad tabhartha ar lámh dos na tíortha eile sa AE. Chomh maith leis sin, le blianta beaga anuas, tá sé soiléir go bhfuil neart saibhreas againn faoin talamh, ar thír agus faoi uisce, tá gás ann agus ola. Is ár saibhreas dúchasach é seo, agus tá daonra óg againn atá oile i ngach teicneolaíocht agus iad ag lorg oibre.

Ach tá na hógánaigh ag dul ar imirce, níl slí bheatha anseo dóibh, is baolach.

Cad atá cearr?

Cén fáth nach bhfuil na daoine óga san ag obair i dtionscadal dúchais, seachas bheith ar imirce? Cén fáth go bhfuil easpa d'aon seirbhís dos na saoránaigh gur leo an saibhreas seo? Cén fáth go bhfuil muid ag brath ar mairgí idirnáisiúnta airgeadais agus lucht na bannaí?

Deireann na húdaráis nach bhfuil malairt slí ann... go gcaithfimis géilleadh don léirscris seo atá orainn.

Más fíor son tá muid i bponc ceart.

An iad seo polasaithe na ndaoine atá á chur i bhfeidhm ag an rialtas? An iad seo na polasaithe ar chaith muintir na tíre seo a vótaí san olltoghchán? Is cuimhin linn an

ráiteas "Labour's way" in áit "Frankfurt's way", ach cad a tharla?

Ní hé toill na ndaoine atá ag rialú sa tír seo, ní hiad na saoránaigh atá i gcumhacht! Tá ár gcórais daonlathais curtha amú, goidte uainn, ag na páirtithe polaitiúla ar mhaithe leo féin.

Tar éis féachaint ar na ceisteanna seo le tamall, tá sé lán soiléir nach bhfuil ins na páirtithe polaitiúla, gach aon cheann acu, ach clubanna príobháideacha. Is cuma cén brat atá ardaithe acu, bíodh sé glas nó dearg, gorm nó buí, nó ón eite chlé nó deis iad, nó beag nó mór iad. Tá na páirtithe go léir mar an gcéanna i slí thábhachtach - ní ghlacann siad le ceannasáocht an phobail sa chóras daonlathais. Dá nglacaidís, ní bheadh 'whip' ann, ní bheadh an córas toghchánaíochta eagraithe i bhfabhar na bpáirtithe (rud atá míbhunreachtúil). Dá mbeadh daonlathas ann, bheadh smacht ag an bpobal ar ár dTeachtaí Dála agus ceart againn iad a aistarraingt ón Dáil mura bhfuileamar sásta leo, agus gan aon ghá fanacht ar feadh cúig bliain eile!

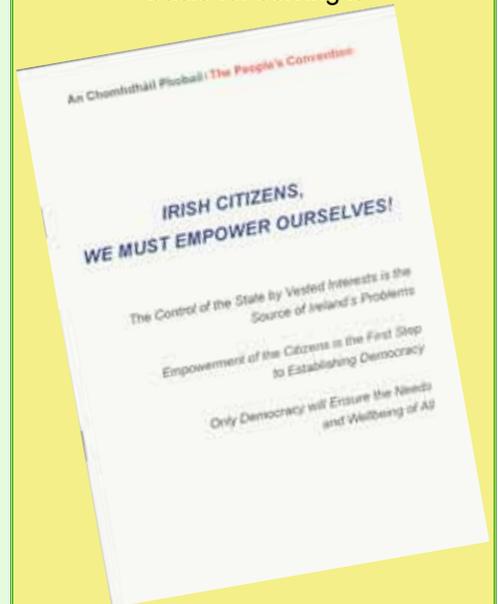
Níl aon cheann de na páirtithe chun teacht mar shlánaitheoir orainn, is fúinn féin atá sé chun seasamh a thógaint agus a bheith eagraithe roimh an chéad toghchán eile.

Is é toill an phobail ar cheart a bheith ag rialú sa tír.

Is é sin bunús an daonlathais.

Pamphlet Available

Presenting both a clear analysis of the underlying problem facing the Irish people today and also offering the basis for solving it



Copies of the pamphlet can be downloaded in PDF format from the website, printed copies are available at meetings or on request

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Submit News

You are invited to submit stories, experiences, research, photographs or opinion on any issue affecting our democracy

Articles may be published either signed or unsigned as appropriate

CPPC Constituency Meetings - Everyone Welcome

Why do the People not decide State Policy?

Dublin Mid-West: Community Centre
Ballyowen Castle, Lucan
18th April, 8.00pm

Cork South Central: Blackrock Hurling Club,
(South East Electoral Ward Area) Church Road, Cork
25th April 7:30pm

The Peoples Convention are beginning the constituency-wide process through which citizens will continuously mandate our public representatives

Citizens are invited to submit motions for discussion and adoption at these meetings. All elected representatives are invited to attend

Secure, Exercise and Defend Our Democracy!