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Fianna Fáil and government parties accused of betraying the Irish people

The People's Movement, which is campaigning for a No vote in the forthcoming referendum, have strongly criticised Fianna Fáil and accused the party of “a gross betrayal of the Irish nation and its people” by putting the interests of the euro-zone countries above the interests of the Irish people and the country as a whole.

At a press conference attended by independent TDs Maureen O'Sullivan, Catherine Murphy and Finian McGrath in Dublin today, the movement's chairperson, former MEP Patricia McKenna, said: “The admission by Fianna Fáil leader, Micheál Martin TD in Friday's *Evening Herald* that Irish taxpayers were saddled with the massive and unprecedented €34 billion bailout for the notorious Anglo-Irish Bank because the Irish government felt under pressure to save the euro currency, is a monumental disclosure and flies in the face of Fianna Fáil's 2008 justification that the guarantee was necessary to stabilise the Irish economy and protect the interests the Irish taxpayers”.

McKenna said “it is now clear from Mr Martin's disclosure that, under the guise of the national interest, the vulnerable Irish taxpayer was handed a multi-million euro bill in a futile attempt to shield other EU states from financial disaster.”

“The current government parties, which are now unconstitutionally spending public money on biased publications and advertisements to buy the result they want, were complicit in that outrageous act of betrayal and deception by the previous government.”

“The People's Movement are urging voters to consider if any of those parties urging a Yes vote can be trusted as they have clearly demonstrated that the end justifies the means, in that the interest of the Irish people must be brushed aside to protect the euro-zone project and shield from any financial loss those reckless European banks that gambled on what they thought was a sound bet” she concluded.

Also speaking was Robert Ballagh who challenged the Yes side's mantra of “where will we get the money if we vote no?” by quoting Micheal Noonan who said on returning from the March summit before the referendum was announced:

“There is a commitment that if countries continue to fulfil the conditions of their programme the European authorities will continue to supply them with money even when the programme is concluded ... The commitment is now written in that if we are not back in the markets the European authorities will give us money until we get back in the markets.”

Adding further he said: “this is clear and concise. The words of Michael Noonan the Minister of Finance saying we will get the money. I think this scare tactic that has been employed since the start of the campaign that, if we vote no we will be frozen out of funding, is a lie and one that is denied by Michael Noonan’s own words.”

Finian McGrath too, was unequivocal in his call for a No vote whilst adding: “I am shocked and appalled to find Labour Party TD, Aodhán Ó Ríordáin, attacking three trade unions this morning in the national media. He had a go at Mandate, Unite and the CPSU for calling on people to vote No. I think it is a sad day for the Irish Labour Party when you see a member of the party attacking trade unions over a principled stance they have taken.”

Adding further Deputy McGrath said: “Deputy Ó Ríordáin and the Labour Party should be focusing on the fact that we now have 30% youth unemployment in this country as a result of their policies over the past 12 months and austerity. This is one major reason to vote No. The economy is on its knees and what we need is growth, economic development and this treaty is a bad deal for Ireland, bad for the economy and bad for democracy in this country.”

Deputy McGrath concluded by challenging IBEC and others on the Yes side to explain how they are going to deal with article 3 and 4 of the treaty, adding: “article 3 and 4 alone will destroy the economic base of this country. I challenge IBEC and others to explain how they will deal with implications of article 4 and 4 of this treaty.”

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