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Cowen's threats verge on political dictatorship

The threat by Taoiseach Brian Cowen to expel party members who do not actively campaign for a Yes vote on the Lisbon Treaty verges on political dictatorship said former Green MEP Patricia McKenna who is campaigning for a No vote. She said "Mr Cowen is ignoring the fact that despite being members of a political party, Fianna Fáil members are also protected by the Irish constitution and as individual Irish citizens have the sole power to vote to amend our constitution free from party political pressure".

Ms McKenna said "This heavy handed approach by our Taoiseach towards members of his own party does not augur well for the public at large and indicates that his heavy handed and dictatorial approach is what we can expect during his term in office."

She said "His attitude also indicates that threats and bullying is the only way that the Government can secure a Yes vote as there is nothing in this treaty to sell to the Irish people."

"Dismissing the arguments against this treaty as absurd and a distortion of the facts without engaging in debate will not convince people to vote for it. It is clearly a bad deal for Ireland and a bad deal for Europe and that is why our political establishment are so defensive in their approach."

"This will be a battle of the people against the entire political establishment. But I believe that the No side have the advantage, in that they have 'right' on their side and the genuine interests of the Irish people at heart" concluded McKenna.

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