

**23 May 2008**

**Yes side displays extremely irresponsible and cavalier attitude to our constitution**

European Commissioner for Internal Market and Services, Charlie McCreevy, said today he had not read the Lisbon Treaty and wouldn't expect ordinary voters to do so either. The former MEP Patricia McKenna has questioned the legality of the EU Commission's interference in the referendum, saying "this type of approach, that we should in effect agree to something we have not read, displays an extremely cavalier attitude to the entire issue. It is incredibly irresponsible of Mr. McCreevy and other members of our own political establishment to ask voters to agree amendments to our constitution allowing the provision of the Lisbon Treaty to override the founding legal document of this state without thorough scrutiny."

McKenna said "Commissioner McCreevy is not the first senior Irish political figure to admit that he has not read the treaty. The current Taoiseach Brian Cowen and his predecessor Bertie Ahern both admitted that they are in effect asking Irish people to agree to something they themselves have not read in detail. This attitude 'sign a contract you have not read' is grossly irresponsible and an abdication of their constitutional duty to protect our constitutional rights."

She went on to say "The constitution of Ireland is the basic law of the state. No law can be passed which does not agree with it. Yet voters are being asked to agree without thorough examination to fundamental constitutional changes. Mr. McCreevy says, 'I don't expect ordinary decent Irish people ...will be sitting down spending hours reading' these proposals. Our politicians must be reminded of the fact that our Constitution makes it clear that '*All powers of government, legislative, executive and judicial, derive from the people, whose right it is to designate the rulers of the State and, in final appeal, to decide all questions of national policy*'. Irish people cannot be urged to give up this right without questioning the consequences" concluded McKenna.

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