

20 September 2009

Read the bill!

The south-east region of the People's Movement has urged voters to read the Twenty-eighth Amendment of the Constitution (Treaty of Lisbon) Bill, copies of which have been sent to all homes along with the Polling Information Card.

Kevin McCorry, the secretary of the south-east region of the organisation says that 'if voters read it, they will see that there is a big discrepancy between the Lisbon Treaty being peddled by the Yes side and what we'll actually be voting on'.

At its simplest, there is nothing about jobs, the economy or 'staying at the heart of Europe' in the Bill. Lisbon represents a constitutional revolution

For example, Irish citizens would be given a real 'additional' citizenship on top of their national citizenship instead of the purely notional and symbolic EU 'citizenship' of today, which is stated under the current treaties to be 'complementary' to national citizenship, a legally meaningless term. This important point was not dealt with properly by the chair of the Referendum Commission in last Friday's 'Morning Ireland' programme. Judge Clark claimed that there was nothing new in Lisbon regarding this matter, claiming that we already had an 'additional' EU citizenship since the Maastricht Treaty.

We are to be asked to put into the Irish constitution a formal and permanent 'commitment to the European Union' something that no other member state has done nor proposes to do. Such a constitutional provision is remarkable for a purportedly sovereign state to have in its constitution. The Referendum Commission claims that this provision is 'intended to express the commitment of Ireland to the EU and its values' but does not explain why it is felt necessary to do so, nor why Ireland alone of 27 member states should require such a constitutional provision.

There is not a single reference to the 'assurances' in the Bill yet the Referendum Commission devoted half of the 'Guide' to the Lisbon Treaty but did not explain why the assurances were not incorporated in the Bill.

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For further information on this statement and on the People's Movement in the south east, contact: Kevin McCorry – 086 3150301