

Email to all Green Party TD's, Cllrs', MEP's in advance of their Ard Fheis this weekend.
'Sack the Government'

We, the Connolly Youth Movement and Labour Youth, write to you as influential members of the Green Party. It is time you withdraw support from this Government and return to the politics you promised the Irish electorate in your 2007 Election Manifesto.

In the lead up to the 2007 General Election, your Party highlighted the need to remove Fianna Fail from Government and how you wanted an alternative Government excluding Fianna Fail.

However, rather than sending Fianna Fail into opposition you have proceeded to prop up Fianna Fail for another term to the detriment of Irish democracy, the Irish people and, importantly, your Party.

Since you entered Government you have been unable to implement any real policies or bring about any real change.

Your Party has been responsible for keeping Fianna Fail in power and therefore you have played your part in the collapse of the Irish economy.

Irish people are demanding accountability and responsibility and clearly the book rests with the Government you are a part of.

Just like Fianna Fail, the result of the Green Party's time in government has been one of broken promises.

It is time you stood up for what is morally right and fair and withdraw support from this Government before you are forever tainted with the failure, arrogance and corruption this Government stands for.

Below is outlined a number of areas you have failed to deliver on and promises you have broken.

Yours Sincerely,

Connolly Youth Movement and Labour Youth

Your Broken Promises:

Education

Your party promised as part of your 50 Steps to a better Education System that you would provide "additional special needs and resource teachers". In reality you have been responsible for savage cuts that will severely affect the futures of many young children with special needs. Your party have not only failed to implement this promise but further damaged the futures of many young children and their families.

Also promised was a provision to "Provide 2,400 extra teachers at primary and secondary levels". However, rather than provide extra teachers, the Greens have been part of cuts to the number of teachers.

Health

You promised to "provide an additional 400 acute beds and 400 step down beds per annum over the term of Government". To date five Dublin hospitals have seen their funding slashed by nearly 30 million with the Department of Health and HSE chiefs set on further cuts.

The Green Party also promised to "expand the medical card system". Again, and shockingly, not only did you not fulfill this but you were part of one of the most horrendous budget policies seen in recent times when an attempt was made to withdraw the right of over- 70s to their medical cards. It was not thanks to you or the Government this policy was amended but only thanks to those brave people who came out on the streets and forced a u-turn.

Also promised was a “significant increase in the budget for health promotion and support for public immunisation programmes”, and to “initiate a comprehensive health promotion and cancer prevention plan which would incorporate nationwide screening for certain cancers, where appropriate.” Instead we have seen the government withhold the implementation of a national immunisation campaign to help detect cervical cancer.

Transport

In relation to Bus Services the Green Party said it would “make major investment in new quality bus corridors” and “introduce fast and frequent long distance commuting bus services”. The reality after more than 18 months of governance, both Bus Eireann and Dublin Bus are looking to introduce savage cuts in both companies, further adding to unemployment in Ireland and decreasing the number of buses on our roads. Dublin Bus want to let 290 workers go and cut 10% of its fleet. Again it is the most vulnerable who rely most upon public transport and so who will again be hit by these attacks.

Workers Rights

The Green Party also spoke of how they would “strengthen our redundancy and unfair dismissal laws to prevent job displacement and a ‘race to the bottom’ in wages and working conditions.” An admirable and morally correct stance. But unfortunately yet again you have fell painfully short in fulfilling this. You haven’t even stood by the recently negotiated partnership arrangement. No more than ever we need a Government that will strengthen workers rights and protections so that they are assisted while unemployed financially and in finding new employment in an increasingly difficult labour market.

Environment

Even in the Minister for the Environments own department, you have rolled back on pre-election promises. The Green Party promised to stop a Government “hell bent on promoting incineration and landfill as the solution to our waste management crisis”. John Gormley has, rather, allowed the building of an incinerator in his own constituency.

The Green Party were opposed to the building of a motorway through the Hill of Tara and after 18 months of Green Party involvement in Government, your silence on this issue is deafening. The road is still going ahead and Green Party’s opposition to it has disappeared.

Foreign Policy

For the first quarter century of your party’s existence you held strong views on protecting and enhancing Irish neutrality. In your Election Manifesto you promised that you would “remain committed to protecting Irish neutrality from any further moves towards an EU Common Defence Policy or any strengthening of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy.” You also promised to “ensure that Irish troops only take part in peace missions that have a United Nations mandate or an OSCE mandate”. This has not been the case and we have seen the de- facto ending of Green Party support for Irish neutrality. The support shown by the Green Party leadership for the Lisbon Treaty, your silence on ending the US military’s use of Shannon Airport, your support for Irish troops in Chad, shows clearly how your party is no longer ‘committed to protecting Irish neutrality’.

Between 2002 and 2007 the Green Party played an active and important part in protesting against the illegal US/ British war in Iraq. Your party membership attended meetings and demonstrations and spoke out against the war. You were strong in opposing the use of Shannon Airport by the US military. The Green Party said it would “end the use of Shannon Airport by US military forces involved in the war in Iraq” and “insist that any aircraft suspected of involvement in illegal movements of prisoners must be searched”. However, the US military still continues to transport its soldiers on their way to commit murder and mayhem in Iraq and we now know Shannon has been used for illegal and morally grotesque rendition flights. Your Party, now in Government, remains silent.

Another pre-election promise from your Party was that you would “ensure that, within five years, Ireland will deliver on the commitment that our overseas development aid should reach 0.7% of GNP and will publish a plan of year-by-year increases to achieve this”. Rather than bring about ‘year- by- year’ increases,

the Greens have actually overseen a 95 million reduction in the amount of over seas aid being paid by the Irish Government a further attack upon the worlds most vulnerable.

EU Constitution and the Lisbon Treaty

The Green party promised it would “ensure that the EU Constitution will not be put to a referendum in a form that has already been rejected by referendums in other members states”. While the Green Party’s TDs were unable to get its membership to toe the Party line and support the Lisbon Treaty, the leadership of the Green Party supported and campaigned for this Treaty, which was very clearly a renamed EU Constitution.