



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF TAOISEACH'S NOMINATION OF OTHER MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT

Tairgim:

Go gcomhaontóidh Dáil Éireann leis an Taoiseach d'ainmniú na dTeachtaí seo a leanas chun a gceaptha ag an Uachtarán mar chomhaltai den Rialtas.

I move:

That Dáil Éireann approve the nomination by the Taoiseach of the following Deputies for appointment by the President to be members of the Government.

RISTEÁRD MAC AN EARRAIGH

DICK SPRING

I also propose to nominate him as Tánaiste

PÁRALAN Ó EACHTHAIRN

BERTIE AHERN

MICHEÁL O HUADHAIGH

MICHAEL J. WOODS

MÁIRE GEOGHEGAN-QUINN

MAIRE GEOGHEGAN-QUINN

RUAIRI Ó CUINN

RUAIRI QUINN

MICHEÁL MAC GABHANN

MICHAEL SMITH

DAITHÍ MAC AINDRIÚ

DAVID ANDREWS

SEOSAMH BREATHNACH

JOE WALSH

CATHAL MAC RIABHAIGH

CHARLIE MCCREEVY

BRIAN Ó COMHAIN

BRIAN COWEN

MUIRIS TAILLIÚIR

MERVYN TAYLOR

MICHEÁL D. Ó HUIGINN

MICHAEL D. HIGGINS

BREANDÁN Ó HÚILÍN

BRENDAN HOWLIN

agus

and

NIAMH BREATHNACH

NIAMH BREATHNACH

It has been the practice at this stage to indicate the Departments to which these Ministers will be assigned. They are as follows:

Department of Foreign Affairs.....	to Dick Spring
Department of Finance.....	to Bertie Ahern
Department of Social Welfare	to Michael J. Woods
Department of Justice.....	to Máire Geoghegan-Quinn
Department of Industry and Commerce	to Ruairi Quinn
Department of the Environment.....	to Michael Smith
Department of Defence and Department of the Marine	to David Andrews
Department of Agriculture and Food	to Joe Walsh
Department of Tourism, Transport and Communications.....	to Charlie McCreevy
Department of Energy.....	to Brian Cowen
Department of Labour	to Mervyn Taylor
Department of the Gaeltacht.....	to Michael D. Higgins
Department of Health.....	to Brendan Howlin and
Department of Education.....	to Niamh Breathnach

As soon as it is possible to do so, the Government intend to change by order the titles of some Ministers and Departments and transfer functions between Departments so that Ministers will have the following responsibilities:

Department of Enterprise and Employment.....	Ruairi Quinn
Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry.....	Joe Walsh
Department of Tourism and Trade....	Charlie McCreevy
Department of Transport, Energy and Communications.....	Brian Cowen
Department of Equality and Law Reform.....	Mervyn Taylor and
Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht.....	Michael D. Higgins.

I will elaborate further on these changes later in my speech.

I also propose to nominate Deputy Noel Dempsey for appointment by the Government as Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach with special responsibility as Government Chief Whip and Minister of State at the Department of Defence.

The Government will, in due course, appoint other Ministers of State. I will inform the Dáil of these appointments after they are made.

I propose to nominate

Harold A. Whelehan, S.C.,

for appointment by the President to be the Attorney General.

This is a partnership Government, and both parties are determined to work closely together in Government to advance the welfare and prosperity of the nation. The new spirit of partnership will assist us to meet challenges and overcome problems in a coherent and united way, on the basis of the very comprehensive and ambitious programme which we have agreed and published.

As soon as the necessary arrangements can be put in place, the structure of Government will be radically reorganized, so as to enable us to concentrate our resources most effectively on the principal problems and priorities that we have identified.

First of all, to reflect the partnership that we are embarking upon, an Office of the Tánaiste will be situated in Government Buildings. The Office will have a separate vote. There will be a Minister of State attached to the office of the Tánaiste, who will also be attached to the Department of Finance.

The Minister of State attached to this Office will represent the Government on the new National Economic and Social Forum and ensure direct liaison through the Tánaiste between the Forum and the Government.

The National Economic and Social Forum is an innovation designed to broaden the basis of social consensus in Irish society, which has been one of the most successful features of the last few years. It will strengthen the concerted attack we need to make on unemployment, deprivation, and other social problems. It will include representatives from the social partners, representatives of women's organisations, groups representing the unemployed, the disadvantaged and people

with a disability, as well as from the Oireachtas. The Central Review Committee and the NESC will continue under my own Department with their present functions and composition, but their work will be enriched by the deliberations and recommendations of the Forum. The Forum will ensure that the disadvantaged and the marginalised and the voluntary and community groups that represent them or work with them, have a voice that will be heard and that there is the widest level of participation in our public life.

The Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach, and the Minister of State at the Office of the Tánaiste will be jointly responsible for the implementation of the provisions of the Programme for Partnership Government contained in the section Broadening our Democracy. These cover ethics in Government, Oireachtas Reform, electoral reform, as well as the coordination of local Government Reform.

When I first became Taoiseach last February, I promised greater openness and accountability. I promised to complete all enquiries into the controversies of the recent past, and to seek out the truth wherever that might lead to. I expressed a determination that my Government would operate in accordance with the highest standards. I renew those pledges today.

There will be a Register of Members' Interests, statutory controls of gifts to office holders, and partial state funding for political parties, with registration of substantial private donations or subscriptions to either political parties or candidates. There will also be limits on election expenditure. A clear system of rules will be of benefit to all parties, and will help to build greater confidence in our democracy. The existence of legally enforceable rules means that there will be clear ways of measuring adherence to standards. It also means that when allegations are made in future, there will be laws in place and therefore procedures for investigating them. All of this is in my view a healthy and necessary development. Indeed, I set an example in one respect last February in making a voluntary declaration of my private financial interests, when I became Taoiseach.

The other major innovation will be changes designed to bring up to date the procedures and work methods of the Dáil and to make Government more accountable. Because implementation of our Programme will entail the passage of a very substantial amount of legislation, it is essential to streamline our procedures. Electronic voting will come into operation later this year, so as to reduce the time lost at present. Four new Standing Committees will be established to consider the Committee Stage of all Bills as well as Estimates and Reports. The Finance and

General Affairs Committee will be established immediately, with the Social, Economic and Legislative Committees being set up as soon as possible.

There will also be a new Foreign Affairs Committee, which has been long sought, and which was agreed in principle towards the end of the last Dáil. The conduct of our foreign policy will be a legitimate subject of political and parliamentary debate and scrutiny. It will serve a useful public function in highlighting changes in the world around us, that are bound to impinge upon us.

We will also ensure that additional drafting experts will be recruited, as necessary, to the Attorney General's Office. Our overall aim is a Dáil that will operate effectively and that is capable of dealing expeditiously with urgent national issues as well as long-standing needs for reform.

I now turn to the reorganization of the Departments of State. We are establishing five new Departments, replacing existing ones, and we are combining some other Departments or Divisions under one Minister.

A new Department of Enterprise and Employment is being established, which will subsume most of the functions of the Department of Industry and Commerce and of the Department of Labour, as well as taking responsibility for the new County Enterprise Partnership Boards. This will be a key Ministry, combining and integrating the job promotion efforts of the new industrial agency Forás and its autonomous subsidiaries Forbairt and the IDA with the national training schemes of the Department of Labour. Job protection and industrial relations are clearly complementary functions that belong in the same Department. The purpose of this reorganization is to combine in one Department many of the main policy functions that have a direct bearing on employment, industrial policy, employment training programmes and other labour market measures. There will be a greater integration of policy, all working towards the same end, of creating employment by a variety of means. The lead policy role in employment creation will be assumed by the Minister for Enterprise and Employment. The very title shows however the primacy of enterprise in creating employment.

We are also establishing a new Department of Tourism and Trade, two equally important functions. Tourism is an industry with enormous employment potential, which requires pro-active Government support and intervention. The Trade function will be to give exporters every necessary governmental support, for example, at trade fairs and promotions, leading trade missions, and smoothing the

path in State trading countries. It will include the Foreign Earnings Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs, and we will continue to spread the Ireland House concept, which has been established in a number of cities.

A new Department of Equality and Law Reform is being set up. The issues involved are regarded as so fundamental to the character of our society that they require to be the responsibility of a member of the Government. The Minister will have responsibility for women's affairs, including equality issues at present dealt with in the Department of Labour, and will coordinate services for people with a disability and for travellers. The new Minister will have responsibility for implementing the Report of the Second Commission on the Status of Women. While good work has been done by successive Ministers and Ministers of State on many of these issues, a member of the Government will have the authority to ask that the necessary action be taken by other Ministers across Departments. Civil Law reform will also be the responsibility of the Minister for Equality and Law Reform, while Criminal Law reform will remain the responsibility of the Minister for Justice.

We are also creating a new Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht. There is a widespread feeling that Irish culture in the widest sense of the word should be integrated, rather than being regarded as belonging to separate compartments. The new Department comprises the Department of the Gaeltacht, the Arts and Culture Section, at present attached to my Department, and will also include responsibility for the National Heritage Council for the Wildlife Service, and for broadcasting policy. I am happy to divest my office of direct responsibility for arts and culture, which was a way of raising their status, on the basis that they will now have the increased status of a full Government Department. This is a recognition of the tremendous contribution that is made to the quality of Irish life not only by our distinctive language and associated Irish cultural traditions, but by artistic and cultural activities in all their forms.

Tuigeanann fúrmhór mór ár ndaoine anois an tábhacht ar leith atá ag an Ghaeilge in ár gcultúr agus in ár dtráidisiún. Oidhreacht bheo atá sa teanga agus tá sé mar aidhm ag an Rialtas nua an oidhreacht sin a chothú agus a chur chun cinn.

The already announced increase in the Budget for the Arts Council this year, confirmed in the Programme for Government, is evidence both of mine and the Government's strong commitment to the arts and our recognition of their value and potential to Irish society.

The Minister for Transport, Energy and Communications will have responsibility for most of our infrastructure that is provided by public utilities and State companies. The next few years will see major emphasis on improvements in public transport both in Dublin and nationally with the help of Structural and Cohesion Funds and the Jobs Fund. We want to see, for example, a light rail system introduced in Dublin as well as major improvements in the national rail network. We also want to develop the best possible air links between Ireland and the rest of the world. I also see a great need for a more imaginative and innovative energy policy, which embraces new technological developments and which will conserve energy and the environment, as well as reduce energy bills, particularly for the less well off.

In addition to new Departments, I am combining some existing ones. The Minister for Defence and the Marine will be able to promote better coordination between the two Departments, given that both the Naval Service and to a considerable extent the Air Corps are involved in work which is related to the Department of the Marine, in surveillance and protection of our fishing waters and in air-sea rescue operations.

Finally, I propose to assign responsibility for forestry to the Minister for Agriculture and Food, who will add that to his title. The land-use implications of forestry, and its promotion as an alternative enterprise for farmers make this a sensible combination. I envisage that as at present there will be two Ministers of State assigned to the Department of Agriculture, one with special responsibility for Forestry and Rural Development, the other with special responsibility for Food and Horticulture.

This Government are taking office at a time of serious economic difficulty, which is reflected in very high unemployment and pressures on our currency. While there have been considerable improvements in many aspects of our economic performance in recent years, the core issue of underemployment remains to be effectively addressed. We would all recognize that, despite many creditable achievements in the 70 years of our history as an independent nation, we have not yet succeeded in performing anything like up to our true potential.

While we are now able to achieve non-inflationary growth, we have still to strike a fully satisfactory balance between economic and social progress. On a number of occasions in the past, economic progress has tended to highlight the persistence of

deep-seated social problems, while at other times the effect of a concentration on making social progress has been largely nullified by economic stagnation.

Over the lifetime of this Government, the conditions are right for an economic and social breakthrough. Over the last two periods of Government we achieved a major improvement in the public finances and significant reform in the system of taxation as well as a substantial improvement in social welfare levels. While building on those achievements, a direct concentration on unemployment and on other social problems, like homelessness, disability, educational disadvantage, hospital waiting lists, and other manifestations of social inequality are the main objectives of this Government.

The formulation of the Budget and dealing with the currency crisis will be the immediate priorities of the first few weeks. We have to operate within narrow constraints in 1993, if we are to hold to our course, but within those constraints we would like to make a start on some of the key priorities within the Programme.

Both parties are committed to maintaining the existing parity of the Irish pound within the EMS, and we are ready to implement the domestic policies necessary to underpin the policy. The situation of mortgage holders and of the productive sector, vis a vis very high interest rates, will be priority considerations for this Government. Measures will also be taken to ensure that the general government deficit remains within the discipline of the Maastricht guidelines. Reform of the system of public service pay determination, on which discussions are already proceeding with the Public Service unions, will also be a high priority. In the medium-term, prospects of a further rise in sterling and a lowering of German interest rates in view of the deepening economic recession in that country are reasonably good. In the meantime, we should hold our nerve and resist all efforts to undermine our economic well-being.

We are looking to our European partners for assistance in fighting off the currency speculators. The future of the EMS itself and of Economic and Monetary Union is at stake, if countries can be successfully picked off one by one. There must be recognition in the countries most committed to European integration of the vital importance of defending the ERM and the core currencies that have always belonged to it.

The Government are deeply committed to the establishment of peace in the North of Ireland. The killing has gone on for far too long. We will work for a resumption

of dialogue between the parties, with a view to negotiating a balanced settlement which deals with all issues and which will create a new climate of cooperation and understanding on this island and a basis for enduring peace. In the meantime, the Anglo-Irish Agreement will continue in full operation and will be actively worked and developed by the Irish Government.

The two parties that have come together to form a Government have entered into a new type of partnership. The partnership will be strengthened by the knowledge that we have a number of traditions and attitudes in common. The democratic republican ethos of equality has much in common with the ethos of social democracy or democratic socialism. The close relationship between Fianna Fáil and Labour in the early days of Irish democracy and their many common roots going back to 1916 or before have not been forgotten. The radical social policies of the 1930s in relation to public housing and the introduction of unemployment assistance were carried through with Labour support. The pioneering spirit of the times is well captured in Todd Andrews' memoirs Man of No Property. Eamon de Valera once declared that Fianna Fáil and Labour had the same programme. He also said that their views and his on the duties of the State towards the members of the community coincide. In 1932 the first leader of the Labour Party Tom Johnson predicted about Labour and Fianna Fáil: 'We shall have to coalesce some day'.

Fianna Fáil is a proud party with a long tradition of public service and national achievement. We created many of the State companies, the interests and survival of which the Labour Party has always keenly espoused. Fianna Fáil Governments, since the days of Seán Lemass, have strongly believed in the mixed economy, and have worked closely in the national interest with the trade union wing of the Labour Movement. The new social consensus achieved with the trade unions, employers, and farmers since 1987 has been of decisive importance in turning round our economy. This fruitful experience of partnership has, I think, more than anything else paved the way for this Government, where partnership is to be the guiding principle. I regard this Government as a lasting arrangement based on a substantial agreement, at least for the natural duration of this Dáil.

This is a Government profoundly committed to change. We should lead on change, not be afraid of it. It is better to manage change successfully than to fear it. That is the challenge before us, as we strive to make Ireland a more self-confident, more enterprising, but also a more just and caring country, with a quality of life and a national spirit of which we can all be proud.