

Gerard Linehan

Cork South Central
Independent Candidate



Born: Blackpool Cork's north side and reared in Capwell Avenue Turners Cross, Cork. I am 55, the second of three sons, separated with three daughters.

Education: Turners Cross primary school and to Leaving certificate at Colaiste Chriost Ri.

Work Experience: Apprentice electrician with *Fitzgerald's Electrical* and the *Electricity Supply Board*, maintenance electrician with *Gouldings Chemicals*, service engineer with *Champion Fire* and *Walter Kidde Irl*. Currently I am a self employed fire protection and electrical contractor for approximately fourteen years.

Political Career: Received 155 first preference votes in the 2007 general election.

Why I seek election: If elected, it would create an opportunity for me to challenge the Ceann Comhairle in the Dail on the manner in which he and his predecessors, have blocked questions for oral hearing as submitted by the former T.D., Joe Higgins, the technical group, Enda Kenny T.D. and most recently Mary O' Rourke T.D., on the irregular manner in which Judge Patrick Moran of Cork Circuit Court and others within the judiciary dealt with my family law case. The details and issues of the case can be seen at www.gerardlinehan.ie

What I consider to be the main election issues: In the years that the Dail has been preoccupied with denials of dig outs and cover ups for cronies, the country was in free fall. Opposition parties weren't in earnest in objecting to the cavalier manner in which questions on so many contentious issues were being blocked by successive Ceann Comhairle. Viewers of Oireachtas Report may not be aware that the questions being asked in the Dail have been submitted for approval days in advance and that the answers are well rehearsed with no spontaneity.

Now that the credit has dried up, the chant is on reform by the same politicians who vegetated in their Dail seats during the introduction of forty year mortgages.

Iceland had the right idea with their banks. Moody's downgrading on the value of Ireland's financial institutions to junk status might focus minds on what the nation cannot afford at any rate of interest.

While it has been said that Ireland cannot default on its debts, being an EU member, it might be a good time to consider a referendum on retaining its membership. The issues on the rights of children, the retention of all the T.D.'s, senators and the presidency could be voted on simultaneously.

For me other issues of concern would be:

- Appropriate redeployment of surplus staff within the health service and other state bodies.
- The provision of mobile health care specialist, who would visit all areas urban and rural on a regular basis, would augment local primary health care services. This service should be available to all on an affordable basis. Such a service would avoid the necessity of patients having to travel long distances, in transport without toilet facilities, over pot holed filled roads to the so called centres of excellence where they could end up on a trolley. This would also provide employment for specialists in every field from cancer to mental health issues on salaries in line with their level of skill and without the need for gagging clauses as imposed by Ms. Harney.

- Provision of schemes whereby individuals could form co ops and collectively pool resources and skills to purchase and complete unfinished housing estates with a view to providing affordable homes for themselves.
- Review of custodial prison sentences. Some or part of the above mentioned estates could be converted for use as open educational remand centres. They could provide practical environments for low risk offenders, while alleviating the inhuman overcrowding in the countries prisons. For those who reoffend in crimes of a more serious nature, they could be incarcerated near a suitable quarry and kept occupied in the reduction of stone to grit, thus avoiding the necessity to import salt for the purpose of providing traction on our roads in cold weather.
- There is no reason why immigrants should be detained for the unacceptable periods of time while the merits of their cases are being considered. Mary Harney T.D. told us that the country needed all these people when there was a shortage of cheap labour during the bubble years. There is no point in people complaining now if they saw fit to re elect such politicians, who failed to put proper immigration policies in place when they had a choice in a series of general elections. Like so many Irish families, I have daughters living in two different cities in England and one in the United States, none of whom chose to leave this country in the first instance. We shouldn't forget that we are a nation with a history of immigration.
- The Bus Eireann monopoly on routes across the country should be removed to give private bus companies an opportunity to provide services on a competitive basis.
- The issuing of taxi licences should be reviewed. To my mind the people who earn their living in this industry have been used to by a government intent on generating easy revenue.
- The quangos should be investigated before being abolished to establish what their funding was being spent on over the years.
- If the EU is responsible for the decline of Ireland's fishing industry, a nation surrounded by water, it is a matter to be readdressed. I understand that this industry alone has the capacity to generate more jobs and revenue in the country than all the multinationals put together.
- Irish companies such as the ESB should not be privatised for short term gains. The skills and expertise acquired by their staff will be invaluable in the continuing development and provision of alternative means of providing power for the country in the years ahead. That isn't to say that the price of their electricity couldn't be reduced, which is currently inflated to provide the government with finance to plug holes associated with so many of its half baked policies.
- The construction of a new sugar beet factory is only one example of where the country could create new employment and replace foreign imports. To my mind the factory in Mallow should never have closed. Given the increasing exports in agricultural products, it is an industry that should be supported in its expansion efforts, thereby creating more jobs while helping to meet the world demand for food.
- Part of any banking overhaul should include the provision of a bank that actually has the capacity to lend money to viable businesses.
- Funding schemes for individuals similar to those available to businesses employing a specific number of staff, would create opportunities for those in receipt of unemployment benefit and the former self employed without such entitlements. Such schemes should be set up to be use friendly with limited bureaucracy. The schemes could include the provision of start up space

within workshops and offices at low cost rents, in premises that might otherwise lie idle for a period of six months, thus providing the incentive for the beneficiaries to succeed in their chosen business. Successful individuals would have the option of extending the use of such facilities. Many such individuals will be aware of niche markets into which they could sell their goods and services given the opportunity. Many sharing such facilities would learn to share used equipment, purchased in liquidation sales etc and pool their skills and expertise in manufacturing products and providing services in demand in the open market. State agencies such as the IDA, having analyzed the common products being imported into Ireland could provide information to such individuals on import substitution.

- Last but not least, we must not forget the homeless. In a nation with so many vacant properties and so many unemployed, capable of helping them, it is nothing short of a disgrace that the political parties have become so ambivalent to their needs. With so many home repossession cases due in court because of peoples inability to pay unaffordable mortgages, one wonders will the unfortunates involved be forgotten, or will there be provision made for they being bailed out?

Why the electorate should vote for me: Unrestrained by a party whip, I could advocate for change. I am running for election because I believe I can make a difference by listening to and fighting for the individual.

We are a young country, founded on ideals, the reality of governance beyond the grasp of party politicians. At such a critical time in Irish history, this election needs to be seen as a new beginning and mark the very end of dynasty governance. The time for reformation is now.

I understand that the bookmakers have listed me at odds of 50/1 of winning a seat while Michael Martin is listed at 1/50. Having watched a TV five way debate between party leaders, I was struck by the thought that a vote for any of these parties was a vote for more of the same. We do have a choice in this country and with so many independent candidates running for election, the choice was never greater. Granted we may not have the experience of the seasoned politicians who have purported to represent the interest of the people over the years, but were they just looking after the interest of their respective parties when you consider the state of the country?

If elected, I'd welcome the opportunity to represent the interests of the people for a fair wage. I'd be happy to travel to Dublin in the course of my work for nothing. I do this in the normal course of my daily work in an effort to remain competitive with customers. If you cannot give me your number one vote, perhaps you would consider listing me in your subsequent preferences.

Thanking You

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