

IRISH FREETHINKERS & HUMANISTS

Letter To: General Secretaries, Jan 2024

Aontú, Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, Green Party, Independent Ireland, Labour Party, People Before Profit, Sinn Féin, Social Democrats.

A Ard-Rúnai,

In March of 2024, referendums will be held to amend the Irish Constitution.

As you know, there will be two amendments, one concerning the definition of the family and the other concerning care in the home.

Holding referendums is an expensive business and full advantage of the exercise should be taken to secure further change which may be regarded as urgent.



The Preamble to the Constitution has previously been highlighted. This offends Unitarian Christians, non-Christian religious, and Humanists. That is insofar as it is trinitarian, specifically Christian, and theistic.

It is held that such a Preamble has no place in the Constitution of a secular republic. Moreover, it is of no legal significance, while being unwelcome in its declarations as outlined, and its removal could take place without affecting anything else in the Constitution.

There is also the consideration that the Government proclaims that it is committed to reconciliation among different traditions on the island of Ireland. It should be pointed out that the Preamble is incompatible with that stance.

It is therefore being suggested that a broad REPEAL THE PREAMBLE (RTP) approach should be adopted as soon as possible to lobby for the removal of the item in question in March by way of an additional referendum question.

Finally, it should be added that one should be careful about oppositional reaction to proposed repeal being that, instead, it should be redrafted. That could be a clever way of embroiling one in lengthy deliberations, probably designed to lead nowhere, and therefore of postponing any tabling of a suitable amendment in March. The point should be underlined that, as there is no necessity for a Preamble of any kind, one should not get involved in a discussion about redrafting.

There are other aspects of the Constitution that also should be repealed such as having religious references in oaths for the offices of President etc. But raising these at this time is not advocated so as to concentrate on the Preamble and maximise possible support in that regard.

Finally, on the technical point, what is now required is a simple Bill for repeal which involves no complexity in drafting or deliberation.

Sinne,

Roger Kelly, ADMINISTRATOR, *Daltún Ó Ceallaigh*, PUBLICATIONS OFFICER.

IFH MONTHLY EXTRACT FROM BULLETIN FEB 2024

As reported in the last edition of this bulletin, a letter was sent by IFH to the political parties on 15 January 2024, viz. Aontú, Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, Green Party, Independent Ireland, Labour Party, People Before Profit, Sinn Féin, and Social Democrats. Only one (Fine Gael) had the courtesy to even acknowledge the communication. As expected, there will not in fact be a question about the Preamble put to the people on 8 March, but, as already stated, the point is that the matter has been flagged and will continue to be followed up. The Preamble therefore stands for the present as set out below.

PREAMBLE In the Name of the Most Holy Trinity, from Whom is all authority and to Whom, as our final end, all actions both of men and States must be referred, We, the people of Éire, Humbly acknowledging all our obligations to our Divine Lord, Jesus Christ, Who sustained our fathers through centuries of trial, Gratefully remembering their heroic and unremitting struggle to regain the rightful independence of our Nation, And seeking to promote the common good, with due observance of Prudence, Justice and Charity, so that the dignity and freedom of the individual may be assured, true social order attained, the unity of our country restored, and concord established with other nations, Do hereby adopt, enact, and give to ourselves this Constitution.