



MICK'S TRICKS AND THE STATE OF IRISH POLITICS

In February 2011 in Opinion Piece 64 I wrote about Mick Wallace and I stated the following: “*he convinced me that he genuinely cares about people and society*” and therefore only for the fact that on the day of the election I was too sick to vote, he would have got another number one vote from me! (This is a good indication of what I thought of the other candidates!)

I had hoped that he would be genuinely different and somebody that would be the “Michael O’Leary” of politics – a straight talker that would be judged on what he did rather than the suit he wore. His election slogan was “For a New Politics” and I had hoped he meant it. Unfortunately he did not tell us that his company had a major tax liability that was being dealt with by the Revenue. I remember that there had been plenty of talk about how he was in debt and was probably bankrupt. He spoke about this but did not use it as an opportunity to come clean on his tax. I looked back at the video he made where he spoke about his financial situation

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CNu7qfq33Y&feature=relmfu> – the relevant section starts around 3 minutes into the video.) and I must say that I now feel like a bit of a fool for believing him. So much for him heralding an era of transparency, from the beginning he has engaged in spin.

What really annoys me is that he is still trying to portray this image that he really cares. He is still trying to convince people that he lied about his company tax because he was trying to save the jobs of his workers. If this were genuinely the case he would have quickly responded to the questions asked by the Irish Independent about the payment he received as a director of his company. The Independent looked at the company accounts and discovered that in the financial year ending in August 2008 payments to directors totalled €290,000 up from €148,141 the year before. No accounts have been published for the year ending August 2009 so the Independent asked him to disclose this information. So far he has not been forthcoming but during an interview on South East Radio he suggested that the €290,000 in 2008 was split among three directors rather than two which had been the case before. The Independent then checked this out and discovered that there were only two directors during the relevant time period and the third director (his son) was not appointed until September 2008. The Independent brought this to his attention but so far he has not provided what should be very straightforward answers.

A person genuinely trying to save his business would cut his own pay first. Many owners end up working for subsistence pay in an attempt to keep going but it appears as if Mick did not make that type of sacrifice.

When Mick stood up in the Dail to explain what he had done he stated that “*I’m answerable to the people of Wexford*” and he has said on a number of occasions that he has received tremendous support from the people of Wexford. Personally I would like to see him provide full disclosure on his financial situation (company and personal) as well as finding out what the people of Wexford now think by resigning

his seat and running for re-election. It might just be that the people of Wexford re-elect him but I just don't see how I could give him a vote.

The way politics exists in Ireland today probably means that whenever we get the chance to vote I will end up voting for a candidate that I think is the "best of a bad lot". In the presidential election I voted for Michael D. Higgins not because I thought he would be a great President but rather because I thought the other candidates were even worse.

(No doubt I will write in future opinion pieces about elections and the candidates that I consider voting for.)

The country would appear to be crying out for a new party but it does not look likely that this will happen. I will therefore have to move to Wicklow in order to vote for Stephen Donnelly, the Independent TD, because so far he appears to be the best we have got!



The best we've got?

(I should also take this opportunity to congratulate my cousin, Jim Allen, who has just been elected mayor of Wexford. Perhaps one day he will run for the Dail but I just don't see Paul Kehoe, Liam Twomey or Michael D'Arcy standing aside in the near future to give him a chance).