

## TRENCHANT VIEWS» GET RID OF 100,000 PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS

# Another Blaney on the 'Frontline'

National profile for son of late Neil T Blaney who argues for the small businessman

BY KATE HEANEY

The Blaney voice most heard in the national media of late is not that of Fianna Fáil TD Niall Blaney but of his cousin Eamon Blaney, son of the late Neil T Blaney TD and MEP.

Eamon Blaney might be described as a reluctant politician - he does not want to go into politics and have to make the same sacrifices his late father made as a TD and MEP for 50 years, but he is prepared to do so in order to see the current government removed from office.

The Dublin-based businessman featured on RTE's Frontline discussion programme twice in recent weeks and has written an article for the Sunday Independent on the problems facing the economy.

This week Eamon told the Donegal News that thanks to his first appearance on the Frontline programme, he has received seven or eight offers of the investment he needs to match the €10,000 he is being offered by his local Enterprise Board.

He did not wish to give too much away about his business before launch other than describing it as a personal development Facebook application.

"The only way forward for me was to get on the Frontline on RTE. I make no apologies, I was there to promote my company," he said.

The 46-year-old said he has two main objectives in life - the first is to get his business off the ground - the second is to remove the current government, even if that does upset his TD cousin.

### BLANEY DYNASTY

He said he does not like to think of the history of his family in terms of a

political dynasty and insisted his father never 'changed his tune or compromised his beliefs to stay in power'.

"Our grandfather was sentenced to death for his part in Drumboe and his activities looking for the freedom of our country. He literally risked his life to do what was right for the country. My father spent 50 years doing the same. If he had been like Charlie Haughey he would have taken the bribes and would have been extremely well off. Being a TD and MEP does not leave much room for being a father. He made sacrifices. I have a strong passion for this country and for what is right and wrong.

"I have done everything I can as a citizen to dislodge this government. I am nothing special, just a citizen of the state entitled to express my views. We are allowed to speak against the government without risk of being shot or interned unlike some other countries. Everyone else should be speaking out," he added.

He believes there are a lot of people in Ireland now who are not able to represent themselves.

"People don't have any sense of this being their country anymore, they feel marginalised and subject to a political and economic elite - they feel they are expected to pick up the tab for what has happened - it is just not acceptable."

He also finds it hard to accept that his cousin Niall rejoined Fianna Fáil after all that had happened.

"I fundamentally disagree with how they are running the country and I believe it was political expediency for Niall to rejoin the party.

"How anyone, never mind Niall, knowing what we knew at the time, could join them I do not know.

"My family urged him strongly not to do it," he said.



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### SMES STEP UP

He is also firmly convinced that the next government will be based on a rainbow coalition of independents elected throughout the country.

He wants to see the owners of small to medium sized enterprises around the country coming together and pushing forward candidates who are experienced in business.

He does not want to see people elected because of their family name or because they are promoted by the party.

"We need to get the right calibre of people elected. If the business community is not prepared to put the work in, how can we expect the country to change if it is left to

everyone else.

"If I were to get the money to run I would; if I spent what Bertie Ahern spent on the last election I would get elected easily.

"If elected I would halve the number of TDs and double their salaries but only have them if they are properly qualified for the job. Their CVs would be put up on a website when they stand for election."

### NO EASY SOLUTIONS

The country should also get rid of 100,000 public sector employees.

"What I am suggesting will undoubtedly upset the 460,000 people who work in the public service. No public representative has dared to say what the rest of us all know. Simply put, we cannot afford to employ the present numbers any longer. The days of a job for life are over for all of us and everybody needs to accept this, especially the public servants. The days of the defined benefit pen-

sion are also over. Regardless of what agreements were entered into with the unions, cuts in public service salaries must be implemented.

"They should have been implemented over 10 years ago but the biggest coward of them all, Bertie Ahern, didn't have the nerve to do it.

"He was too busy spending our money buying public service votes with benchmarking and so ensuring his 'historic third term' in office. Easy to do it when you use someone else's money (i.e. yours).

"The scale of the cuts that must be implemented in the public service are massive - in the region of €5 billion and this would mean 100,000 redundancies. Sorry, but there is absolutely no way around this. Either we do it ourselves or wait for another year or so and let the International Monetary Fund do it, without any consideration for the welfare of those who lose their jobs. The IMF doesn't do subtle," he said.

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