

INAUGURAL CONFERENCE - NICOSIA 12/3/2011  
YIANNOS KANNAS - FIRST FOUNDING MEMBER

Hello Dear Fellow Citizens,

I wish to say thank you to Mrs. Ersi which was one of our first members. Zygos will succeed because citizens like her believe in the idea and stand in the streets for hours to give leaflets to the people.

For those who do not know me, my name is Yiannos Kannas, I am Mechanical Engineer and business man. Lately I feel like a second class citizen because I pay 6.3% towards my social insurance and will receive a pension of about 600 Euro and I am certain that this applies to most of you here today. There are of course some first class citizens who pay half of what we pay and will be receiving three times higher pension. Naturally we have no quarrel with these citizens they are not responsible for this unfair practice.

On this issue, however the news may be pleasant: Since we believe that the injustice of unequal pensions violates the human rights of individual citizens, we are studying the matter legally and perhaps the way forward is a lawsuit against the Republic of Cyprus and after some years the European Courts may vindicate us, hopefully the Republic of Cyprus will still be around then.

Without further ado, we welcome you to the Inaugural Conference of Zygos and hope that you may hear some pleasant statements as well, because these days most news is depressing and what we will be hearing until May may drive us all mad.

The creation of the Independent Citizens Movement Zygos is the result of frustration and deep concern for what is happening in Cyprus over the past 15 years, starting from the old familiar scandals and disasters until the present. Consecutive negative effects dominate our society and have gradually derided citizens, because no one ever gets punished and while all of our politicians undertake clear responsibility for the problems, they continue to ask us without any shame, to vote them in again so they can continue their mostly destructive work. We wonder what this means for us, what do they actually think of us?

Yesterday one of the leading politicians stated that our political system has an expiry date, we ask .....for those who created it, this is not the case?

How did we get to this point?

It is simple we got to this point because we let ourselves be corrupted by the leaders in two main ways: First, by allowing the polarization that they invented to control and to divide us, to turn us into fanatics and cloud our mind. Secondly, because for too many years we naively believed their lies and voted them without criticism, based on our personal and not the collective interest. After the elections and in order to fulfill their campaign promises the parties

had to appoint people in the public service, give pay increases to the unions, benefits, immunity, tax free cars etc to themselves, high and multiple pensions for the senior party loving government employees covering their scams etc.

In this way all the parties gradually created a public service which has now become our biggest problem as Mr. Afxentiou confirmed a few days ago on TV. This vicious circle has consolidated the party politics and the absolute personal power of party leaders against the civilian and the relatively few new Members, forcing them to serve first and above all even SUSPECT party interests. The result is a complete loss of control of the Government by the people, which leads to power abuse, collusion, embezzlements, bribery, state customer relations, state-business relations and wrong solutions to technical problems. In the end, the collective interest of the country was always third after the interests of the parties, trade unions and the public officials, and the citizen ended up at the mercy of these situations and unable to govern his country.

For years we were lucky, because due to international circumstances that the private sector entrepreneur exploited, the financial position of our country was good, beer and barbecues were there in abundance and loans for Governments easy to make. So we continued to vote for these parties (no other options were there of course) with many blank votes and abstentions. But now state and household loans have exceeded the limits, incomes are low and will continue to be low for years to come, because the foreigners do not now buy property any more and tourism has declined. At the same time we have high unemployment (20% among the young), many thousands of aliens, increased costs, low productivity and competitiveness of our products, drugs at high levels, and other serious social problems which cause extreme situations and behaviours.

The worst thing is that the huge operational costs of the Public Service cannot be reduced by the parties because they fear the powerful unions and insist on counting votes in a frenzy when the top Cypriots economists are telling us that tough measures should have been taken 18 months ago. The possibility of economic collapse is referred to constantly, our Minister of Finance says that we cannot continue to pay the exorbitant costs of our Public Service and instead of taking swift action, the Government is making studies which will take months to finish (possible measures after the elections of course).

The President expects the unions to visit him to solve the problem, but they don't want to of course and this farce/comedy, continues, ..... while the private sector is still paying .....

We keep paying then while we can !

Ladies and gentlemen The bad news is that, our economy is about to collapse, but this you already know.

Unfortunately, our leaders want to wake up one morning and find this problem gone because they know that this will bring with mathematical accuracy the end of their reign as we have seen in other countries. Furthermore, they would prefer

the EU to come and cut everything as they have done in Greece; better a thousand times that they seem to be incompetent rather than anger the first class citizens and the unions.

The people have realized their weakness, we just need to take the responsibility for this situation because we voted for them but at least we should now show them the door and say : Get out gentlemen we have had enough !

Ladies and gentlemen, unfortunately we have more bad news ; when we speak about economic collapse we cannot fail to mention DEFA and the Natural Gas incident. As you know the Government just about committed Cyprus to a long-term agreement which was against our interests and and they may still try to do this. We will keep this short :

We believe that such an agreement would have destroyed our economy entirely, arguing that:

1. The mandate of DEFA was wrong and against the advice of excellent scientists and academic experts from our side. Those responsible did not consider the natural gas deposits here and in Israel , nor the Renewable Energy Sources which , in addition to the natural gas, ought to be promoted to the maximum, because our full dependence on imported energy is one of the most serious problems of our economy. 200 dollars now oil and wait for the private sector businessman to pay the heating bill for our poor fellow citizens.

2. The role played by the leading officials in this case raises a lot of questions, it is actually scandalous.

3. DEFA failed with criminal negligence, to indicate these weaknesses in their terms of reference to the EAC and the Government, worked without transparency and failed miserably or deliberately to defend the national interest.

4. The inability of any control over DEFA by the parliament and Auditor General makes it extremely dangerous and as Mr Perdikis mentioned the way it is operating is stupid, we ask therefore who are the stupid people who set it up this way ?? Are they running for parliament again ??

**GET OUT GENTLEMEN!**

For these reasons we ask that DEFA BE completely dissolved and their work assigned to honest technocrats with imagination and patriotism who will quickly find the best solutions for our country.

We also ask the Government to make public the exploitation agreement signed with Noble Energy for our natural gas which is perhaps worth 70 billion Eu, and we are particularly concerned about this issue after the Politis Newspaper reports that Cyprus will only get a percentage of the profits ( if there will be profits with costs which no one will be able to control) rather than a percentage of the production. Note here that Israel gets 20 or 30% of the production, but they of course have more brains than us. This scandal may well be the grand finale for us but it does not surprise us.

All the above prompted us to create Zygus so that the voice of honest technocrats may finally be heard and so that we can elect in the House real representatives of the people from all sides. This way the Citizens will control the Government in order to stop corruption and power abuse through strict laws and also the parties will decide the shape up.

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Our goal is to become a fairly functioning state that would be taken seriously by the other countries with positive results for all our problems, certainly the National problem as well.

A parenthesis here please to say we think it would be very useful if we could bring back the ancient institution of shame, ostracism and confiscation of property for mis-behaving officials and sometime perhaps this will happen.

Ladies and gentlemen, the good news is that:

For Zygus there are no communists, capitalists, socialists, etc. and all the relevant philosophies which were invented in distant steppes and deserts, to separate and control the people like sheep have nothing to do with this little island and its various residents, which are in danger of extinction.

There are only two categories of citizens: A category are colourful alive citizens (multicolour as my fellow villagers would say) and they are the ones who put the collective good over the personal good, laugh at our situation, but they are determined to take action to improve it, and that's all of us at Zygus!

The B category are those who rate their personal good over the collective good and don't laugh, just grumble and want to take more at the expense of their fellow citizens. The bad news is that we have already taken what Cyprus had to offer and there is nothing left on offer. The parties can no longer offer positions and salary increments.

It is now time, as one great leader said a long time ago to think about what we have to offer to this place for the future generations and not what can we take. The name of this leader cannot be reported in this banana republic, but some of you will know him

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Zygus is a movement which is different and innovative because:

- It will not remit any salary or other benefit to the members of Central Committee
- The executives of the Central Committee will be selfless and patriotic persons with no political ambitions.
- The elected Members will serve a maximum of two terms, except in exceptional cases, so that they don't get too comfy on the chairs and start playing tricks.
- The financial accounts of the movement will be open for public scrutiny.

- It will promote candidates from various backgrounds and All selfless capable citizens shall be deemed appropriate for candidates including farmers .

Our effort will be long term , regardless of the results of the election because the presence of Zygos is a permanent and imperative need for our country. There will be difficulties but we hope the citizens will finally adopt our proposal eliminating simultaneously the destructive polarization that has been imposed to control them.

Of course the difficulty is not the election of the Members, but how they will accomplish their difficult task. We have considered this carefully and say that :

To enable the elected Members to be effective, they will be guided by excellent technocrats and other scientific staff from all the sectors who will deal with the various issues of our country and which could be trusted by the Cypriot citizen to resolve the country's problems. The financial needs will be covered from the grants and EU funds for research and studies which Zygos will carry out.

At this point we announce the first bill to be presented to the House by our first elected Zygos MP which will propose a reduction in the salaries of the MP and parliamentary grant by 25% , cancellation of their immunity, their tax-free car, and reduction of their pension benefits.

I conclude and recommend to the people of Cyprus:

1. Those that vote for the same parties all their lives because the parties have found some way of caressing their ears we tell them to continue to do the same thing but at least this time tell them loud and clear that it is their last opportunity to clear the stable of Avgeias which they have created. Also not to vote for any Members who are already in the House two terms.

2. To those who are thinking of not voting or submitting a blank vote we tell them not to do it, because it strengthens directly to the rotten status quo. We tell them that in their hands they hold the future of all the children and we ask them to vote the realistic alternative offered by Zygos in order to improve our society.

The task of attracting these votes will be assigned to a group of supporters and Mrs.. Ersi Oikonomidou will present a co-founder of Zygos and our first parliamentary candidate for Famagusta Mr. Dimitris Lord, who has also prepared our minimum programming positions on a range of current issues. .

I conclude and thank the silent partner, the founding members who believed so easily in the idea of zygos the members of other parties who helped again silently ..... with a word or a nod of the head at the initial critical stages and Nisian from Megaprint ( hm customer relationships ) who liked the idea and made the bananas for free to enable him like me ..... (I hope you too ) to walk at last after 10 years or so with a straight neck.

THANKS FOR YOUR PATIENCE