

# Socialist Worker

For latest news visit [www.socialistworkeronline.net/](http://www.socialistworkeronline.net/)

Text JOIN to 086-3074060

# SHARE THE WEALTH!

**F**ine Gael and Labour say 'keep the recovery going'. Of course, because it is a recovery for them, for the super-rich and their middle class supporters.

But for the rest of us there is no recovery to keep going.

For us there is just the ongoing and worsening housing crisis, the perpetual crisis in the health service, the continuing unfair water charges and property tax, the joblessness and emigration, the poverty and rising inequality.

And there are also all the social problems this economic deprivation and inequality always bring - the problems of crime, drug addiction, mental health and suicide, which the system tries to blame on individuals but are the inevitable result of these social conditions.

It's election time so the establishment parties are rolling out their promises.



Joan Burton sinking fast.

'Sure isn't that what you do at elections,' as Pat Rabbitte put it. 'Forget what we've done in the last five years, in the next five years we'll do wonders: raise pensions, build houses, fix the HSE, bring in free GP care, abolish USC and more besides.'

Why? Because we've got "fiscal space". We're not sure how much fiscal space we've got - €8 billion, €12 billion, or €3.5 billion - but don't worry, we're sure we'll have some if you vote for us now.'

The truth is all this talk of fiscal space is fantasy economics of the first order. It's based on predictions of economic growth which hasn't happened yet and probably isn't going to happen.

Global capitalism is teetering on the brink of another recession. Stock markets are falling, the Chinese economy is slowing, Japan is in massive trouble and Europe and the US are stagnant. All of this cannot fail to drag down Ireland. There isn't going to be another Tiger.

The claimed 'fiscal space' is going to evaporate and the cynical politicians will say 'Sure, we can't keep our promises because conditions have changed'.

The truth is the only way to fix Ireland's crisis, to right the many wrongs that have been done to the people and really improve services is to

redistribute income and SHARE THE WEALTH.

That means making the giant corporations like Apple and Google and the rest of them pay their taxes. It means introducing a Financial Transactions Tax on all the trade of the speculators at the IFSC. It means introducing a wealth tax for the very rich with assets over €1 million outside of the family home and raising income tax for individuals earning over €100,000.

It also means removing the unfair taxes imposed on the people - the water charges, the property tax, the green bin tax just smuggled in by Alan Kelly and the USC for those under €70,000 - and improving the wages, conditions and rights at work of workers.

It means building a society based on equality and solidarity not greed and inequality.

That's what socialists stand for; that's what People Before Profit stands for. That's why we say build the movement on the streets and in the election vote Anti-Austerity Alliance- People Before Profit.

## WHAT FINE GAEL and LABOUR DID FOR US

### HOUSING CRISIS

**20%**  
**IN 2015 RENT HAVE RISEN UP BY**

**76%**  
**HOMELESSNESS ROSE BY**

Waiting list for social housing has grown by over 2% in the last four months from 135,832 to 139,359, an increase of 3,527 - February 2016

EMIGRATION | JOB BRIDGE | TRANSPORT CUTS | HOSPITAL QUEUES | FLOODS UNPAID CORPORATE TAXES



### EDUCATION

**PRIMARY SCHOOL CLASS SIZE: 2nd HIGHEST IN THE EU**



### ENDA'S BROKEN PROMISES

- UNIVERSAL HEALTH INSURANCE
- MEDICAL CARDS
- DISABILITY CUTS
- SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANTS and DISADVANTAGED SCHOOLS
- SPECIAL ADVISOR SALARY CAP | CRONYISM

### EU - IMF DEAL & BOND HOLDER BAIL OUT

FG Manifesto 2011: Fine Gael believes that the IMF/EU bail-out deal has not and will not restore investor confidence in our country, and must therefore be renegotiated to reduce the interest rate and to ensure a fairer sharing of the cost of fixing Ireland's broken banks. The current deal is bad for Ireland - and bad for Europe



### WATER CHARGES

**UISCE ÉIREANN: IRISH WATER**

**LABOUR EVERY LITTLE HURTS**

**LABOUR SAID: LOOK WHAT FINE GAEL HAVE IN STORE FOR YOU!**

### HEALTH CUTS

**€3 BILLION CUTS**  
**10,000 STAFF**  
**OVER 1,200 BEDS CLOSED**



**VOTE PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT NO.1**



**VOTE LEFT - VOTE AAA - PBP**

# Cadbury's workers stand up to corporate bullying

Marmie Holborow

Almost 350 workers at the Mondelez (formerly Cadbury's) plant in Coolock, on the Northside of Dublin, have voted to reject management's proposals on restructuring, pay and outsourcing.

Management's attempts to ram through changes to shift times, and the loss of another 35 jobs and changes to production, were just one step too far for the workforce. By a strong vote of 283 to 42, the workers said enough is enough. At a subsequent meeting it was decided to ballot for industrial action. One worker said of the deal:

'This is an attempt by management to undermine workers' pay and conditions. It would open the door to the outsourcing other jobs that undermine permanent positions within the company. Outsourced jobs are filled by contractors paid less wages and with reduced conditions.'

Getting rid of the 17 stores staff was what angered the workers and what led them to reject management's plans by six to one. Jobs are divided along two pay scales - a grade D and a Grade G. Grade G pay scales are based on levels of responsibility and

are acquired through seniority and experience by staff. It is these grade G jobs that the company want to outsource.

Cadburys has long been a well unionised factory. Workers have been making chocolate in Ireland since 1932 when the first Cadbury factory opened in Ossory Road in Dublin. The Coolock factory was built in 1956.

The new management seeks to undo generations of hard won workers' rights. Just under a year ago, the company announced about 90 job losses, along with major changes.

## Labour Court

The Labour Court recommendation last October was to reduce the job losses to 35, but left standing the most contentious issue, the 17 jobs to be outsourced in the stores area. As a sweetener, it recommended a 2% increase from May 1, 2014 and a further 2% increase from May 1, 2015, with the deal to expire on April 30, 2016.

The workers were not taken in by this. They fear that further job losses are on the cards as some of the chocolate brands could be transferred to a Polish plant, as has already ready happened with the eclair plant and the timeout/pink snack plant.



Cadburys workers protesting in 2013

Rejecting this deal is about defending conditions and stopping outsourcing and restructuring with job losses. Already the Cadburys-Modellez gum-based production plant in Tallaght which employed 900 people is due to close this year. At the time it argued that the Coolock plant was its priority and that the new technology installed there would ensure that the core chocolate brands - Cadbury Dairy Milk 8-square,

Flake, Twirl and Boost - would be the export winners.

This company seeks to maximize profits not only by riding roughshod over workers' conditions, but also through not paying tax. Mondelez International, previously known as Kraft Foods, made £96.5m in profit in the UK in the year to December 31, 2014. Yet it has paid no corporation tax since 2010. The Bourneville factory in Birmingham also saw 200

jobs go recently. This is the classic profit seeking global corporation, so beloved of the FG/Lab government, which supposedly provides a great economy for us all.

## Determination

The workers at Coolock have shown their determination by voting in favour of a ballot for strike action. At a meeting on February 6, the union held a meeting in Liberty Hall

which gave the company seven days notice of a ballot for strike action. The ballot will take place on February 16<sup>th</sup>. Solidarity across the northside of Dublin will be vital for this strike to win.

As local People before Profit candidate John Lyons said "Cadbury's is an institution here on the Northside, employing thousands from the area over the last half a century, and its name is generally well regarded.

So to witness over recent years some of the biggest global corporations take it over, squeezing some of its workers whilst discarding many more, all in the interests of profit-making, is sad but unexpected. This is the trend in global capitalism.

The race to the bottom in search of ever-more profits leads to corporations destroying the lives and livelihoods of so many.

The stand taken by the workers in Cadbury's has to be commended and supported and over the coming weeks we in People Before Profit will campaign to highlight the issues and build the community solidarity if and when they embark upon strike action. This is the only weapon workers have to defend themselves against the ravages of a system that cares little about the lives of workers and their families."

# VICTORY TO THE LUAS DRIVERS

Owen McCormack

The pay strike by Luas drivers is one of the most important fight backs by workers in Ireland in many years and should be fully supported by workers everywhere.

If the Luas drivers win, it will set a benchmark for many others and signal that workers have had enough of belt tightening and austerity. Employers and Government hacks understand this well hence the media storm aimed at these workers and the recent strikes.

The Luas workers are absolutely right to demand a pay rise and to seek to have it benchmarked with CIE workers who operate rail and Dart services. Like all workers they have been at the sharp end of austerity, stealth taxes and an effective pay freeze for many years with little sign of any recovery.

In the last six years alone, Luas revenues increased by 30% while passenger number have grown by over 5 million. Routes have been extended with impacts on already stressful and long work rosters.

One driver told Socialist Worker that before the recession the bosses had used long and unsocial rosters as a mechanism to keep militancy down for many years, relying on a high turnover of drivers to stop workers from pursuing improvements in work conditions and pay.

Media attacks While media attacks have concentrated on the headline figure of 54%, they have ignored that this is over the five year period that Transdev have been contracted to operate the Luas.



The attacks also ignore the fact that management have tried to tie any pay claim to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which is almost running at 0% despite the hikes in living costs and stealth taxes on workers.

While Transdev, (formerly Veolia) claim they made a slight loss last year they have been largely profitable; in 2014 profits were €1.39m while they also paid a dividend to their French parent company of over €2.8 million between 2013/14.

Drivers point out that the company have made over €30 million in profits over the years. Transdev's claimed loss of €800,000 should be treated with scepticism. While Transdev operates the Luas, the infrastructure is operated separately by the Railway Procurement Agency (RPA) a semi state company which made an operating profit last year chiefly by negotiating a new five year contract with Transdev. The RPA stated it expected to take in €180

million in revenues over the five years while it will pay Transdev just €150 million.

These are largely accountancy tricks: the facts remains that Luas is profitable and that fare and passenger numbers have increased. The claimed losses come at a convenient time for both Transdev and the Government. Last year the company blamed different billing structures within its new contract with the Rail Procurement Agency (RPA) for the declines in revenue and profits.

The Luas is a small part of Transdev's international operations in over 19 countries. This giant French based multinational was picked by the Irish Government as part of an agenda to bring in private operators into public transport provision. It is one of the largest private transport operators in the world. Its new chief, Gerry Madden worked with Royal Mail before Transdev where he was part of a management team that

pursued staff cuts and contracting out to private operators like DHL.

Militant Before this strike, many right wing commentators eulogised the Luas as an example of private sector efficiency in comparison to the inefficient state owned CIE, whose workforce, they complained, was strike prone and too militant.

The attacks on Luas drivers should be seen for what they are; an attack on a group of workers who dare to stand up and defend themselves. The same commentators now complain that Luas drivers are unskilled and can't realistically expect a decent wage. Bosses are terrified that a powerful group of transport workers might set an example that others could follow.

Pay claims by Dublin Bus workers and others have been awaiting a hearing for almost a year in the Workplace Relations Commissions (WRS) in what seems to be a policy of trying to put off and delay workers grievances. SIPTU should ballot these workers for strike action as well.

A victory for Luas drivers would give the whole labour movement a boost and start the process of rolling back years of austerity and cuts aimed at our class.

One driver said "We are determined to win this, we have already sacrificed a bonus worth 6% of our annual earnings by striking but we won't back down" Striking Luas workers were supported by technicians from Alstom who refused to cross pickets despite threats from their own management.

# Drugs Crisis Worsens

Tom Hendy

Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign have issued a *Manifesto for the 2016 Election*

-Tackling Ireland's Drug Problem. In it they state that 'New Figures ... for 2013 (latest year for which figures are available) show the number of drug-related deaths reached a peak with 679 fatalities.'

It means that, on average, 13 people died every week, directly or indirectly, from illegal drugs, prescribed pills and alcohol.'

These figures are shocking but come as no surprise to those working in this difficult area and struggling to deal with an increasingly complex range of drug misuse with much reduced resources.

Budget 2016 contained no increase in funding for community drug services and between 2008 and 2014 the Drugs Initiative saw its funding cut by 37%. These cuts have affected the whole range of services - treatment, rehabilitation, aftercare, youth services, education and awareness, childcare and community safety - and it is crucial that these cuts should be reversed.

## Decriminalisation

The Citywide Campaign also believes it is necessary to open up a rational debate on decriminalisation of drug use. They argue that 'drug use should be addressed as a social and health issue rather than as a criminal

justice issue'. They note that over 70% of drug related convictions are for possession and maintain that 'the resources used to process these convictions would be better spent on health and social services for people who have drug problems.'



Aodhán Ó Riordáin - the Minister responsible

Decriminalisation of drug use would also do more to help undermine the criminal gang culture, whose feuds have been so evident on the streets of Dublin recently, than any amount of Special Criminal Courts.

Ireland's drug crisis, however, is also part of a wider picture - a symptom of communities shattered and left behind in both the rat race of the Celtic Tiger and the austerity years since the crash. It is the dark underbelly of the rampant neoliberalism and market worship of the political establishment and many of our young people and not so young people are paying for it with their lives.

## Never miss an issue of Socialist Worker

Six month subscription €15/€10stg

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive \_\_\_\_\_ copies of Socialist Worker each issue

Return to PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, with a cheque/postal order or a bank lodgement through Bank Details: Socialist Workers Movement, AIB, 37/38 Upper O'Connell St, Dublin 1. Account No. 95173469. Sort code: 93-11-96

## WHAT THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STANDS FOR

Capitalism is wrecking the lives of millions and endangering the planet. A new society can only be constructed when the workers take control of the wealth and plan its production and distribution for human need and not profit.

**REVOLUTION**  
The present system cannot be patched up or reformed. The courts, the army and police exist to defend the interests of the wealthy.

To destroy capitalism, we need to remove the present state structures and create a workers' state based on much

greater political and economic democracy.

**AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND WAR**  
War is a constant feature of capitalism today as the imperialist powers try to dominate the earth.

The "War on Terrorism" is a crude device to attack any country which threatens US military, strategic or economic dominance.

**END RACISM AND OPPRESSION**  
We oppose all forms of oppression and racism. This divides and weakens the

working class.

We are for full social, economic and political equality for women.

We oppose immigration controls which are always racist.

**FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH**  
We stand for workers unity against the Assembly politicians and Cameron government.

Like great socialist James Connolly, we believe that partition has brought about a 'carnival of reaction'

We want to see an Irish workers republic where all

workers gain.

Our flag is neither green nor orange but red!

**FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY**  
To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party.

This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system.

We call for co-operation between left-wing parties and the formation of a strong socialist bloc.

We stand for fighting trade unions and for independent rank and file action.

## Join the Socialists

Fill in the form and send to SWP PO Box 1648 Dublin 8

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

# Water Charges – Still the Issue

James O'Toole

The battle against Irish Water and their regressive charge has been the defining movement of a generation.

For two years people have organised against meter installation community by community, protested locally and participated in massive national demonstrations tens of thousands strong.

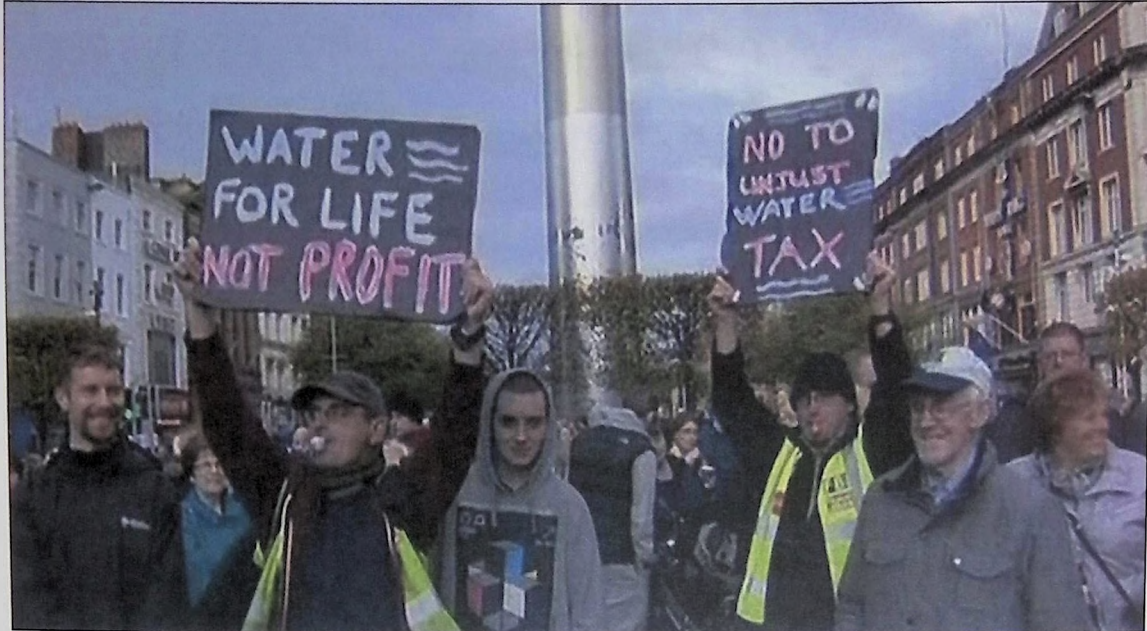
Networks of people who had never been 'activists' before mobilised to stop water meters, creating text trees and booking buses to the major mobilisations.

People Before Profit activists were key to creating these activists' networks in many communities- in Clondalkin, Bray and Ballyfermot, in Cork, Sligo and elsewhere. People Before Profit activists worked with local residents to organise street meetings in every estate.

These street meetings saw people debate the water charges and vote to resist the charge.

This tidal wave of popular mobilisation has also shifted working class communities across the country to the left with a growing politicisation taking place and a huge left vote coming in the election. The radical left groups, like People Before Profit and the Anti Austerity Alliance, have placed themselves at the heart of the movement on the streets and the building of a strong boycott campaign in the communities.

There were massive debates within the movement as people threw off their old traditional po-

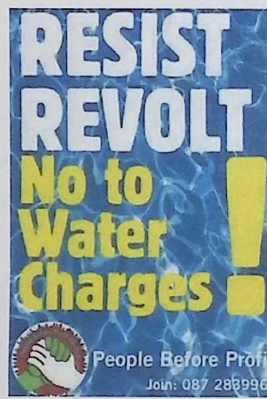


litical affiliations and tried to find a new way of looking at things.

### Can we win?

But can we still win? The first mass protests against the water charge from October to December 2014 saw the government left reeling- they quickly made promises to reduce the charge and even tried to bribe people into registering by offering a €100 'conservation grant' - nothing but a carrot designed to lure people into payment and future bills at a higher rate.

In early 2015 the government realised the carrot alone wasn't going to work and so they ar-



rested protesters including Paul Murphy TD- a blatant attempt to demoralise the movement and split the activist networks at the heart of this movement from support in the wider population. There was slander heaped on the movement- we were even compared to ISIS!

But in both March and August 2015 the mass movement appeared on the street tens of thousands strong. The resilience of the street movement helped to feed a determination to boycott the bills. The government were terrified of releasing figures for the payment rates and when they finally did the boycott of the first bills was

over 60%.

Despite harassing phone calls, texts and threatening letters- over 50% of people are still boycotting these bills. Even those who have paid will tell you at the doorsteps that they did so under duress- a lot of old people were scared into paying. But Irish Water is not viable faced with such a strong boycott level.

### Election

The election campaign had all the mainstream parties trying to avoid the issue of water charges and this despite polls showing that it was a key issue for huge numbers

of people. That's why the protest march on February the 20<sup>th</sup> - the first time a major national protest has taken place during an election- shows that we will not go away and will continue to protest and boycott until water charges are abolished.

Where next? The movement needs to return to the streets after the election to send a clear message to any incoming government that we want this charge abolished. We also need to build up a strong boycott campaign in our areas- this means re-assuring old people and others who are worried about the bills. If we continue to refuse to pay there is nothing they can do.

For many of the new activists who have been politicised by this movement- our message is that it's time to find a political home. This movement has always been about more than just water charges. The working class communities that have mobilised have confronted an elite who don't care about our health or housing needs.

In order to have a decent society where we can all be housed we are going to have to redistribute the wealth of the super rich. But to do that we need to be organised.

Sinn Féin are willing to go into coalition with the old mainstream parties- hence their fear of illegal tactics such as the boycott. We have marched and will continue to march with Sinn Féin members but we have to be honest with each other- there are questions of trust with regard to the leading circles in Sinn Féin.

We need a genuine left that is willing to stand up to the rich.

# The World Economy in Turmoil

John Molyneux

Despite all the hype and spin about 'recovery' world capitalism is in deep trouble. The most obvious sign of this has been turbulence on global stock markets, especially in Japan.

On 8 February €4 billion was wiped off the value of Irish shares in what The Irish Times called a 'bloodbath'.

In the last few weeks, there has been a continuous series of poor data for the US economy: falling manufacturing output, weakening business sentiment and capital goods orders and falling corporate profits.

Other major factors contributing to the instability and the risk of a new recession have been the slow down of the Chinese economy which reduces their demand for imports and the linked low price of oil which hits the profits of many of the worlds biggest corporations like Exxon, Shell and BP.

The recent UN report on global economic perspectives stated that 'the world economy stumbled in 2015 and only a modest improvement is projected for 2016/17'. The UN economists downgraded their final estimate for global growth in 2015 from 2.8% to just 2.4%. Before the Great Recession of 2008 the average for global growth was 4-5% a year.

### Root of the problem

What lies at the root of all these problems is that although the rich have been getting richer as individuals the overall



Chinese stock market crashes

rate of profit for the capitalist corporations has been falling.

This has happened because in trying to grab ever greater shares of the global market the corporations have accumulated more and more capital and spent more and more on machinery compared to labour. As a result and Karl Marx predicted this would occur, their rate of profit has declined in relation to their total output.

This matters because capitalists respond to this fall by cutting their investment which increases the level of unemployment internationally. At a certain stage a tipping point is reached and the system crashes: there is another recession.

So it is significant that globally capitalist investment is low. As nobel prize-winning economist, Joseph Stiglitz noted, 'the UN report clearly shows that, throughout the developed world, private investment

did not grow as one might have expected, given ultra-low interest rates.' As a result an estimated 44 million people are unemployed in developed countries, about 12 million more than in 2007.

A number of socialist and radical economists believe that the next recession will hit in 2017.

### Alternative

Inevitably many ordinary people will feel that debates about the world economy, the rate of profit and so-called 'fiscal space' go over their heads and of course they are meant to. 'The system and its elites, especially its 'economists', don't want working class people to understand how the economy works because they don't want people to understand how they are robbed.

But the fact is that if and when there is another international recession - and

these recessions are international - the impact on us all will be immense because we will be asked to pay for it through job losses, extra charges and cuts in services just as we were in 2008 and after. There is no chance that Ireland will be able to escape unscathed from such a global crisis.

Whenever economic growth rates are high, as they are in Ireland now, the establishment politicians and pundits always claim credit for it and that the growth will continue indefinitely. It never does. Capitalism as a system has a cycle of alternating boom and slump built into its nature.

The only alternative is to build a working class and socialist movement to resist these attacks when they come, to challenge capitalism and the rule of the 1% and to forge a society based on production for human need not profit.

## Latest IMR out now!

Issue Number 14 €5/£5

# IMR

Irish Marxist Review

Featured articles:  
Dave Sherry on Red Clydeside and Ireland  
Fergal McInnes and Brian Kelly on Palestine and the Carnival of Reaction  
Néill Ó'Grada on Roots of the Refugee Crisis and more

Special Issue:  
1916 and the Irish Revolution

The 1916 Rising: Myth and Reality  
Kieran Allen

Workers in the Irish Revolution  
Conor Kostick

Women in the Irish Revolution  
Mary Smith

Special issue on 1916 and the Irish Revolution with articles on The Rising: Myths and Realities, and on Workers and Women in the Irish Revolution and more.

Price €5.

To order email [info@swp.ie](mailto:info@swp.ie) or phone 01 872 2682.

# #socialism 1.01

John Molyneux

## Revolution and violence

Revolution and violence are closely linked in the public mind - and not by chance. The ruling class who ultimately control both the education system and the media have been reinforcing this association ever since the French Revolution and the Storming of the Bastille in 1789. They figure that most people, very reasonably, don't like violence so portraying revolution as violent will put them off revolution. In reality, however, violence is not the main feature of revolution. In

**'Ordinary war'**  
Of course this doesn't mean there is never any violence involved in revolution, if only because ruling classes frequently respond violently to such challenges to their power, as the British did when the Volunteers occupied the GPO in 1916. But in considering this several things should be born in mind. First, the establishment may play up the violence of revolution but in fact it is enormously less than the violence involved in 'ordinary' capitalist wars.

the Commune they killed about 30,000 Communards in one week - bodies were piled in the streets. Chile in 1970-73 is another example. The Chilean people elected a left government called Popular Unity which tried to implement reforms. This government behaved very 'responsibly' - too responsibly - and kept compromising with the army but to no avail. The army, led by the infamous General Pinochet crushed the Popular Unity government and killed and tortured tens of thousands of Chilean



Irish soldiers at the Somme

reality what makes an event into a genuine revolution is not violence but the entry of the mass of ordinary people into political action and onto the stage of history. In so-called 'normal' times the large majority of people are passive. They let the bosses and the politicians run things and concentrate on trying to survive in their private lives - which are tough enough, of course. A revolutionary begins when huge numbers of these formerly passive people become active and start to assert themselves. The main ways they do this are through mass street demonstrations, mass strikes, mass community meetings, and the occupation of workplaces and other key buildings. Through these means working people not only challenge the existing rulers but also start to take over the running of society themselves. This has been central to every real people's revolutionary movement such as the Paris Commune of 1871, when the people took over Paris, through the Russian Revolution of 1917, French May events of 1968, to the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 and many others.

The Easter Rising claimed 450 lives in all. 49,000 Irish died fighting for the British Empire in the First World War - that is more than four times the total killed in the Rising, the War of Independence (2000), the Civil War (3000), and the Troubles (3500) put together. In 1917 in Russia there was a February Revolution that overthrew the Tsar, in which about 1500 were killed by the Tsarist army before it came over to the people, and an October Revolution establishing workers' power which was almost bloodless. In contrast 1.8 million Russians died in World War I. The death toll for the First World War as a whole came to 16 million. For the Second World War it was over 60 million. The Korean War claimed 3 million, the Vietnam War 4 million, and the Iraq War 1 million. Second, history shows that counter revolutionary violence always vastly exceeds any revolutionary violence. So for example when the working people took control of Paris in the Commune of 1871 they shot two generals who had ordered their soldiers to fire on the people. This was greeted with howls of outrage by the establishment of the day. But when the army retook Paris and suppressed

workers and socialists.

### Politics

This raises the question of how the revolution can defend itself against this counter revolutionary violence. The key to this is politics more than guns. It involves mass nationwide mobilisation in every town and major workplace so that the forces of the state have more on their plate than they can cope with. The Paris Commune and the Easter Rising both suffered from the weakness of being confined to one city, which enabled the counter revolution to concentrate its forces against them. It also involves winning over the rank-and-file of the armed forces to the side of the people so that the state is disintegrated from within. This can be done by appealing to them to stand with their working class brothers and sisters. In short the best way to avoid and end violence is not to shun the revolution as this just allows capitalist violence to continue but to actually win the revolution. What is needed for that is a mass united movement of the working class and its allies on a nationwide and, ultimately, international basis.

# A space open

Kieran Allen, *People Before Profit* Director Elections, off

General Election 2016 began with a sustained press campaign suggesting that Enda Kenny was a sure thing to be returned as Taoiseach. The FG-Labour government choreographed to the last detail a series of sweeteners designed to push up their poll ratings. Their media friends joined in chorus to predict their return. Politics was presented as a spectator sport where punters could identify the favourite to win. The political establishment, however, did not reckon on the surge of anger that has swept Irish society. Pensioners felt insulted by their €3 rise. Hospital patients and their families were horrified by the daily sight of over 500 people on trolleys. Many were scandalised by homeless crisis. There a rage out there that those who lived in a Dail bubble missed. Under pressure of an election, Fine Gael let their masks slip. In reply to a question about the health crisis, Varadkar said, 'when

they have more beds and more resources, that's what kind of slows it down. Because that's what kind of slows it down. Because they (the hospital staff) don't feel as much under pressure.' With a philosophy like that, it was no wonder that he kept 1,800 acute hospital beds closed. Matters got even worse for the coalition in the first week of the campaign. They tried to make a shift from their politics of permanent austerity by a series of promises. But when they were asked how to pay for these, their only answer was the 'fiscal space'.  
**Fiscal fantasy**  
The term had originated in some obscure article by OECD research and ratings agencies such as Standards and Poors. In the dying months of the FG-Labour government, the mandarins in the Department of Finance began to use the term. It referred to the expected revenue that the state would have after paying off its annual €8 billion for the Irish national

debt. The expectation was based on an assumption of continual growth. Three problems quickly emerged. First, the political agree could not agree on how much fiscal space they had. Was it €12 billion as Varadkar suggested or €8 billion which Noonan claimed? Or even €3.5 billion as the neoliberals who run the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council thought? And if the whole thing was 'manana money', who cared anyway. Second, news of stock market turbulence and the decline of the Chinese economy signalled that another global recession was not far away. Assumptions about year on year steady growth in the most globalised economy began to sound particularly stupid. Third, the population had grown cynical of politicians making promises before an election- and breaking them afterwards. The famous words of Pat Rabbitte about 'isn't that the kind of thing you do' was ringing about. Many knew that it was a case of 'fool me once, shame on you, Fool me twice, shame on me.'



It's all her fault

Thrown onto the back foot, Fine Gael retreated to their age old standard message of being the party of law and order. As in everything else, Labour who had once opposed the Special Criminal Court on civil libertarian grounds, joined in the desperate chorus.

### The missing debate

Throughout the whole election campaign, there was however one major item that was marginalised by the mainstream media: how the wealth could be shared. There has been a recovery - but the main winners have been the super rich. You can see that easily in the way Denis O'Brien's wealth has grown from €2 billion to €9 billion. Or in the manner in which builders like Joe O'Reilly or Bernard McNamara who owed billions of debt are rising again.

# America polarises

It is not just here in Ireland or even just in Europe that the established political system is being shaken by people's anger at austerity and rising inequality: it's also in America. For more than a century US politics has been dominated by a combination of right wing Republicans and right wing Democrats. In words the Republicans, like George Bush, usually sounded more right wing than the Democrats like Barack Obama, but what they did in office was more or less the same: rule in the interest of the 1% at home and US imperialism abroad. Now, Bernie Sanders, the self-declared socialist from Vermont is threatening to break the mould. Conventional wisdom said that a left winger like Sanders had no chance of getting anywhere in American politics but Sanders is defying the pundits. For months now Sanders has been campaigning round the country holding huge rallies and attracting more and more grass roots support. Now we have concrete proof of the real momentum behind Sanders bid to be the Democrat nominee for President in 2016.  
**New Hampshire**  
In the last two weeks there have been preparatory elections (called Primaries) in Iowa and New



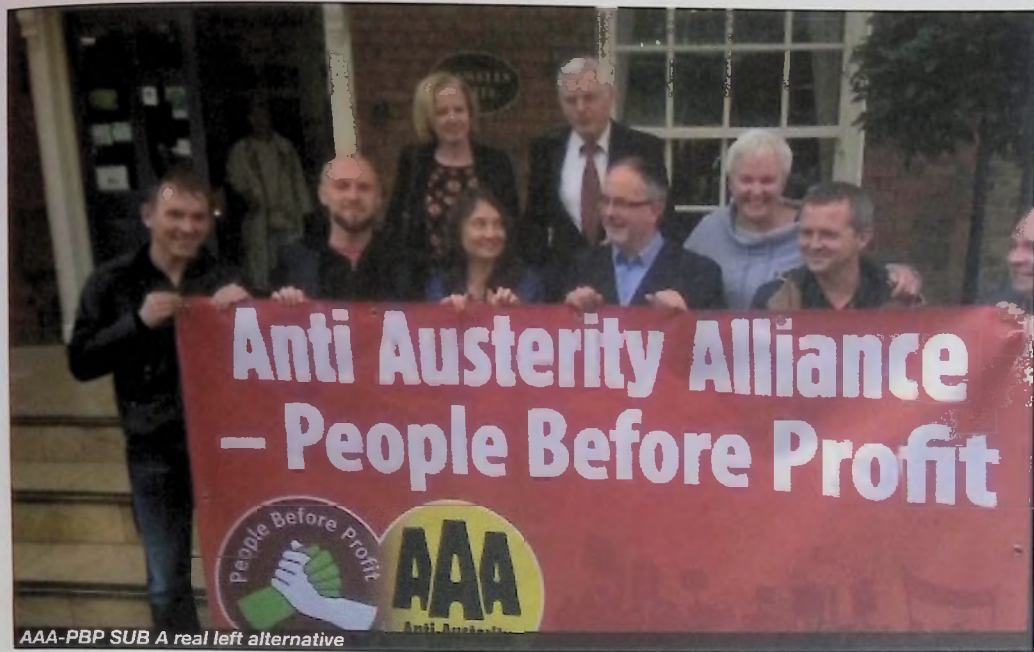
18,000 at Sanders' rally in Denver

Hampshire. In Iowa there was more or less a dead heat between Sanders and the establishment candidate, Hillary Clinton, and in New Hampshire Bernie Sanders won by a landslide - 60% to 38%. This was despite huge media bias in favour of Clinton and was

unprecedented. Not since John F Kennedy in 1956 has any candidate taken 60% of the vote in New Hampshire. At the same time US politics is also polarising to the right with billionaire Donald Trump leading the race for the Republican

# ng for the Left

rs his overview of the 2016 General Election campaign



AAA-PBP SUB A real left alternative

Recovery for the majority has meant a modest increase in jobs, at much lower rates of pay. According to the OECD, 23 percent of the workforce are now officially on low pay – as against 19% before the crash. Beyond all that there has been a major increase in youth emigration.

Yet despite this gross inequality, only the genuine left in AAA-PBP focused on a distribution of wealth. They called openly for increases in the corporation tax take, a Robin Hood tax on financial speculation and a wealth tax. These were relatively modest measures designed to take the tax burden off workers who had paid the cost of the crash.

Sinn Fein, by contrast, side-stepped the issue of making the rich pay. Their

manifesto represented a rhetorical step backwards from previous ones. They did not call for a tax on financial speculation; they made no commitment to increase taxes from the corporations; they only proposed 'to examine' the introduction of a Wealth tax.

Instead of calling for public ownership of the natural resources which were handed over to Shell, Sinn Fein backed an Oireachtas report which stated that 'existing agreements should be adhered to.'

Sinn Fein proposals for alleviating austerity were also, ironically, based predominantly on €8 billion of 'fiscal space'. The failure to attack the rich meant that they called for the retention of the USC tax for those earning between €19,000

and €70,000 – something which the AAA-PBP vigorously opposed.

All of this meant that the issue of redistribution of wealth did not feature as much as it should have done.

Behind the din of the election, important shifts were taking place in the Irish political landscape.

Fine Gael, which received a huge boost in 2011, has begun to decline except amongst the more privileged voters. Labour is in deep trouble.

Despite a sustained media offensive, Sinn Fein is growing in support. But space for a more genuine radical left is also growing and the battle to shape the resistance to the next pro-austerity government will also start in earnest.

## s: Sanders rises



to minimise Bernie Sanders. But it is Sanders who is striking a chord on the ground and generating a real popular movement for change.

The election of Obama showed that most Americans were not racist warmongers but his time in office showed that he was a complete prisoner of the racist warmongering system. So Obama's presidency has been marked by the epidemic of police killings of unarmed black people at home and repeated bombing and drone attacks abroad.

### Opportunity

Similarly the rise of Bernie Sanders shows there is a real thirst for radical change in America and a real rage against the greed of the 1% that can be channelled in a socialist direction. At the same time Sanders' main problems are first the Democratic Party itself which has always been totally committed to US capitalism and totally ruled by one faction of America's super-rich, and second the US state and ruling class itself.

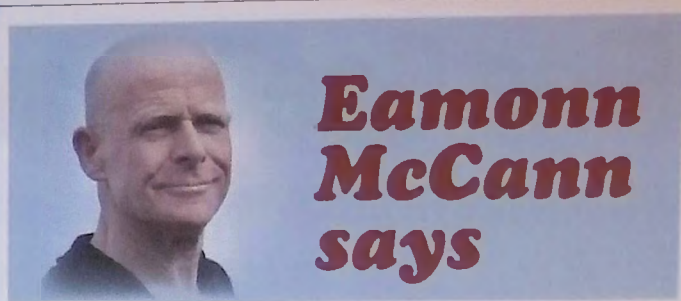
The Democratic Party establishment can be relied upon to do their very best to stop Sanders getting the nomination and even to sabotage his election campaign if he becomes the candidate.

If despite this Bernie Sanders became President he would then face the concerted opposition of the ruling capitalist class and its state



Donald Trump

machine. This is why socialists understand that, exciting as it is, it will take more than Sanders' campaign and more than a progressive President to really change America. It will need a mass movement of people power from below: a revolution. But the Sanders' campaign is a brilliant opportunity to build in that direction.



**Eamonn McCann says**

## The Road to Choice

If there was a law allowing a raped woman to have an abortion, women would be queuing up to lie that they'd been raped in order to get abortions.

That's the approach of a number of politicians, clergy and commentators North and South as they try to hold a hard line against women's right to control their own bodies.

It is the basis of the North's Justice Minister David Ford's decision to appeal against a High Court ruling that European law gives women a right to abortion in cases of rape, incest and fatal foetal abnormality.

Ford accepted the ruling as far as fatal foetal abnormality was concerned, but wants the reference to rape removed.

A lack of "legal certainty" concerning rape, he argued, could lead to "abortion on demand".

Ford's argument had been spelt out in detail in a November 2014 Department of Justice consultation paper:

"It is relatively easy to say that we need to address cases where pregnancy has been the result

colony of political neanderthals, but leader of the "moderate" Alliance party.

Likewise, the SDLP advertises itself as a progressive party; but abortion spokeswoman Dolores Kelly has matched the most hardline of "pro-lifers", saying that neither she nor her party will have any truck with the concept of "choice" – including in cases where the medical advice is that the foetus has no chance of survival outside the womb.

Even people who broadly define themselves as "anti-abortion" can have difficulty with that one: if the foetus has no chance of survival, what's the justification for overriding a woman's wishes and compelling her to carry it to full term?

What's "pro-life" about that? It makes no sense.

Or at least it doesn't make rational sense. But it can be made to make sense in the context of religion.

### Ensoulement

Christian fundamentalists believe that life begins when a soul enters the body, and that "ensoulement" endows the body with the same moral weight and "right to life" as



of rape or incest, but there are other situations which need to be considered...The situations in which women and girls may become pregnant as a result of criminal offending behaviour extend beyond the scope of the offence of rape or incestuous sexual activity."

Proclaiming a right to abortion in cases of rape or incest would raise questions about other adjacent circumstances.

So let's ditch rape and incest as reasons for allowing abortion altogether...

### Ford's logic

Ford's twisted logic highlights the extent to which debate on abortion is commonly conducted in terms which are implicitly disparaging of women – mainly male politicians discussing what limits to set on women's right to sovereignty over their own bodies, peppering their pronouncements with references to "vulnerable" women in "tragic" situations deserving of our "compassion".

The notion of a strong woman asserting her rights seems not to occur to them.

Ford, it should be remembered, is not a member of the Democratic Unionist Party, which provides a natural habitat for the North's sizable

any adult human being.

They teach, too, that ensoulement occurs at the instant of conception.

So, terminating a pregnancy the day after conception is murder in the same sense that killing a bystander in a drive-by shooting is murder.

The "pro-lifers" know that if they back off even an inch from this position they will have given away the ground of principle on which they take their stance.

If they concede that there are any circumstances in which abortion is acceptable, the question remaining is – what are these circumstances? The debate now turns on when, not whether.

This is the "slippery slope" argument to which Ford gave credence.

It lies behind the "pro-lifers'" near-hysterical dogmatism and refusal to accept women's testimonies, medical evidence or polls showing that they represent a diminishing minority across the island.

We should stop denying that legalising abortion for rape, incest and fatal foetal abnormality will lead to "abortion on demand."

If it does – so what? What we are dealing with is not a slippery slope but a way forward towards the right to choose.

# Fine Gael's Law and Order offensive

*Kieran Allen argues that Special Criminal Courts will only help Fine Gael's law and order image but will not defeat crime.*

**M**asked police in balaclavas. Police checkpoints with armed sub-machine guns. Headlines screaming 'A City Gripped by Fear'. It's not Mexico City but Dublin days before a general election.

The Department of Justice pressed the panic buttons and has ratcheted up a mini 'strategy of tension'.

There is no logical reason for it. True, many people were deeply shocked by the brazen and brutal gangland killing in the Regency Hotel and the subsequent murder in Ballybough. The killers operated with a shocking impunity to spread a message of fear.

But the Regency killings were carried out by thugs dressed as police officers in balaclavas. Which only begs the question: why put more armed men in balaclavas on the streets? Does it not provide an opportunity for more confusion?

Just before the Regency killings, the Fine Gael-Labour argument about a 'fiscal space' providing money for election promises was falling apart. The two parties could not agree on whether they had €8 billion or €12 billion to spend from their 'manana money'. To make matters worse, news of stock market turbulence put the prospect of continual growth of the Irish economy in question.

Better to switch to a 'law and order' agenda, thought the Fine Gael strategists. Their media friends could then concentrate on Sinn Fein's 'weak point'. By pure co-incidence, the judgement in the 'Slab' Murphy case was also due a few days. So the dirty tricks department thought that they were onto a good thing.

The reality, however, is that calls for a Special Criminal Court will do nothing to solve the problem of organised crime.

The Special Criminal Court came into existence through the Offences Against the State Act, passed in 1939. It allowed a government to declare a state of emergency and set up courts which could convict people on the word of a Garda superintendent.

During the 1970s and 1980s, convictions were also obtained by confessions from the accused.

The police formed a 'heavy gang' unit



Armed gardai on streets of Dublin

which visited the accused in prison cells and beat confessions out of them. In one notorious case, the Sallins train robbery, Nicky Kelly was wrongly convicted on such evidence.

The record of the Special Criminal Court was so bad that even the Labour Party, including its current leader Joan Burton, opposed its extension in 2009 for use against organised crime. The former President Mary Robinson, summed up the reasoning 'To charge persons in the Special Criminal Court that are charged with purely criminal offences is to abolish trial by jury by the back door'

Aside from these elementary human rights concerns, the Special Criminal Court has not stopped the spread of organised crime.

## Deprivation

Ireland's murder rate is about average for the EU but, according to security correspondent, Tom Clonan, murder by deadly weapons is five times higher.

One of the reasons is that the state allowed pockets of extreme deprivation to arise in impoverished working class areas. As unemployment shot up, drug distribution and sale became an alternative

economy that guaranteed a high status. Young men, in particular were drawn into the drugs industry because they were excluded from the official economy.

When this escalated into shoot outs, the state turned a blind eye. The predominant attitude was that the killings only affected criminal gangs and it was hoped that they might just 'wipe each other out'.

Another Special Criminal Court may help Fine Gael's law and order image. But it will do nothing to stop the spread of organised crime.

The justification used about 'juror intimidation' makes little sense because it

could equally – and even more so – apply to witnesses.

So in effect Fine Gael might as well be proposing a juryless and witnessless court. Special criminal courts are not used in the US, Scotland or England to tackle organised crime because other mechanisms can be used to protect juries – a jury could hear video evidence or could be seated behind screens, for example.

Organised crime will only be defeated when the scourge of unemployment is tackled and the prohibition style opportunity given to gangs to deal in cannabis and other drugs is removed.

## EGYPT – THE STRUGGLE REVIVES

*Thanks are due to Sameh Naguib, of the Egyptian Revolutionary socialists and Anne Alexander of Egypt Solidarity for information used in this article.*

**T**he Egyptian Revolution of January/February 2011 was the greatest revolutionary struggle so far of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In July 2013 it was crushed by the counter-revolutionary coup of General Al-Sisi and the Egyptian military.

Now there are signs that the Egyptian revolution is beginning to revive. At the end of last year and the beginning of this one there was an important series of workers strikes including at the major Textile plant of Mahalla which has long played a central role in the Egyptian labour movement. These strikes were defensive and limited but they were a sign that the workers' movement was not completely defeated.

Then in the last few weeks there have been two momentous struggles which have shaken the government and the state apparatus.

The first involved football supporters known as 'Ultras'. The Ultras played an important and heroic role in defeating the hated police in the 2011 Revolution. Then on 1 February 2012 revenge was taken when 70 Ultras were killed after a match in Port Said. On the fourth anniversary of this slaughter The Al-Ahly Ultras of Cairo staged a mass memorial in the Giza football stadium where they chanted slogans against the Interior Ministry and the Egyptian military. Only 500 metres from Tahrir



Mass general assembly of Egyptian doctors

Square this was a clear defiance of the regime's anti-protest law.

It was followed, only a week later, by a second memorial/protest by another group of football supporters, the White Knights Ultras who had had 20 of their number killed in a more recent incident.

At the same time Doctors at Al-Matariyya Hospital in Cairo walked out on strike in defence of colleagues who

were assaulted by policemen for refusing to write false reports about a patient's injuries.

The strike began after a van of policemen arrived at the hospital on 28 January. Doctor's Union secretary-general Mona Mina reported that the police told doctors to falsify medical reports, and then seized two doctors, who "were abducted from the hospital

by policemen and dragged into the microbus, where they were handcuffed and transported to Matareya Police Station".

In response to the incident, medical staff walked out on strike, closing the hospital for a week. Then on 12 February the Doctors organised a huge public General Assembly in a street leading to Tahrir Square which was

attended by 10,000 medical staff !!.

This passed a series of radical motions calling for :

All medical services to be provided free of charge, which means breaking the law en masse; no privatisation of health care; the immediate closure of any hospital where doctors are assaulted (directed at the police); the resignation of the Health Minister. And a national strike if these demands are not granted.

In a highly repressive society where activists are regularly being jailed, disappeared and tortured, these amazing acts of defiance, which the police were unable to prevent, show that the experience of the revolution remains alive in the consciousness of the people and that the revolutionary spirit is again rising.

At the same time the regime is gripped by a deep crisis as the Egyptian economy is badly affected by the slowdown in the world economy, the decline in usage of the Suez Canal, the fall of the Egyptian Pound and the collapse of tourism. To cap it all President Al-Sisi has announced that he is going to end the state subsidy of water and increase water charges (!)

We know the effect of water charges in Ireland. In a country as deprived and dry as Egypt the impact of this on the poor, and most Egyptians are very poor, will be utterly devastating. Watch this space!

# Pegida Ireland routed – on to M19

Memet Uludag  
of United Against Racism

**S**aturday 6 February saw the racist and fascist group Pegida attempt to launch themselves in Dublin. They were completely routed and run off the streets by anti-racists. About 2000 anti-racists and anti-fascists assembled at the GPO in a rally called by the Anti-Racist Network and supported by United Against Racism, People Before Profit, the Anti-Austerity Alliance and many other groups and campaigns.

It was a superb show of strength that made it impossible for Pegida to get anywhere near their planned destination of the GPO. And when some of them appeared on Talbot St they were immediately forced to run for cover by a large crowd of anti-racists.

Also as the small group of fascists came down Gardiner St they were confronted by a group emerging from the flats – probably Bohs supporters – chanting 'Pegida Say Your Prayers – Refugees Welcome Here'. Again they had to take flight.

After this great victory the next big day for anti-racism in Ireland is Saturday 19 March.

## M19

19 March is the International Day of Action against racism. On this day, across Europe there will be numerous events and rallies.

Specifically the Greek campaign, KEERFA - Movement Against Racism and the Fascist Threat has issued a call for international mobilisation.



A section of the crowd at Anti-Pegida Rally

Today in Europe the fight against racism is vitally important. Racism divides us, creates fear and hate and is a key mechanism for diverting mass anger at austerity onto scapegoats. The refugee crisis has given racist, Islamophobic and fascist movements an excuse to mobilise, build and spread their propaganda.

But as the rally against Pegida showed, anti-racism can win against such movements. We must continue our stand against racism

and build stronger anti-racist movements.

Following the successful rally last year on March 21, United Against Racism (UAR) supports the call from KEERFA and will be organising a rally in Dublin on **Saturday 19 March - assemble 2pm, Central Bank Plaza, Dame Street.**

United Against Racism invites all anti-racist organisations, NGO's, trade unions, community groups and anti-racist political parties to support and endorse this rally

and build the day together. The slogans for the Rally are:

- Yes to Diversity and Solidarity
- No to Racism, No to War!
- No to scapegoating of migrants and minorities
- No to Islamophobia
- No to Anti-semitism
- Recognition of Travellers as a minority group
- Open the EU borders - Refugees

**#M19**  
International Day  
Against  
Racism  
Public Rally  
2pm, Sat 19 Mar  
Central Bank Plaza

**Anti-War**  
Cultural  
Night  
Songs and Words Against War  
Workman's Club  
Doors Open 7.30pm

NO to Racism and War  
YES to Diversity and Solidarity  
No to Islamophobia  
No to Anti-semitism  
Recognise REFUGEES  
Open the EU borders  
End Direct Don't

Organised by United Against Racism  
and Irish Anti-War Movement

Welcome

■ End the Direct Provision System

Further details can be found on UAR Facebook Page ("United Against Racism")

□ On the same day, and in conjunction with United Against Racism, the Irish Anti-War Movement is organising a cultural night of live music and poetry against war at the **Workman's Club on Wellington Quay, Doors Open 7.30pm.**

# A book for every Irish socialist

Continuing his series of reviews of socialist classics, **James Granell** looks at **James Connolly's major work, Labour in Irish History.**

**E**very recurring Emmet anniversary continues to bring us its crop of orators who know all about Emmet's martyrdom, and nothing about his principles... He believed in the brotherhood of the oppressed and in the community of free nations, and died for his ideal.

It is a depressing fact of history that James Connolly's words about Robert Emmet could just as easily be said about Connolly himself.

One hundred years after Connolly's execution there are many who use his image, weep for his martyrdom, make fine speeches in his honour, yet there are few in the political establishment who still stand for the same principles that he believed in.

*Labour in Irish History* was first published in 1910, shortly after Connolly's return from America.

In this short book Connolly set out to

provide a Marxist reading of Irish history.

Although his idealised understanding of class relations in Gaelic – pre Norman – Ireland were optimistically influenced by cultural movements current at the time, the work is nevertheless a true classic that deserves to be read by every Irish socialist.

## Oppressors

Throughout the work, Connolly argued that the age old fight of the Irish people against their oppressors was not driven by "great men" and random political occurrences, as the Whig historians claimed, rather it was dominated by the fight for control of the means of production on the island.

Connolly maintained that understanding this fundamental point was key. For the worker, it would be a 'lamp to his feet in the stormy paths of today.'

The main body of the book deals with various incidents from Irish history – the rebellions of the seventeenth century; the 1798 rebellion; land wars; Catholic emancipation and so on. Connolly uses these events to demonstrate that the driving force behind Irish history was



class-struggle.

In analysing these events he did not shy away from confronting the betrayals of various bourgeois reformers, some of whom, like Daniel O'Connell, were almost sacrosanct in popular consciousness.

Connolly demonstrated that once

many of these so-called revolutionaries gained control of the land, the means of production, they abandoned the workers and the poor who had fought with them.

As he puts it, 'the working men fought, the capitalists sold out, and the lawyers bluffed.'

An important theme, which runs through the entire work, was Connolly's rejection of sectarianism.

## Landlords

He showed that landlords and the government (one and the same for much of Irish history) didn't care whether their tenants were Protestant or Catholic.

Their primary aim was the extraction of as much wealth from Ireland as possible.

Connolly provided examples of Protestant landlords evicting their Protestant tenants in order to take higher paying Catholic ones.

Again and again he stressed that what divides the people of Ireland is not their religion, it is their class. He argued that workers of all creeds must unite against the capitalist class who control the country.

He contended that any political

movement that did not accept the reality that the control of the means of production was the primary driving force behind history could solve nothing.

'They could change taxation and so on, but they accomplished nothing, because the political remedies proposed were unrelated to the social subjection at the root of the matter.'

How true this is of today's political establishment.

Connolly wrote that: 'only the Irish working class remain as the incorruptible inheritors of the fight for freedom in Ireland.'

This is a vital point to remember during this centenary year.

The political establishment may parade themselves as the inheritors of the Rising, but they are not.

That honour belongs to the working class of Ireland alone.

Only a working class movement, guided by the same socialist principles that Connolly defended, can truly change Ireland for the better, ending sectarianism, oppression, and bringing to an end the choking grip of capitalism. The workers united will never be defeated.

## WHAT THEY SAY AND WHAT THEY DO

After visiting the anti-homeless barriers erected outside Joan Burton's Department of Social Protection homelessness activist Peter McDonagh sent us this comment:

**A**ll the politicians weep crocodile tears and express their sympathy for the homeless.

As someone who has experienced homelessness myself I have learned to look at what they do, not what they say.

The Labour Party and, in particular, Joan Burton are specialists in this hypocrisy. In the TV Leaders' Debate Burton had the nerve to say that Father Peter McVerry was not familiar with the work being done by her Department of Social Protection.

But here we see what her Department is actually doing – installing barriers.

It's very similar to the way they claim to care about refugees and then put up fences – it's disgusting.

But hopefully the voters of Dublin West will ensure that the homeless are not the only ones losing their seats!



Housing activists Peter McDonagh and Daniel Healy at 'Burton's barriers'.

# Socialist Worker

## EAMONN McCANN TO STAND IN FOYLE

by Shaun Harkin

**E**amonn McCann, veteran civil rights campaigner and lifelong socialist, confirmed he will stand as the People Before Profit candidate in the Foyle constituency in the forthcoming Assembly elections. Announcing candidacy McCann said "I am proud to be standing for People Before Profit, an all-island party that is fighting austerity on both sides of the border."

"All of the other parties standing in Foyle merely offer more of the same. The two largest parties are mainly concerned about which one takes three seats, which one takes two. But what does that matter to families in constant anxiety about cut-backs, joblessness, rock-bottom wages and fear that their children will never make a decent living in Derry."

"The SDLP and Sinn Fein should be told that the seats are not theirs to divvy up between themselves."

McCann received 3120 votes in the 2011 Assembly elections to only narrowly miss out on taking a seat. He believes we face a 'dire political situation' but that the time is ripe for a political alternative and a different kind of politics:

"People Before Profit is building a new politics, the kind that is emerging all over Europe from people on the ground."

"We have been at the cutting edge of the great movement against water charges and austerity in the South. We will bring that spirit of people power into the Assembly and blow away the dusty ideas which have smothered progress for too long. We will give a voice to a new generation not trapped in the past."

"We are not hidebound by Orange or Green designation. We stand on the Left. We will fight on every issue - women's rights, the



Eamonn McCann with the Derry PBP team

environment, State involvement in crime and collusion, etc. - on the basis of what serves the interests of all working-class people."

### Hope

McCann sees his campaign in the context of support for radical alternatives represented by Corbyn in Britain and Sanders in the United States:

"It isn't only in the North that growing numbers are fed up with the manoeuvres and antics of the old guard. Millions of mainly young people coming onto the streets have opened up new hope. Northern Ireland needs this hope more than any part of these islands."

If elected, McCann plans to remain ac-

tive with campaigns he has long supported such as justice for the victims of Bloody Sunday and their families, the expansion of Magee University and the Derry Trades Union Council:

"I will be raising these and other issues that are close to my heart - like the rail line, defence of the public sector and the ruination of our local environment through large-scale illegal dumping - at every opportunity in the Assembly."

"Derry City is a jobs desert and the few jobs that are available do not pay a living wage. Promised jobs tend not to materialise. But real jobs are being lost week in and week out through cuts in public provision."

In response to the proposal to sell-off

and privatise over two hundred homes in the Bogside area of Derry, McCann said "We need to invoke the spirit of the Civil Rights Movement now," he said.

### Sell-off

"There are as many people in the Derry area in need of housing as there were back in the 1960s, when homelessness helped spark the civil rights movement."

"The sell-off of these homes is part of the move to get rid of the Housing Executive - one of the most important legacies of Civil Rights."

"We know what will happen from what's happened in Britain. Rents will go up, services get worse and fat-cat salaries for top

managers will become standard."

McCann underlined his belief that fundamental change can only come about through mass participation of working class people from all backgrounds and communities across the North. If elected, he will use his seat to amplify and encourage campaigns and struggles.

"I am looking forward to joining Gerry Carroll (West Belfast) and Fiona Ferguson (North Belfast) in the Assembly. We came very close to taking a seat in Foyle at the last Assembly election. This time, we are confident of taking a seat."

"A team of People Before Profit MLAs would immediately change the dynamic of politics across the North."

## Lessons of Shankill British Collusion

John Molyneux

**T**hroughout the Troubles the British state claimed the moral high ground. It presented itself as 'above the fray' struggling to control the 'two tribes' of troublesome Irish who insisted on killing each other.

The latest revelations in the Irish News about British collusion in the Shankill bombing show once again that this was a lie and a myth. Far from occupying the high ground the British state apparatus stood on the lowest ground of all.

At least it could be said of the IRA and even the Loyalist paramilitaries that they generally believed in what they were fighting for, but what did killers of the British secret state believe in apart from the power of their bosses, the British ruling class?

The Irish News revealed, on the basis of classified documents they have seen, that the IRA commander who planned the Shankill bombing was a police informant who had told his handlers of the plan to blow-up Frizzell's fish shop in 1993. Nine people died in the bombing, including two children and one of the bombers.

Collusion between MI5, the police Special Branch and military intelligence on the one hand, and the UDA and the UVF on the other, is well known and has been well documented but this story

breaks new ground. There is speculation that the motive for 'allowing' this bombing and the late warning that accompanied it was to disrupt the developing peace process.

As Eamonn McCann pointed out in The Irish Times the excuses given about the failure of the ministry of defence and the PSNI to disclose potentially crucial documents have been 'preposterous' "Preposterous," he writes, 'might be applied also to the response of PSNI Chief Constable George Hamilton to a BBC Panorama programme last May detailing a series of paramilitary killings that state agents had helped plan and then cover up. Among these were the loyalist murder of Sunday World journalist Martin O'Hagan in 2001, the massacre of five men in a bookie's on the Lower Ormeau Road in 1992 and the IRA slaughter of 10 Protestant workmen at Kingsmills in 1976.'

Nevertheless the answer to the question posed by former republican prisoner Dixie "Were the Brits running both sides?" cannot be a simple yes.

Yes, it was British imperialism that created the conditions that caused the conflict and yes the British state fomented sectarianism as a means of divide and rule. But that does not mean they simply controlled everything that happened or that the struggle was not based on real popular anger against decades



Aftermath of the Shankill bombing

of discrimination, deprivation and oppression.

Without widespread popular sympathy the military campaign on the scale waged by the IRA would have been unsustainable for twenty weeks never mind twenty years.

What it does show, however, is that the

more the struggle for Irish unity became, and the more any struggle becomes, a purely military conflict in place of the mass mobilization of the working class from below the more susceptible it is, despite all security precautions, to the dirty tricks and machinations of the secret

state.

If the focus of the struggle is mass demonstrations and mass strikes spies, informers and double agents will still be at work but their effectiveness and the damage they do will be much less than if the focus is bombs and assassinations.