

People Before Profit Alliance



DUBLIN CENTRAL BULLETIN MARCH 2009



The fight-back is on!



Colm Stephens comments: *Over 120,000 people took to the streets of Dublin on 21 February to protest at the Government's handling of the economy. Public service and private sector workers joined together to condemn the attempts by Fianna Fáil and many in the media to drive a wedge between us. Instead we united to condemn the government's moves to make ordinary people pay while the millionaires get off scott free.*



Bailouts for the bankers while jobs are slashed

On top of the astonishing stories of corrupt loans and a golden circle of billionaires, we now learn that the AIB has just announced profits of 'only' just over €1 billion.

How can they be given €2.5 billion of our money to 'keep it afloat' and then get to keep all of their profits? The bank should be taken into public ownership now and the profits used to protect jobs and services. Meanwhile unemployment is rocketing. Even profitable companies are sacking workers left, right and centre and forcing those who remain to take pay cuts. In the public sector contract workers are also being let go wholesale and those still at work are being made to pay a new tax, the so-called 'pension levy'. Everyone is paying ... except the super-rich. The only jobs the Government seem interested in protecting are those of top bankers and executives.

Protests and strikes begin to show results

The fight-back has started and is gathering momentum. The protest on 21 February and the strike by lower-paid civil servants immediately showed results. Within hours, government spokespeople began to call for corrupt bankers to be jailed – up to that they had defended their friends at every turn. The trade union leadership has also begun to move, albeit slowly, towards a national strike on 30 March.

Support the bus workers and teachers

Even the mere threat of a strike by bus workers has also had an effect – it has forced the bus companies to delay the implementation of cuts to services and the laying off of 570 people. The teachers have also voted overwhelmingly for strike action to try to stave off the disastrous cuts announced before Christmas. These struggles continue.

The emergency budget should tax the super rich

In the emergency budget on 1 April the Government will once more increase the taxes on you and me in a further attempt to get us to pay for the crisis that they have created.

The only logical and sensible solution would be to get those who actually have wealth – the companies and millionaires who made so much money during the boom years – to step up to their responsibility. According to the Central Bank's own figures, the top 1% of Irish society made €41 billion in the last few years. Taxing these earnings would go a long way to filling the hole in the public finances. Squeezing workers, the unemployed, pensioners and ordinary families further is not only unjust but will also cause the economy to contract even more and lead to worse problems in the coming months.

Cutbacks target the most vulnerable

The pupils and staff of Rutland St Primary School have finally moved into their new building. **People Before Profit** welcome the new school, a hugely valuable resource to the children and parents of the North East Inner City. However, the savage cuts in education will cancel out the gain to the community. Cuts in the free school books scheme, special needs, language support, home school liaison teacher numbers and the school completion programme hit children from disadvantaged areas hardest.

Fight-back

The work that schools, parents and communities have put in fighting for an equal chance for all children is being undermined. This is unacceptable and it can and must be reversed. Why should our children's education suffer to pay for a crisis created by greedy bankers and developers? The massive education march on 6 December, which saw over 70,000 people on the streets and the pensioners' protests before that, resulted in the Government backing down. This shows how we can fight the cutbacks and win.

Community projects, youth projects and funding for literacy and other adult education programmes have also been hit. With the Government saying they will make double the amount of cuts next year, these vital community services will be hit further. This is despite the fact that funding for them is far too low as it stands. It makes no sense at a time when unemployment is rising and training and up-skilling are more important than ever.

What we think

- **People Before Profit** believes that every child has a right to a decent education at every level. This should not depend on how much a child's parents earn.
- Fund and expand programmes aimed at supporting disadvantaged children
- Provide schools with enough funding to actually run them. Schools should not have to depend on fundraising for basic facilities and resources
- Tax the wealthy and take our natural resources (such as the Corrib Gas Field) back into public ownership to pay for education and other services.

People Before Profit will campaign with you to fight the cuts. Please let us know how they are affecting you locally.

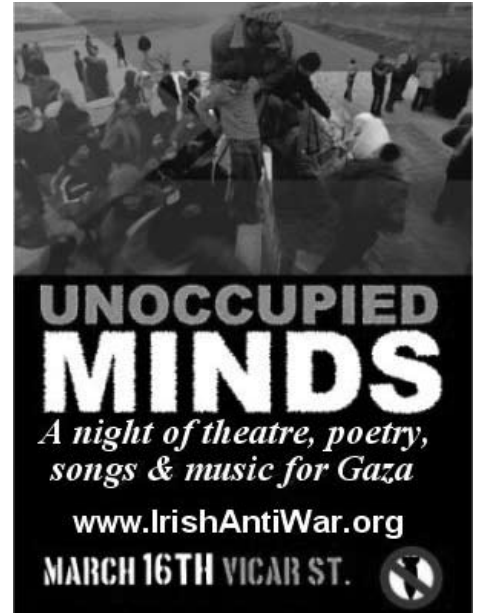
Green bin/bag collection

You will have seen that there is a new company that collects recycling (green bins/bags) since 1 January. The company, Greyhound Recycling, has now got this lucrative contract. Many residents have complained to us that the company was not as quick as its name suggests and has missed collections and failed to distribute green bags where necessary.

What to do if a collection is missed or you need green bags:

- Call Greyhound Recycling on 1890 342 342
- Call the City Council Waste Department 222 1000

Please keep Colm Stephens, PbP, informed of any breakdown of service 087 2947100



People Before Profit

Candidate for the City Council in the North Inner City



Colm Stephens

The **People Before Profit Alliance** has selected Colm Stephens to stand for the City Council in the North Inner City area next June. We want offer a real choice and give the voters an alternative to the failed policies of privatisation and cut-backs. We stand with ordinary people and for their interests – not the interests of big business, bankers and property speculators. All the established parties seem to agree that in the good times the workers needed to be 'restrained' in their pay demands as others made billions. Now in the crisis they say the workers must again bear the brunt. We are different. We recognise that the real cause of our problems is the greed of the profiteers. We will fight with you to make them pay for the crisis, for real sustainable jobs, for education, health and transport services and a decent place to live. Make your voice heard as we fight back together!

Colm is a northsider who lives close to Croke Park and works in Trinity College as an administrator. In 2002, horrified at George Bush's plans to invade Iraq Colm joined the Irish Anti-War Movement and became active in socialist politics.

After the great first-time showing by People Before Profit at the last general election, Colm and others were inspired to start a branch of People Before Profit in Dublin Central with the aim of providing a real alternative to the policies of the Government and the other establishment parties.

Contact Colm at 087 294 7100 or ColmStephens@gmail.com