

# LOOK LEFT

*The Newspaper of The Workers' Party*



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## ANGER ON THE STREETS



On Saturday 21st February 120,000 workers marched through the streets of Dublin. It was the largest industrial protest in this country for over 30 years. So huge were the crowds assembling in Parnell Square that on safety grounds the march had to start 10 minutes early.

The marchers formed an unbroken river of people from Parnell Square, through Dublin city centre and on into Merrion Square. Indeed the speeches had actually finished before the final marchers left Parnell Square.

It was a march that bristled with anger. It was a quiet, deep-seated anger. It was the anger of honest people who have just realised that they have been robbed, cheated, and blamed completely in the wrong.

The reason for the anger is easy to see. Fás, Cervical Cancer smears; cancer disasters; A&E waiting lists; Special Education cuts. Even as the marchers gathered it was revealed that the Anglo Irish golden circle had landed us with another €300 million dodgy debt.

The energy of that massive demonstration must be maintained. Too often in the past workers, like the Good Olde Duke of York, have marched to the top of the hill and then meekly marched back down again.

The time for meekness is over. When we have people like Ulick McEvaddy - friend of Mary Harney and wannabe privatiser of Dublin Airport - proposing that the Anglo Irish 10 are patriots we know the mindset of Irish capitalism. Workers must Unite and Fight for their rights.



# BUS CUTBACKS - THE HEIGHT OF MADNESS



A Bus Queue building up in O'Connell Street Dublin

In a time of recession the demand for public transport always grows - but the government is making CIE cut back on service. They claim that Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann are losing passengers.

However Minister Dempsey has refused to let CIE expand services into high demand areas, he has refused to let most buses use the Dublin Port Tunnel. He has refused to let Dublin Bus put their new buses on routes where private operators are trying to muscle in.

Of course Fianna Fail has a secret agenda to all this. They want to hand over the juicy routes to their private sector friends. And they want to use the recession to force this policy through.

Workers Party representative in Finglas-Ballymun, John Dunne, has highlighted the practical implications of these cutbacks. "There will be 30 fewer buses in the Haristown Garage and 23 fewer buses in Phibsboro Garage.

This means, for example, that the 40 and 40A route serving Finglas; the 13 and 13A route serving Ballymun; and the 19 and 19A running from Jamestown Road right across to Drimnagh and Walkinstown will be directly affected. These services were providing a very good service to the people of Dublin and it will now be cut to ribbons. We completely support the bus workers in their fight to secure their jobs and maintain a decent public transport system for the city"

## **Pensioners Robbed by Insurance Companies**

THEY haven't hit the headlines like the banks - but the insurance companies are equally part of our failing financial services industry.

Most of the major insurance and assurance companies operating in Ireland are owned by the big banks.

Over the last year, these companies have suffered huge losses and the value of their funds has been massively reduced.

Sadly it is ordinary workers and pensioners who will be forced to take the hit - not the bosses or the corporate shareholders.

Two years ago, a 68 year old Look Left reader wanted to cash in his assurance policy with New Ireland Assurance - owned by Bank of Ireland.

The redemption value was then worth just over €68,000.

The company persuaded him not to do this and instead to invest for another two years and they assured him he would be guaranteed a redemption amount of around €88,000.

This man continued paying into his policy at an average of €60 per week - over €6,000 for the two years.

At aged 70 the man went to cash his

policy with New Ireland.

He thought - €68,000 in 2006, plus a further investment of €6,000 should be a minimum return of €74,000 - plus the promised increase in returns.

Wrong, wrong, wrong.

His policy was worth only €57,000 and damn lucky to get it.

You can be sure though, that all the bosses and the agents got their full wages, their full commission and their big bonuses.

Oh - and if the government had got its way last November this man would not even qualify for a medical card.





# Families suffering in a living hell

Empty local authority flats on the northside of Cork have become a magnet for Anti-Social Behaviour and local Workers' Party representative Jackie Connolly is demanding that something be done about it immediately.

The flats in question are on Sprigg's Road in Gurrabraher where only three flats in the entire block of 24 are occupied. As a result the empty homes have attracted gangs hanging around at night which has made life unbearable for the remaining few families.

"These families are having their lives turned upside down by the situation and I am calling on Cork City Council to transfer them to suitable alternative accommodation for their own safety, before someone is burned to death in one of these flats.

"These people were promised that this block would be refurbished but the money for this has still not been granted and in the present economic climate is unlikely to come on-stream for some time.

"My argument is that if the City Council did get the money the families would have to be re-housed anyway while the work took place, so why not move them out now?" said Jackie Connolly.

It was an incredible sight. One hundred and twenty thousand workers marching through the streets of Dublin. There were workers there from every sector of the economy. Members of the Gardai marched beside workers from Waterford Crystal. Civil servants marched beside building workers. Teachers marched beside workers from SR Technics. At this time it is vital that workers remain united and do not let the employers divide them.

In the retail sector families are being hit on all sides also. The price of crude oil has dropped by 66% but petrol has only dropped by 15%. Multinational stores refuse to pass on the sterling differential to customers thereby putting jobs at risk. Car makers are also refusing to pass on the sterling difference

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

All workers are under attack. The government has chopped the wages of all its workers through the so-called pensions levy. Tom Parlon and big builders want to chop 10% off the wages of construction wages. Mark Fielding and ISME want to abolish the minimum wage for those working at the lowest levels of the economy. The list goes on.

on new cars to Ireland.

Workers - whether presently in a job or unemployed - have only two choices. We can all stand together to fight for our rights and ensure that those who robbed us blind during the Celtic Tiger years now pay their fair share to society. The other option is that workers divide into different factions of sector versus sector and industry versus industry. This would be a recipe for disaster. We should remember the advice: **United we stand Divided we fall.**

# Join the Workers Party

"As long as class differences continue to exist there will be a struggle of the ruled against the rulers and the Workers' Party will represent the class standpoint without compromise, no matter how long it may take".

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# *The Sad Case of the Scrooge Board and the Grave Robbers*

By Frank Hayes

Ten years ago an elderly Dublin man was admitted to St James' Hospital. His family had shared a nightly care roster, but he was now very unsteady on his feet and his sight was deteriorating. Two operations in two years, a predictably slow recovery at age 80, his general health was becoming poor.

Then social workers told his shocked family he must leave hospital at the end of the week. His condition was due to old age but they could offer no Eastern Health Board (EHB) nursing home place for him.

Now needing 24-hour care, and aware his family had to work, the social workers agreed he could no longer live on his own but still gave an ultimatum he must leave St James'.

Faced with no choice his family

found a private nursing home which, at €1,400 per month, quickly ate into his life savings. He was very distressed by his loss of independence and his hard-earned nest egg. And he didn't even like the private Home. So his family kept up the pressure on the EHB.

It took two years before he was given EHB hospice care near his family and old home. But at least he could spend his last months in a happier environment.

The story is as distressing as it is disgraceful, but that's not the end. Following a court ruling, the Government were forced to set up a redress board to refund money wrongly taken from the elderly and others forced to fund their own medical care and rehabilitation.

Through his estate, application was made to recoup the care costs. But

word came back - only costs incurred in the EHB facility would be refunded. This would be a small fraction of the total care costs. Not a cent of the private expenses would be covered.

Bear in mind he was forced into private care by the EHB in the first place. Plainly unjust, and in conflict of the stated objective of righting a wrong to thousands of elderly people, what could be done? The family of this unfortunate man had the courage and conviction to appeal the decision of the Scrooge bureaucrats.

Recently this appeal was rejected. They have bravely chosen to fight on to vindicate their father's rights. But how many others face a similar struggle as the establishment robs graves to give money to bankers. We will report on future progress on this issue.

## *Ruthless International Oil Companies Are Robbing Us Blind*

INTERNATIONAL oil giants are ripping off pensioners through blatant profiteering, according to Andrew McGuinness, Workers' Party representative in Ballyfermot-Drimnagh.

Mr McGuinness claims oil companies have been deliberately exploiting the elderly by fixing their prices.

"For the last year, both motorists and householders have had to endure massive inflation in fuel prices.

Naturally their anger has been vented on both the retailer and at the producer countries.

"However it is now clearly demonstrated that the real culprit all along has been the cartel of international oil companies," he said.

Mr McGuinness said BP Oil announced a staggering 148% increase in quarterly profits last autumn.

"On an annualised basis that is over 600% increase in profits.

"In the three months of July, August and September - traditionally low demand months for oil - their profits were \$10 billion (€8 Bn).

"All of the other international oil giants also announced similar record profits. It is interesting to note that the chairman of BP is a certain Peter Sutherland - one of the most strident voices in favour of the discredited Lisbon Treaty".

"These obscene profits were made last year when motorists were fleeced for €1.30 per litre of petrol; when families and old people particularly could not afford home heating oil, and when industry is collapsing across the country."

He claimed the multinationals recklessly drove up inflation at a time when the economy was suffering.

"These oil companies have ripped us off with impunity and have

pushed up inflation when the economy is on the brink of recession.

"This once again shows that these companies' loyalty is always to the bottom line.

"The oil companies made a big song and dance about bringing down the price of petrol and diesel at the beginning of this year. But over the last six weeks they have sneaked the price back up by about 12 cent per litre even though the global price for oil is at an all-time low

"There must be greater controls on the oil companies both at national and international level. They must not be able to hold countries to ransom and inflict hardship on ordinary people through their gross and obscene profiteering.

"It is time to rein in the oil companies at home and abroad", said Andrew McGuinness.



# Special Education Cuts - Hurting the weakest children in society

By Mick Crowley - Cork North West

The Dept of Education has announced that 128 special class teachers covering 119 schools will be lost on the 31st August this year. 80 of those schools are in disadvantaged areas.



Mick Crowley

This decision has been taken, says the Minister, due to dropping numbers. This is a blatant lie.

The special classes in question cater for children with mild general learning disability. MGLD is diagnosed by way of psychological assessment and children given this diagnosis fall within the 'extremely low' range of learning ability. The term 'mild general learning disability' masks its seriousness.

The Americans refuse to adopt the term for this very reason.

A Department of Education Circular in 2005 stated that children with MGLD should fall within the schools' general allocation model for dealing with special needs. Prior to 2005 those same children qualified for 2.5 special resource hours per week each. A school with 10 such children was entitled to a full teaching post to support the needs of this particular group.

Most schools operate a system whereby special class children are integrated into mainstream. The special class system allows for children to be withdrawn for periods dictated by their individual needs. This is not possible under the General Allocation system.

While schools have been at pains to integrate children from the special class the Dept of Education and Science has refused to allow the children enrol on the mainstream roll. Why? Because the capitation grant for children on the special class roll is much higher than that of the mainstream class child. Now the Dept will save on teachers' salaries and the capitation grant for the children will also be greatly reduced. This will have a knock-on effect on school funding particularly since most of the schools are located in low socio-economic areas. Those are the very schools which in the past opened their doors to children with special needs when other schools in the locality refused to do so.

The Dept is acting now, not because of dropping numbers but

- (i) A long awaited opportunity has presented itself and
- (ii) It is a cost saving exercise

**In defending these cutbacks Minister O'Keefe has made a number of statements which show he does not understand primary education.**

For example: *"The pupils would now be taught by mainstream teachers in regular classes"*.

At present most special-class children are integrated into mainstream classes, and taught by mainstream teachers. The children are withdrawn to the special class for periods dictated by their individual needs.

For example: *"When the children are moved to mainstream classes they will still have Special Needs Assistants"*.

This makes absolutely no sense. The Dept of Education Special Education Needs Organisers (SENOs) insist that SNAs can only cater for the CARE NEEDS of children. They insist that the SNAs **cannot become involved in the Learning Needs of children**. This is being enforced very strictly and is one of the crucial issues which has led to the recent audit of the SNA system.

For example: *The minister talks about access to Support and Resource teachers.*

Department of Education regulations (Circular 02/05) took away the entitlement of children with Mild General Learning Disability to Resource Hours. This means that children coming from those special classes will now be catered for by the "general allocation" system. This is the situation that already exists in schools that don't have special classes - and it has proven disastrous.

Due to the extent of the learning difficulties of this group of children it will put enormous pressure on the general allocation system - resulting in children already in the system having their time reduced or taken from them completely. Children will possibly cope so poorly with the new arrangement that they will have no choice but to enroll in Special Schools. Is this the agenda? So much for integration!



If the Minister is looking for areas to cut he should start with the €100 million of tax payers' money he spends on private fee-paying schools. These schools are where the sons of the bankers and building speculators - many of whom pay no tax - get educated at our expense.

It is grossly unfair to target those children least able to fight back and on whom the effects of this decisions will have hugely detrimental consequences in the future.



# Empty Homes Waste Money

Jackie Connolly, the Workers' Party representative in the Cork North Central local election area, has been in contact with the City Council with a proposal to allow people on the Social Housing waiting list to move into vacant units that are suitable for immediate accommodation but that might need minor works on the basis that the tenants will complete these works themselves

"Here is my proposal that you may consider in the near future.

The council and potential tenants sign a legal document that they (the possible tenant) accept the house in a reasonable enough condition.

- \* Tenants would paint the inside of the house, walls doors, ceilings etc.
- \* Tenants would, if they wish, keep the current fitted kitchen, bathroom, wardrobes etc.



Jackie Connolly - Cork North Central  
"With a bit of imagination the Housing List can be greatly reduced in the short term"

- \* Tenants would paint the exterior of the house.
- \* Tenants would also take on any minor plastering jobs.

The city council would do the following, only if needed.

- \* Ensure that the property is structurally sound.
- \* Replace windows and front door.
- \* Undertake any rewiring.
- \* Undertake any heavy-duty works that may bring about excessive cost or labour to the tenant.

All of the above can be negotiated between the housing dept, and tenant.

In her proposal to the City Council Jackie Connolly states: "This proposal would, I feel, have at least three key benefits to the housing department.

- \* Reduce the housing list more swiftly
- \* Reduce capital spending on vandalised houses
- \* Bring in revenue at an earlier date.

Jackie Connolly said that with over 5,000 people on Cork City Council's social housing waiting list it was ridiculous that hundreds of local authority homes continue to lie idle because the council doesn't currently have the funds to prepare them for letting to tenants.

# A Shopping Centre Without Any Shops

"Despite ten years of constant construction and development the Ballymun area still has no town centre" said John Dunne. The original master plan, published approximately twelve years ago, showed a town centre comprising 70 shops, apartments, cinema, and other services and facilities.

Treasury Holdings are the main property group in this project and they operate what is left of the old shopping centre. This is a shopping centre without shops. Tesco operate a limited supermarket in Ballymun but the rest of the shops have all been closed down. "I believe that what is needed is a big



John Dunne

push to get this project back on track" said John Dunne (above), local election candidate for the Workers Party in the Ballymun / Finglas ward.

The City Council and BRL need to move this project on very soon. People who have moved into new housing over six years ago have a worse infrastructure than when they first moved into their new homes. The leisure centre is finally operating properly and I have campaigned to get that back into public ownership where it should have been in the first place.

The lack of a proper shopping and town centre is seriously affecting the entire regeneration project. If I am elected to the City Council next June I will devote every effort to ensure the Shopping Centre finally gets moving.



# Defend Democracy No Means No

Taoiseach Brian Cowen and his cabinet were like rabbits caught in the headlights of the Lisbon Treaty. The Brussels bosses demanded they surrender, but the Irish people had voted overwhelmingly for democracy. In typically cowardly fashion Cowen and company surrendered.

October is the date pencilled in for this undemocratic referendum, even though different ministers are flying all sorts of kites to confuse the issue.

It is now over eight months since the referendum on the Treaty was held.

In an historic decision, the proposal to adopt the treaty was defeated on a 54% to 46% margin - after a higher than expected turnout of over 53%.

The Irish vote has caused turmoil in EU political circles and among the European bureaucrats.

The EU elite is still firmly dedicated to the Lisbon Treaty project - but how to circumvent the decision of the Irish people? The simplest solution from the EU elite point of view would be to rerun the referendum.

But unlike the second referendum on the Nice Treaty, they are not guaranteed victory in a rerun.

First a second referendum would show contempt for the democratic decision of the Irish people.

Second the original referendum had a very high turnout, and a very clear margin of victory for No side.

Third, the increasing unpopularity of the government, and the lack of any decent selling point for the Yes side all mean a second referendum will still meet stiff opposition by the voters.

Cowen was desperately searching for a solution which would keep Brussels happy while not making him any more unpopular at home.

He commissioned public opinion polls; held expensive seminars; set up special Oireachtas committees - all in an effort to wriggle free of the democratic decision of the people.

His newest tactic is to claim that our present economic crisis is a result of our failure to ratify Lisbon.

In bogman's language that Mr Cowen might understand, that is a load of rubbish. It is the slavish following of the EU model of free market capitalism that got us into the mess we are in. Cowen seems to think that more of the diet that made us sick will make us better.

We are angry that our democracy is being cast aside and we know that the Irish people object to our hard won right to self-determination being cast aside by the Brussels bureaucracy.

## CULLEN MUST COME CLEAN ON LOTTERY SPORTS MONEY

The Workers' Party has called on Waterford TD Martin Cullen, the Minister for Sports, to "come clean" and explain what will happen to National Lottery money that would be normally allocated to clubs under the Sports Capital Programme.

Ballybeg based Workers' Party representative Willie Moore, who is actively involved in training young soccer players, said that it was one thing for the Minister to announce cutbacks in his Department, but another thing entirely for him to withdraw lottery funding which is specifically designated for funding sporting activity.

"The money allocated to clubs under the Sports Capital Grants scheme is a vital lifeline for hundreds of small clubs around the country and allows them to provide facilities for young people which couldn't possibly be provided by parents and supporters", said Mr. Moore.

"These clubs do a huge amount of work with young people, nurturing them and getting them interested in sports. They are great asset to local communities and give young people an outlet for their energy and an alternative to hanging out around estates. In these difficult financial times with growing unemployment and cutbacks in education, there is a greater need than ever for such clubs".

"Minister Cullen well knows the effort that goes into tackling the causes of anti social behaviour and the value of sport and leisure in this area. I am appalled that he could stand over such a petty cut which will save the government pennies when compared to the amount they have wasted in shoring up the banks and speculators. I am really concerned as to why the Lottery element - at the very least - could not be paid. I call on Minister Cullen to give a full statement as to what will now be done with this Lottery funding", said Willie Moore.



The Workers Party is very clear. The Irish people have spoken. NO means NO.



# Workers Party Launches Alternative Economic Policy

"Unemployment is now hitting 300,000. In another 12 months it could be 400,000.

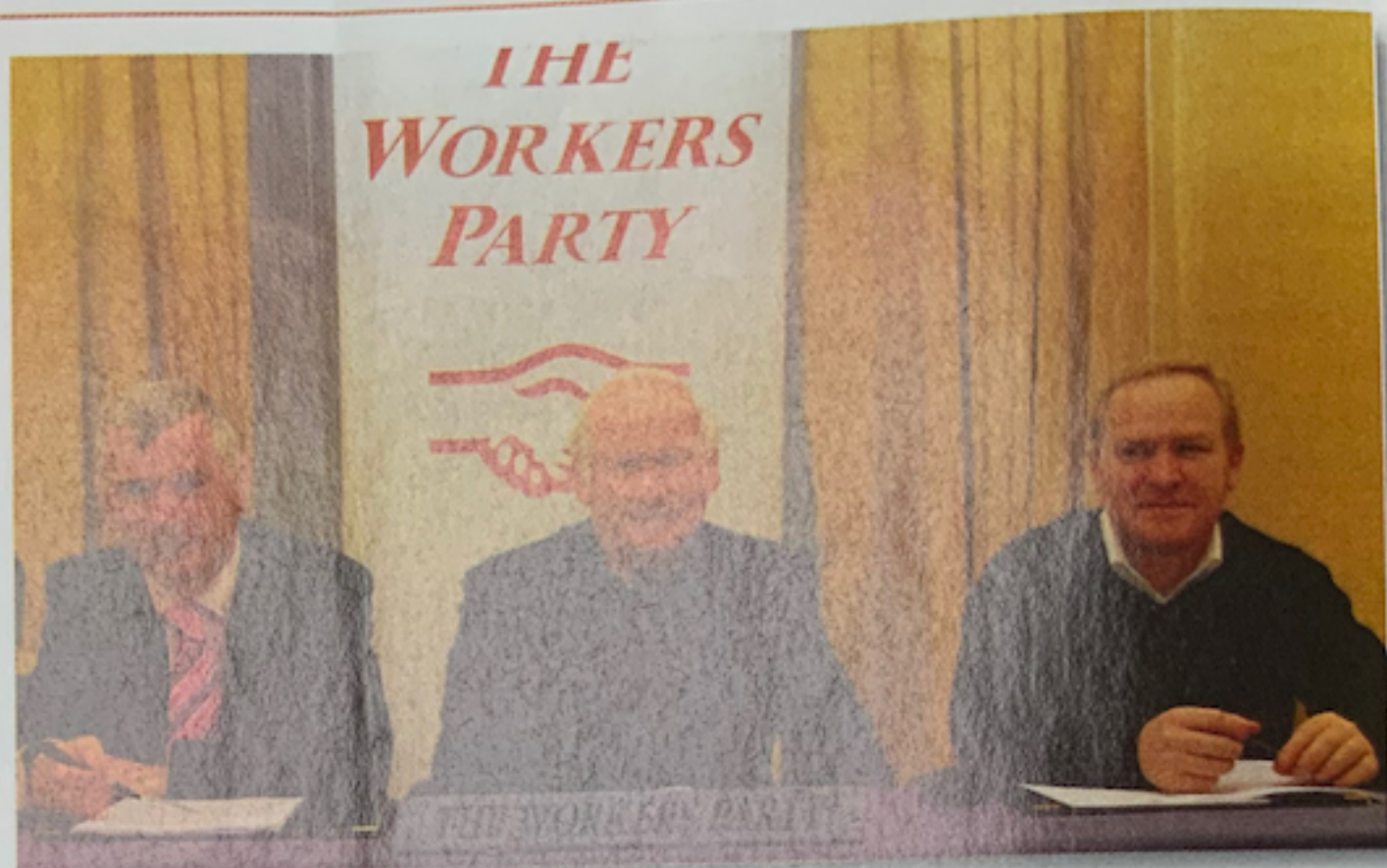
The quality of life for families throughout the state lies in tatters. Thousands of families face losing their homes by being unable to pay their mortgages, while thousands more on local authority housing lists see no end in sight to their accommodation crisis" said Michael Finnegan when he launched a new economic policy document.

"So far the only solution that the government or the opposition have put forward has been to cut wages and pensions in the public and private sector. The working class are to be made pay for the greed of the bankers, speculators and builders. It was not workers who benefited from the billions made by the banks over the last decade. It was not workers who benefited from the immoral profits made on land zoned for development, nor was it workers who drove the cost of housing to absurd levels greater than anywhere else in the developed world".

"Despite the mounting crisis affecting the country, the Workers Party is confident that thousands of jobs can be created by investing in Ireland's badly needed infrastructure - we need thousands of social houses, an immediate school building programme, and remedial work needs to be carried out on many of our existing schools".

**The main points of our programme are:**

- Job creation by investment in social infrastructure, funded on a mortgage basis against the national pension reserve fund



Launching "The Economic Crisis - A Socialist solution" were Malachy Steenson (Dublin North Inner City), Party President Michael Finnegan (Lucan) and Andrew McGuinness (Ballyfermot-Drimnagh)

- Job creation by upgrading heating and insulation levels in existing houses, resulting in savings to both families and to the state
- A meaningful programme of training and skills development for all workers who lose employment
- No wage cuts in the public or private sector
- No cutback on workers' pensions and legislation to protect workers pensions and entitlements
- No Privatisation of public assets or utilities
- Nationalisation of AIB and BOI and the development of a genuine state bank
- Full pursuit of corporate clients of Anglo and other banks for the full value of their loans
- Transfer of ownership of collateral seized in lieu of loans to the main shareholder - the State - for long-term national development
- Total rejection of the concept of a state-owned "toxic bank"
- Broadening of the tax base by ending the myriad of tax avoidance schemes, ranging from Section 23 to stud farms
- A new tax band for the super rich - All income above three (3) times the average industrial wage subject to a tax rate of 50%
- The 6,000 tax exiles (or tax fugitives as Irish Times columnist Fintan O'Toole has named them) to be made pay their tax to the Irish Revenue Commissioners

**We believe it is important that, as in any situation, a clear analysis of the mistakes that were made in the past is necessary before a worthwhile prescription for the future can be put in place.**

**We do not accept the jargon from the bankers and speculators that we draw a veil over the past. Those who created the crisis cannot pretend to reinvent themselves as our saviours.**

**Those who have evaded tax for too long must now be made to pay their fair share.**



# Banks - Nationalise Them Immediately

Last year 54 people went to jail for not paying TV licences. So far not one banker has ended up in jail.

"The government banks policy is wrong. It is a waste of money, a waste of time, and a wasted opportunity" stated the Workers Party.

Everybody whose pension fund or life savings were invested in bank shares faces disaster. Shares that were worth €100 two years ago are now barely worth €2.

So far the banks themselves are the only real winners. Six months ago they were given a state guarantee for all their deposits and all the borrowing they had undertaken. The full value of this guarantee is estimated at €400 billion. Last month they were given €7 billion in actual cash.



**Brian Goggins, CEO of Bank of Ireland - whinging that he would only earn €2 million this year.**

If the big banks do go belly up and the state has to refund their debts then it will work out at €100,000 for every person in this state.

We demand that no further aid is given to private banks. Commercial banks should be nationalised immediately. The existing Boards of Directors and senior executives should be removed.

All bank Directors who are also directors of any State Board, or State Committee should be dumped off immediately.

Senior bankers must move into the real world and accept realistic wages. If they don't like the new regime there is no shortage of bank workers to take their jobs. In the last 12 months 1,500,000 bank workers lost their jobs internationally.

The behaviour of the banks and the senior bankers is costing Ireland in every aspect of life. Bank policy forced up the price of houses for families. Bank policy is now forcing viable businesses into liquidation. Bank dishonesty has destroyed Ireland's credit rating and we are all paying the difference in our taxes.

## **A Possible Silver Lining**

A small cabal of speculators and developers owe billions to the banks. It is quite likely that one or more of this cabal will default on these loans. If this happens then the property that has been used as security should not be sold off in a rushed fire-sale. Instead the state - as the bank shareholder - should take ownership of these properties.

This property portfolio would be a major benefit to the state and community for many years. It would give the state sites for schools, community centres, health centres and social housing right around the country.

As many of the loans are secured against various office blocks then the state would have free office accommodation instead of having to pay exorbitant commercial rent.

## **Nationalise the Banks Now**



Anglo Irish Bank was the success story of the Celtic Tiger. It had emerged from nowhere and was outperforming the opposition both national and international.

It was too good to be true. Now we know it wasn't true. The books were cooked. Anglo Irish was a shyster bank. It was run by shysters for shysters and now the bubble has burst.

After twenty years of privatising every public asset it could flog to its friends the government was forced to nationalise Anglo Irish Bank.

Anglo Irish should not have been nationalised. It should have been let collapse. It was of no significance to the Irish economy. It was only important to a small gang of speculators, developers, and get-rich-quick artists.

Anglo Irish has cost Ireland dearly. Those who broke the law should be prosecuted. Those who owe millions should be followed for every last cent - just as you or I would be.



# Waterford Crystal: Don't let it die

As we go to print KPS Capital Partners, a New York based investment company, has signed a deal with the Deloitte, the official receiver of the Waterford Wedgwood group of companies.

Cllr Davy Walsh of the Workers Party has stated that the deal could mark a major step forward but, as ever, the devil will be in the detail.

"In the first instance" commented Cllr Walsh "I would like to wholeheartedly praise the Unite Union and the workers and their supporters who occupied the plant and kept the furnace blazing. If that occupation had not happened then Waterford Crystal would have turned into one big building site."

"However the Unite trade union has declared that certain crucial issues must be agreed up front before this deal can go ahead. These issues are:

- Maintaining the maximum number of jobs in Waterford;
- Securing the brand name of "Waterford Crystal" for Waterford;
- Maintaining an active manufacturing facility in Kilbarry;
- A proper redundancy deal for all those workers losing their jobs; and
- Securing the pension fund for all present and future workers" said Davy.

"The National Implementation Board must be brought in to tie up this deal".

"Waterford Crystal has shown over many decades, in good times as well as bad, that it is a strong and resilient brand. Reborn after the Second World War, it has survived depressions and recessions. In recent years it has been dragged down by the consistent loss-making of the ceramics division of Waterford Wedgwood and by frankly bad management practices.

Cllr Davy Walsh and the Workers' Party have called on the government to put at least as much effort into saving Waterford Crystal as was put into shoring up the banks. "Bankers can get €8 billion but the workers here cannot even get the pensions for which they paid all their working lives" added Davy Walsh.

Councillor Davy Walsh said his party fully supported the position adopted by the UNITE trade union and believed that glass production in Waterford is still viable. "Waterford Crystal does have a future and every effort to save it. The alternative does not bear thinking about", said Councillor Walsh.

"The loss of Waterford Crystal would be a severe blow for the region, both in terms of jobs, downstream employment, tourism and the prestige of the city and county of Waterford. The Government and the receiver can deliver a good deal. If they do not then the fight will continue and we will support that fight".



We can be sure that "Sir" Anthony O'Reilly's pension is secure

Look Left

## Government won't let ESB drop prices

Electricity prices are too high. This affects everybody. The ESB is by far the largest electricity supplier in the country so we all blame the ESB. Even the government has got in on the act.

But the ESB is not actually to blame for this mess. And for once the banks are not to blame either. In fact the real culprit is the government, and specifically Green Party TD Eamon Ryan, Minister for Energy.

The long-term aim of the FF/Green Party coalition is to privatise the ESB. However they cannot do this at the present time. So Minister Ryan's buzz-word is that he wants to "encourage competition in the marketplace".



So what strategy has Minister Ryan (above) to encourage competition? Simple. He has introduced regulations and a "regulator" which forces the ESB to charge artificially high prices. This will allow other companies to sneak in and undercut this artificial price and get a foothold in the market. Of course it also gives the ESB a bad name amongst the public. Therefore, in a few years, when the government wants to sell off the ESB to their friends for a knockdown price they hope there will be no public outcry.

Up to ten years ago the ESB produced some of the cheapest electricity in Europe. However due to the government regulations, as implemented by Minister Ryan, our electricity prices are amongst the highest in Europe. Minister Ryan and his party should be ashamed of themselves.



# DDDA - Dublin's Dodgy Development Authority

Late last year the Workers' Party in Dublin Central called for a public inquiry into the Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA) and its links to big business and also to the Corrupt banking institution known as Anglo Irish Bank also known as Fianna Fáil Bank which has now been bailed out with billions of Euros in taxes paid by ordinary working people.

As the days go by and the drip feed of scandal continues it is imperative that these matters are looked into and dealt with, and they must be dealt with through the criminal law process and not through the establishment of another Toothless Tribunal.

The DDDA was set up to develop the Docklands area of Dublin and to create a vibrant area where local people would find jobs and homes following years of neglect. Sure there has been a transformation in the landscape, but no real change for ordinary working people. Flat complexes were knocked down and new homes built supposedly to create a better area for residents, but really to make way for huge office and apartment complexes. The DDDA began as a local authority for the area but ended up as an extension of Anglo Irish Bank.

**The Board of both Anglo and the DDDA contained virtually the same people.** Sean FitzPatrick, Lar Bradshaw and Donal O'Connor, who did not see any conflict of interest in approving projects through the DDDA for the clients of Anglo and then funding them through Anglo making massive profits for the Bank, and also racking up huge arrangement fees. O'Connor now as head of Anglo, (in whom Lenihan stated he has the utmost confidence), has suddenly found a "possible conflict" in the two roles. Odd he didn't see it when he joined the Board of Anglo in 2005 whilst on the Board of DDDA. We will of course overlook the fact that O'Connor was a senior partner in accountancy firm PricewaterhouseCoopers, yes the authors of the report into Anglo that Brian Lenihan didn't get to read.

Local Fianna Fáil reps recently stated that "sure haven't we got a college in the Docklands", but again all is not as it seems. The National College of Ireland is a private college and is not part of the CAO. It is simply the College of Industrial Relations moved from Ranelagh. It's probably entirely coincidental that its head, Joyce O'Connor, is a sister of Sean FitzPatrick. Whilst this was a year before FitzPatrick joined the DDDA board, his buddy Bradshaw was Chairman. Naturally the project was funded by Anglo, and just to make the cake go round, during its construction ARUP Consulting were the engineers and earned around €400k. Purely coincidental that a director of ARUP also sits on the Board of the DDDA.



**Malachy Steenson - Dublin Central**  
"The DDDA has moved from being a body for community regeneration to a vehicle for Anglo Irish Bank building speculation"

One of the roles of the DDDA is to bypass the usual City Council planning process and give out planning permissions. It would seem that to get planning the only criteria is that you are a client of Anglo, or so Liam Carroll thought when he got permission for a multi million euro development. This was to include the National Convention Centre, and also the new headquarters for Anglo, and surprise, surprise funding was coming from Anglo. This project was stopped in its tracks by Sean

Dunne, who was out of the loop on this one - he issued High Court proceedings which were eventually settled with Liam Carroll losing his planning permission. He is now believed to be in the process of suing the DDDA for €30m.

The biggest mess of all must be the Glass Bottle site in Ringsend which was bought for around €411m by a consortium consisting of the DDDA, Bernard McNamara, and Derek Quinlan. This is the same McNamara who abandoned the re-development of Dominick Street under a PPP, because he wasn't making enough money. To help him out Fianna Fáil gave him the €400m Thornton Hall contract. [Again the Ringsend money was lent by Anglo. Now apparently the DDDA has stopped paying the interest on this loan - no real point I suppose now that their buddies are gone and the interest is due to the taxpayer]. The Standards in Public Office Commission (SIPO) investigated this transaction and found nothing wrong.

Meanwhile Angela Cavendish, a Director of the DDDA, is also on the Board of Chateaubriand Properties who are a major client of Anglo. Grainne Hollywood, Director of Property for the DDDA worked for Treasury Holdings, the developers of the Spencer Dock who have many close links with Anglo and the DDDA. Former DDDA board member Joan O'Connor managed the building of the Westin Hotel for Treasury through her company Interactive Project Managers.

What is often forgotten in this quagmire of sleaze is that the Board is governed by the Docklands Council. This body has one senior Council official, five local councillors and four inner city community representatives. They have all been very silent. If they are not up to the job they should do the honourable thing and resign.

And finally not to be outdone by FÁS the DDDA spent half a million Euro on foreign travel.

Of course the common factor in all of this is Fianna Fáil.



## Iraq - Six Years of Slaughter

It is now six years since the illegal Bush / Blair invasion of Iraq. It was a war the Neo-Cons had been planning for many years and it demonstrated both their power and their stupidity. Every shred of "justification" for the invasion was unbelievable at the time and has since been shown to have been forged and concocted.

It has been a most terrible and bloody 6 years. Over 4,000 US/UK soldiers have been killed in Iraq with thousands more maimed and injured. There is no accurate figure for the number of Iraqi civilians killed but reliable sources estimate about 1,000,000.



The Bush-Blair legacy - Six years of slaughter

The new Obama regime has promised to end the scandal of Guantanamo Bay internment camp and end the US invasion of Iraq. There will be huge forces ranged against him including the major armaments manufactures and also companies like Haliburton who have creamed off billions of dollars in profits from the US Treasury. For the sake of humanity let us hope that Obama lives up to his word and ends this illegal and immoral war.

## Unemployment Crisis Getting Worse Daily

Michael Donnelly, Workers Party representative in Galway said that this month's jobless figures - which show another huge rise in unemployment - indicate that the country is quickly approaching an unprecedented state of mass unemployment and that the government's job creation and protection strategy was a shambles.

Mr Donnelly said it now seems very possible that unemployment will reach half a million within 12 months, leaving an even smaller pool of taxpayers who are expected to shore up the banks and sustain the country without any sacrifices on the part of the business community and a continued failure to tax the wealthiest people in this country.

"We must distinguish" said Michael Donnelly "between those firms who are in genuine trouble because of the present crisis and those who are using the crisis as a means to move to low wage economies. We can all understand when firms in the construction, tourist or financial services closes down or cuts back on staff numbers. However other companies are merely milking the crisis for their own profit.

"High profile closedowns like Dell in Limerick, or SR Technics at the airport or Ericsson in South Dublin are just moving to pastures new. They have milked the IDA and the Irish taxpayer for twenty years and now they are going to try the same stunt in Poland or China or India.

"Sustainable jobs are more important to this country right now than shoring up banks which have gambled themselves into insolvency. Going down the road of further privatisation, or relying on the crumbs from the multinational companies will not create jobs.

"At this time only the state itself, and specific state agencies can create the jobs to ride out this crisis".

## Another €1 billion HSE Massacre

The HSE is cutting another billion Euro from the health budget. This is the follow-up to the half billion cut-back in January.

Peter Short, (Louth) has stated "these cutbacks will be a complete disaster for every hospital in this country. It means that hospitals in places like Nenagh, Ennis, Ballinasloe, Dundalk and Monaghan will be effectively strangled of cash and be forced into becoming glorified day clinics.



Peter Short

"Harney and Drumm should do the only decent thing and resign"

"The HSE is a bureaucratic disaster. Drumm, Harney and their top advisors get over €2 million per year. They spent €51 million on spin doctors. Mary Harney has just given consultants a huge increase.

"For ten years Harney's agenda to destroy our public health service has been clear. She has done everything in her power to privatise our health system. Even as her days in power are numbered she continues this evil quest".



# ALL-OUT EFFORT NEEDED TO SAVE ST. PATRICK'S HOSPITAL - SAYS TOBIN

The Workers' Party have called for an all-out effort by the people of Waterford to save St. Patrick's Hospital, regardless of whether they or anyone they know currently requires its services.

Workers' Party representative Joe Tobin said that there was a concerted campaign spearheaded by Health Minister Mary Harney to close down St. Patrick's Hospital. The closure of St. Brigid's ward on trumped up Health & Safety grounds was a preemptive strike on the part of the Minister and the HSE to kill the hospital off.

Mr. Tobin said that people were rightly outraged with recent developments which had seen a massive bailout of the banks, widespread job losses and an attack by government on the income of workers and pensioners and public sector workers. At the same time there had been swingeing cut-backs in services such as those for children with special needs and a withdrawal of funding for local community sports facilities. "The closure or downgrading of St. Patrick's Hospital is a bridge too far for the people of Waterford and they won't allow it".

He said that the Health & Safety argument was a red herring and was a matter which could and was being addressed at no cost to the HSE. The hospital has passed a Health & Safety inspection and there is just one remaining issue outstanding which is the requirement for a special large fire blanket which will cost €40,000. This is being purchased by the Friends of St. Patrick's at no expense to the HSE.

"Having failed to undermine the case for keeping St. Patrick's open, the HSE's next ploy was to close St. Brigid's ward on the basis of a proposed new 50 bed unit for which plan-

ning permission hasn't even been sought yet. This is merely an illusion produced by the HSE to fob people off. Indeed Mary Harney has made it clear that there are no funds for such a unit" said Joe Tobin, who said the people of Waterford should "hold what we have" and make a stand for St. Patrick's.

pressure on local government representatives and give them a very clear message that the people of Waterford will not accept this attack on our already under-resourced health service in this region." said Joe Tobin.

The Workers' Party spokesman completely rejected any idea that closing St. Patrick's would cut costs.



Councillor Davy Walsh, Joe Tobin and Willie Moore join the picket by staff and supporters to save St. Patrick's Hospital, Waterford

"We must come out and stand shoulder to shoulder with the staff at St. Patrick's who are not only fighting for their jobs but to ensure that this vitally important hospital stays open. I would call on people to come out whenever they can and join the workers and supporters of the hospital on the picket line. They should also put

"If this is about cost cutting then the first step for the HSE should be to cut the bloated salary of Professor Brendan Drumm who is on €360,000 per annum, his advisors who also earn a small fortune, and Mary Harney herself who gets over €4,000 a week for doing what I don't know except wrecking our health service."

AVAILABLE FROM WORKERS' PARTY HEAD OFFICE

### Mounted Hand Sketches of:

*James Connolly, Cathal Goulding, Che Guevara*

Plus many other famous Irish revolutionaries  
and giants of Irish literature

Price including postage: €45 per sketch



# Huge Winter Gas Bills Hurting Families

Cork Workers' Party chairman Ted Tynan has said that huge gas bills are causing immense hardship for elderly people and others on low incomes as the winter cold intensifies and warned that old people could die as a result.

Mr. Tynan said that many householders had been hit by gas bills running into five or six hundred or more Euro and that people were going without proper heating because they could not afford this cost.

"Householders have been told that gas prices have not come down because Bord Gáis purchased gas supplies early in 2008 when prices were at an all time high because of their linkage to the price of oil. Now that oil has dramatically come back down in price the gas prices have not followed suit and through no fault of their own customers are receiving huge gas bills", said the Workers Party spokesman.

"At this time with temperatures at or below zero for much of the time elderly people in particular are very vulnerable to the cold and can die from hypothermia if they don't get enough heat. They should not have to suffer because Bord Gáis got it wrong and bought in gas when its price had rocketed".

"This is a very real crisis for older people and the government has to bear major responsibility. It has handed our own future natural gas supplies over to multinational oil companies such as the granting of the Corrib gas field to the likes of Shell. The present government sees no problem in throwing money like confetti at the banks but will leave old people to suffer and perhaps die because of the vastly inflated price of domestic gas. I am now calling on the government to instruct Bord Gáis to drastically reduce the price of gas to the domestic customer".



"We are now told that Bord Gais are moving into the electricity market and they promise to be the cheapest supplier in the country" said Ted Tynan. "Their track record certainly does not inspire confidence. The other possibility is that Bord Gais has been building a war-chest by overcharging in the gas market where they have a virtual monopoly so that they can supply electricity at a loss for two years and thereby steal customers from the ESB. The real question is: what will happen after the first two years?"

## Inequality in US cities rivals Africa - UN

MAJOR US cities including New York, Washington, Atlanta and New Orleans have levels of economic inequality rivalling African cities, according to a recent UN report.

The study found that the most balanced city in the world is Beijing, with the most egalitarian cities on average to be found in western Europe.

According to the report, US cities have relatively lower levels of poverty than many cities in the developed world but their levels of income inequality are extremely high.

In the United States and Canada one of the key factors in determining levels of economic inequality is race, the report said.

"The life expectancy of African Americans in the United States is about the same as that of people living in China and some states of India, despite the fact that the United States is far richer than the other two countries," it said.

"European countries including Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands

and Slovenia were among those with the lowest levels of inequality.

It also found that Hong Kong, the ex-British colony and now a special administrative region of China, has the highest level of inequality of all cities in Asia.

In Latin America, Brazilian cities 'have the greatest disparities in income distribution in the world,' the report said, partly because of Brazil's rising unemployment and declining wages.

The report said that cities in sub-Saharan Africa have the world's highest levels of urban poverty, with more than half of city dwellers living below the poverty line.

The report also said cities in South Africa and Namibia continue to have extremely high levels of inequality.

The present crisis in capitalism, with its huge rise in global unemployment, and a decrease in the price of primary products like oil and copper, will once again worsen inequality throughout the world.



## Palestinians still count the cost of Israel's genocide

As Israelis voted for a new government, Palestinian residents in the Gaza Strip continued to rebuild from the three-week long attack on their territory which killed at least 1,350 people, including more than 400 children, and injured more than 5,500.

Israel's destruction of property and land belonging to Palestinians has been a feature of its occupation since 1967 and is in clear violation of international law. It has also contributed to the steadily deteriorating humanitarian situation in the occupied territories.

The preliminary list of damage to civilian property includes:

- Two thousand and four hundred homes destroyed, and at least 12,000 homes damaged.
- Sixty police stations and 30 mosques completely destroyed.
- Twenty-one private enterprises, including cafeterias, wedding halls and hotels.
- Twenty-eight public civilian facilities, including ministry buildings, municipalities and fishing harbours.
- One hundred and twenty-one industrial/commercial workshops destroyed and at least 200 damaged.
- Five concrete factories and one juice factory destroyed.
- Five media and two health institutions destroyed.
- Nine educational facilities, including schools, damaged or destroyed.
- Thousands of dunums (a dunam is the equivalent of 1,000 square meters) of agricultural land razed to the ground.

In the recent elections Kadima took 28 out of 120 seats in the Knesset, Israel's parliament, with Likud in second place at 27.

Each is now racing to find enough support to form a government. The only difference between them is measured in the level of their determination to destroy the Palestinian people.

## Why I Joined the International Brigades



**Bob Doyle 1916 - 2009**  
**International Brigade Veteran**

I was born in 1916 in the Dublin slums and joined the IRA in my teens. In 1934 I left the IRA to join the Republican Congress set up by Peadar O'Donnell, Frank Ryan and Kit Conway. The time had come to support the fight of tenants against landlords, of workers against anti-union employers, and to take on the Blueshirts in the streets. We were still republican but now we were social revolutionaries too.

Had we stayed in the IRA as it was then, many of these employers and landlords would still have supported us and the IRA's purely nationalist policies. We had to form coalitions with groups who might have differed from us in the past but now shared our campaigns for social justice and fighting the rising tide of fascism.

In 1936 we realised that this struggle was being fought even more brutally elsewhere, especially in Spain. This is what led me and my ex-IRA comrades to join the International Brigades. We were with volunteers from 53 countries who also saw that their fight was the same as the Spanish people's: our slogan was "Bombs on Madrid means bombs on London" and, as I saw for myself, this slogan proved all too true.

With the betrayal of the Spanish Republic by Britain's Tory government and the French and American allies of big business, Hitler, Mussolini and Franco won the war in Spain. Six months later the Second World War began and bombs began to fall on cities everywhere, as they still do today.

Yet despite the Allied victory in 1945, we now find that fascism, raw capitalism, is thriving and using spin doctors instead of racist speeches, while more powerful weapons are being developed supposedly to protect us, and our environment is in crisis. This crisis cannot be solved by capitalism because capitalism is now its cause.

My generation's vision of a world without exploitation, where we live in harmony with our environment, seems as distant as ever, while globalisation, which is the worldwide triumph of money over organised labour, undermines our democracies. The fight today is as vital as it was in Spain, but remember we are fighting for an idea, and though at times we must defend ourselves, guns cannot impose an idea. The four weapons of victory today are: education, organisation, civil disobedience, and unity.

From my lifetime of struggles these are the lessons which I have learned. Take up the fight and let us fight together for the liberation of mankind. La lucha continua. Viva la Republica.

**Speech made by Bob Doyle in Inistioge, Co Kilkenny, on 27th June 2008 at the unveiling of a memorial to fellow International Brigadier, George Brown. Bob Doyle died in London, where he had lived for over 60 years, on January 22nd 2009.**



# Stop the Extradition of Sean Garland



[www.seangarland.org](http://www.seangarland.org)  
[defendseangarland@gmail.com](mailto:defendseangarland@gmail.com)

Sean Garland, former President of The Workers Party and current member of the Party Ard Comhairle, was arrested as he was about to enter the Party Head Office on Mountjoy Square on Friday 30th January 2009. The arrest was carried out by Gardai on foot of an extradition request from the United States of America. We wish to draw your attention to several issues of concern.

The request for extradition was signed by Condoleezza Rice on the 21st November 2008. There is no doubt in our minds that this represents a vindictive act by the outgoing discredited Bush/Cheney administration. At a time of much hope and optimism that the election of Barack Obama heralds a new and more open approach to international relations and human rights standards in particular, one can only conclude that this was only one of probably many attempts by the outgoing administration to frustrate a new beginning by Obama and his team.

Sean's medical wellbeing is a matter of grave concern to us. In October 2005 the Belfast court, in recognition of his ill health, allowed him to return to Dublin to receive urgent medical treatment. His situation has got worse since then. As well as suffering from Insulin Dependent Diabetes and Angina he has developed Cancer since 2005, for which he is receiving continuing treatment. This continuing persecution of a 75 year old man in very poor health is an affront to any sense of humanity.

The Stop The Extradition Of Sean Garland Campaign has launched an Urgent Financial Appeal. We need your help. Bank account details are:  
Defend Sean Garland Fund  
Permanent TSB,  
O'Connell Street, Dublin.  
Sort Code: 99 06 58.  
A/c No 14 53 42 10  
or you can send your contribution directly to:  
Defend Sean Garland Fund,  
12 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1.



Tomás MacGiolla, Former TD and Lord Mayor of Dublin, has launched the following Petition calling for the withdrawal of the United States' demand for the extradition from Ireland to the US of Sean Garland:-

**Text of the Online Petition - Please sign at [www.seangarland.org](http://www.seangarland.org)**

To: Irish and U.S. governments

I / We call on the Irish government to support a call for the withdrawal of the extradition warrant issued by the United States authorities against Sean Garland, former President of the Workers' Party of Ireland.

This extradition request is nothing more than a vindictive act signed by Condoleezza Rice of the outgoing discredited Bush / Cheney regime.

Sincerely,

Hard copies are also available.

## Stop the Extradition of Sean Garland



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