

THE

PUBLISHED IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

UNION POST

FEBRUARY 2013



SAT
FEB
9

JOIN THE
PROTESTS

LIFT THE
BURDEN
JOBS NOT DEBT

IT'S TIME TO
SHOW *OUR*

DUBLIN
CORK
GALWAY
LIMERICK
WATERFORD
SLIGO Assemble
1.30pm
See details **PAGE 3**

STRENGTH

They saved the bondholders - then they sent the bill to us

THE people of Ireland will be on the streets in their tens of thousands on February 9.

They will be marching in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick, Waterford and Sligo.

Contrary to the official line from Strasbourg and Frankfurt, there is very little evidence of European solidarity in action in Ireland right now.

We have been saddled with a €64 billion bank debt burden that eliminates any possibility of economic recovery and guarantees years of continued stagnation.

That debt represents the cost of 'saving' the Irish banks, which collapsed in 2008 and brought down the whole economy.

They operated in a wholly corrupt Eurozone banking system that was rigged to ensure the most reckless senior lenders got the highest reward.

And the EU expects us to

COMMENT

By DAVID BEGG
Congress General Secretary



pick up the tab, in full. This is the big lie at the heart of our 'bailout'.

A country with a workforce of 1.8 million cannot repay debt of this size without doing enormous social and economic damage.

While the Irish bank guarantee of September 2008 lies the root of this current evil, the European Central Bank's insistence that no bank could fail – not even Anglo – meant it could never be reversed.

The new European order deemed that 'no bondholder could be left behind'. And then they sent the bill to us.

Over the next three years, the interest bill on just a portion of that debt will cost Ireland over €4 billion. That money will be borrowed and our debt will increase further.

Our most recent budget – carried out under the watchful eye of the Troika – involved a very painful 'adjustment' of some €3.6 billion. The numbers just don't add up.

In the meantime, we have haemorrhaged 360,000 jobs and seen families broken up by emigration.

So far, Ireland has paid the biggest bank debt bill in the European Union. We have already paid out €41 billion – more than Germany (€40 billion), the UK, the Netherlands, Portugal or Spain.

This has cost everyone in Ireland almost €9,000 each. The cost of the bank crisis across for all other EU citizens, was just €191.

We have paid almost 50 times more than what everyone else has paid.

And we are expected to pay more, the full €64 billion and counting.

That's why we'll be marching on February 9. Join us.

For more information go to: <http://www.ictu.ie/jobsnotdebt> <https://vimeo.com/58711943>

Irish burden too great, Troika told

CONGRESS has warned officials from the Troika that without a significant deal on Ireland's €64bn bank debt burden, there is little chance of economic recovery in the near future.

Speaking ahead of a meeting with the official on February 4, general secretary David Begg said: "The penny hasn't quite dropped yet on the bank debt, particularly the absurdity of expecting a small economy with a workforce of just 1.8 million to pay a bank debt of €64 billion. It is unjust and unpayable." The Congress delegation outlined to Troika officials that Ireland has already paid a heavy price for the reckless actions of banks across the whole Eurozone.

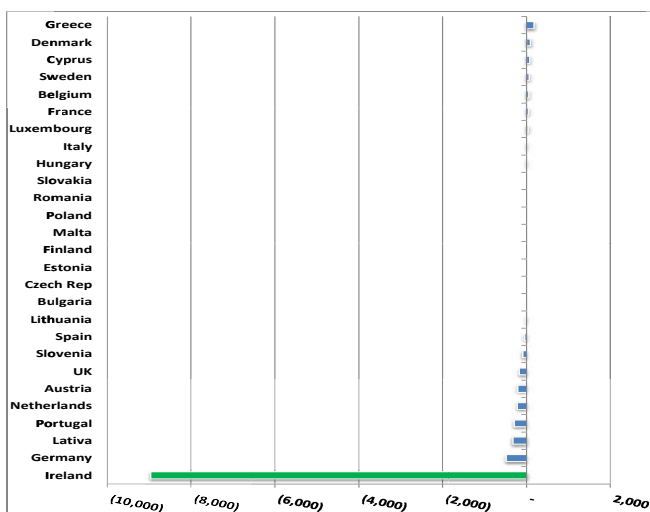
"Figures from the Eurostat agency show that Ireland has paid more for the bank crisis than any other EU state. So far, the bank bailout has cost us €41 billion, while Germany – with an economy almost 20 times our size – has paid €40 billion.

"We have also paid more than the UK, France, Portugal and Spain. Indeed, the bank crisis has cost every person in Ireland almost €9,000 – while the EU average is €191 per person. We have paid almost 50 times more than anyone else."

Mr Begg said the February 9 demonstrations were an opportunity to send a "very clear signal to Europe" and encouraged people from all sectors of society to attend the protests and make their voices heard.

He added: "This is an issue that transcends all others... there is no more critical issue facing Irish society at this point."

The total net cost of bank capital transfers (Govt deficit) per head of population in 2011 (€ per capita)



Ours is the largest most expensive bank bailout in history. So far, Ireland has paid out €41 billion and the total bank debt burden is €64 billion. Germany has paid out 40 billion – but their economy is some 15 times the size of ours. The broken banks have cost each one of us €9000. Across the rest of Europe, the cost of the banking crisis per citizen has been just €191. We have already paid 50 times more than anyone else. It not fair, its not just and its not payable.

http://www.ictu.ie/download/pdf/neri_banks_governments_citizens.pdf

30,000 jobs bitter cost of payout

PAYING the €3.1bn Anglo Irish promissory note due next month could cost a total of Irish 30,000 jobs, a leading economist has warned.

NERI director Dr Tom Healy said: "The option of suspending payment of the next tranche of promissory note payments pending a suc-

cessful agreement by all concerned should not be excluded.

"The risks associated with such an approach must be weighed against the risks of taking a further €3bn out of the Irish economy in 2013 with the loss of over 30,000 jobs."



LIFT THE BURDEN JOBS NOT DEBT

DUBLIN

Cook Street
(near Civic Offices, Wood Quay)

CORK

SIPTU offices,
Connolly Hall, Lapps Quay

GALWAY

Cathedral Car Park

LIMERICK

Mechanics Institute,
Harstonge Street

WATERFORD

The Glen
(in front of the Forum)

SLIGO

Sligo County Council Offices,
Riverside

Family-friendly entertainment for Lift the Burden protests...

TOP comedy, rap, punk poetry, reggae and pop acts are to provide the entertainment at the at the Congress Lift the Burden march and rally in Dublin, on February 9.

Among the acts that have been confirmed to perform during the march and at a subsequent rally in Dublin's Merrion Square, are: comedian Barry Murphy of Apres Match and Irish Pictorial Weekly fame; Mundy and his band; Finglas rapper MissElayneous; punk poet Jinx Lennon and well-known UB40 tribute band Promises & Lies.

Congress assistant general secretary Sally Anne Kinahan said that while the February 9 protest had a very serious intent, the aim was to make the event a family-friendly occasion. "We are asking

people to march and protest to secure a deal on Ireland's unpayable and unjust €64 billion bank debt burden – but we want to ensure that they can do so in a safe, friendly and entertaining atmosphere.

"Along with the range of musical and comic acts that will perform, we also hope to have activities such as face-painting for children.

"We are encouraging families to participate, because ultimately this is about an unfair debt that will be passed on to our children and our grandchildren."

The Dublin protest will assemble from 1.30pm in Cook Street (near Wood Quay) and the entertainment will commence when the march reaches Merrion Square.

There will also be entertainment at the rallies in Cork, Limerick, Galway, Waterford and Sligo.

JOIN THE PROTESTS

ASSEMBLE 1.30pm

€64bn

THE GREAT IRISH BANK ROBBERY

What else could we do with €64bn? **PAGE 4**

THE GREAT IRISH BANK ROBBERY

BANK DEBT €64 BILLION
LIFT THE BURDEN
JOBS NOT DEBT
SAT FEB 9
JOIN THE PROTESTS

What else could we do with €64bn?

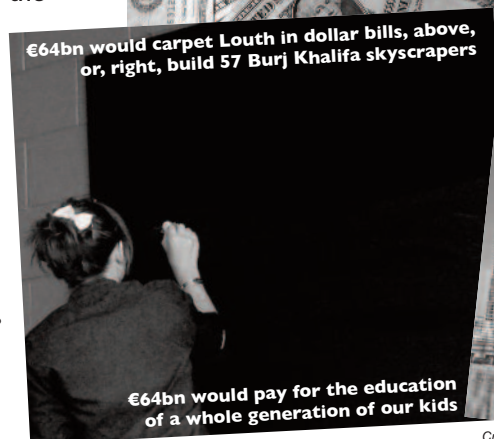
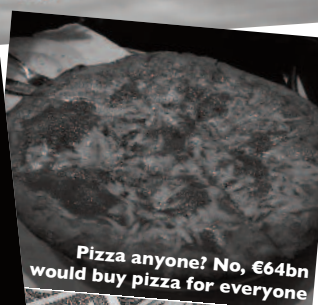
MONEY has been poured into the Irish banks to compensate for the gross incompetence of senior management. This is private debt that the Irish public have been made liable for. This is the €64bn question – what else could we do with that money????

Every €1 million invested in public infrastructure projects generates approximately 11 new jobs... an investment of €64 billion could create over 700,000 jobs, virtually eliminating unemployment twice over.

In 2012, Ireland spent €8.6bn on primary and secondary schools. The sum of €64bn would pay that bill for seven-and-a-half years. That's equivalent to a full primary or secondary-level education for a generation of Irish pupils.

Childcare costs parents here an average of €10,000 per child, per year. The €64bn poured into the banks could pay the childcare costs for 18 years for 350,000 children under five years of age.

Tricolour on the moon? Ireland with its €64bn could run a NASA-style space exploration programme for five years. The US Congress allotted the US space agency \$17.8bn



(£13.4bn) for the fiscal year in 2012. And placed end to end, the dollar equivalent of our €64bn bank debt (\$83 bn) would be long enough for 17 round trips to the moon...

The world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa, in Dubai is 828m high – that's 14 Liberty Halls stacked one on top of the other. It cost \$1.5bn (€1.13bn) to construct. Our €64bn would build 57 of them – one for each Irish town with more than 8,000 people.

A Boeing 747-400 costs €27.2m (\$36m). For its €64bn Ireland could buy 1,777 jets – one for every 2,600 people in the Republic.

The Earth's population reached seven billion on October 31, 2011. Ireland could treat everyone on the planet to a tasty €9 Margherita pizza. And there would be money left in the kitty for extra toppings for China.

The basic 5 Series BMW costs €36k, €64bn would buy about 1,780,000 of them – more than enough to park a brand spanking new 'bimmer' in every driveway in the country.

It takes about \$1m to carpet a soccer pitch in dollar bills. Covering Dublin's Phoenix Park would cost \$700m. The dollar equivalent of our bank debt of €64bn would carpet all of County Louth in many billions and billions of notes.

Credits: dcsurfer, capelle7, avlyxz, 401(K) 2015, PhilipC, kkalyan (CC BY 2.0); (CC BY-SA 2.0)

THE UNION POST

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POA's condolences over Det Gda Donohoe killing

THE Prison Officers Association has extended its "deepest sympathy" to the family and colleagues of Garda detective Adrian Donohoe.

Det Garda Donohoe was shot dead outside Lordship Credit Union, Bellurigan, Co Louth on January 25.

The POA statement read: "This is a dreadful crime and hopefully those responsible will be identified and

brought to justice. This brave man was mown down in his prime while doing his duty on behalf of the state and all of us.

"Our thoughts are with his family, colleagues and friends at this very difficult time for all of them.

"We have passed our condolences to the Garda Representative Association."

NIPSA: UK govt must move to close tax gap

NIPSA has called on the Northern Ireland Executive and local political parties to demand the UK government moves to close the tax gap and tackle tax avoidance by large corporations and the rich.

General secretary Brian Campfield said: "In the Chancellor's Autumn Statement we were informed that the cuts to public spending and the dismantling of the Welfare State would continue for the foreseeable future.

"We were also advised that there would be no reversal of the Government's so-called economic policies despite the threat of a triple dip recession in the UK."

He pointed out the government could avoid making these cuts if it made a serious commitment to tackling "endemic tax avoidance practised by many large private sector companies and wealthy individuals".

An estimated £120bn is lost to the public purse through tax avoidance, tax evasion and uncollected



Campfield: Tax avoidance 'endemic'

Picture: NIPSA

taxes in the UK each year.

Mr Campfield said: "If these taxes were realised, then Northern Ireland would stand to benefit to the tune of around £3bn a year. That is why NIPSA is calling on the Northern Ireland Executive to make tax avoidance a priority matter in any discussions with the UK government."

'We need to find new ways to organise'



LEADING US trade union activist Karen Nussbaum, above, was the guest speaker at a number of engagements in Ireland last month.

The Working America director – who delivered an inspirational address at the Making the Case for Decent Work conference in Dublin on January 24 – had earlier spoken to SIPTU's *Liberty* newspaper about her experience of organising workers Stateside.

In particular Ms Nussbaum under-

lined the need to draft in a "new generation of activists" into the labour movement.

She told *Liberty*: "We need to explore new ways of representing workers in the face of growing casualisation, less attachment to the workplace and other problems that have changed the nature of the collective bargaining relationship."

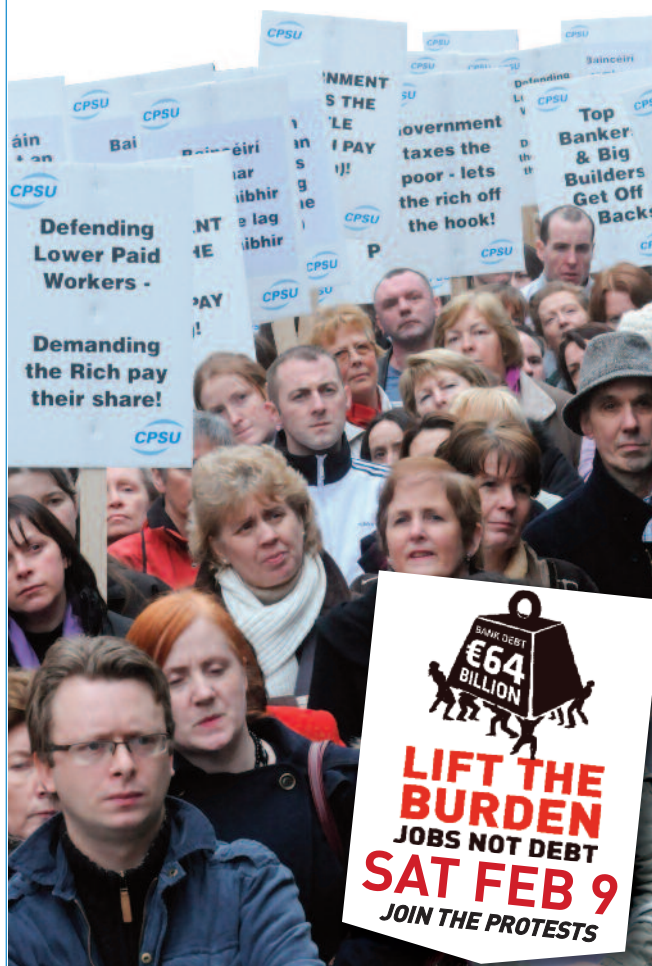
Ms Nussbaum also spoke at the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre on January 25.

Picture: Kevin Cooper/Photoline

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TUC: Cam tilting at windmills on WTD

The TUC has called on the UK government to stop "obsessing" about the EU Working Time Directive – which many Tory MPs think represents an unnecessary burden on British business.

General secretary Frances O'Grady made the comments as David Cameron delivered a speech in the Netherlands last month in which he called for a sweeping repatriation of EU powers back to the UK. Current TUC thinking is that this is a smoke-screen for further attacks on UK employment rights that could put thousands of British jobs at risk.

Accusing him of "tilting at windmills" over the WTD, she pointed out that it was ironic the PM choose to deliver his broadside in a country which had long abandoned excessive working hours in favour of higher productivity.

The latest OECD figures on working time revealed the average Dutch worker spent 1,379 hours at work each year, producing \$82,460 in GDP value whereas the average UK employee spent 1,625 hours a year at work yet only produced \$76,700 in GDP value.

Ms O'Grady said: "The government should abandon its obsession with the Working Time Directive which guarantees millions of people a paid holiday and stops dangerous work being done by exhausted people. Forcing people to work longer hours is not the answer. Instead of tilting at the windmill of the Working Time Directive, the Prime Minister should be taking steps to raise UK productivity to Dutch levels and beyond, through more investment in training, jobs, infrastructure and a better work-life balance."



FLASHBACK 1973



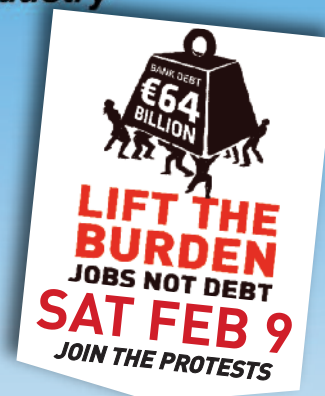
The slogan says it all: Members of American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees Local 1072 University of Maryland, in the city of College Park during a September 1973 protest against lay-offs. The grounds crew are pictured here doing their bit during a lunch break in front of the university's main admin building. This was an action with a happy ending – the AFSCME eventually won both recognition and collective bargaining rights.

Picture: washington_area_spark (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Picture: ITUC

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Access to face-to-face banking under threat

IBOA chief Larry Broderick has warned large parts of Northern Ireland, especially rural areas, will be left with little or no access to face-to-face banking.

The warning came after Bank of Ireland revealed last month that it plans to close nine of its 44 branches north of the border.

The latest closures will bring the total number of bank branches and sub-offices that have shut to nearly 60 since 2008.

Mr Broderick said: "The announcement from Bank of Ireland follows similar announcements by Ulster Bank and First Trust Bank in

the last six months, while Danske Bank's Northern Bank subsidiary has also engaged in some restructuring of its branch network since the banking crisis began in 2008.

"We are particularly concerned that a situation is beginning to emerge where each banking group is taking decisions based upon its own narrow institutional self-interest."

And he added: "We have no confidence that further closures will not be sought by the major banks in the future."

Mr Broderick claimed no consideration had been made over "the cumulative effect of these changes".



Picture: Goran Hoglund (CC BY 2.0)

"The danger is that large parts of Northern Ireland – especially in rural areas – may be left with a much reduced or inferior facility."

"While some bank managements seem to believe that mobile phone or internet technology is the key to the future of banking – and that where branches exist they should consist of a battery of self-service computer screens and a small complement of human beings – our members' face-to-face experience with customers suggests that a significant number would still prefer to bank with humans rather than electronic devices."

WATERFORD CRYSTAL



Demonstration: Waterford Crystal workers on the march in 2009

Picture: Unite

Unite launches cut glass legal bid

UNITE has outlined plans for a legal campaign to force the current owners of Waterford Crystal to repatriate manufacturing of the world-famous brand back to the city.

Since KPS bought Waterford Crystal in 2009, most of the manufacturing has been moved out of Ireland to Europe and South Amer-

ica with the loss of more than 600 jobs.

The brand is sold under the original trademark and Unite is hoping to challenge its use on glass not produced in Waterford.

It is understood the union is to take a test case to the registry of trademarks in Alicante, Spain, which could end up at the

European Courts of Justice.

And there have been successful precedents for such legal action on behalf of geographical areas associated with particular products.

Unite co-ordinator Walter Cullen said: "Champagne and Parma have successfully protected the link between the name of the place and products

made there. And Movenpick was recently prevented from making a link to Swiss chocolate when production was actually taking place in Germany."

"We have engaged experts in the field of trademarks who believe that the people of Waterford have a strong case to make."



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UNI Global chief outlines strategy to beat world slump

Give the world a pay rise!

UNI general secretary Philip Jennings, right, has claimed the labour movement could provide the answer to rising joblessness in Europe – and called for a radical change in the current model of dealing with the problem.

"We know how to get this job done," he said during a spirited live interview on CNBC television on January 24.

Mr Jennings pointed to the "very bleak" jobs forecast in the ILO's latest annual report predicting the number of those out of work would rise to 205 million by 2014.

He insisted there had to be a response from business and government and that



Picture: Mandate

both had to realise that unions could provide the answer. "It's time to recognise

the voice of labour and work with labour. We know how to get this job done. We can

fix this – give us a seat at the table, we are part of the solution.

"It's time to put the money sitting in those cash mountains to work, people are desperate to work. They are looking for quality jobs and a decent wage."

Mr Jennings flagged up how Germany had been able to weather the storm because of investment in apprenticeships and in protecting workers' jobs.

He said: "They kept people in work – they put young people in work. They continued their apprenticeship programmes."

"They were ready when we had that glimmer of light

two years ago because they were prepared to work with the labour movement."

Mr Jennings continued: "We have record unemployment in Europe. It's time to change the model."

"Austerity is not working. It is not providing employment opportunities. It is not helping investment or the business climate."

"We want to put business to work, we want to put that cash mountain to work and then we will have a much better horizon for business and working people."

Mr Jennings queried how the economy could be put back on track without improving aggregate demand, adding and that meant "giving the world a pay rise".

"They'll only get that by working with labour and when the elites say it's time to give something back."

"We need a new commitment, a new social contract, to help people through their working lives."

"Retraining, income support, to give people hope that there is a safety net which will help the business community invest and sell their products and a skilled motivated work force."

"The work force is ready – they are hungry for change, hungry for opportunity. Give it to them."

MANDATE

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**IMF: DITCH
AUSTERITY
GEORGE...
SEE PAGE 14**



Timber! Report fells govt case for sell-off

IMPACT has claimed the findings of a new report undermine the government's economic case for selling off Coillte harvesting rights.

The study carried out by economic consultants Peter Bacon & Associates and published last month found that the move did not make economic sense.

According to the report's authors, the State would remain liable for costs after selling the €1.3bn harvesting rights.

To cover this amount, Coillte would have to sell well above the price paid currently by saw mills – at just over €43 per cubic metre – for Coillte supplies. The report states: "To generate a

sale valued at €1.3bn would require an average price of €78 per cubic metre. This is well above current or recent prices and there is no basis in these prices for assuming that this would be achieved."

In fact, the authors add that far from generating State income, a sale of Coillte harvesting rights would actually represent a substantial cost to the exchequer.

Speaking at the report's launch, IMPACT assistant general secretary Johnny Fox said: "IMPACT

and many other organisations have expressed concerns that the sale of Coillte harvesting rights would drastically limit public access to the countryside, undermine the quality and character of our woods, and damage our world-class forestry and environmental standards."

He added: "In response we were told that the policy is necessary on economic grounds. Peter Bacon's report has now fundamentally undermined the only rationale the government has put forward for this reckless and damaging policy."

Check out the full report at:

<http://www.impact.ie/files/campaigns/saveourforests/ForestryFinalReport1.pdf>

A Century of Workers in Struggle 1913-2013

National Commemorative Event
11am - 4pm, March 2nd,
Liberty Hall, Dublin

Save the Date



Hosted by Sinn Féin
Spokesperson on Workers' Rights,
Senator David Cullinane



A major conference is being organised for March 2nd in Liberty Hall to mark the 100th Anniversary of the most significant battle for Workers' Rights in Ireland in the 20th Century, the 1913 Lockout.

Hosted by Sinn Féin Workers Rights spokesperson, Senator David Cullinane, the Conference will be addressed by both National and International Trade Union Leaders, as well as prominent guests, including Writers, Historians, Musicians, and more.

Join with us in celebrating and remembering the great lockout of 1913, and a century of struggle for Irish Workers', and in considering our own contemporary struggles.

Further details to be published in coming weeks. For more information contact Senator David Cullinane at david.cullinane@oireachtas.ie or 01 6183176

100 years on from 1913, much is still left to do...

EVERY nation, and in every Labour movement, has in their collective memories landmark moments of social agitation and of workers asserting themselves.

In the US, they recall the Haymarket Massacre, and the Homestead Strike, in Britain the '26 General Strike, and the Miners' Strikes in '74 and '84.

All around the world these incidents and disputes – where ordinary workers stood up for their rights, and said, "Enough!" – are recalled with special significance by ordinary people and by trade unions.

In Ireland, the 1913 Lockout stands out clearly as the most significant event in Irish labour history.

Faced with such arrogance and a blatant effort to intimidate Irish workers, the ITGWU had no choice but to respond decisively, and the Irish working class, not just in Dublin, but also around the country, responded, and took to the streets, in a remarkable show of strength and of defiance.

William Martin Murphy and the rest of the Dublin employers responded with venom and pitilessness, bringing the full force of official repression, and media manipulation to bear on them.

The suffering of these workers and of their families, has long passed into folk memory, and has been commemorated in literature, in film, in song and in poetry.

While the dispute was ultimately defeated in the short term, Irish employers learned that the Irish working class, organised and unified, was a force to be reckoned with, and would never again attempt in such a brazen way to intimidate Irish workers, and to deny them their right to organise.

So much progress has been made since then. Workers are better paid, are much safer, have better condi-

VIEWPOINT

The centenary of 1913 Lockout is a perfect opportunity to reflect both on past struggles and future challenges, says DAVID CULLINANE



tions, and better employment protections. They cannot be restricted from joining a union, nor can they be summarily dismissed.

Workers have taken on unscrupulous employers and have achieved substantial victories.

We have seen this in recent years with Vita Cortex, with La Senza and Lagan Brick – but yet many, many challenges remain.

While they cannot be restricted from joining a union, the lack of collective bargaining in this state means that they do not achieve the full benefits of union membership.

In many workplaces workers are actively discouraged from joining unions, accompanied by both inducement and intimidation.

The legal rights which exist for workers are often flouted due to a lack of inspection and weakness of compliance mechanisms.

This is particularly the case as regards migrant workers and other categories of vulnerable workers, and while the government's decision to bring in legislation to tackle forced labour is welcome, there is much more yet to be done in this area.

The 100th anniversary offers an excellent opportunity to reflect

upon the struggles of workers in the past, and on the challenges facing workers today, both in Ireland and abroad.

To that end, I – as the Sinn Féin spokesperson on Workers' Rights – will be hosting a major conference in Dublin to consider all the key issues workers faced today and in the past. The conference, entitled *A Century of Workers in Struggle 1913-2013*, is to take place on March 2, 2013 in Liberty Hall, Dublin.

As well as addresses from invited guests, the conference will hear from union leaders, on the challenges facing workers today.

This conference will be an excellent opportunity to reflect on the traditions of the union movement, and an opportunity to consider how we continue to bolster and protect the rights of workers, and to strengthen the Labour movement in Ireland, and elsewhere.

I hope that you will be able to join us in this celebration of past achievements, and discussion of present and future challenges, and look forward to seeing you in Liberty Hall.

David Cullinane is Sinn Féin spokesperson on Workers' Rights

ITUC chief blasts use of riot police to break strike

The ITUC has condemned the Greek government's use of wartime emergency powers to break a week-long strike by metro workers in Athens.

Riot police moved in on January 25 forcing employees back to work under the threat of arrest.

It is the latest in a series of government measures that severely undermine the fundamental rights of workers and which, according to the ITUC, violate a number of international conventions to which Greece is a signatory.

Last November, the ILO strongly rebuked the Greek government after it had put in place measures virtually eliminating collective bargaining processes built up over generations. It is claimed this was a result of IMF/EC/IMF Troika pressure.

ITUC general secretary Sharan Burrow said "Enough is enough. The Troika's misguided and illegal policies are creating long-term social and economic damage to an entire generation. Forcing people to work under threat of arrest will only produce more misery and instability."

She claimed the metro workers' strike was not just a reaction to pay cuts being forced on them but was about the government's continuing disregard of existing collective agreements and the threat of being pushed into a new Troika-imposed uniform public sector wage scheme.

Commission VP admits unions' role in recovery

EUROPEAN Commission vice-president Olli Rehn has underlined the important role trade unions will play in any economic recovery in Europe.

He made his comments to a European Trade Union Confederation conference on January 28.

Europe had to restore its competitiveness, he told the gathering in Madrid, but added that this was not limited to its "external dimension".

"It means a sustained rise in welfare, for which productivity growth is the main driver. And I believe we can [do this], if we stay the course of reform."

"Not for its own sake, but reform for the sake of sustainable growth and job creation, and reform to reinforce the competitiveness of European industry."

He said Europe also had to back research and innovation as well as boost financial support for SMEs.

Mr Rehn also called for smart regulation that both achieved societal and environmental goals but without hampering job creation and competitiveness.

'Legal rights for workers are often flouted due to lack of inspection & weak compliance mechanisms'

Full *A Century of Workers in Struggle 1913 - 2013* programme is published shortly. For more information, contact: david.cullinane@oireachtas.ie or Tel 00353 (0)1 6184069



Picture: SIFTU



Unstinting advocate for rights of women and working people

CONGRESS president Eugene McGlone has paid tribute to leading Northern Irish trade unionist and human rights activist Inez McCormack's "unstinting passion" for social justice following her death last month.

He said the Derry-born campaigner – who was elected the first woman president of Congress in 2000 – had an "unequalled track record" in supporting women's and human rights, adding, "her work in promoting the cause of labour and social justice in Northern Ireland was known worldwide."

Inez was also the first female full-time official of the National Union of Public Employees where she worked from 1976 to 1990 and became the first female regional secretary of UNISON in 1993.

Her work was portrayed by Oscar winner Meryl Streep in the stage play *Seven* – a dramatisation of her life and that of six other women. That production grew out of Inez's involvement with the Vital Voices network, set up by Hillary Clinton more than a decade ago.

And in his tribute, Mr McGlone referenced comments made about Inez by the then-US Secretary of State during a visit to Belfast last December.

In her address, Ms Clinton said: "Inez stands out amongst the extraordinary people I have met and worked with over the last 17 years. She inspired and motivated me, challenged me often, and we're sending her our thoughts and our prayers and our best wishes as she fights a courageous battle against cancer."

Mr McGlone added: "Inez's commitment to social justice began in the 1960s when she became active in the Northern Ireland civil rights movement. She followed this on when she became a trade union and equality activist before becoming the full-time official of the National Union of Public Employees."

"She also held the post when NUPE was reconstituted in a

merger as UNISON. Her unstinting passion was recognised and she received many justifiable accolades."

In her tribute, UNISON regional secretary Patricia McKeown said Inez's passing had been dreaded by thousands of workers and trade union members, but added that she "will never leave us in spirit."

Inez had, she said, "touched the lives of thousands" of ordinary people, adding, "she has succeeded in what she set out to do – she has made a difference."

Ms McKeown said UNISON

'Inez had an unselfish and unshakeable belief that ordinary people, given a chance, can change the world'

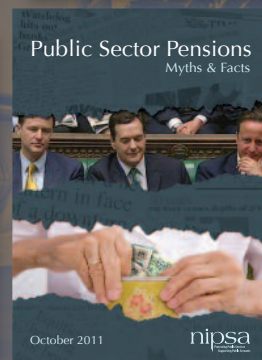
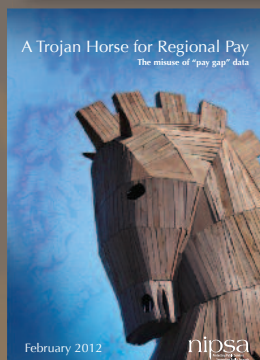
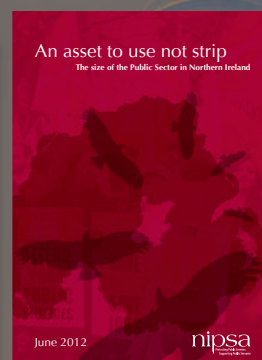
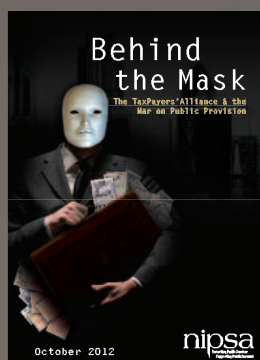
members had always "known her true worth". "It lies not solely in her remarkable journey, engaging with power systems dominated by disrespect for women in general and the working class in particular."

"It lies especially in her unselfish and unshakeable belief that ordinary people, given a chance, can change the world."

Ms McKeown said those who had followed her had basked in the "reflected glory of her extraordinary achievements" but pointed out that, for Inez, all the accolades were "merely tools to progress an agenda built on her feminist beliefs and her abiding desire to see equality, justice and the affirmation of human rights as a normal way of life rather than the continual struggle against selfishness, prejudice, intolerance and exploitation which it still is today."

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CAMPAIGN

Nurses protest outside HSE HQ at 'yellow pack' grad initiative

HUNDREDS of nurses and midwives angered by the controversial nurse graduate scheme protested outside HSE's Dublin HQ on February 1.

Dubbed a "flawed yellow pack programme" by INMO chief Liam Doran, the scheme offers 1,000 graduates two-year contracts on 20% less than nurses already employed in the HSE.

But the programme has been cold-shouldered by the vast majority of graduates – and it is believed that only between 50 to 60 have applied so far, following a boycott call by unions.

Protesting nurses and midwives from the INMO and PNA handed in a letter to be given to HSE deputy chief Barry O'Brien detailing their opposition to the initiative.

The INMO and PNA argue the scheme would displace up to 1,000 nurses and midwives currently employed through agencies.

Both unions also point out

that there are no additional nursing working hours in implementing the programme and that it has no special additional educational component.

Added to this, nurses and midwives have already seen their pay cut by almost a quarter since 2009.

Speaking before the protest, Mr Doran said: "We remain confident that the boycott is holding fast and that the HSE has received a very small number of applications for these underpaid posts which carry 100% responsibility with only 80% of the proper pay."

"The refusal of the Department of Health/HSE to come to the negotiating table only confirms that this has now become an issue of principle, for senior management, rather than an issue which needs to be addressed, through dialogue, conscious that the stated salary scales must be respected while all costs should be minimised."



Pictures: INMO



No roll-out of scheme to other health workers

IMPACT has again received confirmation from Irish government officials that there is no intention of rolling out the Nurse Graduate Scheme to physiotherapy, occupational therapy or other health professional grades.

It follows comments reportedly made by Health Minister James Reilly in a newspaper interview that the controversial initiative

would be rolled out to other health professionals.

Last month IMPACT national secretary Louise O'Donnell raised the matter with the Department of Health after similar sentiments were voiced over Christmas.

She said: "I was told then that there were no plans for a graduate programme for allied health professionals, and the department has

confirmed this again."

Meanwhile, SIPTU has also received confirmation from the Department of Health that there are no plans to cut the pay of graduate health professionals through extending the Nurse Graduate Scheme to other grades.

Welcoming the confirmation, SIPTU sector organiser Kevin Figgis said: "The department must

now demand that the HSE ends its attempts to recruit 1,000 nurses and midwives on 80% of the staff nurse salary scale following the refusal of graduates to sign up to the scheme." It is understood fewer than 50 graduates have applied to take part in the scheme which offers successful candidates €21,700 a year in contrast to the current rate for new entrants of €27,234.



INMO EC's vow on pay

INMO Executive Council has reaffirmed its commitment to protect members' income from further cuts after reviewing the current Croke Park extension talks.

The Council claimed the government stance was provocative, unrealistic and primarily targeted at the income of frontline public servants on a 24/7 roster.

Speaking after the February 5 meeting, INMO general secretary Liam Doran said: "The INMO fully supports the stance taken by the Garda representative bodies with regard to the totally unrealistic and provocative list of demands tabled by the management side."

"There can be no agreement, acceptable to the INMO, which seeks to

impose cuts or reductions in existing pay rates, premium pay rates and allowances which form the total income of members arising from their obligation to work 24/7, 365 days a year."

He called on the government to "radically alter its agenda" to demonstrate its seriousness about brokering a deal.

"If it continues with the current approach, of disproportionately attacking frontline staff and seeking to dismantle other fundamental conditions of employment, then this process cannot succeed."

He added: "The simple reality is that most public servants cannot suffer any further loss to their income and still meet their obligations and pay their bills."



O'Connor: Feb 9 demo 'crucial'

'Hang tough' on bank debt SIPTU chief advises govt

SIPTU general secretary Jack O'Connor has called on the Irish government to "hang tough" over the €3.1bn promissory note and the wider issue of bank debt.

He made his comments in a speech delivered at the James Larkin commemoration in Glasnevin Cemetery on January 30.

Mr O'Connor said there was a recognition that refusal to pay the debt would have "potentially enormous consequences" which was why brokering a deal was "too important a political battle to be left to the government alone".

He told the crowd: "We must demonstrate massive public support and it is critically important that as many as possible turn out on Saturday, February 9 in support of Congress' day of action against the bank debt and one-sided austerity."

Mr O'Connor cautioned that February 9 was "not just another demonstration", but was crucial in the battle to convince Europe that the Irish people had reached the "end of the line in terms of what we can sacrifice".

He added: "It was blind obedience to the laws of the market and pursuit of short-term gain for the wealthy elite that led the previous Irish government into the greatest economic crisis in the history of the State and into accepting liability for the debts of private speculators."

"This has resulted in Ireland carrying 40% of the entire eurozone bank debt. We should almost €9,000 of bad bank debt for every man, woman and child in the country, compared with €192 per capita in other eurozone states."

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COMMENT HEALTH & SAFETY

Official stats on Irish workplace deaths only 'tip of the iceberg'

By ESTHER LYNCH
Congress Legislation & Legal Affairs

OFFICIAL figures released last month by the Health and Safety Authority show a reduction in the number of reported workplace deaths during 2012.

A total of 47 people lost their lives in workplace accidents last year compared to 54 in 2011.

But what these statistics don't show is the devastating impact on the families of these workers killed in these tragedies. It also represents only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to work-related deaths in Ireland.

The official figures do not record workers whose lives have been cut short by occupational cancer. It is conservatively estimated that occupational cancer accounts for between 6% and 9% of all cancer deaths.

A sizeable number of the 161 fatal road collisions – up to 50 – that occurred last year involved people driving during the course of their work in cars, vans, buses, HGVs, tractors etc.

And despite a general recognition that bullying and stress are workplace risks, there is no official recording of these as work-related causes of deaths – even in circumstances of suicide.

A reduction in workplace deaths is always welcome but it is not always an indicator that things have improved.

This year the biggest reduction in recorded fatalities

occurred in the Transportation and Storage sector, with one death reported in 2012 compared to seven in 2011.

However, about 1,000 injuries were reported from that sector and based on injuries reported, it remains the most dangerous sector in which to work.

Based on the number of reported deaths, agriculture remains the most dan-

gerous sector during 2012 but again this may be more a reflection of significantly reduced activity in the sector than increased attention to health and safety.

Of particular note is Construction where workers and their unions have reported a general fall in standards. That sector saw an increase in fatalities from six in 2011 to eight in 2012.

Picture: Gene Hunt (CC BY 2.0)



gerous sector, recording the highest number of deaths for the third year in a row, with 21 occurring in 2012 compared to 22 in 2011.

Deaths in the fishing sector have seen the largest increase with five deaths in 2011 and seven in 2012. There were no fatalities reported in the Mining

Reported work-related vehicle fatalities 2012

Breakdown by vehicle type and activity

Vehicle use	Deaths
Driving, riding on, reversing, manoeuvring, access & egress	15
Vehicle maintenance	4
Total	19

Vehicle type	Deaths
Jeep	1
Tractor	7
All Terrain Vehicle (quad)	2
Telescopic handler	1
Car	3
Truck	2
Refuse truck	2
Trailer	1
Total	19



NIPSA's Norman Gray, second from left, was the winner of the Health and Safety Representative's Award for 2012. He is pictured with, from left, Health and Safety Executive NI chairman George Lucas, NIPSA official Geraldine Alexander and Congress health and safety committee chairperson Barbara Martin. Speaking after the award, Congress assistant general secretary said: "I'm delighted that the hard work and commitment of our trade union activists in improving and maintaining high standards of health and safety is being recognised today."

Picture: Kevin Cooper/Photoline

PHOTOLINE

Experienced photographer specialises in campaigning photography for trade unions and NGOs. For conferences, campaign launches, street demos, May Day parades, magazine and PR photography. Shared commission rates for ICTU conferences.

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'Lost generation' warning

SIPTU has called on the Irish government to act to boost the economy following the release of jobs data showing the continued scale of the crisis.

Campaigns and equality organiser Ethel Buckley said: "The latest Live Register figures indicate that unemployment remains at 14.6%.

"The unfortunate situation would seem to be that there has been little improvement in terms of job creation since the onset of the crisis five years ago." She pointed out that

the number of those who were long-term unemployed had risen by 3.3% over the last year and claimed that the only factor stopping that figure from rising was the impact of emigration.

Ms Buckley added: "Action must be taken now to alleviate the State's €64bn debt burden so that funds can be invested in large scale and effective job creation schemes.

"Otherwise, a generation will be lost to unemployment or emigration."



IMF chief economist Olivier Blanchard believes George Osborne needs to think again on UK economy



Pictures: IMF (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0); Congress

IMF chief calls for austerity U-turn



Bunting: 'Austerity is failing'

CONGRESS assistant general secretary Peter Bunting has welcomed the IMF's belated recognition that continued austerity policies are snuffing out any chance of an economic recovery in the UK.

He was responding to comments made by IMF chief economist Olivier Blanchard in a January 24 interview on the BBC's Today programme.

Mr Blanchard advised chancellor George Osborne to slow down the pace of planned spending cuts in the

coming months. He told the BBC: "You have a Budget coming in March. We think this is a good time to take stock and see whether some adjustment could be made. Budget time seems like the right time to do these things."

Mr Bunting said: "The IMF has, at last, admitted what their own research has been telling them for some time, that austerity isn't working.

"It hasn't worked for the UK economy, which will once again be plunged into a

triple-dip recession caused by the obstinacy of this Westminster government.

"Austerity is failing the people of Northern Ireland, where the recession seems to have no end in sight."

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady agreed. She said: "The IMF is saying what we've warned about for years – that sharp austerity off the back of a global crash will turn a recession into a decade-long depression of low growth and high joblessness."

Mandate welcomes Dunnes rise

MANDATE has welcomed Dunnes Stores' announcement that it will pay its staff a 3% pay rise – but expressed continued disappointment that bosses at the retailer were still failing to respect their workers' right to be represented by a trade union.

The wage hike – the first since 2007 – was announced on January 17 and affects more than 14,000 shop workers across the Republic.

Assistant general secretary Gerry Light said: "The company persists in being high-handed in its dealings with their workers at local and national level as well as the institutions of the State.

"Hopefully, they might learn from

some of their competitors that treating people with respect is in fact a business asset – not a liability."

Mr Light claimed that most retail companies had emerged intact from the economic crisis and had remained highly profitable.

And he also pointed to industry estimates that Dunnes Stores generated sales of around €3.8bn a year and was achieving significant profits – efforts which were in large part due to the efforts of hard-working staff.

He added: "Since early 2011 Mandate has sought to engage with retail employers to put in place pay arrangements that reflect their

workers' contribution to that success."

Meanwhile, following the decision by Dunnes Stores to concede a 3% pay rise, SIPTU has made it clear that similar increases will be sought for workers in other retail companies.

Organiser Graham Macken, said the acceptance by Dunnes was "good news for workers in the retail sector" and that when taken along with similar increases at other retailers, including Tesco, Marks & Spencer and Debenhams, highlighted the continued profitability of these companies despite the increased pressure on sales.



Picture: Mandate

Light: 'Respect is business asset'

So just who are the TaxPayers' Alliance?

THE TaxPayers' Alliance (TPA) is an organisation that has played a very prominent media role over the last few years as a critic of government spending in general and public sector unions in particular. But who are the Taxpayers' Alliance?

At NIPSA's 2012 annual conference, a motion calling for an investigation of their agenda, political affiliation and funding was passed. NIPSA's latest research publication fulfils this motion.

Tea Party by the Thames?

The TPA describes itself as "Britain's independent grassroots campaign for lower taxes" and was launched in 2004, "to speak for ordinary taxpayers". The political history of its founders, however, shows it to be rooted in the Eurosceptic/Libertarian wing of the Conservative Party.

While, when the Conservatives were in Opposition, leading TPA members denied they were a "Tory front", they have, since 2010, been supportive of the most extreme Tory policies, including the "tax cuts for millionaires" budget of 2012.

The message the TPA delivers surfs a wave of genuine political disillusionment swollen by the global financial crisis and the MPs' expenses scandal.

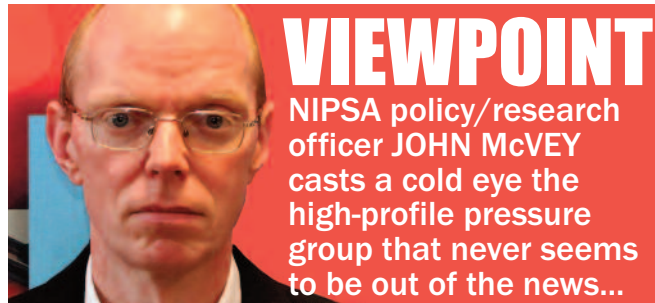
This provides a favourable climate in which to promote an 'anti-politics' theme, particularly one that focuses on a message of "why should we give them our money?" in taxes.

Feeding on these sentiments an organisation such as the TPA can present itself, as the 'everyman', the 'outsider', opposed to 'elites', in support of all those who simply want to protect their own money from a bureaucratic enemy.

This language has echoes of the US Tea Party movement and its "little person against the system" message. The "ordinary guy" rhetoric, however, provides perfect cover for those who bankroll such campaigns and those who profit most from this "libertarianism" – the private sector beneficiaries of a largely unregulated capitalism.

Ideological public relations

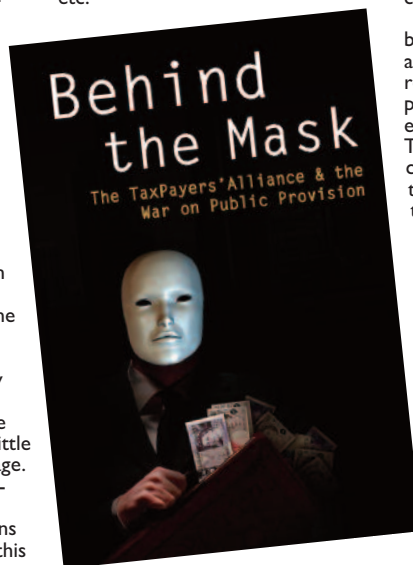
Behind the 'everyman' populism, the mission of the TPA is to assist an ideologically-driven war on the public sector by contributing to the wave of propaganda that demoralises and undermines the still dominant general belief in public provision. This mission is assisted by the mainstream media's cutbacks to 'costly' – i.e. rigorous – journalism and the fact that publications owned by tra-



ditionally right-of-centre, anti-trade union press barons, will gladly disseminate the TPA's slickly-delivered and, to them, ideologically-agreeable sound bites.

Who funds the TPA?

The TPA makes great play of the issue of public sector financial transparency. The full sources of its funding, however, are unknown with only abbreviated accounts published since 2006 and no publication of their annual income, list of donors etc.



What is known is that this supposedly 'independent, grassroots', 'non-partisan' organisation, the voice of the 'everyman' taxpayer in the UK has a considerable number of wealthy backers, many of whom have previously donated to the Conservative Party.

The TPA also has links to significant organisations from the richest, most powerful elements of the American right such as the Americans for Prosperity Foundation (founded by the billionaire David Koch), the Cato Institute (who

attract the funding support of such 'ordinary' taxpayers as Chevron, Exxon and Shell) and the Heritage Foundation.

Who benefits?

So who would benefit most in the TPA's ideal society? The answer, of course, is the private sector – the TPA's wealthiest funders, benefiting both from a favourable tax regime and the chance to be the new alternative provider of services the state no longer offers as a duty to its citizens.

The trade unions represent a bulwark against such market utopianism as they provide potential resistance to the easy capture of public services by the private interests behind such organisations as the TPA. Objectively, the TPA's current campaign against trade union facility time arrangements has to be seen in this context.

Broadcasters should look behind the mask

We would expect broadcasters to adhere to their guidelines on 'balance', disclosure and transparency when inviting comment from the TPA. This should end the 'free run' the TPA have had up until now, properly contextualise any contribution that is being given by them and ensure their input is balanced by alternative voices that challenge their populist facade.

Tax justice to re-build society

A real tax campaign supports progressive taxation and the necessary redistribution through which collective, public provision can be delivered. It shows genuine concern for all taxpayers by wanting to chase the £120 billion in taxes uncollected, avoided or evaded annually in the UK.

Unlike the Taxpayers' Alliance, trade unions support a real fight for tax justice and accept progressive taxation as "the price we pay for a civilised society".

EDUCATION



Pat King



Sheila Nunan

ASTI & INTO welcome govt action on bullying

THE ASTI and INTO have both welcomed the launch of a new Irish government action plan on bullying but pointed out that severe education cuts are making it increasingly difficult to maintain student wellbeing services in schools.

ASTI general secretary Pat King said the report, published on January 29, recognised the valuable role schools played in "fostering children's and young people's self-esteem, confidence and resilience" as well as the work already being done in addressing bullying and nurturing "inclusive and respectful learning environments".

But warning that cuts were having a devastating impact on school communities, he added: "While all teachers play a role in monitoring the wellbeing of young people in their classrooms, this is an increasingly difficult task given that classes are larger and many families are under stress."

"Typically it is teacher year heads who work to identify pupils at risk, act as a contact person between the school and the family, access specialist and support services if necessary, and implement the school's code of behaviour. In many schools, these posts have been virtually wiped out."

INTO general secretary Sheila Nunan pointed out that the report emphasised that much was already being done to tackle bullying in Irish schools.

She added that not all bullying happened within an educational environment but that most people looked to schools to resolve the problem – which was taken very seriously by teachers.

"Every year thousands of hours are spent investigating allegations, monitoring situations, following up on cases and meeting with parents and pupils. Teachers are committed to tackling bullying. Most parents are well aware of the excellent work done by schools and the lengths to which teachers go to deal with bullying."

A recent report revealed that 12% of students in the Republic reported they were being bullied weekly at school. This percentage was significantly higher than in Sweden (7%) Denmark (8%) and Finland (9%) but lower than Northern Ireland (14%) Austria (17%) and the Netherlands (16%).

'Who benefits most in TPA's ideal society? The answer, of course, is the private sector...'

Check out the full research publication at:

<http://www.nipsa.org.uk/Docs/Publications/2012/Behind-the-Mask>



Sightsavers

**Every wipe
of his eyes
takes Talla
closer to
blindness**

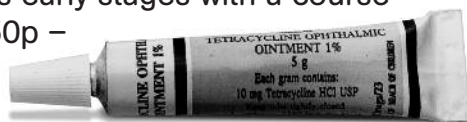


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Talla is just five. He has trachoma, a painful eye disease which can lead to a lifetime of blindness. Repeated infections cause the eyelashes to turn inwards and slowly and painfully every blink damages the eye and leads to blindness. Trachoma can be treated effectively in its early stages with a course of ointment costing just 50p – but for millions of people this is still too much.



If, like Sightsavers, you believe that nobody should go blind needlessly from trachoma, river blindness or cataract, please make a donation today to support our eye care work in some of the most deprived communities in the world.

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