

People Before Profit

Newsletter Jan 2010

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2010 and a happy New Year to all our members and supporters. We would like to wish you a prosperous one but under this government that is not very likely to happen. This year will be very difficult for the 200,000 people who have lost their jobs in this crisis. It will not be a good year for the tens of thousands who will unfortunately lose their jobs in 2010. It will not be a good year for those who face short-time working, wage cuts, cuts in the dole and other welfare benefits, or the loss of services which many depend upon.

We have a cruel and brutal government, determined to defend the wealthy elite who are responsible for the crises by making ordinary working people and the poor pay. This government does not regard the explosion of unemployment, with one in every three young males on the dole, as a crisis.

It is not an accident that the government have hardly proposed a single measure to tackle the jobs crises. The central plank of their policy, apart from the €80 billion bailout of the banks/developers, is to use mass unemployment to drive down wages and reduce the living standards of ordinary people. This may work for the foreign owned multi-national sector, which accounts for less than 10% of economic activity, but it will mean years of severe deflation, and high unemployment for the domestic economy.

The more you cut jobs, wages and social spending, the less money people have to spend, the more the economy is deflated in a vicious cycle. It is condemning yet another generation to either the dole or emigration.

It doesn't have to be like that. There is an alternative. The banks should be nationalised. A state banking sector could be at the heart of a national plan to create jobs and get the economy moving again. Just one example of what could be done is a national programme to insulate all housing, saving energy, taking workers off the dole, getting them to pay taxes, and reducing welfare spending. We need imaginative, creative thinking, and to not allow ourselves to be ruled by the dictates of the elite 5% who own 40% of the wealth, or the so called 'Masters of the universe', the spivs, speculators and criminals who control the world financial system.

Unfortunately, the Ictu leadership derailed the mass movement of opposition which could have driven this government from power and put down a marker for Fine Gael and Labour. It is now less likely that there will be an election. In fact the government is now planning to stay the course and deliver another two years of massive cuts. At the moment it is very difficult for the huge anger that exists to find an expression. We will have to wait and see how things develop, all the while doing our best to agitate and organise.

2010 promises to be an important year for People Before Profit. The Tipperary Workers and Unemployed Group, which has eight Town and County Councillors in Tipperary South, are in the process of formally affiliating to PBPA. We also expect that the former Green Party Councillor in

Cork, Chris O'Leary will affiliate with a group of 30 odd people in the next few weeks. Discussions are ongoing with former Green Party Councillor in Cork, Chris O'Leary and Councillor Declan Bree in Sligo. Discussions are ongoing with others, including the Socialist Party, with a view to working together on some issues and possibly having a left list for the next general election.

Mentioning elections, 2010 will be an important year even if there is not a general election. There will be a general election in the north, probably in May, and assembly elections may take place at the same time, if the Stormont executive talks fail. A PBPA meeting will place in Derry in early February and is likely to select Eamon McCann as a candidate in the Derry area.

It is also likely that there will be an election for the position of mayor in Dublin, possibly as early as June. This will be an election across the four Dublin Council areas, that is, similar to the Dublin Euro constituency. The PBPA steering committee are nominating Cllr Brid Smith to stand for PBPA.

So now is the time for you to get involved and help us build the real alternative. Contact us to find out where your local PBPA group is or for us to help you get a group going in your area. There will be a PBPA activists meeting in Dublin on Saturday 6th February, open to anyone who wishes to attend. It is in An Oige, Dublin International Youth Hostel, 61, Mountjoy Street. (go up to Black Church from Parnell Sq. Turn right)

The agenda is 1pm to 5pm – the current political situation- intro by Cllr Richard B. Barrett
-election report- Dermot Connolly
- water charges – Cllr Brid Smith
- Business/Finance

Please get along to our PBPA social nite in the Clifton Court Hotel (turn at O'Connell Bridge towards Liberty Hall). Note date Friday 5th Feb. We could not get the Saturday. Admission 5 euro – live music –raffle- craic. We need to fund raise urgently so help us out. Please inform activists in your area and encourage to attend.