

# Left Tribune

"proud to be left,  
proud to be labour"

the magazine of Labour Youth in Ireland

vol 2 issue 6 / autumn 2007



where now  
for Labour



**INSIDE...**



A Future for Palestine?  
Election '07 Review  
& much more...



**Left Tribune** "proud to be left, proud to be labour"

**Volume II, Issue 6  
September 2007**

*Left Tribune* is the magazine of Labour Youth in Ireland. We operate on the basis of a sustainable and democratic socialist ethos.

As such, *Left Tribune* is printed on paper which is 50% recycled and 50% from sustainable forests. If you are finished reading, we would ask that you pass this issue on to someone else - or recycle it.

All articles are copyleft - this means that we encourage the sharing of these articles and anyone is free to reproduce them. However we would ask that in the interests of those who took their time to write and edit this publication, that you would contact us at the details below to let us know if you are doing so.

We welcome articles and comments from all readers to [lycommunications@labour.ie](mailto:lycommunications@labour.ie)

The opinions expressed in *Left Tribune* are those of its contributors and are not necessarily those of Labour Youth or the Labour Party.

## Editorial Staff

**Editor:** Dermot Looney (Labour Youth Communications Officer)

**Deputy Editor:** Jane Horgan-Jones

**Design & Layout:** Andrew Payne

**International Editor:** Victor Duggan

**Contributors:** Chris Bond, Louise Caffrey, Katriona Conway, Paul Dillon, Joanne Doherty, Enda Duffy, Eoghan Fox, Holly Kilroy, Paul Mulville, Hazel Nolan, Patrick Nulty, Dan O'Neill, Jason Timmins, Neil Ward

**With thanks to:** Cian O'Callaghan and the National Youth Executive

**Printed by:** Grehan Print, Brunswick House, Dublin 2

# Two candidates for Deputy Leader race



Joan  
Burton

## Dermot Looney

Labour Party members will this month decide on a new Deputy Leader of the party following the resignation of Liz McManus TD from the post. In what is only the second ever such vote, Labour activists will use the one-member, one-vote system to decide on one of two candidates; Limerick East TD Jan O'Sullivan, or Joan Burton TD, who represents Dublin West in the Dáil.

The Deputy Leader's role is described in limited terms by the Party Constitution as "assisting the Party Leader." At a Labour Youth hustings on September 1st both candidates were keen to express their understanding of these limitations while promoting closer co-operation with members and a rejuvenated approach to campaigning on the ground.

Joan Burton is a 58 year-old former lecturer who cut her political teeth in the anti-apartheid movement in the late seventies and early eighties. First elected to Dublin County Council in 1991, she was returned to the Dáil the following year in the 'Spring Tide.'

A Junior Minister for Social Welfare in the Labour-Fianna Fáil coalition of 1993-94, she moved to the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform in the Rainbow Coalition of 94-97, overseeing Overseas Development in particular. She lost her seat in 1997 but regained it in a tight battle in 2002 and, despite considerable competition in a vastly overpopulated constituency, increased her vote to take the seat this year. She was Labour's Finance Spokesperson in the last Dáil.

Jan O'Sullivan, only a year younger than Burton, began her political journey in the party of her mentor Jim Kemmy, the Democratic Socialist Party. The DSP merged with Labour in 1991, with



Jan  
O'Sullivan

O'Sullivan, previously a Limerick City Councillor, elected to the Seanad in 1993 and to the Dáil in 1998 in a by-election following Kemmy's death. She retained the seat in 2002 and 2007 and, like Burton, enjoyed a high profile in the Dáil as Labour's Education spokesperson.

The ballot will take place by postal vote for members who have paid full affiliation fees for the past two years. Those yet to receive a ballot or with other queries can contact their branch secretaries or Labour's Head Office directly. Voting closes on October 5th.

## Contents

### NEWS SECTION

- 1: Deputy Leadership
- 2: Gilmore Elected New Leader
- 3: Labour to Stand in North? / Tom Johnson Summer School Report
- 5-6: Branch Reports
- 7: Introduction to Labour Youth

### GENERAL ELECTION SPECIAL

- 9-10: Election Overview
- 11: Labour Youth's role in the Campaign
- 12: Labour Analysis of Exit Poll Data
- 13-14: Left Tribune Focus: Women in Irish Politics

### FEATURES / OPINION

- 15: Fighting for a Living Wage for All
- 16: Theatre and The Left

### INTERNATIONAL

- 17-18: A Future for Palestine? / IUSY 100 Years Celebration
- 19: Darfur - Still in Crisis
- 20: Ending the Cuban Blockade
- 22: Belarus - Europe's Last Dictatorship / Contact Details

# Eamon Gilmore Elected New Leader

**Dermot Looney**

Galway native and TD for Dún Laoghaire Eamon Gilmore has been elected as the tenth leader of the Labour Party following the resignation of Pat Rabbitte in late August.

Gilmore was formally proposed by Michael D Higgins TD and Willie Penrose TD and was deemed to have been elected as the only nominated candidate at close of nominations on September 6th. His official term as leader begins on October 5th.

The shock decision of Dublin South-West TD Pat Rabbitte to resign as Party Leader on August 23rd opened a potential leadership contest with a number of prominent TD's reported to be considering a challenge.

Potential candidates including Joan Burton, Willie Penrose and Tommy Broughan, whose entry to the race was called for by the Labour Youth Executive, eventually decided against contesting, leaving Gilmore a clear run.

**"Not only me, but others too.  
Not only here, but elsewhere too.  
Not only today, but tomorrow too."**

Eamon Gilmore's 3-point commitment for Labour

52 year-old Gilmore began in politics as a student activist and was President of University College Galway Students' Union from 1974-1975 and of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) from 1976-78.

Around this time Gilmore, along with Pat Rabbitte and others, joined Official Sinn Féin. This party went through a number of different incarnations with Gilmore first standing for the Workers' Party in the November 1982 general election in Dún Laoghaire. He was first elected to Dublin County Council in 1985 and to the Dáil in 1989. Gilmore was one of the six TD's who supported the break-away from the Workers' Party in 1992 to become first "New Agenda" and eventually Democratic Left.

He served as a junior minister at the Department of the Marine in the 1994-97 Rainbow Coalition and, when Democratic Left merged with the Labour Party in 1999, he was installed as a prominent front bencher. Gilmore's portfolio as Environment and Local Government spokesperson saw significant confrontations with the FF-PD government on housing, local government reform and climate change in



particular. He was also chair of the party's Policy Committee in the run up to May's general election and was credited with authorship of much of the 2007 Labour manifesto.

Patrick Nulty, Chair of Labour Youth, welcomed the election, noting that Gilmore "has been an outstanding advocate for ordinary people, in particular in exposing the inequities in the Irish housing market."

"A commitment to party democracy is a key litmus test for any incoming leader. In the last few years there appeared to be a gap between the leadership & the membership. All the signs are that Eamon is prepared to engage with members," Nulty noted.

In his acceptance speech Gilmore stated "Labour's mission is never about doing things just for ourselves, or even for our party. It is about what we can do for our country. In the immortal words of Connolly: 'The cause of Labour is the cause of Ireland and the cause of Ireland is the cause of Labour'."

A Gaeilgeoir, Gilmore concluded his acceptance speech *as Gaeilge*; **Seo tús aistir nua domsa, do Pháirti an Lucht Oibre agus tá suil agam don tír. Ar aghaidh leis an obair!**

## Gilmore: I Want U.S. Out of Shannon



**A vote for Labour will kick Bush's Irish allies out of office & his military out of Shannon.**

**A vote for Labour  
is an anti-war vote**



Labour Youth

www.labouryouth.ie :: youth@labour.ie

**Labour Youth's national anti-war election poster**

**Jane Horgan-Jones**

New leader Eamon Gilmore has reaffirmed support for the Labour policy to remove the US military from Shannon Airport. Speaking to young members at the leadership hustings event hosted by Labour Youth on September 1st, Gilmore asserted, "Let there be no ambiguity whatsoever about this. I want to see the US military out of Shannon and I do not want to see any Irish facility used for the conduct of the Iraq war."

"There is something twisted about a Government policy that allows Shannon to be used to wage an immoral & illegal war while what used to be our national airline will not accommodate the people of the Mid-West region in taking flights to London," he stated.

Ending Irish complicity in the Iraq war through the use of Shannon has been a sustained campaign of the Labour Party and Labour Youth since its outbreak in March 2003. Since then, Labour members across

Ireland have taken part in demonstrations and been involved in both local and national campaigns against the war. At the same time, through organising workshops on the issue at Party conferences and campaigning on the war in university campuses, Labour Youth have ensured that the issue is kept firmly on the agenda of the party.

At the last national Labour Conference in 2005, a Labour Youth-proposed motion on the war demanded the immediate withdrawal of US warplanes from Shannon to be an integral part of any programme for government after the election. This pledge, incorporated in the Labour manifesto, proved immediately popular - particularly with the young.

Gilmore closed by stressing Labour's place as an anti-war party will continue during his tenure. "Labour has been absolutely and unequivocally opposed to the war in Iraq from the start, consistent with the principles and philosophy of the Party."

# FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE

Unite the union is 100,000 strong in Ireland and its intention to reach out to new workers comes as the union reveals the results of a new poll, conducted exclusively for Unite by ICM Research, showing that younger workers are significantly better off if they are a member of a trade union.

The results suggest that the world of work is failing young people, and is creating a 'Generation Anxiety' as work-related worries spread stress throughout their lives. Yet the scale of Unite's task - and opportunity - is clear with just 1 in 4 saying they are a member of a union.

Therefore we are reminding you the youth of today that

Unite is the 'UNION FOR LIFE'.

When you finish your studies and enter the world of work remember - an organised workplace is a better workplace.



unite  
theUNION

The fighting back union



Jason Timmins

With a full Labour Party National Conference to take place in Wexford over the weekend of November 16-18, party members from across the island of Ireland are in store for a weekend of exciting, fraternal and robust political debate.

The extent of the all-Ireland dimension of the Labour Party is the critical question inherent within what is bound to be one of the touchstone motions of the party conference. The Northern Ireland Labour Forum (NILF) will be tabling a motion to conference calling on the Labour Party to change its constitution to allow Labour Party members to contest local elections in the six counties.

This promises to be a lively and controversial debate, and one which Mark Langhammer Chairperson of NILF is looking forward to.

# Labour to Stand in the Six Counties?

Speaking to *Left Tribune*, Langhammer noted "I think the time has come for Labour to stop waiting in Northern Ireland. We know that finding space for the Labour message will be difficult within the present political arrangements in the North. However it is critical that Labour provides all sections of the electorate with a genuine alternative to the mainstream parties based on Labour's core social democratic values."

A key factor in the debate will be how such an initiative would affect Labour's relationship with the SDLP (Social Democratic and Labour Party). Many Labour members have an affinity with the SDLP, and it is a member of the Socialist International. However, NILF and others would be keen to point out that the SDLP is a party borne out of the peculiar circumstances of Northern Ireland.

While there is a clear social democratic tradition within the SDLP embodied by former leading activists Paddy Devlin and Gerry Fitt, it also has a strong nationalist and conservative wing. The SDLP is closely aligned with the

nationalist community for understandable historical reasons. Furthermore, no trade unions are affiliated to the SDLP which is highly unusual for a labour party.

Thus, while there are progressive elements within the SDLP, NILF argue that this should not be used as a barrier to the Labour Party contesting and ultimately winning elections in the six counties. On the contrary, a strong, active Labour Party could work with, strengthen and support progressive elements within both communities around an egalitarian and inclusive approach to politics.

Patrick Nulty, Labour Youth Chair, is strongly supportive of the NILF motion. "From Labour Youth's perspective the choice is clear. Every single person on the island regardless of race, gender, ethnicity or culture should have the right to join and vote for a party with a socialist analysis and heritage. As Connolly wrote, 'The cause of Labour is the cause of Ireland.' Now it is time for Labour to realise that statement and offer itself to the electorate on an all Ireland basis."

## Tom Johnson School 07 'A Massive Success'

Over 200 Labour Party members from across Ireland attended the annual Tom Johnson Summer School in the Menlo Park Hotel, Galway from July 13th to 15th in what was deemed the largest and most successful such event in over a decade by those in attendance. The school is organised by Labour Youth but open to all Labour members.

Speakers over the weekend included TD's Jan O'Sullivan, Tommy Broughan, Ciaran Lynch, Joanna Tuffy and Eamon Gilmore, along with academic Kieran Allen, Moyross-based community worker Paul O'Shea, ICTU

General Secretary David Begg and British Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn. A series of debates on topics such as Migration and the Left, Labour in the North and Class and the Celtic Tiger complimented the overall theme - Labour: Where Next After the Election?

Local TD and Labour Party President Michael D Higgins delivered a keynote speech on Labour's role in the coming decade. The annual Jim Kemmy Award was presented to Larry Wheelock on behalf of the campaign to find justice for his brother Terence, who died in suspicious circumstances in Garda custody in September 2005.



# Around the Campuses

*Labour Youth has members from all walks of life in all 43 constituencies and the North, but much of our activity takes place in various college campuses across the country. As we enter a new college year, Left Tribune covers some of the news and plans for the year ahead in some of our major college branches.*

## UCC / Jim Kemmy Branch

### COMMITTEE 2007-08

Chair: Hazel Nolan  
Secretary: David Murray  
Treasurer: Keith O'Brien  
PRO: Peter Lucey  
Events: Greg Walsh

After a very successful electoral campaign in Cork, UCC Labour is re-establishing itself on the Leaside campus this year. The only way to grow is to get more people interested and involved, and the best way to achieve that is to get active on campus. This year students studying in the 'People's Republic' will see UCC Labour running campaigns based on student services in college, and local and national issues.

UCC Labour will also be holding open meetings and debates with speakers from the PLP visiting the campus and invited guest speakers. In light of the sliding in gender balance among active female members in UCC



LY, we will be running a Women's Week in order to both raise awareness on women's issues and to encourage women to become more active.

For those who may have spent the summer away from festivals, UCC LY, inspired by Left Fields, will be running its own alternative/ left wing fest. A combination of good music and

even better debate will give all genuine left movements a platform to offer students an opportunity to get involved in alternative socially-conscious movements and activities. So whether or not Cork isn't painted red by a sea of victorious GAA enthusiasts, it should see a strong and healthy resurgence in its red politics!

*Hazel Nolan (Branch Chair)*

## UCD / Michael O'Riordan Branch

### COMMITTEE 2007-08

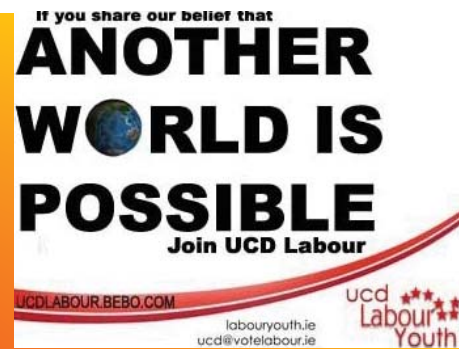
Chair: Dan O'Neill  
Vice Chair/Campaigns: Enda Duffy  
Secretary: Brian O'Connor  
Treasurer: Karen O'Connell  
PRO: Chris Bond  
Equality Officer: Kevin McCormack  
Social Secretary: Rory Geraghty

UCD Labour, recently renamed the "Michael O'Riordan Branch" in honour of the lifelong socialist and veteran of the Spanish Civil War, is to hit the ground running this September in an attempt to increase our membership and secure the branch's place as the most active political society in the University. Since our AGM at the end of last

semester, we have been working hard to draw up a plan of action for the year ahead.

Fresher's Week is always a time of great excitement within the branch and this year will be no exception. We will be handing out the cards (right) around the college. A key event during our campaign will be an introductory meeting to "The Politics of Labour" on Wednesday, followed by a social. This will help our new members to understand what it is we actually do and get to know each other.

We plan campaigns on climate change, the use of public land to damage healthcare, Shell to Sea, immigration, the treatment of UCD's neighbours & disability access.



With the announcement by the heads of Ireland's universities that they intend to put pressure on the government to reintroduce college fees, it is important that Labour Youth are at the forefront of the anti-fees movement. UCD Labour intends to lead the charge against the reintroduction of fees.

Finally, UCD Labour sees its overall goal this year as staying true to the mission statement sprawled proudly across our banner - "Campaigning for Democratic Socialism." We hope to be the voice of Labour principles within our university, helping to make the university a place where those who believe another world is possible unite in the proud tradition of Labour activism.

*Dan O'Neill (Branch Chair)*



# ¡Viva la Quinta Brigada!



Pictured at the 2007 Connolly Festival in the ATGWU hall, Dublin are, from left, Enda Duffy (Labour Youth Recruitment Officer), Harry Owens (Historian), Bob Doyle (last surviving Irish veteran of the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War) & Manus O'Riordan of SIPTU. Over 150 left activists listened to an emotional & inspirational speech by Bob Doyle as part of a weekend of debate & action

## GMIT / Caitlin Maude Branch

### COMMITTEE 2007-08

Chair: Dan O'Neill

Vice Chair: Cian Egan

Communications Officer: Julius Daree

This year we are planning a big recruitment drive in the main Dublin Road campus, Cluain Mhuire Art, Film and Television School, and the Castlebar campus in the hope of building a strong campaigning organisation to promote and fight for the ideals of the Labour

Party. The past year saw us take to the road in solidarity with our comrades in Erris, Co. Mayo in their phenomenal struggle against Shell and its allies. This coming year will see us travelling up again to offer our support and strength.

On campus, we are going to launch straight into a campaign to stop medical fees being brought in to see the college doctor. We see this as a fundamental struggle for the reten-

tion of a right the students of GMIT fought long and hard to achieve and we are disgusted at this proposed regressive policy.

If you are interested in becoming part of these campaigns and wish to fight for a just society feel free to contact me (eoghanfox@hotmail.com), or call into the Student Union office and ask about us and how to get involved.

**Eoghan Fox (Branch Chair)**

## Trinity College / Peter Fitzgerald Branch

### COMMITTEE 2007-08

Chair: Graham O Maonaigh

Secretary: Gary Honer

Treasurer: Eoin Moore

PRO/ Recruitment Officer: Laura Buttigieg

SU Co-ordinator: Christina McSorley

Following another remarkable victory in banning Coca-Cola from SU outlets last year, Trinity Labour go forward to 2007-2008 with a new name. They are now the "Peter Fitzgerald Branch" in memory of a commit-

ted Labour activist in Dublin South East who was remembered in Issue 4 of *Left Tribune*.

Trinity Labour Branch was founded in 1969 and was the first Labour Youth section founded at the conception of Labour Youth in the 70's.

For further information contact Branch Chair Graham O Maonaigh at [labour@csc.tcd.ie](mailto:labour@csc.tcd.ie).



### LABOUR YOUTH IS ALSO ACTIVE IN...

.....Dun Laoghaire IADT...National College of Ireland...NUI Galway...

...NUI Maynooth...Sligo IT...University of Limerick...Waterford IT.....

For info on any of these colleges, or to help set up a Labour branch in your college, email [youth@labour.ie](mailto:youth@labour.ie) or check out [labouryouth.ie](http://labouryouth.ie)

# Labour Youth: How We Work

*Labour Youth has launched an ambitious recruitment campaign with the intention of getting as many new active members as possible. Joining any new group can be daunting in itself - getting active even more so. When that applies to a political group, it's very easy indeed to be put off. But in Labour Youth the focus is on welcoming new members, encouraging their involvement and promoting their initiative. Here, Patrick Nulty & Dermot Looney examine how LY's structures works - a handy guide for new & existing members alike.*

## National Youth Conference

Every year Labour Youth holds an annual conference. This is the most important event of the year as policy is decided for the year ahead along with the election of the National Youth Executive (NYE). Conference is an exciting event with Labour Youth activists from across Ireland coming together to discuss policies, campaigns and ideas as well as interacting socially.

Policy is adopted by passing a motion. Every branch can submit five motions. Other members can then speak for or against that motion which will then be followed by a vote. Youth Conference is also addressed by the Labour Leader with members having the chance to ask questions. This year's Conference takes place in the ATGWU Hall on Middle Abbey Street, Dublin on October 26th and 27th. All members are entitled to attend. If you've any queries you can contact your branch secretary or email Cian O'Callaghan at youth@labour.ie

## Labour Youth Council

Every couple of months Labour Youth activists from across Ireland come together to discuss the organisation's work, make decisions on future events and track the work of the National Youth Executive. The Labour Youth Council is the second most important decision-making body in Labour Youth after Youth Conference. Every Labour Youth branch has a Council representative who votes on their behalf. All members are free to attend and speak at this meeting. It

discusses ongoing campaigns, adopts policies & holds the executive to account.

## National Youth Executive (NYE)

There are 9 members of the NYE, which is constitutionally responsible for Labour Youth between Councils.

The National Chair has overall responsibility for the development and management of Labour Youth. The Chair also acts as the official spokesperson for Labour Youth and represents LY on the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the Labour Party.

The National Vice-Chairperson is responsible for Labour Youth's national campaigns and stands in for the Chair where necessary.

The National Secretary is responsible for Labour Youth correspondence and the minutes of NYE and other Labour Youth meetings. S/he is also responsible for fundraising and the keeping of proper accounts.

The National Communications Officer is responsible for all Labour Youth Publications, including the website, information leaflets, posters and *Left Tribune*.

The International Officer is the Labour Youth's representative on the ECOSY bureau. This is the organisation that brings us together with our sister parties in Europe.

The National Recruitment Officer has responsibility for the planning, organising and



the execution of recruitment campaigns.

The National Education and Development Officer is responsible for Labour Youth training policy development. The Education and Development Officer also runs Labour Youth's Tom Johnson summer school and devises new policy documents.

The National Equality Officer is responsible for ensuring equality and equality of access for all Labour Youth members.

Cian O'Callaghan, the Youth Development Officer, also sits as a non-voting member of the Executive. Cian, a former Labour Youth activist, is part of the Labour Head Office staff and provides logistical support to all Labour Youth activities.

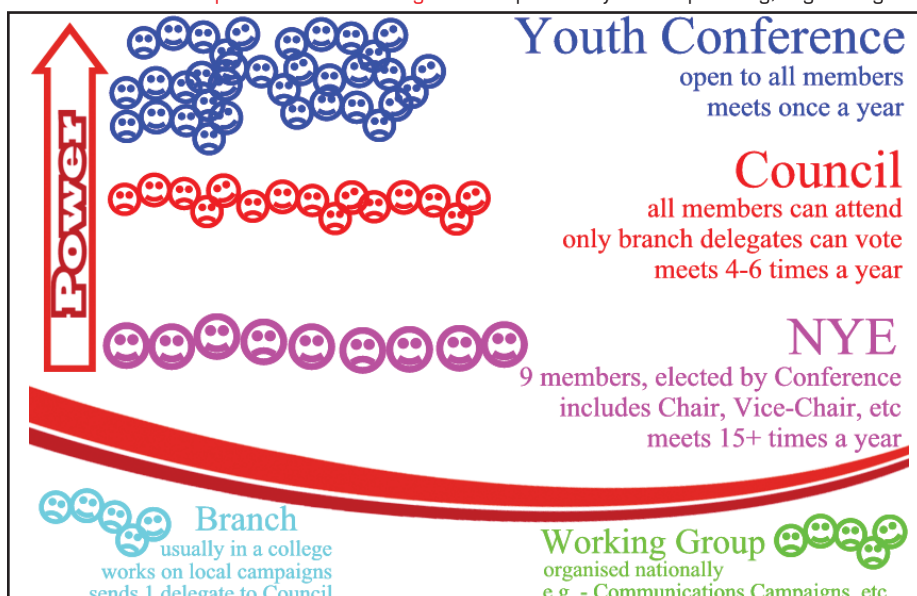
## Working Groups

There are 4 national Working Groups (WGs) open to all members, each chaired by the relevant executive officer. These are the Campaigns WG, International WG, Communications WG and Policy WG. Other groups may be set up throughout the year. These groups work through email and in meetings and campaigns and are a wonderful opportunity to follow your interests in the party, be they in communications, policy, etc.

## Branches

By far the easiest way to get involved with Labour Youth is through your local or college branch. We have branches in most major colleges and also work in all 43 Dáil constituencies. Most branches have a formal structure of Chair, Secretary, etc but getting involved need not be so formal. Setting up a local branch is also a lot easier than it sounds - contact Cian at youth@labour.ie or on 086-2866631 for any help or info.

Overall, Labour Youth is an open democratic & inclusive organisation. It seeks to empower & enable members to participate fully and to campaign for a fair and just society.





# Because we care...

Every day, SIPTU members in all walks of life throughout Ireland are working to develop our economy, to advance our society and to enrich their local community.

Our members can stay focussed on this work because the Union stays focussed on seeking the best living standards and working conditions for them.

# SIPTU

LIBERTY HALL, DUBLIN 1.

Tel: 01-8586300 Fax: 01-8749115 [www.siptu.ie](http://www.siptu.ie)



# Election 2007:

**Labour's performance in May's General Election has led to a period of intense reflection and debate within the party and society at large. But, as Paul Dillon & Dermot Looney argue, too much of this debate has been filtered by a narrow media agenda and a false 'modernisation' model along the lines of Britain's New Labour.**

We've had several TV news reports, numerous radio phone-in shows and more blog postings than you can point a mouse at. There's been more newspaper opinion pieces than there are opinions and the letters haven't piled up in Irish media outlets since the days of *Arthur's Mailbag*. For once, people are talking about the Labour Party. But the reason for such reflection is hardly a cause for celebration for Labour.

The immediate positives of May's election outcome are few and far between. Yes, Labour has secured its position as the dominant party on the Irish left - such as that is. But the weak performance of Sinn Féin, the Socialist Party (now left without Dáil representation) and other left independents is nothing for Labour to cheer about. With a mollified Green Party firmly ensconced in Government, the hopes for a progressive bloc in parliament - whatever the arguments about the status of other groups in such an arrangement - are severely curtailed.

It is also worth recalling that the loss of broad left seats, or failure for these groups to gain them, was in almost all cases to the benefit of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael - not Labour. So while some in the media have been quick to highlight Labour's advantage over Sinn Féin and others as a positive for the party, realists and dreamers alike in

Labour take no solace in an effective return to the 'bad old days' of a two-and-a-half party system. Labour might very well be in a better position now to recruit new members and attract new voters but it is a largely Pyrrhic victory.

Those attempting to be positive about the 20 seat, 10% outcome also point out the election of young candidates to the Dáil such as Seán Sherlock in Cork East, Joanna Tuffy in Dublin Mid-West and Ciarán Lynch in Cork South-Central, along with a host of new and mostly younger Senators. But while these parliamentarians fought excellent campaigns and may have a bright political future ahead of them, it would be fair to note that their collective commentary in the aftermath of the election - and in particular following the departure of Pat Rabbitte as Party Leader - was hardly inspirational.

In various interviews and articles Labour's newcomers made largely dull and often vacuous statements about 'modernising' in a 'changing Ireland' where 'all sections of society' must be represented. It may be a little unfair to single out these candidates - after all, the party's management, leadership and chatters were as one on this - but the musings of one 'newcomer' in the *Sunday Business Post* that there may well indeed be "a place" for trade unions in modern society

was the ultimate in kowtowing to the media consensus.

Commentators were also keen to point out Labour's joy at the demise of the Progressive Democrats - hardly an achievement, given all their main policies are now cornerstones of Fianna Fáil governance, and sometimes, as in the case with the conduct of recent deportations, are carried out with even less humanity. And some have even alluded to the failure of the 'Mullingar Accord' strategy as a positive - not because Labour now stands independent from Fine Gael, but because they want Labour pushed closer to Fianna Fáil!

Any fair analysis of Labour's 'performance' - if such a word is apt - must be cognisant of the bleak reality we face as a party. Nearly 100 years in existence, Labour has been in seven governments but has yet to achieve power. Rarely has the Labour Party had a chance to break out of its status as a half-party in Dáil terms; when that chance has arisen, as it did after Fine Gael's disastrous result in 2002, Labour has tended to take options which prop up either of the two major parties.

For now, Labour's Dáil proportion is a quarter of Fianna Fáil's and two-fifths of Fine Gael's. The need for renewal in terms of election candidates is plain to see. Doubtless, issues of organisation, strategy, policy, ideology and politics are crucial to how Labour goes forward. Such debates could have formed the foundations of a party-wide debate had there been a challenge to Eamon Gilmore's campaign to become Labour leader. But the lack of such a campaign should not mean the end of a member-led discourse on Labour's role in the coming years.

While Michael D Higgins' speech to the Tom Johnson Summer School was of much more substance, the soundbite from then-Party Leader Pat Rabbitte that Labour would have to "modernise" if it were to increase its electoral strength attracted much more attention.



**Pat Rabbitte TD launches Labour's ill-fated campaign**

# 20 seats, 10%, FF back in - *but, are we happy?*

The analysis that Labour can be restored to good health through "modernisation" draws on the experience of New Labour in Britain. Tony Blair declared New Labour to be a project of "modernisation" from the outset.

Exponents of Irish Blairism, small in number though they may be, have urged a re-examination of Labour's relationship with the Trade Unions. Some have suggested that Labour's relationship with the union movement is damaging the party. The first problem with this contention is that it is not mindful of Labour history. The Labour-Union link has been a source of both political legitimacy and finance in troubled times for our Labour Party. The trade union link was often the only thing that bound the Party's independently-minded TD's together in its early decades.

The argument also ignores contemporary evidence. Irish Congress of Trade Unions statistics show that about half of all workers in Ireland are members of unions. Research indicates that workers in Ireland continue to see unions as relevant and important. There are votes in appearing union friendly, as the Bertie Ahern well knows.

The Irish Labour Party has already looked for inspiration from New Labour - and has been rebuked by the electorate. Much of the Labour platform at the recent election had echoes of the New Labour approach. Some of the party's main slogans, such as "Ireland can do better with Labour" were adapted from those recently used by New Labour.

The departure in tax policy - where Pat Rabbitte promised a 2% cut in the basic rate of tax - could be said to have emerged from the same school of thinking. The New Labour school of thought is that you undercut your rivals by offering the electorate the same policies as they do, holding your core support and winning over new voters in the process.

The departure in tax policy - where Pat Rabbitte promised a 2% cut in the basic rate of tax - could be said to have emerged from the same school of thinking. The New Labour school of thought is that you undercut your rivals by offering the electorate the same policies as they do, holding your core support and winning over new voters in the process. The only effect this tax proposal had was to ensure that the agenda of tax cutting in



*Counting and tallying Dublin constituencies at the RDS*

Ireland was intensified, as the proposal to cut the basic rate to 18% per cent was quickly matched & outstripped by the other parties.

The spindoctors in our Labour Party have even gone as far as to borrow the term used by the New Labour to address the electorate - "Hard working families." How many people define themselves as, or as part of, such a unit? Focus groups may like notions of family and hard work but such assertion does not necessarily produce results in terms of fostering political identity or support.

Much of the New Labour miracle is a mirage in any case. The idea that New Labour represents modernisation is itself nonsense. The actual politics of modernisation in that party - welfare cuts, tax cuts for the rich, privatisation - represent a throwback to a bygone era when the free market reigned supreme.

It is also worth noting that the supposed electoral miracle of New Labour ought to be called into question. That party received fewer votes in the last general election than it did when Michael Foot was leader in the 1983 election. Hundreds of thousands of dis-

affected voters who once opted for Labour now stay away from the polls altogether.

Those who argue that the Irish Labour Party can copy New Labour and shift to what is apparently the "centre ground" ought to take a sober look at the Irish political landscape before recommending such a course. This space is already very crowded and some very obvious questions arise.

What is the point, and where is the benefit, in Labour offering the electorate a political option already being presented by the two main political parties? Who would vote for Labour if what it offers is the same as what is offered by Fianna Fail and Fine Gael? Surely these parties can implement centre-right policies better than Labour?

The debate about Labour future ought to be "no holds barred." All aspects of policy and politics should be examined as we attempt to chart a future for our party. But we ought to be weary of dead ends. Continuing to employ the politics of supposed "modernisation" or the approach of New Labour is only likely to inflict further damage on our Labour Party.

# Labour Youth's Role in the Election

Neil Ward

This year saw an enormous number of Labour Youth activists participate in the General Election campaign, working for candidates all around the country. Labour Youth, as a campaigning organisation, have always maintained a high level of activity all year round. But this year, our members went above and beyond their usual levels of activity, and began knocking on doors and delivering leaflets on behalf of candidates months before the election.

Centrally, Labour Youth took the decision to focus within the Dublin area on four key constituencies - constituencies which had been identified by Labour Head Office as battleground constituencies for the party in the election. These constituencies were Dublin South-Central, Dublin Mid-West, Dublin West and Dublin North-Central. Of these constituencies, Labour in 2002 won a seat in Dublin West, and a seat in Dublin South-Central. For 2007, we were aiming to retain these seats, and add seats in Dublin Mid-West and Dublin North-Central and a second seat in Dublin South-Central.

We were extremely fortunate to have great candidates and constituency organisations to work with in each of these constituencies. Joan Burton, as a sitting TD, was the party spokesperson on Finance, and had been one of our most important parliamentary voices in recent times. Nevertheless, in a tight three-seat constituency, the Labour seat was under pressure from the ever-popular Joe Higgins, and a new FG candidate in Leo Varadkar. In a phenomenal result, Joan dramatically increased her vote to comfortably retain her seat in the 30th Dáil.

Less fortunate was the case of Derek McDowell. Derek had held a seat in the four-seat Dublin North-Central from 1992-2002,

and had been one of the sitting Labour Senators during the last term. Unfortunately, despite a strong campaign, Derek's share of the vote declined from 2002, and he was unable to retake his former seat. The independent Finian McGrath bucked the national trend for independents, and substantially increased his share of the vote, which undoubtedly had an impact on the Labour vote in the area.

Dublin South-Central provided the tightest electoral race in the country. Eric Byrne had twice previously held a seat in this constituency, and had topped the poll in the Crumlin-Kimmage ward in the 2004 local elections. These factors, combined with his enormous reputation for campaigning on social justice issues, led to great expectation that Eric could take a second seat for Labour in this five-seat constituency, and join sitting Dublin South-Central TD Mary Upton in the 30th Dáil. Unfortunately, after some heartbreaking moments at the count centre, Eric lost out to Sinn Féin's Aengus Ó'Snodaigh by just 67 votes.

Finally, the constituency of Dublin Mid-West saw a hard-fought battle between Mary Harney, FG's Frances FitzGerald and Labour's Joanna Tuffy or the final two seats. A sitting Senator for the Labour Party, having lost out narrowly in 2002, Joanna substantially increased her share of the vote in the area to snatch the 4th seat in this hard-fought constituency. She joins Séan Sherlock and Ciarán Lynch as Labour's three new deputies for the 30th Dáil.

Labour Youth members played key roles in all of the four campaigns listed above, but also



in many others around the country. These four constituencies were used to direct youth members not heavily involved in their own local areas, but most of our members have been heavily involved in their own constituency campaigns, and played key roles in helping Labour return 20 deputies to the this Dáil.

Overall, it was a disappointing election for the Labour Party. The gains that had been hoped for failed to materialise on election day, and it can't be denied that this was disappointing both for Labour Youth and the Labour Party. However, with the quality of Labour candidates successfully elected to the Seanad, and over 100 councillors around the country, there are also many reasons for the party to be optimistic about the future.

Since the election, Labour Youth have been leading the debate within the party about where our future lies. With the organisation of the Tom Johnson summer school in July, and the hosting of a forum for all Greater Dublin Area members in September, Labour Youth have recognised the need for the party to reconsider it's own organisation, identity and policies. That debate is one which is being warmly embraced by the party membership, and we look forward to it's continuation.



*Dublin South Central candidate Cllr Eric Byrne must rank as the unluckiest politician in Irish electoral history. Having been involved in a marathon recount with Ben Briscoe in the 1990's, and come close on other occasions, he lost out by just 67 votes this time out to Sinn Féin's Aengus O Snodaigh.*

*He then secured a nomination for the Seanad but lost out in controversial circumstances by just 1 vote.*

*But his campaign incorporated dozens of Labour Youth activists with some members shooting & producing his "vlogs" on Youtube (see right). These were awarded the Best Political Video of the campaign on [www.votetube.org](http://www.votetube.org), beating off stiff competition. The videos are available from his blog at [www.ericbyrne.blogspot.com](http://www.ericbyrne.blogspot.com)*

*Remarkably, Eric has picked himself up and is yet again actively campaigning in local areas and on Dublin City Council.*

## A ballot sheet in Dublin North West



### Andrew Payne

Fianna Fáil weren't the only big winners on May 24th. Once again the RTE/Lansdowne Exit Poll provided an almost perfect prediction of the first preference vote for each party. Along with first preference intentions, the poll also asked a range of other questions to voters. Given the success of the poll it is interesting to look at the trends indicated by its other questions. Not all the results are as disappointing from a Labour perspective as the final result of the election proved.

### Young and first time voters

One of the most striking facts indicated by the poll is the fact Labour's vote is strongest, and growing, amongst young voters. Labour took 14% of the vote amongst 18 to 29 year olds - up from 10% overall - and even more impressively won 16% of first time voters. Both of these figures have risen over the last two elections indicating a potentially bright future given that both Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael's votes are lower in these groups than they are nationally.

### Desire for Labour in Government

The exit poll also shows a clear desire amongst the electorate to see Labour in a coalition government. The party achieved more other preferences than any other party with 26% of voters giving Labour an other preference compared to just 20% for Fine Gael and 15% for Fianna Fáil and the Greens. Even more clearly, the only two presented government options that were judged to be acceptable to at least half the population were a FF/Labour coalition (judged acceptable by 50% of voters) and a FG/Labour coalition (judged acceptable by 54%), the latter of which was the only possible government judged acceptable by a clear majority.

Even more striking is the number of Green Party voters who wished to see Labour in government. 52% wanted to see a FG/Labour/Green government while 61% expressed a preference for government

# Exit Poll Points to Brighter Future

options including Labour. By contrast, only 2% wanted to see a FF/Green coalition (the eventual government of FF/Green/PD/Ind was not presented as an option by the poll, if it were the figures supporting it would presumably be even lower than this 2%). That Green Party voters would rather see Labour in any kind of government than have their own party of preference in government with Fianna Fáil is clear.

### Key issues to voters

The five main issues influencing people's votes according to the exit poll were Health (mentioned by 45% of voters), Crime (25%), Managing the Economy (23%), Cost of Living (18%) and Education (15%). Labour voters also placed above average importance on the Environment (19%), Honesty and Integrity (15%) and Housing (15%).

More generally speaking 39% of voters said that choosing a candidate to look after their constituency was the main factor behind their vote and 24% said that choosing between policies as set out by parties was the main factor. These were followed by choosing who will be Taoiseach (22%) and choosing the set of ministers (12%) with don't know at 3%.

It would appear that Labour again scores well on the main two criteria. 43% of those who gave Labour their first preference said they voted Labour in order to choose a candidate who would look after the local constituency (only Sinn Féin and Independents scored higher) while 34% chose Labour for its policies (only the Greens scored higher). In comparison, only 17% of Fianna Fáil voters voted on the basis of policies while 33% voted on who they wanted as Taoiseach.

### Negatives

Not everything was rosy however, as the final result would of course imply. Labour did not prove a viable option for the 22% of voters voting on the basis of who they wanted as Taoiseach. This notion is backed up by the fact that only 9% of those who voted Labour stated that choice of Taoiseach was their main reasoning. Even more clearly, only 13% of those switching their vote away from Fianna Fáil since 2002 switched to Labour, by contrast 43% switched to Fine Gael.

Labour is also struggling to gain votes in a number of demographics. Sinn Féin is now

pulling in a greater first preference vote than Labour in the C2DE class while Labour's first preferences amongst farmers stand at only 6% compared to 44% for both Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil. Likewise, while Labour is strong in Dublin (14% of first preferences standing only 3% behind Fine Gael's figure of 17%), it remains exceptionally weak in Connacht/Ulster where only 5% of first preferences went to the party.

### A cause for hope

Although the RTE/Lansdowne exit poll clearly made disappointing reading for Labour supporters on election day, a deeper reading of its result clearly provides much cause for hope. While support for Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael is lower than the national average amongst the young and first time voters, for Labour these are groups of relative strength.

It is also clear that amongst those who choose to vote Labour, the most important deciding factors are the ability of Labour candidates and the policies of the party. That these are the core advantages voters see in a Labour vote is clearly very positive. Likewise the general popularity of the idea of Labour in government and in other preferences show a clear level of support for the party amongst many of the electorate, most notably those who voted Green this time around.

Without doubt there are worries. The lack of the prospect of a Labour Taoiseach appears to be a clear handicap in gaining votes while the party is suffering in what could in the past be considered traditional working class areas where Labour would expect support and in rural areas. If these areas can be seriously improved upon and support for Labour amongst Green voters translates to future Labour support after that party's unpopular decision amongst its voters to enter government with Fianna Fáil, then there is much hope for a bright Labour future.



Ballot boxes in the RDS



# Left Tribune Focus:

**Labour Youth activists** *Katriona Conway & Louise Caffrey* **reflect on the appalling state of female participation in Irish politics following May's election of just 22 women to the 166-member Dáil - one less than in 2002, and far behind most other countries.**

## Katriona Conway

*"Women should remain silent in the assemblies. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the assembly". [1 Corinthians 14:34-35]*

Some 2,000 years later, the above statement still rings true - albeit to a lesser extent. There are considerably fewer women than men involved in parliament, both in Ireland and throughout most of the world. Can a statement made so long ago really have that much effect on modern day politics? Evidently so. The social constraints & traditions that emerged from interpretation of this statement and others like it have long since confined women to the domestic sphere, while their male counterparts engaged purely in the public sphere.

This phenomenon is seen in parliaments across the world - women make up slightly more than half of the over global population, and yet very few parliaments are made up of even a quarter or more female representatives. There are numerous problems that face women in the world of politics - the primary one being transgressing stereotypical

gender boundaries that have been in place for generations, followed by more practical obstacles such as access to information systems, finances, and in some instances the practicalities of family situations.

There are the traditional barriers that need to be broken in order to have more women involved in politics. Men need to acknowledge, and even promote, female participation in decisionmaking and leadership. It is not uncommon to hear comments from males stating that they would never work for a woman. If that's their attitude concerning employment you can be pretty sure they would never vote for a woman to run the country! There is also the other end of the spectrum - women who will belittle successful women who do manage to get power, be it political, financial or status.

So how do we break down these barriers? We need to re-format the way society thinks about gender roles. We should give both sexes the same tools and experiences to enable them to be confident at what ever they chose to do. For instance, in very basic skills such as public speaking, females are at an instant disadvantage.

From a young age very few, if any, females are steered in the direction of public speaking and/or politics. Public speaking in schools is generally a boys club and many university debating societies are also evident of this. Without basic public speaking skills, how can any female be expected to be on an even keel with her male counterparts when it comes to canvassing and campaigning?

Furthermore, there are the more practical matters of women in politics. For a start, there is the financing of political campaigns. It has been well documented that women earn less than men. There are also problems concerning familiarity and knowledge of political processes. For a female entering the realm of politics independently, there are little, if any, helping hands to

guide the way. Many would feel intimidated by male counterparts and discouraged from asking for help for fear of being seen as the 'typical female' in need of rescuing and thus bowing to the traditional stereotypes that have long entrenched women in the private sphere.

There are practical obstacles to the majority of women being successful in the public sphere - one of the biggest being their responsibilities in the private sphere. For women who have children, or who choose to have children in the future, a successful career in any field involves a certain amount of sacrifices. There are also the logistics of being both a successful career woman and a mother - both roles often entail long and unpredictable hours and both demand a lot of attention. In terms of politics, it may include women working away from their families in order to sit in parliament and carry out their political duties. Considering that tradition, and the Constitution, holds dear the role of the woman in the home, women who venture into public life and parliament have to also transgress the traditional roles assigned to them.

Our culture is not supportive of a strong or equal female presence in parliament. The only way to reverse this is to break down the barriers of tradition and stereotype, to give young women encouragement to voice their opinions and the confidence to do so in the future. We need to encourage political awareness amongst both sexes and give both equal opportunities to express their views. We need to make the political structures that exist, both at a party, national and European level more accessible to women and encourage them to participate. There needs to be an end to what is viewed as 'gendered politics'- that issues such as abortion, equality and healthcare are women's issues and that they are the primary goals for female politicians, with all else left to their male counterparts. Men involved in politics need to play their part too, encourage female participation and listen to emerging female points of view, even if they do not agree, instead of shouting them down as often happens. Women have a right and a role in the public sphere - after 2000 years it's about time our voices were heard.



*Some of Labour's TDs and activists participating in the campaign to extend BreastCheck across Ireland*

# Women in Politics



**Louise Caffrey**

In terms of national pride, the statistics on female political representation in Ireland make for some fairly embarrassing reading. Just 22 TD's, or a miserly 13%, are women. Or, to put it another way, 87% of Dail representatives are men. This is below even the *global* average of 16% female representation. If we continue at the current rate, it will take more than 370 years for women in Ireland to gain equal representation in the political arena. Clearly, if we want to do something about the issue we need to do more than just talk about it.

So what can we do? Research in Ireland matches findings internationally in suggesting that balancing family life is the most important structural barrier for women seeking and sustaining a political career. Similarly, there is a problem in that at the level of youth and student politics there is a serious gender imbalance. Ensuring that women are empowered and instilled with the confidence to participate would be one course of action in addressing this. But we could also suggest that the reason politics is intimidating to many women, is simply because it is so dominated by men and a "male" way of doing things. In this sense just having more women in politics would probably improve the situation in itself.

Clearly if we are serious about addressing these problems, tackling structural barriers and the nature of electoral politics is of paramount importance. However it is also clear that the complexity of such issues means that many of them will not be easily or quickly resolved. In the meantime, half of the population will remain under-represented. Hence additional measures must be taken which promise more immediate effect. In this regard, much of what can be done lies in the hands of political parties.

It remains a seldomly-discussed fact that the most practical impediment to women's equal representation in Dail Eireann lies in the scarcity of women candidates and the absence of women selected to run in "winnable seats". While this is true of all Irish parties, it is far truer of the two largest parties than the smaller ones. In the recent election, while between 22 and 29% of candidates for Labour, Sinn Fein, the Greens and the PD's were women; the comparative figures for Fianna Fail and Fine Gael was only 13 and 15% respectively. This is the crux of



the issue: if women are not represented as candidates, it is simply not possible for them to be represented in the Dail. Hence, it is at the stage of candidate selection that the issue must be tackled and thus it is parties that hold the key to advancing women's political representation.

A good example of what parties can do comes from Norway. Thirty years ago, only 15 per cent of national representatives in Norway were women. Since then this figure has increased dramatically and now fluctuates between 36 and 39 per cent. As the Norwegian themselves explain, "Experience indicates that the proportion of women in political institutions will not increase unless targeted measures such as special campaigns and gender quotas are employed." A system of gender quotas was first adopted within the Socialist Left Party and the Liberal Party in the 1970s. Today, virtually all of the major Norwegian parties voluntarily apply a gender quota system in nominations to elections as well as to the make-up of party-governing bodies at all levels.

The Labour Party has instituted gender quotas to significant effect, making it the party with the largest percentage of female TDs. Yet in Ireland in general it is almost impossible to raise the issue of gender quotas without bitter objections being voiced. Perhaps the principle objection is that gender quotas are seen as removing the choice of the electorate. Yet without equal numbers of male and female candidates the Irish electorate are denied the choice to elect representative numbers of female TDs. In this sense quotas can be seen as a mechanism that enables

choice. Perhaps more importantly, we also need to look beyond technical issues to examine the practical implications of more equal female representation for society as a whole.

Research confirms that women's presence in legislatures is accompanied by a broadening of the parliamentary policy agenda to include mainstream concern with issues such as childcare, sexual violence, women's health and the balancing of work and family responsibilities. These issues are not simply "women's issues".

These issues affect both men and women and indeed children. In this sense the call for gender equality is not just about giving women a voice, it is about balancing the perspectives of both sexes in order to formulate a more rounded policy with all the positive implications that implies.

The absence of women is simply unacceptable in an institution such as the Dail. Tackling the deep-seated and complicated factors that surround this issue is absolutely vital if we intend to succeed in addressing the issue. However, we must recognise that in the absence of more equal numbers of male and female candidates, there is no possibility of having equal female representation.

The experiences of other countries prove that gender quotas at the candidate selection stage ensure more equal female representation. If parties are serious about gender equality, then they need to pay less lip service to the notion and take more action. To a very large extent, the issue is in their hands.

# Fighting for a Living Wage for All Workers

**Chris Bond**

Since the Celtic Tiger, we have been led to believe that working life has become more congenial. However, this analysis is far from the truth, particularly for those who are unskilled and work in the services sector. Some of Ireland's highest earning retail outlets are populated by workers earning the minimum wage. As a result, the wages employees are paid in comparison to the massive profits accumulated by these companies is negligible.

By definition, a 'living wage' is a wage which allows workers to comfortably afford all living expenses, giving them sufficient compensation for their hours of labour. The current levels of the minimum wage is surpassed by massive increases in the cost of living.

The current Irish minimum wage is €8.65. A worker earning the minimum wage over a forty hour working week receives approximately €346 per week. That money is expected to cover food, accommodation, electricity bills, transport, medical bills and all incidentals of life. However, Ireland has one of the highest costs of living in Europe. With G.P fees exceeding €50 per consultation, many who are earning the minimum wage will put off going to their doctor, even if they are very unwell. Otherwise, they may find themselves unable to pay for other essentials.

It is unacceptable that working people are visited with such financial pressure when trying to pay for the necessities of life. Employers are even allowed some exemptions in the minimum wage in the case of an employee being under the age of 18, or having less than two years work experience as an adult. This disproportionately affects early

school leavers. According to the European Foundation for the Improvement in Working and Living Conditions, Ireland has one of the highest levels of working poverty in the E.U. The working poor is defined as people who work for a living and whose disposable earnings are below 60% of the national median income. A living wage determined by the E.U. is €10 per hour.

Last year, Labour Youth were involved in the Living Wage Campaign. This involved the submission of a living wage motion to Dublin City Council by Labour Party Councillor Eric Byrne, who has done some excellent work on the issue of wages and employment standards. The motion required all companies doing business with the Council to pay their employees a minimum of €10 per hour. This was an important victory in the campaign for fair wages.

In 2005, the Unite union in New Zealand launched the "Super Size My Pay" campaign, demanding a \$12 minimum wage, abolition of youth rates for the minimum wage and secure working hours. It enjoyed considerable success, winning wage increases and the phasing out of casual hours for 7000 fast food workers. The campaign has also inspired similar initiatives in other countries such as Australia. At home, an equal minimum wage for all workers regardless of age was included in the Labour Party manifesto prior to the 2007 general election.

There is a hostility to wage increases emanating from some media outlets and interest groups representing employers, such as IBEC (Irish Business Employers Confederation). In July of this year, the Governor of the Central Bank Mr John Hurley warned against wage increases on the basis of high wages being inflationary. People representing the business class will

always try to suppress wage increases for workers in the pursuit of higher profits. The Minimum wage has been vehemently opposed by IBEC since its introduction. As with all things IBEC, we should not accept their views as truth. In 2001, when inflation was running at 5%, ICTU (Irish Congress of Trade Unions) managed to negotiate an additional 2% wage increase with the employers and government. Inflation then declined in the years following. Furthermore, conservative commentators do not apply the wages causing inflation argument to quantum salary increases for already high earning company executives. Labour costs relative to profits have declined considerably in the past number of years. The pro business National Competitiveness Council - which is hardly a bastion of left wing opinion - claimed that Irish cities have lower labour costs than many of their counterparts in the U.K and on mainland Europe.

It is grossly inhumane to expect anyone to get by on the current levels of minimum wage. A living wage ensures a decent return for a week's labour. It is also a step towards reversing the race to the bottom in wages and standards in the workplace. A proper living wage will help to lift many hardworking people and their families outside the poverty trap. It is also important that all exemptions to the minimum wage, which were inscribed into law at the insistence of IBEC, are abolished. The Combat Poverty Agency state that fair wages set by the state are crucial to alleviating poverty. "A fairer distribution of income is necessary for a poverty-free society. Employment and social welfare are key sources of income. These are influenced by employment, tax and social welfare policies at national and European level."

*Our campaign for a Living Wage for All continues. For more see [www.labouryouth.ie](http://www.labouryouth.ie)*

*Cllr Eric Byrne and Neil Ward of Labour Youth launched the Living Wage Campaign for Dublin City in 2006 with Mick O'Reilly (ATGWU - now UNITE), Joanne Delaney (MANDATE shop steward), Jack O'Connor (SIPTU) and Pat Rabbitte TD*





# Breaking a Left Leg: Theatre and the Left

Katriona Conway

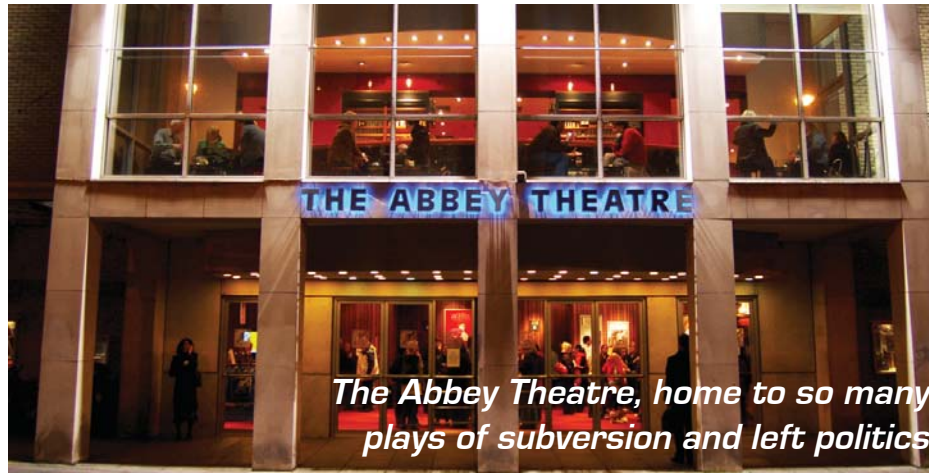
The stage has long provided dramatists with a space for scrutinising the society in which we live, transgressing oppression and subverting authority albeit with a safety screen of it being 'art', and rarely through direct and open criticism. The smokescreen of 'art' allowed many to voice particular left wing sentiments in an otherwise oppressive society.

Take for example, Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879) which is a critique of archaic gender roles and restrictions, Eugene O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape* (1921), which expresses outright disgust at the industrialisation and exploitation of American working class. In historic terms, theatre served a purpose in regards to the expression of leftist politics and dialogue in an atmosphere which would otherwise be hostile or indeed highly dismissive of such ideology.

Through the stylistic means of *Littérature Engagée* and Social Realism, political theatre came to the forefront as capitalism and mass industrialism took hold during the early 20th century in Western Europe and North America. In the USA, plays such as *Hairy Ape* and perhaps more markedly Mark Blitzstein's *The Cradle Will Rock* (1937), displayed, with intensity, the stark reality for many working class while also highlighted the emerging need and role of workers unions as the differences between the classes became more pronounced.

*The Cradle Will Rock* was so threatening to the US Federal Government and their overtly capitalist interests, that it was censored at its first scheduled performance, with the cast and audience being locked out of the theatre, this however, did not stop the production from going ahead in a nearby theatre. In Europe, social realism was used to show audiences the futility and hypocrisies of social class etiquettes, with plays such of Shaw's *Pygmalion* (1916) and *A Doll's House*.

Through this form of theatre, audiences are given a mirror image of the societies in which they live and are encouraged to see the ludicrousness of their present situation and in doing so induce a cathartic moment of realisation amongst his/her audience. In *A Doll's House*, Ibsen provides a critique on the autonomy of women in an emerging modern



*The Abbey Theatre, home to so many plays of subversion and left politics*

society, this play is seen as one of the first polemic plays ever written & mass produced.

In recent times, however, one has to question the role of theatre in the furthering of a leftist political agenda. While there have consistently been many productions of plays such as Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1944) and Miller's *The Crucible* (1952), there appears a certain lack of contemporary political drama being staged in the major theatres across Europe and North America, with the exception being The Abbey Theatre.

Compared to the anti-war theatre that emerged both during and after the Vietnam War, theatre and playwrights have been slow to use the war as an overriding theme. The most widely known anti-war plays to emerge have been David Hare's *Stuff Happens* (2004) and Slovo and Brittan's *Guantanamo: Honour Bound to Defend Freedom* (2004) which opened to packed houses on both sides of the Atlantic and both are candid and unapologetic in their stance on the war. *Stuff Happens* concerns itself with the depiction of Blair and the White House Administration and their respective roles in the war - it uses well publicised speeches and comments from all the main players in the war and thus provides a stark demonstration of the ludicrousness of going to war. Many US critics were unhappy with the sentiment and tone of the play, pointing out that those who go to see the play were in essence going to be anti-war anyway, thus limiting the political and social effect of such a play.

The same, however, can be said of any overtly leftist dramatic production, perhaps, when it comes to theatre, the less overt about its

politics the more astute the political message. Take for example the recent run of Sam Sheppard's *Kicking a Dead Horse* (2007), in which subtle reference is made to the war in Iraq, globalisation and commercialism - yet in the context of the overall production it is in its very inclusion a damnation of such events.

This is perhaps even more astutely done in Caryl Churchill's *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You* (2006), which hasn't yet been staged in the US but like *Kicking a Dead Horse*, had a recent run in The Abbey Theatre. It examines the relationship between American and British foreign and economic policy under the auspices of two men having an illicit affair, but does so in a manner to which one would not immediately associate the play with an anti-war and anti-American stance.

Theatre has a major role to play in the current climate concerning leftist politics. It, however, may not be a time for overtly politicized drama. Theatre in Ireland has been from its conception, social theatre, and theatre which throughout the years has aligned itself with the politics of the left. In recent months we have seen it aligning itself very strongly with the theatre of a strong contemporary anti-war, anti-globalization and, in the coming weeks, an anti-racism voice.

In this sense, theatre has a strong place to play in the furthering of leftist politics and ideology, the problem is, however, the overpricing of tickets which limits the capacity of all to attend. Perhaps the only fault to be found with political and social mainstream theatre productions in Ireland is that it does, through its commercialism, exclude the many people who cannot afford to attend.

# A Future for

**Holly Kilroy is a Labour Youth activist who has worked in Palestine for the past two years. She sends on some of her experiences and observations from a country in perpetual crisis.**

As I sat in the dusty schoolyard, a shrill scream rippled like a Mexican wave across the city and sent a shiver up my spine. It was a warning-in Nablus, Palestine screams and whistles are the fastest way to send word that the Israeli army is entering the city. Moments later, voices wailed from the mosques, warning some into their houses, and others out to fight. This was typical of a night in Nablus. Every night, people rushed to be locked up in their houses by midnight—every night the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) trundled into the city in their armoured jeeps, and you didn't want to be caught on the streets. Hurrying inside ourselves, we turned off all the lights and dragged our sponge mattresses from the classrooms to the kitchen, huddling together, away from the windows. No one slept much that night as gunshots rained through the streets below and F16s flew low overhead, breaking the sound barrier with shattering booms.

I found myself in Nablus last summer with a group of 20 internationals, invited to Palestine to run a summer camp for the children of a refugee camp. Run through a university based organisation, Zajel, we spent mornings teaching the kids English, drama, art and dancing, and spent afternoons meeting with NGOs, politicians and journalists. The morning after these screams however, we were not to go to work. An Israeli soldier had been killed a few days earlier and the reprisal



*A destroyed Government building built by the Palestinian Authority*

was getting underway. The IDF had set up roadblocks and proceeded to shell a nearby government building. They retreated three days later, leaving a prison, a section of the Ministry of Interior, a veterinary clinic and the city archives, which housed the identities of over 100,000 people, in ruins. Hundreds lost their jobs and windows were blown out of buildings up to a kilometre away. Six Palestinian civilians were left dead, four braindead, and 56 seriously injured, none of them the wanted man.

My journey to Palestine began in my first week of college, when I signed up to become a member of Labour Youth. Drawn to it because of my interest in human rights, I quickly became involved in its highly active international section. Zajel was one of the many organisations who looked to Labour in its search for aware and mobilised youth. The year following my return from Palestine, I spent working on the Palestinian issue with Labour Youth and, through which, the Young European Socialists (ECOSY).

One year later I find myself back in the Holy Land, this time in West Jerusalem, Israel. Working with a joint Palestinian-Israeli organisation, the Alternative Information Centre, my life is in strong contrast with last summer as I now spend most of my days in front of a computer in an office. While being in the heat of things last year taught me more than I

could learn from a thousand books, it's now time to get down to work. Often, what I learn from my desk is no more shocking than what I learnt on the ground.

A recent research project on the academic boycott revealed dozens of discriminatory actions and policies carried out by the institutions themselves—an aspect often forgotten in the wider debate. The mere threat of a boycott has triggered a deafening counter attack showing just how effective such a measure could be.

Grabbing the lime light from the academic boycott is the political boycott of Hamas and its effects on the region. The Gaza takeover in June by Hamas, triggered by its political and economic isolation, has brought a number of negative outcomes. The humanitarian situation in Gaza has plummeted and is verging on total collapse. With minimal supplies being allowed into the area and not a single export allowed out the economy has ground to a virtual halt.

On a recent trip through the West Bank a friendly taxi man brought me for coffee in his home, located in a refugee camp north of Jerusalem. Meeting with his extended family, I learnt that support for Hamas there had risen considerably, as it has throughout Palestine.



*Photo: Local Checkpoint Monitors Team, B'Tselem*

# Palestine?

Most Palestinians did not take the apparent concessions made by the Israeli government to Fatah too kindly. The token prisoners freed and the partial release of tax revenues (which already belonged to the Palestinian government) is seen only as a blatant attempt to heighten tensions between political factions-which they are.

When we went on our way again and I finally reached Nablus, I found a different city to the one I left last year. The mountains of rubble remained untouched but the atmosphere was not the lively, resilient one I remembered.

So many of my friends had left, emigrated if they could, and for those who remained, university degree or not, unemployment and poverty soared.

The hundreds of NGOs working in the region do their best, but realistically all they can do is alleviate the troubles of those living with the consequences of the conflict. What is needed is political action.

The Palestinians are damned if they do and damned if they don't-no matter what their political situation, their fate is out of their hands.

The Israeli government, even if they wanted to, could never get the public approval needed to initiate final status peace talks without considerable outside pressure.

The fate of the Palestinians therefore, lies in the hands of the international political community. It is up to us to act.



*Holly teaching local children at a refugee camp*



*Photo: Yehezkel Lein, B'Tselem*

## IUSY Celebrate 100 Years

### Neil Ward

On the weekend of 24th-26th September, members of over 140 organisations from around the world gathered in a former railway station in East Berlin to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the foundation of IUSY (International Union of Socialist Youth). Over 700 delegates gathered from every continent on the planet to participate in workshops on topics as diverse as Feminism and Migration, Eradicating Homophobia, and Decent Work, while regional discussions also took place between Balkan representatives, European delegates, delegates from the Middle-East, and representatives of the Oceania-Pacific delegations.

The event was co-hosted by IUSY, Jusos (the young wing of the German Social-Democratic Party) and SJD-Die Falken (The German Falcons - a socialist youth education group). Unfortunately, IUSY and Jusos agreed to accept corporate sponsorship for the event, allowing Microsoft and E.on (a German nuclear power company) to sponsor the event. SJD-Die Falken were as appalled as we were with this behaviour, and progressive groups from Ireland, UK,

Austria and Germany combined forces to participate in some anti-capitalist campaigning over the weekend!

In more productive discussions, the sitting LGBT co-ordinator is not considering running again for the position once his term ends in January. Due to Labour Youth's enormous activity in this area in recent years, we were able to have considerable sway in the selection of a successor, and it appears that we will secure this position for one of our UK comrades. This is a great step forward, which will see two senior positions within IUSY allocated to UK & Ireland for the first time in recent memory.

The weekend also allowed ample opportunity for us to further advertise our Killer-Coke and anti-war campaigns, and we received enormous support from our international comrades for our attempts to remove the US Military from Shannon. The Centenary celebrations provided us with a wonderful opportunity to welcome delegates from Montenegro to IUSY for the first time since they secured their independence, and celebrate the newest victory for our comrades within the International Socialist movement.

# Rape, torture, death & displacement - the tragedy of Darfur

**Joanne Doherty**

After the Rwandan Genocide of 1994, where over 800,000 people were massacred, the international community declared that never again would such a violent and humanitarian catastrophe be let happen. But 13 years after this promise was made, the international community has stood by as the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan has led to the death of more than an estimated 400,000 people through violence and starvation, with the rape and torture of thousands, and the displacement of approximately 2.5 million people.

The conflict began in 2003 between the government sponsored Arab Janjaweed militia and non-Arab tribes- the Fur, Zaghawa and Masalit. These tribes have formed into two groups, the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Movement. These movements have accused the Arab dominated government of neglecting the people of Darfur for decades. A former colony of Egypt and Britain, this region of Sudan has remained underdeveloped from the period of colonization to today, with most national resources being directed to Khartoum and the Blue Nile Province in Sudan. Famine struck the region in 1984 and 1985 leading to great loss of life, with 95,000 people estimated to have died. Some Africans believed that the Arab government could have prevented such deaths if the people were warned in advance of crop failure and more preparations were put in place.

In 2003 the Sudan Liberation Movement began attacks on police stations and military bases demanding the government to provide

infrastructure in the region, to distribute proceeds from the oil wealth to the region and for power sharing in government. The Sudanese government responded by recruiting the Janjaweed militia through promises of money, guns, and the opportunity to gain land. The Janjaweed have come from traditional Arab nomadic tribes who historically have had no access to land, migrating from civil wars in Chad between the 1960s and 1980s. The government have led bombings in Darfur, while the Janjaweed on the ground are responsible for killings, rape and looting. Large numbers of people have been displaced because of the Sudanese government's orders for the Janjaweed to destroy the water sources, crops and villages of non-Arab civilians.

Civilians have had to flee their villages to refugee camps in neighbouring Chad, but are also faced with attacks from Chadian militia on the borders who are supportive of the Sudanese government. Rape has been used as a weapon in the conflict to prolong the suffering and death of women. Women are constantly under threat of being attacked when seeking water and firewood outside the camps. Many people are dying from starvation and are severely malnourished. This is widespread in areas where aid organisations cannot access due to fighting.

The May 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement was rejected by the Justice and Equality Movement and part of the Sudan Liberation Movement because of its failure to include a victim's compensation fund, power-sharing, and disarmament of the Janjaweed militia. The weakness of the UN in its attempts to end the conflict in Darfur brings to light the

undemocratic structure of the Security Council in which any of its 5 permanent member countries can veto a resolution. China for a long time was reluctant to agree to a peacekeeping resolution due to its oil relations with the Sudanese government, having investments in Sudanese oil fields.

Having finally passed Resolution 1706 in August 2006 to deploy 22,000 peacekeeping troops, the UN has continuously failed to provide the African Union with peacekeepers largely because the Resolution depended on the consent of the Sudanese government. The Sudanese government refused to allow UN peacekeepers into the region, despite previously agreeing to allow 10,000 UN peacekeepers into Southern Sudan where there has been a twenty one year civil war. It is believed that the government fear that it will be held accountable for the conflict in Darfur if the UN is allowed entry.

Currently, the African Union is the only peacekeeping body in the region, but is badly equipped and under funded and it along with the Sudan Liberation Movement is calling for the UN to move in. Resolution 1769 was passed on the July 31st of this year to allow a UN and African Mission hybrid force to enter but this is not likely to take place until October of this year. The UN has given very few sanctions for violations of the arms embargo in place and China's oil purchases have no doubt funded the Sudanese government in the killing of civilians in Darfur. The Sudanese government have promised to disarm the Janjaweed but there is little evidence of this happening. For the people of Darfur who face starvation and violence on a daily basis, it appears to be too little too late.



*A truly shockin scene in Darfur where countless thousands have been killed or left to die. Those walking in the background are soldiers.*

# The economic blockade of Cuba: a State of Siege

**Enda Duffy**

The US economic blockade of Cuba officially began on the 14th May 1964, when the White House prohibited the sale of US food supplies to Cuba. The objective of this was to starve the Cuban people and thus force the collapse of the revolution. Many years earlier during the nineteenth century, the great Latin American liberator Simon Bolivar must have envisioned what was to come when he stated, "The United States seems to be predestined by providence to plague the people of America with hunger and poverty in the name of liberty."

Still today, his words are even more relevant, as under the sadistic regimes of both Clinton and Bush, the economic war against the Cuban people has been intensified. According to the Helms-Burton act, passed in 1996, any non-US company that deals economically with Cuba can be subjected to legal action and that company's leadership can be barred from entry into the United States. Sanctions may also be applied to non-U.S. companies trading with Cuba. This means that internationally operating companies have to choose between Cuba and the US, which is a much larger market.

The hostility of this superpower is derived from the alleged restrictions on political activity and human rights. In actuality, in spite of the difficulties facing the island nation, it sets an example in terms of distribution of the national income that ensures education, healthcare, social security, nutrition and recreation for the entire population.

The economic blockade is a relic of the Cold War, a war that ended almost 20 years ago. Kennedy instigated the war in response to the links made between Havana and Moscow. These economic links were forced on Cuba due to pressure and hostility from Washington - partly because the revolutionary regime had the nerve to initiate agrarian reform that would be of great benefit to the Cuban people and vastly increase their standard of living, while at the same time putting a few wealthy landlords out of pocket. The economic link that developed with the Eastern Bloc countries and the Soviet Union was a solution to the problems created in Cuba by the U.S. blockade. With the disappearance of those suppliers to the Cuban economy, the country became paralysed. The Helms-Burton Act passed after the Cold

War ended made economic survival even more difficult for the Cuban nation.

It has been unambiguously stated in the US congress that the object of the blockade is to facilitate a corrosive process from below, using food shortages and sabotage to make the country ungovernable. Any sensible person can see that such behaviour is misanthropic and psychopathic. The U.S government cannot accept that people can attain social gains, racial equality and justice without having to resort to mass public protest and monumental pressure on elected representatives to demand and achieve these basic human rights. Only sychophants could be infuriated that there is a 'Third World' country that has abolished abject poverty, and established world class and universal health and education systems, while the richest country on this earth leaves its most vulnerable citizens destitute and lacking basic education and health services.

The international community has a responsibility not just to support petitions for the lifting of the blockade, but to actively pressure and threaten the U.S. with international sanctions until this state of siege is ended. The blockade itself is condemned on an annual basis by the U.N. - for example, on November 8th 2006, the UN General Assembly overwhelmingly approved a resolution condemning the blockade, with 183 nations voting in favour and with only four opposing votes: the United States, Israel, the Marshall Islands and Palau. It is clear that for peoples and governments around the world, be they socialist, social democrat, or even capitalist, the economic blockade of Cuba is a moral and legal outrage.

Many people throughout the world are rejecting the methods applied by the United States against Cuba, and even though they might disagree with the model chosen by the Cubans, they empathise with the country's plight and perceive the economic blockade as an immoral and illegal act. All over the world, numerous political groups have condemned the economic blockade and



demanding respect for Cuba's sovereign right as an independent nation to choose the socio-economic system that its populace considers most apt for the country's growth.

This justification of Cuba's self-determination is based on irrefutable facts. Article 2 of the U.N. Charter makes it clear that "all members should refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state". Armed with this legal basis, and Cuba's social achievements, solidarity organisations including Labour Youth are taking to the floor to defend a system in which they can recognise part of the solution to their own struggle, daily irritated by the incompetency of the neo-liberal model proposed to them by decadent capitalism.

For over forty years, this low intensity war has raged unabated. The time has beyond doubt come for this archaic and depraved act to finally be repealed. No system of governance is ideal, and Cuba is far from perfect, but those that strive to improve the lives of the poor, the hungry and the sick are the governments that are truly serving the people, encompassing the freedom to choose the trade and industry that benefits the citizens most can only be regarded as humanitarian and egalitarian in the most extreme.

# IRELAND PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

2007 Marks the 40th anniversary of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the world's longest military occupation.

Palestinian people suffer:

- The construction of an illegal 730-km long Wall on their land in the West Bank
- A policy of expulsion and slow ethnic cleansing from areas Israel wants to annex.
- Large-scale demolition of their houses.
- Collective punishment and targeted assassinations of civilians.
- Restriction of movement by over 500 checkpoints in the West Bank
- A devastated economy and a crippling economic blockade of Gaza

Despite innumerable UN resolutions calling on Israel to end the occupation, abide by international law and respect the rights of Palestinians, Israel continues to expand building more and more settlements on Palestinian land in the West Bank, destroying more and more Palestinian lives.

The IPSC is an Irish campaign group founded in 2001 that is lobbying for an end to the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian land. We are always looking for new members to join the international struggle for justice for Palestinians. To get involved with the IPSC, please contact your local branch (see our website for contact details) or our national office on 01-6770253.



IRELAND PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

WWW.IPSC.IE

"My visit to the Holy Land reminded me so much of what happened to us in South Africa. If apartheid ended, so can the occupation, but the moral force and international pressure will have to be just as determined."  
- SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHBISHOP, DESMOND TUTU

Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign | 01-6770253 | [www.ipsc.ie](http://www.ipsc.ie)  
Room 5, 64 Dame Street, Dublin 2 | [supportpalestine@ireland.com](mailto:supportpalestine@ireland.com)

# JOIN US!

Think Labour? Why not join Labour? Joining Labour Youth is as simple as filling in the form below and posting to Labour Youth, 17 Ely Place, Dublin 2 - or emailing the details to [youth@labour.ie](mailto:youth@labour.ie)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

College: \_\_\_\_\_



# Belarus: Europe's Last Dictatorship

**Paul Mulville**

One of the guiding principles of the left is that of liberty, that is to say we believe that people are born free and have a right to engage in democratic decision making. That is why the left fought in the Spanish Civil War against fascism. That is why we campaign today for a free Palestine, why we campaign to end the Cuban Blockade, and why we campaign for the right of Columbian workers to freely join a trade union. It is our commitment to free and open democracy which situates the left at the heart of progressive politics and which gives us hope for a better world for all.

Today the evidence suggests that the citizens of the Republic of Belarus are being denied basic freedoms, namely the freedom of association, the freedom to public protest and the freedom of speech. Not a wealthy country, the people there were greatly affected by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, and indeed many Irish people are doing vital work to help Belarusian children affected by Chernobyl. The current Belarusian President is Alexander Lukashenko, and it is he who is partly to blame for the current situation. Due to his actions, Belarus is widely known as the last dictatorship in Europe. Mr. Lukashenko has been President since 1994, and concerns are constantly being raised about his abuse of power. Originally a strong opponent of political corruption and an advocate of democratic socialism, the Mr. Lukashenko

has earned the distrust of the international community due to his drift towards authoritarianism.

During the latest presidential elections in 2006, Alaksandar Kazulin, one of the opposition candidates and leader of the Belarusian Social Democratic Party, Labour's sister party, was beaten by police at a rally and then arrested, several weeks before the election. He is currently serving a five and a half year jail sentence. In the 2006 election, Mr. Lukashenko received over 80% of the vote, and in a country going through such a trouble and divisive period, this result can hardly represent the true mood of the people. The OECD, while itself not an unbiased observer, reported widespread voter intimidation during that election campaign.

BBC news reports showed suppression of protest and intimidation of political activists. Amnesty International (AI) has declared Alaksandar Kazulin a prisoner of conscience and is campaigning for his release. AI has also very recently called on Belarus to stop the intimidation of young people involved in political activism. Many young people taking part in peaceful protest are being arrested and beaten for little or no reason, indeed echoing recent events in Rossport, Co. Mayo, and AI has said that the "obstruction, harassment and intimidation" of people involved in the "promotion and defence of human rights" must end.



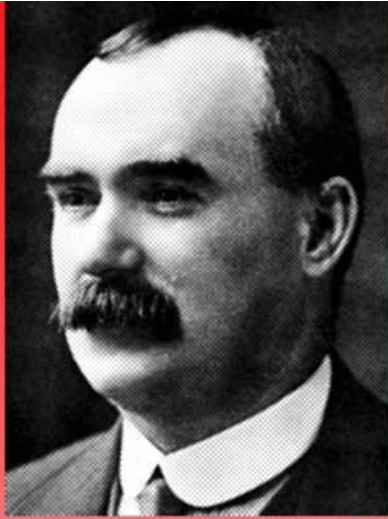
*Belarusian dictator,  
Alexander Lukashenko*

The European Union has imposed sanctions on Belarus, including the freezing of funds belonging to Mr. Lukashenko and other government officials, and a travel ban. The Socialist International has condemned "the permanent violation of democracy, legality and human rights in Belarus". Our comrades in the International Union of Socialist Youths have begun a campaign to legalize political activities in Belarus

As democrats, we do not need to oppose Belarus' economic policy. That is a matter for the people of Belarus to decide, and if they choose an alternative to the free market, the international community must respect such a decision. But we must oppose the violent manner in which Mr. Lukashenko is oppressing the people of Belarus, and we affirm that Belarusians must not be denied participation in free and open democracy. The full weight of international pressure must be brought to bear on the government there and as internationalists and as Labour Party activists, we must agitate in Ireland and through international channels for the freedom of Belarusians to democratically engage in the running of their country.



*Jim Larkin*



*James Connolly*



*Noël Browne*



*Mary Robinson*

*They fought for social justice  
in their generation;*

**Now it's your turn.**

Labour  
Youth

*Join Labour Youth today.*

**labouryouth.ie**

youth@labour.ie

labouryouth.bebo.com

*The Labour movement includes hundreds of millions worldwide who campaign and work for human rights, democracy and social justice. Joining with us will give you the opportunity to make a real difference for an equal Ireland and a radically fairer world.*