

LEFT TRIBUNE



LABOUR'S ROLE IN 1916

www.LabourYouth.ie

Joanne Reinstated

Neil Ward writes about the campaign which led to Joanne Delaney being reinstated as a Dunnes Stores employee

On February 25th, Joanne Delaney received a letter from Dunnes Stores management, advising her that her situation had been reviewed, and she was being offered her job back. This letter came about as a direct result of a concerted effort by the left in Ireland, and provides us with proof (if any were required), that direct action remains a viable tool for delivering radical change.

Back on February 2nd, Labour Youth staged the first protest in support of Joanne, outside the George's Street branch of Dunnes in Dublin. Following on from that action, we proceeded to organise further protests outside branches in Ashleaf, North Earl Street, Grafton Street, Cork and Maynooth. Furthermore, with Dermot Looney as our representative to the Joanne Delaney Support Group, we joined forces with members of other left groups, Community and Workers Action Group, MANDATE and independent members of the left, to protest outside the Ashleaf branch on a weekly basis, garnering huge local support for Joanne and her campaign. This campaign has shown that, when inequality is apparent, the left can readily move to work together on a rights based agenda. On top of the afore-mentioned protests Organise! held several protests in Belfast.

It remains a damning indictment of Dunnes' management behaviour, that it took this level of national action, before they gave in and returned Joanne to her position. They have yet to compensate her for the three month period which she spent unemployed and fighting for her right to organise in the workplace. One victory which Joanne holds dear, is that she now has permission to wear her union badge at all times in the workplace. However, Dunnes continue to



Cllr. Eric Byrne and Pat Rabbitte T.D. protesting with Joanne outside the Dunnes Stores where she was sacked

punish her, reducing her weekly hours to just 15 – enough for her to earn just over the amount she was receiving on unemployment benefit. Her unfair dismissals case continues at the time of writing, and Joanne has vowed to continue with that action until such time as she is recompensed for her three month period of unemployment, and returned to the roster on a full-time basis.

In the March edition of GCN, columnist Stephen Meyler writes: "Public protests have had their day and it's about time, because they are ineffective at producing political change." He goes further with: "Despite the visceral appeal of a direct action, in the end everyone goes home and the system continues on its merry way." That may be the opinion of a magazine columnist (incidentally, one who was appointed to fill a gap left by Ivana Bacik), but to my mind, it couldn't be further from the truth.

On 3rd October of last year, members of Labour LGBT and Labour Youth took to the streets alongside members of USS, USI, BelongTo and Johnny, as well as members of the gay community, to protest against hate crimes committed against members of the community,

including Ciarán McKenna. Almost as a direct result of this single protest, the police force immediately sought to consult the community on how the situation could be rectified. To do so, specially-trained liaison officers, are to make themselves more accessible to the community, and thereby better able to adapt to LGBTQ-specific needs. Later in 2005, the number of people who took to the streets in support of Irish Ferries workers demonstrated once again the power of direct action, as Irish Ferries management backed down, and came to an agreement with the unions.

For as long as the left has been utilising direct action as a means of seeking increased rights, members of the right have been dismissing it as an unnecessary, ineffective tool. Through our action in support of Joanne, we have once again proven that to be a fallacy. For as long as successful results can be achieved through direct action, the left, and Labour Youth in particular, will continue to use this viable form of action to its highest degree. Once again, I'd like to extend my thanks to all the members and supporters who made this another successful Labour Youth campaign.

Labour's Role in 1916

Conor Tannam writes about the central role of the Labour movement in the 1916 Rising

The rebellion of 1916 has too often been associated with the politics of nationalist parties. However this is far removed from reality, as it was the alliance of Pearse's nationalism coupled with Connolly's idea of a socialist revolution that formed the loose band of insurgents that were doomed from the outset.

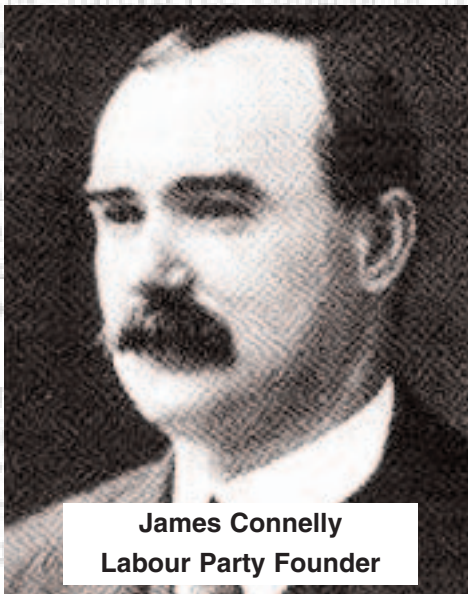
James Larkin's Irish Transport and General Workers Union was established in January 1909. In many ways it heralded a new beginning in Irish industrial relations. The subsequent 1913

The Irish Citizen Army was formed that year. It was a worker's defence force, and members drilled with hurley sticks. Described as the world's first Red Guard, Connolly said that "Now, with arms in their hands they propose to steer their own course, to carve their own future."

With the outbreak of the World War in Europe, Ireland's yearning for Home Rule was put on the backburner of Westminster's politics. Connolly advocated insurrectionary activity and was critical of the procrastinating Volunteer leadership, describing them as "would-be Wolfe Tones who were legally seditious and peacefully revolutionary." His assertion that Pearse was a "blithering idiot" related to Pearse's glorification of battle. The Scots-born socialist began to study guerrilla tactics and street warfare. He was all too aware that any insurgency would stand little chance against the might of the British Army.

was only when the Royal Dublin Fusiliers charged the rebels that people began to pay attention. The day before Connolly had told the Citizen Army that they had very little chance of a victory stating that "the odds against us are a thousand to one." As the fighting raged throughout the week a young Michael Collins confiscated alcohol from the men inside the G.P.O. He declared that "they said we were drunk in 78. There's no way they'll say that now."

The actual fighting lasted almost a week. 140 members of the British army were killed and 64 rebel volunteers lost their lives. A total of 1480 people were interned after the Rising. Prisoners being sent to internment camps in Wales were jeered and spat upon by angry Dubliners. It was only when the seven signatories were shot by the British army that public opinion began to change.



strike saw Larkin, aided by a young James Connolly, take on the employers led by William Martin Murphy. This was the century when elaborate edifices hid the poverty and filth that permeated Dublin.

James Connolly had tried to establish a socialist movement in 1903. His Irish Republican Socialist Party had been described as having "more syllables than members." His writings often made reference to the sense of community in Celtic Ireland and the equality for all citizens that was fundamental to Wolfe Tone's 1798 rebellion.

The I.R.B. made Connolly a member on the 22nd January, and elected him to its military council. The rising plans were precise, and relied on the entire volunteer movement taking part. Dublin rebels were to seize key locations in the city while those in the provinces were to seize garrisons. Orders were sent to the volunteers to take part in "three days of manoeuvres" over the Easter Week period. This message was then contradicted in a newspaper which led to confusion as to the exact status of the military arrangement.

The Irish proclamation was read out on Easter Monday 1916. It was met with much derision from the onlookers, there was a sense that these men had lost their minds. It

Lenin would later defend Connolly's alliance with the bourgeois elements; he felt that Communists would have to unite with other disaffected members of society to overthrow the ruling order. Towards the end of their political relationship Pearse had also begun to accept the socialist policies of Connolly.

The founder of the Labour Party's influence on the wording of the Proclamation is obvious; seen in the ideas of equal rights for all its citizens and equality when calling upon Irish women as well as men. It is an indicator of the man that Connolly was, that 90 years after his death his writings and viewpoint still have an influence on Irish politics today.

Iran's Nuclear Question

Eoin Pattison examines the unsettling issue of Iran joining the nuclear weapons club

Where does the world stand in the nuclear stand-off between Iran and the West? It seems that reason and peace are once again consigned to the roles of dumbstruck bystanders.

As the US pushes the UN Security Council into military confrontation mode, right-minded people are overcome with a sick sense of déjà vu. Iran meanwhile, no stranger to belligerent outbursts, chooses to evoke 9-11 by retorting that the US 'is susceptible to harm and pain.' So how did we get to this position once again? And why is the age-old political art of diplomacy failing us so dramatically yet again?

We could situate the beginning of the crisis process in 2003, when the International Atomic Energy Agency 'outed' Iran's secretive nuclear program. The IAEA announced in 2003 that Iran had hidden a uranium enrichment program for the past 18 years. In lay terms, enriched uranium is the higher-grade material extracted from the original ore and provides fuel for a nuclear power station. Iran has consistently declared that it is only enriching its uranium for its electricity needs, but somehow that hasn't convinced many observers. The fact that Iran has such huge oil and gas reserves leads us to believe mere electricity is not the goal of their nuclear program. However, under the terms of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a country has the right to enrich its own fuel for civil nuclear power, under IAEA inspection. Here is the crux of the issue: Iran concealed its program from IAEA inspection in the past, and so is seen to have lost its right to enrich its own fuel.

This is certainly the way the Western powers view the situation but the issue of trust is two-faced, and Iran can legitimately claim to have 'trust issues' with the Western powers. The US, for

instance, has recently asserted that it will develop India's nuclear technologies, despite the fact that India is not even a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Israel and Pakistan are two further examples of states which have developed nuclear weaponry outside the confines of any international treaty.



George Bush and the Indian Prime Minister after signing their nuclear agreement

A double standard seems to be built into the very fabric of the NPT. It is this double-standard that undermines any appeal to ethical considerations by the Western states.

Instead, the argument advanced by the US et al centres on the notion that Iran, home of the 'Mad Mullah' hell-bent on the destruction of Israel, simply is not responsible enough to have nuclear weaponry. A further argument is that the inherent instability of the Middle East immediately rules Iran's plans out. However, we need only look at the case of India and Pakistan – two states keen to test out their nuclear arsenals on each other – to realise that responsibility is not really the acid test of a nuclear power.

A note of caution should also be sounded lest we make the mistake of overstating Iran's nuclear program. The IAEA, while it has criticised Iran's 'lack of transparency' has also stated that it has not discovered "any diversion of nuclear material to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices." Furthermore, most experts state that regardless of its motives, Iran is still several years away from making its own nuclear weaponry.

Still, none of this analysis is intended to deny that Iran is seeking its own nuclear weaponry capacity. The question is: can anything be done to stop it? So far, attempts by both the EU and Russia to engineer a diplomatic solution have failed. The Russians thought they had hit on a solution when they offered to carry out the uranium enrichment for the Iranians. However, the Iranians decided to have their cake and eat it – accepting in principle the Russian offer but also protecting their own right to enrich. All this leaves us with the terrifying vista of another All-American solution in its playground, the Middle East.

The current state of play is pretty volatile but isn't that always the case in a nuclear world? The signs are that it is only getting more volatile – the Non-Proliferation Treaty is almost an object of derision. It has certainly become to be seen not as a neutral code, but as the weapon underpinning the nuclear weaponry of the nuclear powers. Article VI of the NPT commits all nuclear powers (even the 'good ones') to bring about the cessation of the nuclear arms race, and indeed to total nuclear disarmament. That is the pertinent point that should not be forgotten, either now or when the next belligerent or friendly nation decides to go nuclear.

Slaves to Fashion

Donal O'Liathain writes about sweatshops in the clothing industry and the movement to combat them

Not many articles will tell you to stop reading them but that's exactly what I'm going to do now. So, stop reading for a second and consider what you're wearing. If you can, take off one of your shoes (I know this is strange but follow me for a second), and have a look for the label inside. On the label it should say where it was made. Guess what, most of you just found out something new about your shoes. Shoes you've probably had for quite a while now.



Sweatshops like these are still far too common place



Now think about your wardrobe at home. How much do you really know about the rest of your clothes? Sure, you bought them in a shop, and paid a fair bit of money for them I bet, but how much do you really know about them? Do you know where they came from or how they were made? Most people don't and that's the main reason that sweatshops still exist today. Nobody with half a mind or half a heart wants their clothes to be made in slave-like

conditions. Few if any are willing to stand up and defend sweatshops as a good idea, because we all know that this is not the way things should be done. But yet it is the way things are done.

Sweatshops continue to thrive, but why?

There are two major problems in tackling sweatshops - ignorance and lack of choice. Many people just don't think about where their clothes come from (think back to what you just found out about your shoes) and often ethical goods are just not available to people. Now these problems are not as big as they appear to be. There is a tool at our disposal that eliminates both of them straight away. A way that isn't that difficult at all - in fact, you could say it's No Sweat.

No Sweat is a clothing company with a difference. It's just one of many groups that have been set up to offer choice to those who don't want to exploit others. No Sweat can account for every article of clothing, produced at every stage with fair practices and fair wages, right back to the cotton growing in the field.

Founded by trade union activists, No Sweat describes itself as an 'open source company,' a company that doesn't hide its production but rather is proud of its working conditions. It's these conditions that are the real value of ethical consumerism.

Ethical Consumerism has been growing over the last few years and is becoming a revolution in its own right. Whole cities are falling under the spell of people who want trade to be mutually beneficial and not based upon the plundering arrangements of the past. With large corporations influencing so much of the world we live in, many have realised that they must use every tool available to make sure the world becomes a fairer place. By watching what they wear and what they eat, they are sending a message to the sweatshop owners that they will not stand idly by. Multinationals like to keep their practices secret so they can maintain 'consumer confidence.' There's ample grounds to have confidence in the consumer and believe that they will make the right choice when they are given the opportunity.

SHOULD THERE BE RESTRICTIONS

YES SAYS Jose Jaman

What good is a free press if it's not fair and balanced? The cartoons depicting the prophet Mohammad as a terrorist are considered by some to be exercising the right of free speech. In other words, it's making a statement for the sake of making a statement. The reality however is that it's an example of the abuse of free speech.

The media's role in society is the search for the truth. It exists to inform, to give opinion and to analyse. Naturally not everyone will agree with everything written, but as long as the truth forms the base of an argument then it is worthy of publication or broadcast. However, should the truth get substituted for lies then it has no business in the media.

If it is legitimate to spread these lies about Muslims then why not reopen the debate on whether the Holocaust actually happened? Well, it's not allowed. In many European countries anti-Semitic literature and Holocaust denials or broadcasts are outlawed. Why? Well, because the Holocaust happened and anti-Semitism is racist. So why was it okay to print a cartoon that grossly misrepresents Muslims? These cartoons were offensive, ignorant and had nothing enlightening to add to the debate about Islamic terrorists. If anything, these cartoons seem to highlight the double standards that exist in the media which doesn't do any

justice to the term 'free speech.'

Surely our society has learned the lessons of the deadly potential that the Nazis' propaganda machine fulfilled. Which begs the question; where do you draw the line when it comes to censorship? It's simple, you must not print a lie and certainly you cannot print something racist. Obviously democracy demands active and fearless debate, but in order to correctly facilitate such debates we must cast away the cloud of ignorance. It is a poor reflection on our society if we allow such offensive cartoons to be printed especially in the name of free speech. Must we lower ourselves to defend the people who incite such hatred?



Muslims protesting

The lesson that I hope Western society relearns from all this is tolerance. It's a lesson which Europe learned the hard way over the 20th Century. Indeed it's a lesson that the West is trying to educate the nations of the Middle East in. However it is hard to promote tolerance if the West does not practice what it claims to preach.

The reason why there was such a public outcry in the Muslim world is because of the close relationship that Muslims have with God. Christians and Jews have an evolving and ever changing relationship with God. Muslims' relationship with God is absolute and is not open to any other interpretation other

than what is written in the Koran. So to even make the slightest insult is considered to be blasphemous.

It's true that in Iran there are disgraceful anti-Semitic cartoons being published but two wrongs do not make a right. Also, it's worth noting that many of these Islamic governments make no secrecy of their hatred of Jews. Yet the Western world says it tolerates Muslims, but at the same time racially abuses them.

These cartoons aren't just a 'Life of Brian' type satire. They basically stick two fingers up at Muslims. The riots and protests that followed were appalling but what else can you expect after mocking a people who have such an absolute relationship with God. In certain Islamic republics there is little understanding of a free press and democracy. So this brings me back to asking, why print these cartoons in the first place? Was this newspaper trying to make a point? Where did they see this ending?

It's the ignorance of the editors of that Danish newspaper which blinded them to the reaction that these cartoons would receive in the Muslim world.

A pure democratic society needs a free and equally fair media. A free and fair media will always ask questions of itself which is what a democracy is supposed to do. Tolerance is essential in a free society because without it our democracy is subject to abuse. Free speech is the oxygen of democracy but it can equally be its cancer unless the media acts responsibly.

ON THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS?

NO SAYS Daithi MacSithigh

Sometimes, debates about fundamental rights and freedoms - which can seem quite abstract and philosophical, more suited to an academic seminar than the ups and downs of political campaigning - enter into the popular consciousness through unpleasant or unfortunate circumstances. The recent debate that we've seen about the right to freedom of expression and freedom of the press, triggered by the infamous Danish cartoons, has involved some people and political views that we in the Labour Party and movement aren't comfortable with. However, I argue here that our belief in the importance of a free press and of freedom of expression more generally should continue, not because of some idiots with a different agenda to ours, but despite them.

Virtually every European country has signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, which offers protection to various fundamental rights, including the right to life, to be free of torture, to a fair trial, and in article 10, to freedom of expression. These are real rights that affect real people, and have influence not just in Europe but globally, such as the absolute ban on the death penalty that is now contained within the Convention, which influences extradition and other issues. However, for most rights guaranteed under the Convention, a balance must be struck between this important protection and other possibly conflicting rights (such as the reputation of others), which are set out in article 10(2).

It's true to say that the fight for free expression isn't just about the decorum of courts and judges, but what's disappointing is that the attention given to one situation in Denmark vastly out-

weighs so many other interesting and relevant controversies about the role of the media in a democratic society.

Take for example the violence against journalists in the Ukraine, which was condemned by the Council of Europe on numerous occasions. The ability of politicians there to use the libel laws to inhibit free debate (something with which Irish observers are most familiar!) was also found to breach the basic standards of the Convention. Put simply, the European Court of Human Rights, and most bodies concerned with human rights, accepts that the media deserve a special position within the framework of fundamental rights, and therefore any attempt to restrict this freedom is subject to the strictest of

mouths of TV talking heads in the last few weeks (although, of course, I defend their right to be so foolish, and hope that they will see the light soon).

The very idea that speech should only be free when it conforms to a social expectation of what is 'fair' or 'responsible' strikes at the heart of activism and political campaigning. The idea that because one group of citizens finds a particular drawing offensive to their (honestly held) beliefs, others should suppress their own (non-harmful and also honestly held and expressed) views is a manifesto for oppression and orthodoxy. Rather than try and control the content of the communications media, we should focus our efforts on issues like the concentration of ownership in a number of powerful companies and individuals, the importance of ensuring access to the broadcast spectrum for a wide range of voices and cultures, protecting and promoting public service broadcasting, and above all, speaking up the freedom to discuss and to be controversial.



Free Speech Activists

scrutiny. Advertising and commercial speech, on the other hand, is capable of further restrictions, without violating article 10. And long may that last.

Pragmatically, too, it's in the interest of socialists and social democrats to advocate for the freedom to harass, to criticise, to provoke, to agitate, and to be able to hold the powerful and the wealthy to account, without fear of oppressive civil or criminal sanctions being used to shut down dissent. And if I'm starting to sound a little over the top here, perhaps it's because of some of the relativist nonsense that's come out of the pens of commentators and the

Where laws allow the suppression or limitation of media and expressive freedoms, powerful corporations and their battalions of lawyers are in like a shot. Restrictive copyright laws empower multinationals like in the case of McLibel where McDonalds took two environmental activists to court. Our movement is mature enough to agree with the UK Muslim Council head Sir Iqbal Sacranie over issues like Iraq and repressive police tactics against Muslims, while utterly and unreservedly condemning his thirst for Salman Rushdie's head on a plate for the crime of free expression. When it comes to the current controversy, we should hold our heads high and support a free press, recognising that this principle is worth defending, and that it is not about cartoons or prophets, but something more powerful than that. Liberty.

Riots in Dublin

Anna Coleman writes about the disturbing events that rocked Dublin and examines why this happened

On Saturday 25th February, republicans gathered at Parnell Square at approximately 11am. Some republicans laid a wreath at the monument marking the Dublin and Monaghan bombings in Talbot Street. At noon, roughly 350 members of FAIR gathered at the square, preparing to march. However, from noon onwards counter demonstrators, largely made up of the urban poor from surrounding areas, slowly joined the republicans and began to verbally abuse and throw missiles at the Gardaí in attempts to disrupt the parade as it prepared to move. The Garda Public Order Unit was subsequently deployed in efforts to deal with the disturbance, but came under attack by the same protestors. As Gardaí were injured and brought to hospital, the Chief Superintendent of Police decided to move the march to Kildare Street. The Loyalist protestors complied. Petrol bombs were thrown during the disturbances and looting also occurred. 300 protestors attempted to make their way to the Dáil, resulting in further clashes with police.

The above is merely a summary of a day rife with turmoil, a day that resulted in many conflicting opinions as to the reasons for the events that took place. Opposition claims were made to the government, stating that the riots were a direct result of incompetence on behalf of the Gardaí. A briefing from the Garda Commissioner to Minister for Justice Michael McDowell outlined the fact that intelligence reports from Special Branch did not indicate cause for great concern. Subsequently, a low-



key approach to policing was taken for the event. The Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern also said that Gardaí could initially have been fitted with riot gear but 'if they did that, they'd be accused of over-reacting.' The latter statement is clearly in reference to Mayday 2004, when that is exactly what happened.



The clear message from the underestimation of policing requirements in this case is that when a political stance is in question, and it is guessed that there will be those prepared to fight for that stance, they will be quelled, but when there is no expectation of disturbance, the government will not prepare. However, the point has largely been missed. The government's assumption

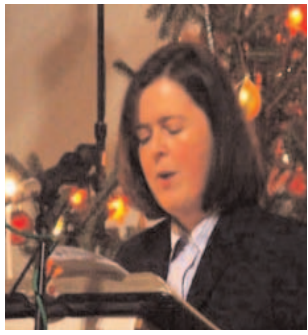


was that those who have been silent would remain silent. And as long as these riots are in hindsight dismissed as mere 'thuggery', the silence remains. The participation of the previously silent urban poor in these riots is symptomatic of a systemic and continual disaffection and disenfranchisement which must be acknowledged and addressed.

Key figures, the government and the media have repeatedly failed to highlight the social origins of this counter protest. Minister for Justice Michael McDowell referred to its cause as 'naked sectarianism', while Irish Times columnist Kevin Myers referred to ours as a 'deeply sectarian society.' While there is no excuse for such extreme violence, the causes must be examined in a broader social context. These riots are the most recent in a wave of urban civil violence to occur in Europe of late.

The Parisian riots in 2005 highlighted another case of urban poor rivalling authority in a desperate attempt to break their silence. In the month of November 2005, firebombs, torching and other violent evidence of civil unrest took place in Germany, Greece, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland. In March riots took place in Spain at protests at laws to ban young people drinking in public squares while French youth rioted against planned laws to make it easier to sack young people. The origins of these incidences can as a whole be seen in light of the urban poor's struggle against increased isolation in our capitalist environment. Anti-police feeling and a distinct rejection of authority had manifested itself in a violence that could not be ignored.

On the day in question, the streets of Dublin witnessed an alternative protest to that expected. The protest that occurred was no less political than the latter. However, its roots must not be seen in the light of sheer hooliganism or sectarianism. The events were rather symptomatic of a social divide more deeply felt on its less privileged side.



Joanna Tuffy

Senator Joanna Tuffy is one of the Labour Party's youngest oireachtas members. She is the Labour Party's candidate in the Dublin Mid West constituency. LabourYouth asks her about the Dublin riots, ASBO's and how young people are portrayed in the media.

1. Do you think that young people are portrayed quite negatively in the media today? Why?

I think they are and I think a lot of the coverage is sensationalist and as a result misleading about the lifestyles and attitudes of today's young people. A lot of it is to sell papers and play on parents' fears about what their child could be up to when they are out socialising etc.

2. Do you think that ASBOs are a short term solution to what is a long term problem in our society?

I think there are lots of other things that need to be done that are more urgent than bringing in ASBO's. That being said anti-social behaviour means that some people literally cannot leave their homes for fear of being abused or having things thrown at them; pensioners living alone have their windows broken and lots of other damage done to their property. Some people suffer so badly from anti-social behaviour that they feel they have no opportunity but to leave their homes and move elsewhere (sometimes giving up council houses and becoming as a result homeless!).

I have come across this type of situation many times, and the people involved because of the nature of the 'crime,' usually carry on without any fear of prosecution, etc. ASBO's could be a mechanism for bringing people like that to account without a criminal conviction. But there must be steps taken to address the problem before an ASBO is made. In the UK they have Anti Social Behaviour Contracts that are signed to avoid an ASBO being made. In addition there would need to be help provided to the person

who agrees to the Anti Social Behaviour Contract so that they meet their promises under the contract. Other things that need to be done more urgently than ASBO's include implementing and resourcing provisions of the Children's Act, community policing, more community facilities and programmes aimed at young people. I think if possible, ASBO's should be brought in on a pilot basis because as there are fears about them because of the criticisms of their use and effect from some quarters in the U.K. and in Irish commentary.



3. What will the Labour Party do to improve the quality of life for young people around the country?

When I was in Labour Youth what was important to me was getting through my education and getting from A to B. So I think investment in Education and Public Transport will improve young people's quality of life. But this type of investment and the philosophy of education as a right and that all people should have access to public transport that would underpin such investment also improves that quality of life of everybody else too, not just young people.

More investment in education at all levels and putting lifelong learning at its heart will benefit young people but also help those who missed out along the way and deserve a second chance. Investment in the type of decent public transport system that other countries take for granted will greatly improve the lives of students who currently have poor public transport options but is also something that will improve lifestyles generally, tackling congestion and the amount of time people spend stuck in traffic. I think in general Labour is about improving the lives of everyone including young people.

4. The Dublin riots was partially as a result of the growing number of young people in the inner city who have been marginalised in our society. What do you feel is the best way of reversing this trend and tackling this marginalisation from Irish society?

I don't know if that was the cause of the riots to be honest. But in terms of Labour tackling marginalisation we need to continue and increase our presence in areas that have been neglected and in Government we have to deliver for these communities.

5. Do you think politicians today are more out of touch with young people's issues compared to 15 years ago?

No. I think generation gaps have narrowed and that politicians would be as subject to that as anyone else. I think they could do better though and need to try and get out and have contact with young people and not to talk down to young people.

SUNDAY INDEPENDERANT

Michael McDowell Interview Inside:

"I cannot understand why I keep getting snubbed for the Nobel peace prize. Once I lock up all the kids with my ASBO's legislation, it will be the biggest Peace break through since Good Friday"

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Opinion / Analysis / Comment: pages 5 to 42

REVEALED: Republican plot to Blame for Ireland's World Cup Failure



Word on the street is that Republican socialists are directly responsible for Ireland's world cup qualification failure. The journalists of this quality rag have gathered enough suspicions to suggest that republicans were giving out free tri colours during Ireland's crucial world cup qualifying match against Switzerland last October.

It seemed obvious that the Irish players were intimidated by the neo republican atmosphere created by the massive amount of tri-colours in the stands. This distracted the boys in green against their neutral hungry opponents, Switzerland. The game finished 0-0 which was not enough to earn qualification to a world cup play-off. The players appeared to be over stimulated with national pride (shame on them) which was uncomfortable for some players because they are actually English.



Sources close to our sources have been rumoured to obtain near concrete evidence that this was a concerted and organised attack by Republicans as a number of men were seen talking on mobile phones before the match in the proximity of Landsdowne Road.

Senior sources who we can never identify because we are making them up told us in the pub last week that a number of "womble" type characters who wear sandals were also involved in this plot to bring shame on our proud nation.

These self styled womble activists tampered with the water supply into the Irish dressing room which resulted in a lack of concentration on the pitch and poor decisions made on the side lines resulting in Gary Doherty being subbed on as a striker.

So what is the Sindo solution to Ireland's world cup woes? All right minded citizens must call for no colours to be worn at Lansdown Road and a ban on an intake of liquids at half time.

Look. We have lots of pictures of pretty ladies inside



The return of the D4 Girls

These sexy n stylish writers are back to write about the important issues that affect real people with real problems.

"Ummmm we are like going to totally give you, right, some tips onto how to max out your boyfriends credit card."

"Does having a social conscience give you wrinkles? Read to find out"

"Why feminism and ideas like fighting for equal pay and equal rights is like so last century"

Shock Poll Exposes Underage Drinking

An exclusive and shocking poll conducted by our crack investigation team of journalists (a transition year student on work experience in our offices texting three of her mates) shows that underage teenagers have tried a drop of alcohol at least once. Advertisements in newspapers, magazines, billboards and sports sponsorship are however nothing to do with it. Read inside to find out more sensationalist scare mongering...

We're Number One:

The Sunday Independerant is still the best selling 'quality' broadsheet in Ireland - our reader ship is approximately twenty thousand million according to random research conducted by the editors aunt last Saturday in the Bingo Hall.

JOIN US

If you want to join Ireland's fastest growing political youth movement please fill in this form and send it to Labour Youth, 17 Ely Place, Dublin 2 or email us at youth@labour.ie supplying us with the information requested below.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

E-MAIL:

Up and coming events:

World Festival of Socialist Youth

Alicante Spain July 18th - 23rd Email lyinternational@labour.ie for more info

Tom Johnson School

September 1st - 3rd email youth@labour.ie for more information

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It's just not good enough

Patrick Nulty examines why the FAI have let football in Ireland down at grassroots level

The opening match of Steve Staunton's reign as Irish national team manager may have ended in a successful 3 - 0 victory over Sweden but this cannot be used to conceal the huge problems that exist within the game in Ireland. At all levels of the game radical restructuring, improvements and innovation are required if Ireland is to become successful in the long term. This requires courage from our national association and political will on the part of the government; both of which are sorely lacking within both organisations.

At grassroots level men and women across the country make an outstanding contribution to their community by coaching and training young footballers. These volunteers give up their own time to teach children to enjoy sporting activity. Such work has numerous benefits for society in terms of the psychological, physical and emotional development of young people. It encourages young people to work within a team, to exercise regularly and to value community life. Many of these volunteers work in marginalised and socially disadvantaged communities in Ireland. Their work is critical in tackling social problems like anti-social behaviour.

However both the government and the FAI have failed to invest in the grassroots of the game. Most local football clubs survive on charitable donations, sponsorship and other fund-raising activities.



If Steve Staunton is to enjoy a success and long era, Ireland must invest more into football at a younger level

The FAI management have failed to promote grassroots football and to effectively lobby government for further investment. It is a great irony that both the FAI and the government are obsessed with building a new large stadium, yet they are happy to allow the grassroots game to survive on a shoestring budget coupled with the goodwill of ordinary people.

Just imagine what could be done to transform under-age football in Ireland if the money ear-marked for re-developing Lansdowne Road could be ploughed back into local football. Ireland already has a world class stadium called Croke Park; we do not need another one. Now that the GAA has been persuaded to abandon its nationalist dogma both the FAI and the Irish government should focus available resources on local sport within local communities who need it, not on grandiose vanity projects.

The second area which requires development is the Eircom league. The FAI has failed to publicise or adequately promote the national league. Most clubs still operate on a shoestring, attendances are stagnant, and in European competition performances continue to be moderate at best. The development of our national league is crucial. Many talented young players are forced to move to England at a young age which often leads to homesickness and failure.

A vibrant Eircom league would allow young players to develop their skills domestically and to continue with education and personal development near their families. Both the government and the FAI share responsibility in this area too. Capital grants should be provided for radical stadium development and closer ties should be developed with the Irish League to stimulate competition and domestic interest. The creation of an all-Ireland league would benefit both associations and clubs throughout the island.

Overall, it is clear that Irish football needs reform. Greater investment in the grassroots game, reform of club football throughout the island and an emphasis on keeping young domestic talent at home are key priorities. However both the FAI and the government are letting the sport down and a fundamental change in attitudes is required if Irish football is to grow and flourish into the future.