



# THE STARRY PLOUGH

IRSP Newsletter – Nov/Dec 2022

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## Cost of living crisis - Economics explained

We keep hearing about this cost of living crisis and we are all experiencing it. Everything from food, petrol, gas, electric and oil has dramatically increased in price over the past 6 months. But what is it and what has caused it?

The entire western world's economic system is built to promote profit taking, to encourage multinational corporations to squeeze as much wealth and profit as they can from goods & services.

During the covid pandemic, the global economy was forced to shut down. Oil & Gas were no longer needed as global travel stopped and businesses and factories closed which meant the large oil & gas companies stopped producing their resource in order to stop flooding the market which would in turn reduce its market price. (It is basic supply & demand).

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## Economics behind cost of living crisis

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Oil & Gas companies were not the only businesses to shut. Everything from electronic manufacturing to food supplies were either shut or reduced.

Capitalism relies on squeezing more and more profit out of a business in order to appease shareholders, and in recent years this has meant that businesses rely on a globalised market where products are made on demand in a complicated web of manufacturing. For example, the modern day smartphone has parts made in 25 different countries before it is sold.

When covid struck, the globalised market failed and components for every day items were not manufactured which meant less and less goods were being created, which brings us back to the supply/demand economics, the less supply, the greater demand which results in rising costs."

### % Struggling financially to make ends meet

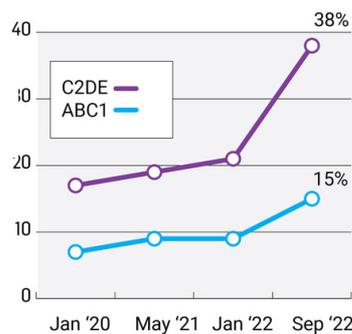
Source: Irish Times, Behaviour & Attitudes (B&A) survey  
<https://www.irishtimes.com/life-style/2022/09/24/more-than-one-million-say-they-are-struggling-to-make-ends-meet-september-ba-poll-finds/>

The Oil & Gas companies, who are the engine behind the global capitalist economy and controlled by a cartel were asked to resume their production back to pre-covid levels began dragging their feet as the less resource they produced, the bigger market price for their oil & gas meant more profit, and you only have to look at the news to see this year these companies recorded record breaking profits.

This oil & gas price has a domino effect on every day items. Think about a loaf of bread or carton of milk. Oil & Gas are needed to produce the plastic for these items, it is needed as fuel for the agricultural equipment to produce the actual product, so we get a snowball effect where prices keep going up and up.

And now we get to the endgame of this. You only have to look to see the large corporations are heavily profiting of these price rises, while working class people are struggling to feed their families and heat their homes. Our governments who are held to ransom by these corporations are powerless. You only have to look at the British Government who in order to try and reduce energy costs are having to pay off these large businesses by giving them the money they would get from profit to try and get them to lower their prices.

The cost of living crisis is a capitalist crisis and it is a crisis that should have and can be avoided.



## IRSP fights to retain services at Daisy Hill

Martin McKeown IRSP: "The NHS has taken a terrible battering in recent years, which can be attributed to lack of investment, asset stripping and privatisation through the back door. Morale amongst staff is at an all time low, nurses and support staff are leaving in droves. The pressure has taken its toll, wages can no longer be stretched to make ends meet "

In Newry, we have fought many campaigns and had some great success down through the years, our members are unionised and have used every means at our disposal to protect vital services at Daisy Hill Hospital. Sadly, our successes have been short lived, as the Southern Trust and various Health Ministers change tact and remove other services rendering departments capabilities to function. At this moment in time, Newry, South Armagh and South Down have no emergency general surgery cover, as this vital life saving service has been moved to Craigavon Area Hospital. This is an area with a population of 240, 000 people. If there was a bad road traffic collision in Crossmaglen or Kilkeel it would take ninety minutes to ambulance someone in blue light conditions to Craigavon, and that's if the ambulance was dispatched immediately, which is very rarely the case. We have already lost people due to this systemic neglect of care, a young Newry woman took ill on a night out with friends, and died on the streets of Newry, less than a mile from Daisy Hill Hospital. The service was that stretched, 240,000 people had no ambulance cover whatsoever, an ambulance had to be dispatched from Belfast which never arrived!"  
The IRSP will continue to fight for the retention of services at Daisy Hill Hospital"

## Belfast IRSP launch initiative to combat Britain's 'Cost of Living' scandal

The Irish Republican Socialist Party met in response to increasingly obvious levels of financial hardship and desperation in our Working Class areas; the result of years of ruthless Tory financial planning in Britain that has seen windfall profits for the wealthy continue while living standards of the poorest here and elsewhere plummet.

In a direct response to the so called 'cost of living crisis', the IRSP intend to revamp and renew their already successful 'Drop the Rents' campaign, mindful that the most vulnerable families in our communities are those forced to rent from unscrupulous profit-making landlords who have already taken the opportunity to raise rents, fully aware that they are taking the food from children's mouths.

In an extension of that campaign however, the IRSP also intend to take the similar tactics of passive disruption and awareness raising to the doors of the various utility and energy companies who continue to rake in a profit while their working-class customers freeze, starve and revert to conditions not seen in this country for many, many decades. Lower Falls spokesman Michael Kelly stated...

"I have spoken to locals in the Lower Falls who are genuinely terrified of what is to come this winter. People do not know how they are going to feed their families on one day, then cloth and heat them the next. Yet the energy and utility companies are continuing to reap mega profits in the face of this suffering. This is not a 'cost of living crisis' it is a capitalist scandal, pure and simple. We intend to expose and confront these companies and the fat cats who profit on the fear and suffering of our people".

Speaking of the intention to ramp up the 'Drop the rents' campaign Mid Falls IRSP representative Dan Murphy said...

"Our previous actions in the Drop the Rents campaign have succeeded in preventing the worst excesses of predatory Landlordism in West Belfast. We have now come into information that suggests that landlords are already planning to capitalise on the rise in interest rates in order to hike their rents up further. To those people we say this, the IRSP will oppose you and expose you at every turn. Our people will not go hungry or homeless for your ill earned profits. Other parties may ignore you, we wont."

The IRSP will announce its intentions to protest and intervene in the ongoing crisis in the coming days and weeks.

# The West's failing "colour revolution" in Iran

Iran has been the recent target of regime change efforts by the West. Allegations of police brutality have been followed by riots and terrorism in what bears all the hallmarks of an attempted "colour revolution". This was openly confirmed by US President Biden at a campaign rally on November 3rd when he told the audience "Don't worry, we're gonna free Iran".

Regarding the case that triggered the unrest, on September 16 2022, Mahsa Amini, a 22 year old woman of Kurdish background was made to attend a religious lecture in a police station in Tehran for not wearing a Hijab. CCTV footage shows Amini collapsing in the police station moments after engaging in conversation while standing up. She was rushed to hospital and later died. Western media was quick to report she was beaten to death but anyone who's seen the footage, which is verified, can see the woman really collapsed out of nowhere.

Aside from the facts of the case, much of the information on the matter was derived from media controlled by those who oppress women or are complicit in the oppression of women. The British press which sees fit to ignore the provision of arms to Saudi Arabia, for example, hardly the bastion of rights in any case, seemed abhorred by these stories from Iran. In Ireland we had, within living memory, the existence of workshops in which women were enslaved, and for which no justice has been established due to state complicity. The media here too feigned disgust at events in Iran but isn't so riled by the absence of justice for those rape victims which their institutions enslaved in workhouses and stripped them of their children.

The west is not concerned with the rights of women, the only rights western capitalists seek to further is their right to exploit the nations of the world to the detriment of their populations. The west's fakery in this regard is evident in the fact that it will promote 'progressive' ideals to undermine some countries but will kindly sponsor ISIS or Azov when that benefits them also. The west's precious capitalist system in fact forms a root cause of discrimination against women and others. The survival of this system is predicated on its continued expansion toward world domination. Iran, ironically, is a bulwark against this, and is actively supporting left-wing governments, anti-imperialist movements, and National Liberation movements such as in Palestine, Lebanon and Yemen.

That is where the real issue lies, the public is being conditioned to dislike Iran so that any future conflict with Iran to satiate the greed of western capitalism will not be challenged at home.

Thankfully, the Islamic Republic of Iran, counting on its support among the masses, is strong enough to see off this attempt at regime change.



# Europe reverts to fossil fuels amid energy crisis

"It is necessary to point out that consumer societies are fundamentally responsible for the brutal destruction of the environment."

Fidel Castro, 1992 Earth Summit, Rio De Janeiro

You can't have your cake and eat it too. Likewise, the majority of the world can't live under a capitalism based on rampant consumerism and ever-expanding militarism while being environmentally sustainable. But despite all the evidence proving the futility of efforts to combat climate change so far, 196 states are set to renew their commitment to reduce emissions at the 2022 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 27) in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt from Nov 6, 2022 to Nov 18, 2022. The latest round of talks is expected to focus on the issue of money and reparations for the poorest countries suffering the worst consequences.

At COP2 in 1996 it was established that unless greenhouse gas emissions are reduced dramatically, we are headed towards a climate disaster. Yet despite this acknowledgement and the host of agreements and conferences that followed, the UN reported in 2021 that greenhouse rises of 2.7C this century, well past the 1.5% goal set out at COP 21 in Paris in 2015. The latest round of talks is expected to focus on the issue of money and reparations for the poorest countries suffering the worst consequences.

The insincerity of the green capitalist approach to the climate crisis is plain to see. As long as transnational companies aren't held to account for the damage they do the environment in the pursuit of profit, the increase in "ethical" consumption by individuals will have little effect. However, like with any great project of the western capitalist elite, one has to judge it according to its unspoken aim as well. The real reason elites are spending political capital on the failed green transition is simply to retain relevance and to be seen to be dealing with a very visible crisis. And in this, the western capitalist elite have had some success.

Recently, however, events in Ukraine have forced the European elite to show its true colours regarding the matter. As soon as their own commitments to the green transition become threats to their maintenance of power, they throw such green commitments under the bus in pursuit of non-sustainable solutions. Such is the case with the EU's scramble to secure alternative energy sources having cut itself off from Russian gas and oil at the US's behest.

After predictably finding there are no sustainable replacements for one quarter of your total energy sources available overnight, EU states have reverted to developing new sources of fossil fuels despite the much recorded damage they do the climate. Data analysed by the energy think-tank Ember Climate for the Financial Times suggest that European governments will spend at least €50bn this winter on new and expanded fossil fuel infrastructure and supplies, including gas shipped in from overseas and coal to fuel previously mothballed power plants.

This is all taking place after the hottest summer on record in Europe and many other parts of the world. The failures of climate policy over 25 years now are undeniable and unavoidable. Fidel's succinct remark at the Earth Summit in 1992 gains more relevance each day as the climate crisis worsens. What is required to stop and reverse the damage is nothing short of a revolution to replace all unsustainable mass production to sustainable production for welfare. Anything short of this is mere political theatre.

## BRITISH INVOLVED IN UKRAINE

It will come as no surprise to those familiar with the tactics of the British Government that they are engaged in dirty tricks in Ukraine. Since before 2014 when Ukraine was overrun by fascist militias and war-mongering politicians the British have been involved in facilitating the transformation of Ukraine into a NATO vassal state to undermine Russia. The British establishment and its military remain a tool of capitalists to further their interests domestically and internationally. This is the motive behind Britain's interference in Ukraine.

More recently however Britain's role has been discerned in the composition of a nuclear dirty bomb in Ukraine, the blowing up of a civilian bridge and a terrorist attack against the Nordstream gas pipeline. This is aside from its active supporting, funding and training of Zelensky's regime and its murderous neo-nazi militias. The Nordstream Gas Line attack was one of the most notable such attacks in history and was to the detriment of Britain and the US's allies in Europe. Information has now surfaced that the British Prime Minister messaged a US official saying 'it's done' or words to that effect immediately after the explosion.

Ironically, Britain is today supported in Ireland and throughout the west in its Ukrainian operations. 'Anti-imperialists', 'Socialists' and so on have found themselves on the same side as the forces of world imperialism - the US/NATO, Britain, the EU, Israel, etc. supporting a puppet imperialist government propped up by Neo Nazis; whilst the successful anti-imperialists and left-leaning governments of the world have been pro-Russia's operation or have at least refused to condemn it. However, it must be asked, if Zelensky is some noble leader, then why is the state which conducted its terror campaign against Ireland currently using him as their pawn?

# China's rise is unacceptable for the West, but also unstoppable

There is a recurring tale in corporate media at the moment. Incidents of injustice are leading to wider movements for regime change in enemy countries. These tales are straight from the Arab Spring playbook. The West keeps a network of NGOs, militants, terrorists and professional diaspora "activists" for most countries they compete with. Corporate media uses these tales and narratives to create an atmosphere appropriate for activating this destructive network in order to install a puppet regime.

Western corporate media was working overtime last weekend to create such a tale out of anti-covid protests in China. 10 people died on November 24th in a fire in a residential building in Urumqi, Xinjiang region. This city has been under some form of lockdown since August. Article after article and report after report were pumped out telling us the anger was universal and palpable. "China's patience has snapped" declared the BBC's Tessa Wong. We were told this is the biggest test of Xi Jinping's premiership.

Of course, the reality of a couple thousand anti-covid restriction protesters spread across a nation of 1.412 billion does not amount to a nation in revolt. The Chinese government acknowledged their grievances and promised to review aspects of their zero-covid strategy. Compare this with the demonisation and marginalisation of anti-lockdown/vaccination protests in the West.

What was the point in this hysteria? Does the West really think they can destabilise a power the size of China with such simple methods? Perhaps they were only testing the temperature, oiling the gears of the regime change machinery for China. For a more earnest attempt to provoke a counter-revolution, see corporate media's recent coverage of Iran.

The rise of China as an economic superpower has upset a western elite hell bent on world domination. China poses a threat in many regards to their ultimate goal of securing control of the global economy by having control directly or by proxy over national governments and supranational institutions like the EU.

Political control and economic exploitation are achieved usually through financial incentives or the threat of political and economic isolation. However, if countries such as those in Africa and Asia which could traditionally have been 'persuaded' to obey the West, can rely on the economic support of another global force in China, the West loses then a key tool in opening foreign countries to be exploited.

As of March this year, 146 countries had joined China's Belt and Road Initiative also known as the New Silk Road. The success of this win-win model of investment, where Chinese companies gain new markets and the host countries gain infrastructure and affordable credit, stands in stark contrast to the West's debt-trap diplomacy and enforced austerity on the Global South.

The other concern for the western capitalists is that China's economic system is fundamentally different from the western one. If that system develops and is adopted elsewhere, it will fatally undermine the capacity of the western hawks to retain their stature.

Another concern is that China's military capacity is growing in tandem with its economic power. The West's trump card is its ability to militarily enforce its will on other nations is now in mortal danger. While the West would still consider its chances against most countries, China is one of several militarily capable entities to have resisted pressure from the US and its allies. Together this new axis has offered military shelter to those wishing to escape the West's influence.

The western capitalists now have a choice: to give up and allow for a world in which they are not in charge, and in which their guarantee of prestige is under threat, or to wage a war against China. Their choice is already evident; they are stoking tensions regarding Xinjiang, Tibet, Taiwan and Hong Kong, and militarily antagonising China in surrounding territories. This has involved preparation of civilian populations here also through propaganda: claiming that China oppresses minorities, that it is 'authoritarian' and that it engages in various macabre practices.

