

9 November 2010

Visit of Olli Rehn

“EU Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, Mr Olli Rehn, is about as welcome in Ireland as a 19th-century British Lord Lieutenant” claimed People’s Movement Chair, Frank Keoghan

Mr Keoghan continued, “EU Commission ‘commissars’ attached to the Department of Finance must have already approved the draconian four year onslaught on living standards that forms the core of current Government policies.”

“Mr Rehn has sought to strengthen the resolve of official Ireland to this anti-people blitz. George Bernard Shaw once said that, ‘a government that robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul.’”

“As people await the December budget like the condemned await their execution, Finance Minister Lenihan recently paid out €7.9 billion to foreign investors as senior bondholders of Anglo-Irish Bank without the merest suggestion that any of them should be asked to make any sacrifice. He thereby increased the sacrifice that will have to be made by generations of Irish people.”

“This is completely in line with EU policy, whereas serious government action on unemployment, investment in public services, and other measures necessary to defend people’s living standards would be considered a threat to the EU monetary union of which Mr Rehn is the current guardian.”

The People’s Movement believes that “like 19th-century tenants of a corrupt and sometimes absentee land system, Irish taxpayer money has been diverted to the foreign investors who had been only too happy to make money stoking the asset bubble on which the likes of Sean Fitzpatrick and his ilk were making fortunes for themselves. This is happening while basic social provisions and protections are being dismantled.”

“The feudalism that Michael Davitt and the Land League set out to destroy in the 19th century has been replaced by a form of financial feudalism in which the interests of a section of the population takes precedence over those of the mass of the population.”

“21st-century Ireland is a ‘bankocracy’ or a state ruled by and in the interests of bankers. This is Mr. Rehn’s constituency not the majority of the Irish people.”

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