

A Fool's Paradise

There are some serious questions to be raised concerning the reality behind Celtic's board of director's plans to move to Cambuslang. As ever, where Michael Kelly is involved, doubts have been cast on the use of public funds, issues of public safety and the wisdom of his leadership.

Last year Celtic's shareholders expressed their fears that the move to Cambuslang was "Hazardous in financial terms... and bedevilled with technical and planning difficulties." (Herald 28/3/92) Fergus McCann the Canadian millionaire who tried to raise £17m for the club, departed the scene saying that "the Cambuslang PR exercise consists of a house of cards to be financed by a fairy godmother... the present management has neither backing nor abilities let alone credibility."

McCann's insinuations that there was something funny going on were somewhat confirmed by the sudden appearance of a Manchester based company called Peel Holdings a few days after his statement. Peel Holdings maintained that they had talked to the SDA about Celtic's site back in 1989 and that they retained the option on it.

Two months later the GDA (who took over from the SDA in 1990) revealed that a "satisfactory solution had been found." They revealed nothing more because it was "a commercial deal and required a degree of secrecy." This is fairly typical of the GDA's unaccountable use of public funds (on 16/7/92 the Scotsman revealed that the government's national audit office had failed to approve Scottish Enterprise's accounts, Scottish Enterprise are the GDA's parent body).

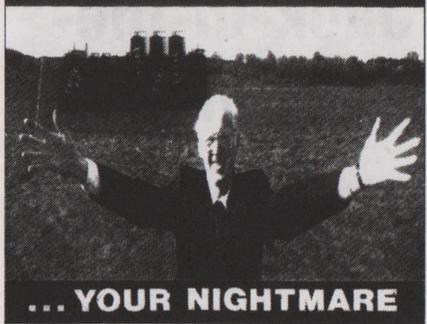
The Evening Times later told us that £500,000 had been paid to Peel Holdings, despite the fact that the GDA could have had the land back for nothing. The Evening Times are calling for a public enquiry. If such a thing takes place we should ask first who Peel Holdings are. They are a subsidiary of Tokenhouse Investments who own 50% of the company, the British Steel pension fund owns 10.99% and JPM Nominees own 20%, their bankers include the Royal Bank of Scotland (who I think should have been quite aware of the deal considering that Mr Ian Clark Wood of the Royal Bank was also on the board of the SDA).

Investigation

Celtic's plans are in the hands of a consortium called Superstadia. At their press conference last November several figures came forward to talk, including Brian Vieton of the engineering consultancy Ove Arup (A London Times report 7/5/91 revealed that Ove Arup were part of another consortium who were first into Kuwait for the cut-up over the rebuilding contracts before, during and after the Gulf war). Ove Arup, according to Celtic's press release were involved in the development of the Tottenham Hotspur ground. Private Eye 23/10/92 reveals that a property company, Landhurst Leasing, were also involved in the Spurs project and that they are now the subject of an investigation by the Serious Fraud Office, for "a large number of bad and doubtful loans, phoney leases and off-the-books cash deals." Ring any bells anyone?

Further investigations on Landhurst on their development of non-league Wealdstone FC's ground (which resulted in the club going

welcome to our paradise...



into administration) have resulted in Scotland Yard's "largest ever mortgage fraud investigation."

One of Superstadia's directors, Jeffrey J Wallis is also a director of another Private Eye favourite, Amber Day Holdings. On the 27/7/92 they revealed the connections between London underworld figure, and Amber Day shareholder Tony Schneider and the Amber Day boss Philip Green. Their background on Green shows him as previously running five other companies, all of which have become insolvent, liquidated or compulsarily wound up. Green has since departed Amber Day, with its shares plummeting to 30p and was given a clean bill of health and a one million pound pay off by his fellow directors, he has since been drawn into the Landhurst Serious Fraud Investigation.

Carve Up

Superstadia itself is 49% owned by Pall Mall plc, this time featured in Private Eye 25/9/92 as the 'vehicle' used by the Chelsfield Property Group who joined with P&O to buy Laing Properties (Chelsfield's shareholders include Hambro's Bank, a director of which includes Sir David Nickson soon to depart from Scottish Enterprise). The deal went wrong and "P&O facing its own problems, wanted to carve up Laing and offload the £340m debt burden it brought... shareholders were promised... the chance to get out 'as soon as practicable'." Pall Mall have been left in a bad way with losses of £48.6 m and about half of its properties now used to pay off the interest on a £160m loan used to facilitate the whole deal. One of Chelsfield's directors has gone on to be the advisor in proposed developments of Chelsea and Fulham's grounds.

But, amidst all the concerns regarding site ownership, effect on small traders and finance for Celtic and Superstadia's project the main issue is and remains the awful pollution suffered not only by the site itself but by the whole Cambuslang, Carmyle and Rutherglen area. A history of wilful dumping covering 150 years; dumping of waste, most notably by Whites Chemicals and the steel industry plus, working on the maxim that the only place to dump poison is on top of poison, fly tipping by, by its very nature, who knows who.

The result is an area that exhibits leukemia rates akin to places like Dounraey and Sellafield, where chromium waste leaches around tarmac

covered car parks, where local football clubs terracings' glow in the dark.

Celtic and Superstadia wish to build there. They have submitted a planning application and were taken aback when the Planning Authorities sent it back, saying that it was lacking. They re-submitted. It, despite all Celtic and Superstadia's claims that it the most detailed planning statement since the universe was built, is still lacking.

They admit that they don't know where the stadium will be sited. They admit that they don't know what other buildings will grace the stinking site nor their purpose. This despite an assurance to local traders that they are not planning a Parkhead Forge, a development that has knocked the street life out of a community.

This, of course, should not surprise. Since locals and various 'unofficial' publications started screaming that the area is a toxic timebomb Michael Kelly and his PR Associates moved quickly and arrogantly to dismiss the claims, even going so far as to publicly demand an apology from the likes of local pressure group Cambuslang, Carmyle and Rutherglen Against Pollution (CCRAP).

Problems

However, Kelly has been noticeably silent since the 20th January, following a public meeting where Superstadia's 'experts' admitted that there are vast problems with the old mine workings and the lethal waste that has been pumped into them, even going so far as to request information from the public!

Is it not strange that Kelly, a previous Lord Provost and thus party to all information from all Glasgow local government committees should claim that there is no problem with the site? That there is no pollution? Would this not suggest that he is one of two things- incompetent or corrupt?

And what are we to make of the Celtic Board and Superstadia's assurances that they wish to be 'good neighbours with the people of Cambuslang, that they will clean adjacent sites of litter following any event at their super stadium? If this is so, then why do they not practice this at Parkhead? Why do community and tenants groups find it necessary to protest to the the Celtic Board over the disruption to their lives, the litter and the nuisance that comes from living next to a club run by that very Board? Why do they receive 'go away' letters from the Board if they dare protest? How difficult must it be living in the knowledge that to protest could mean being branded as anti-Celtic when quite patently they are either not or have no strong feelings one way or the other?

Celtic's main reason for having to redevelop Parkhead or find a new ground comes about following the recommendations of the Taylor Report following the Hillborough Disaster. These recommendations have been made in the interests of Public Safety. How on the spoilt earth could building at Cambuslang and unleashing the toxic threat that that site holds be in the interests of public safety?

The problems affecting Cambuslang, Carmyle and Rutherglen must be dealt with. If the whole Celtic/Superstadia deal falls through the must not be allowed to be forgotten.

The Glasgow Keelie

The Salt of the Earth

Number 17

TIME FOR A CHANGE

It is not just Monklands Distict Council that has been exposed as blatantly corrupt. Every Labour group leader in any District or Regional Council where Labour has an overall majority, runs things in the same sleazy way.

Council meetings are pretend democracy, the decision making process is a farcical public relations exercise, as is Labour opposition to the Tories' brutal treatment of the people. Token statements that Local Authorities oppose water privatisation are clearly seen as hypocritical, with their secret instructions to stop local communities organising for themselves by banning them from 'public' buildings & halls.

Strathclyde Region have already been caught out buying water shares & meeting

with prospective developers. These deceptions and wilful ignorance of the people's wishes to go all the way up to national level, but mass opposition exists, as we have seen in Edinburgh and London. It rejects not only the Tories and their crooked policies, but demonstrates that the House of Commons has become a fundamental obstacle to social justice.

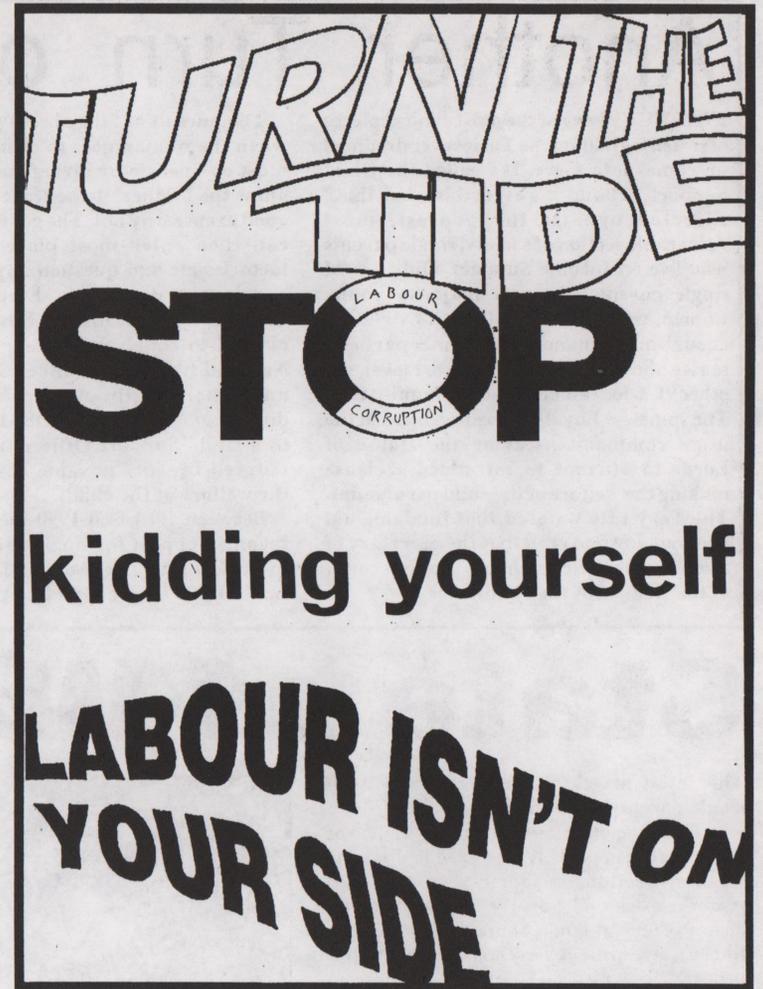
As soon as it was pointed out that the only way forward for Scotland to be taken seriously in its fight for independence, was for all MPs who had been elected as supporters of home rule to resign their seats, turn their backs on the Unionist House of Commons, forgo their parliamentary expenses and set up shop in Edinburgh, that was the end of

any serious attempt to take the fight any further.

We are told as usual we have to wait another five years till the next election. Its always tomorrow for the people.

January 1993 was the 100th anniversary of the formation of the Independent Labour Party, so it's 105 years we've been waiting. All we've got for our patience is a mafia-like network and its systematic abuse of power. That patience has run out.

Just as their sinister activities are so widespread and local, they come within their grasp. Labour's leaders are afraid of their own roots and membership: its time to expose it, to speak up and break up the corruption.



Another Turn of the Screw

IN APRIL '93 one of the most cynical pieces of rotten legislation the Tories ever dreamed up comes into force. It's called the Child Support Act and it's everything but that? Directed against the poorest, most vulnerable section of society, single parents who live on Income Support. Only 9% of single parents, the vast majority young women, will supposedly benefit by getting enough maintenance from former partners to rise above the Income Support level, the other 91% lose money or suffer humiliation. The spineless Loyal Opposition bleated the usual complaints, leaving the House of Lords to attempt to introduce a clause making the welfare of the child paramount. The Tory rats watered that fundamental demand down to read that the Secretary of State and his officers should "take account of the welfare of the child."

The pursuit of "the absent parent" starts when the woman goes to claim benefit. She must co-operate by giving enough detail to allow the "father" to be traced, or a bloody good excuse why not. The government ferret can then enter most places, businesses, factories etc and question anybody over 18 and inspect documents. Employers, Local Authorities and Inland Revenue will be obliged to cough up earnings details, tax, National Insurance number, addresses and much more. If the woman is reluctant to divulge or "comply" the DSS hands the case to a Child Support Officer who can order reduced benefit! Imagine how that affects the welfare of the child!

Between 1981 and 1990 the real value of Income Support for single parents declined by 43% for a 17 year old and by 28% for a single 18-24 year old and on this starvation

benefit young families barely survive - then the government knocks off a tenner! But don't worry, the marriage guidance group Relate are training the ferrets to do it "sensitively" and the woman can always appeal to a Tribunal (manned, thanks to the STUC and Glasgow Trades Council, with government collaborators who will sit in judgement.) Instead of being outside picketing these "champions" of the working class will be inside collecting a nice fee, thank you very much sir.

By sitting on those tribunals they demonstrate agreement in principle with this foul government's attack on the poorest of the poor. Hand in glove with the Tories, no integrity, no honour, all principle abandoned. John MacLean and Harry McShane, are you turning in your grave yet?

State of War

This latest attack by the Government on single-parents comes as no surprise.

It is just another assault on the rights of ordinary folk in the U.K. designed to drive the weakest sections of society further into powerlessness and poverty. Throughout the history of human-kind, common folk have been forced to live in the poverty and fear imposed on them by the greed and brutality of those in power.

They were forever tyrannised and divided by the struggle to survive the iniquities of the power structure under which they were pinned, or the wars which raged between rulers defending their wealth and witlessness. From time immemorial, in the U.K., the domestic industrial economy was bolstered by militaristic colonial trade, or major wars.

In the absence of the profit-yielding conditions to which they have been so long accustomed, the champions of trade and industry forced the Government to declare war once again. But this time it wasn't some invented moral crusade against an evil and distant enemy, it was on their own 'people'. That is to say, 'The State', its members drawn from the traditional Aristocracy and those modern captains of economy such as the late Robert Maxwell, hold the country to ransom.

Often senior Government figures themselves, their territory is more located at the level of international profiteering than domestic investment.

As we have seen most recently with Hoover in Cambuslang, where the workers were brutalised into agreeing to an 'offer they couldn't refuse', their racketeering would do the Mafia proud.

We have seen how the Government gets funds to pay 'State Protection Money' with the Poll-Tax and the selling-off of public utilities. Having already robbed the people of any say in the control of the means of heat, light and communication, with the privatisation of British Gas, Electricity and British Telecom, they are now attacking British Rail and the whole structure of the Welfare State. Essential services like National Health, Housing and Schools are



being targeted by the State profiteers and if that doesn't wash with the public, tough, they'll have to soak it up anyway; and maybe even pay for the privilege, if water-privatisation gets the wave through Parliament.

Our traditional communities already destroyed by housing policies which created Council controlled homelands for industrial refugees, they think they can now put the jackboot in, good and proper. Forced polarisation of society into haves and have-nots has worked to such an extent that if they wanted to charge poor people for the dampness in their houses under the water privatisation scheme, they probably think they'd get away with it. If you consider this to be an absurd proposition, just put your mind to recent attacks on those least able to resist. The withdrawal of benefit for 16 to 18 year olds has not only laid an intolerable burden on families already in financial and social despair, it has created a new kind of socially corrosive alienation.

Consequent family breakdown, homelessness, poverty and peerless-drifting has created a new underclass in which crime has become a way of life. With the safety-net of the black economy totally destroyed by the State's obsession to control profits, there is no way to make ends meet other than turn to crime. This is compounded by society's moral-panic in response to these victims of a ruthless and vindictive State controlled Government. It has got so bad, ordinary folk are scared to bump into one other in the street.

This is part of a deliberate and cynical attack on the very commonweal fabric of ordinary

society. Not only has this led to the forced criminalisation of every-day activity for many people just trying to survive, there is now an attack on their right to legal protection. Within a long-term strategy to get rid of Legal Aid altogether, the Government has introduced a precursor in their abolition of Civil Legal Aid. Whether Civil or Criminal, Legal Aid is the only access to justice for the vast majority of citizens. Withdrawal of Civil Legal Aid, means that ordinary folk can no longer challenge the forces that abuse them nor can they get compensation for industrial and environmental injuries as they couldn't even begin to pay for the long legal process.

Especially on Clydeside, where industrial disease might well be the most common form of illness, this will be devastating. The State has once again forced the Government, into servile submission. With the flood of compensation claims for asbestos-related diseases and other forms of industrial poisoning now going through the Courts, awards for damages are spiralling. Lloyds and other insurance companies have joined up with their State partners in Industry and the Government to deny access to compensation and justice for the victims of their profiteering.

These social and economic atrocities have always been committed on the assumption that common-folk won't stand up for themselves. However, history is replete with individuals, groups and whole communities who have fought back. If ever evidence of citizen power on a national scale was needed, simply recall the events in Eastern Europe and the nationwide Anti-Poll-Tax Campaign in the U.K. The current campaign in Scotland against water-privatisation is another example even if we'll have to await the final outcome.

Glasgow has always had the tradition of refusing to give in to hostile imposition without a fight. Although recent years have witnessed a particularly focused attack on Glasgow, by successive Governments afraid of its reputation, its 'Workers' City' spirit remains steadfast. Great damage has been done but Glaswegians are the same as wronged people the world over. Their anger and determination will always allow them to lick their own wounds and to lick any State controlled Government forces that want to declare war on them.



Another Verse or Two on Jack-in-the-Box Lally

*You're always springing up, Pat,
No matter how you fall,
No matter how you fuck things up
As you did at Flesher's Haugh,
The Concert Hall and Arches,
The People's Palace din,
Everywhere you stick your great
Banana feet right in!*

*Can we explain the 'mystery' then
Of why you surface so?
Why, it's an open 'secret'
Even Glasgow children know!
Propped-up by phoney 'Labour' frauds,
With more twists than a screw,
Without one socialist principle,
They see themselves in you!*

Freddy Anderson

A Modest Proposal

The latest plans for unemployment benefit, prepared by the 'charity' Full Employment UK, show our government in yet another reckless and desperate mood for experimentation.

Yet this is a golden opportunity to offer them some real practical advice. The entire budget for the 'welfare state' comes in at around £6 billion, interestingly also the figure estimated as the total losses of the Poll Tax and about the same again that Mr Lawson donated to the stock market while pretending to stop the pound being devalued.

With £6bn at our disposal everyone unemployed in the UK could be provided with £1m each per annum, and this is what we suggest.

Who would go to work anymore? Would not everyone jack in work in true pools winner fashion, would the country grind to an (even bigger) halt? Well no, the director of Direct Line Insurance recently received £7m as a bonus, and he turned up the next day and there are many like him, all top directors and pillars of the community.

Under the government's new scheme everybody will be working, no one will be technically unemployed or they get their money stopped. The distinction is important because if you are working, a large sum of cash is an incentive to work harder, whereas even £80 a week is considered enough to make you hopelessly lazy.

So everyone gets £1m a year as a special bonus. Admittedly the odd trouble maker will crop up, but there are plenty of laws in existence to deal with that sort of thing, and we can safely

leave these matters in the hands of our police force and Judiciary (who will be excluded from the scheme because their commitment to their work surely over rides any financial considerations).

The scheme will however be extended to those in jail or on remand. Will all this cause chaos and misery? No more than the Poll Tax or the privatisation of the utilities and much less than the new plans to fill the streets with penniless people who refused to join a slave labour scheme, in any case the matter could be settled with a simple referendum.

Not only would our scheme contribute to Mr. Major's classless society, but when we all deposit our money in the bank the boost to the economy is clear, for we will all be spending and saving simultaneously. The banking crisis will disappear overnight as will that in the property and construction industry as the clamour for millionaire's mansions mounts. Some will denounce this plan as mad, but they fail to notice that the scheme is already in existence albeit in a restricted format. Our beloved Royal Family will testify to its benefits and our top director friends will sleep soundly at night, free from allegations that their present system deliberately makes people poor so that they become disposable.

We humbly submit this new proposal to the government with the sole proviso that our own bonus be back dated for the eight years we have spent unemployed preparing this detailed research.



BAILLIE BACKHANDER

Labour stooge John Maxton, MP for Cathcart, is making up the numbers on the House of Commons 'Press Freedom' committee. That's the mob that decides what's OK to be discussed in the Commons Bar but isn't fit to be known by the likes of us. They want new laws to protect the rich and powerful, from Norman Lamont to Prince Charles.

The often repeated words of Rabbie Burns are as true now as they were 200 years ago:-

*"A fig for those by law protected!
liberty's a glorious feast,
Courts for cowards were erected
Churches built to please the priest!"*

So it's come to this... Labour and Tory ganging up to block the working people's vote. Both are working together in Parliament to cancel the next Regional Council elections. They say there will be another election the following year for the 'new improved' council set-up, and neither party is keen to show up their crashing support in Scotland. An old timer once said that real socialists have nothing to fear from ballots and voters. The more the better. That's what a genuine democracy would be all about.

In this time of rocketing unemployment and poverty in Glasgow, one of the most hotly debated subjects in the City Chambers has been the proposed installation of a shower-room for the Lord Provost.

As Terry Thomas used to say "They're an absolute shower!"

A £3.5 million hand-out to keep the Daily Record and Sunday Mail in Glasgow?

Two page newspaper adverts to save Strathclyde Region? (Headline "Mass campaign fills George Square phonebox.")

No problem if your a big shot Strathclyde Labour councillor with £2 million to spend every year and you want to keep it that way.

OK so Maxwell was a big fat crook, but mind how he gave jobs on his board to good Scots Labour folk like Helen Liddell and Lord Alexander so they could look after our interests.

As long as they keep on telling the mugs to vote Labour it'll be money well spent. Just plead poverty in a month or two's time, make £30 million cuts in services an nobody'll notice the difference.

"Cheap at the price" says Jack McConnell, Labour Party supremo (strictly off the record).