



**A RED NETWORK ARTICLE
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So, the blackouts begin! Just not for the data centres of course!

June Maher writes about the reality of power outages from a personal experience

We socialists warned about the consequences of allowing so many Data Centres into the country.

We knew that we would face regular energy blackouts.

A typical large data centre on the outskirts of Dublin can use as much electricity as the entire city of Kilkenny.

It's incredible that we currently have about 70 data centres in Ireland, 65 of them in the greater Dublin area and a moratorium on new centres coming in has been ruled out. In fact, as if to add insult to injury the government have offered these power-hungry centres that provide almost zero employment up to €10,000 per month towards their electricity costs while throwing the rest of us a mere €200 here and there while instructing us to avoid using energy as much as possible!

On November 1st around 9pm in many areas of Bray, Co. Wicklow, we were plunged into the first of the blackouts. Initial information was that it would take all night to restore our power but thankfully it 'only' lasted about 2 hours.

Nevertheless, in those 2 hours, my daughter and I were without heat and light. Many of our friends and neighbours were left the same way but the data centres churned away!

I was fuming while sitting there in the cold and dark, thinking that our wellbeing and the wellbeing of thousands of other people will be taking a back seat to these large corporations as they benefit greatly from Ireland's very generous corporation tax breaks.

Making energy a commodity for profit has been a disaster. The current cost of living crisis is down to out of control "market" driven greed for profit. Prior to the privatisation of our electricity & gas we had the lowest prices in Europe. Now we have "competition" and we are enduring the highest prices in the EU for energy.

As Socialists we have called for the re-nationalisation of our electricity and gas. The price hikes are going on long before the situation in Ukraine and it is all driven by opportunistic greed for profit. France and others have taken electricity generation back into public ownership. We need to do the same.

Neoliberalism has failed the working class, as it is designed to do! We had better stock up on big candles and torches because this is just the beginning.

Next time the blackouts come we should march on the greedy data centres.

People's needs should come before corporate power needs and greed.

The RED Network (incorporating Rebel Telly) are a network of radical socialists within the political party People Before Profit, a 32-county people power movement on the island of Ireland.

www.rednetwork.ie