

WORKERS

INVITATION FROM THE COMMUNIST PARTY

PUBLIC MEETING

OUR WATER IN OUR HANDS!

**Thursday 9 November, 7.30pm
Conway Hall, Red Lion
Square, London WC1**

All welcome. Nearest tube: Holborn

**‘British water is in the hands of foreign-
owned monopolies reaping huge profits
while our infrastructure crumbles...’**

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OUR WATER IN OUR HANDS!

We need to nationalise our water industry.

As it stands, if the winter of 06/07 has the same low rainfall in the South East as it did last year, then by next summer much of South East England will be using standpipes.

British water supplies are in the hands of foreign-owned monopolies who are reaping huge profits while our infrastructure crumbles. If the ridiculously high profits made by these companies in the last few years had been channelled into developing a national water grid and other infrastructure projects we would no longer be facing a water shortage.

Meanwhile, Severn Water has seen an 18 per cent rise in profits as complaints against the company rose by 55 per cent and it was investigated for providing false data to OFWAT. And since it acquired Thames Water in 2000, RWE (its German parent company) has extracted around £1 billion in dividends to shareholders!

With a national water grid, there would be no water shortages. The Major government aborted this idea when it privatised our water industry, dividing England and Wales between 24, mainly French, companies.

Water is only in short supply because the companies won't use the energy available to desalinate and pump water from where it is available to where it is to be consumed. If oil can be pumped from the middle of the North Sea, refined and piped to every part of the country, we could do something similar with water. Workers in the industry could make and lay the pipes, build the aqueducts, desalinate sea water, build reservoirs and pump water.

As the *Daily Express* editorialised in 2003, "The privatised water companies knew that their network was wearing out. They have had years in which to set aside money to pay for the work but it seems that, instead of doing so, they preferred to reward their shareholders and enrich their directors."

The Institution of Civil Engineers says that Britain must invest in new water resources, including reservoirs, to guarantee long term security of supply. Since privatisation in 1989, there has been little investment in new reservoirs.

We need to invest in new and upgraded infrastructure, in research and development for innovative alternatives e.g. improving capacity and quality for recycled water and transferring water between regions through a national water grid. This requires that the people of Britain reclaim the industry from the profiteers.

The Communist Party invites you to discuss how we are to defend Britain's water resources.

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