

Forward

Youth-Culture-Democracy

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There can be no perfect Europe in which Ireland is denied even the least of its national rights.

James Connolly, February 1916

Rising Rents and Cheating Landlords

The capitalist boom in the Irish economy over the last 15 years has made the wealthy wealthier, the poor poorer and squeezed working people dry through under investment in public services, indirect taxation and a property market that has put humble dwellings far beyond our means. This economic success story, built upon the back of our labour and the sale of this country to multinationals, is a success story for the wealthy; for those of us who have lived and still face long term renting off landlords it is more of a nightmare. This housing reality has gone virtually unchecked by legislation, unreported by the media, and unsanctioned by any authorities. It is time we looked at facts, listened to stories and actively campaigned to penalise and criminalise corrupt landlords and for the provision of affordable high quality housing for sale and for rent.

The Deposit

A frequent complaint and frequent problem with landlords is in the return of the deposit when moving out. Landlords seem to treat the deposit as a kind of gift tenants give them for the pleasure of over-paying for sub standard accommodation.

One such landlord owns the residences at number 3 Selskar Terrace Ranelagh. If one knows anyone living at this site or thinking of moving there be careful the landlord is out to rip you off.

While there is some level of protection for tenants through the Private Residential Tenancies Board it is wholly inadequate and largely depends upon the landlords registered when obviously it is the many unregistered ones who need the scrutiny. The process is also extremely long and will at present take over a year to go to arbitration where you are not guaranteed a favorable finding. Check out their website if you do need assistance however as they are one of the few options you might have, www.prtb.ie .

NCT for housing

Threshold, the housing action group, have recently called for the state to implement an NCT form of certification that all housing for rent or sale must achieve every 4 years. Rents have been rising by on average 10% in 2006 and 12% in 2007 in an economy with increasing debt problems for many working people this means the possibility of eviction and homelessness is very real. Threshold are therefore also campaigning for the government to introduce an emergency payment for those in need to reduce the risk of eviction. The number of people who contacted Threshold in 2006 increased by 25% and the evidence of a housing crisis is clear for all to see on the streets of Dublin and in the run down flats for rent.

CYM and supporting comrades picket Shell

For the third month in a row the CYM and other Shell To Sea protesters joined forces at the Shell Station on Finglas road, near Glasnevin, to show their solidarity with the people of Rosspport and oppose the sale of Irelands resources to multi-national corporations.

The picket lasted from 12pm until 1.30pm with over 20 protesters in attendance and an RTE camera man. Many passersby took leaflets while passing traffic tooted their horns in support, much to the annoyance of the station manager. The police presence was considerably less than on the previous pickets although the special branch were seen passing on numerous occasions and a squad car was a constant feature in the near

empty station forecourt. The picket ended in high spirits, with comrades packing up their gear to head home but we'll be back next month and hopefully we'll see you there!

CYM CONDEMNS GARDA INTIMIDATION

The Connolly Youth Movement has condemned the intimidation shown by the Gardaí on Saturday December 1st 2007.

Members of the CYM, along with other anti- Shell protestors, had their details taken by Special Branch, which the CYM see as being blatant intimidation. A number of CYM activists were engaged in completely peaceful protest outside a Shell garage in Glasnevin between 1 and 2 pm, exercising their democratic right to protest.

The protest was a success despite the heavy police presence, with many cars turning away from the garage, many leaflets being distributed and excellent support from the general public.

The CYM views the Gardaí actions as a way to harass and intimidate people from opposing this states policy and the actions of Shell. It is also outraged that its membership is being targeted while drug and gang crime is out of control in the country. Surely the Gardaí have more to be doing than harassing young people involved in peaceful protest for progressive change.

Message of solidarity from KNE, Greece

Thank you for your information about your struggle against the plan by great monopolies to build gas pipelines through your land. Here in Greece already two pipelines have been established, one of gas and the other of oil. They try to persuade us that these pipelines are the bridge of peace and friendship between the peoples. But with our struggles against them in Greece, we disclosed that these pipelines are for the game of profit for enterprise and big business. People won't gain anything from them but on the contrary will lose their rights and a new round of wars and conflicts will soon face us from the imperialist centre of transportation through pipelines in Balkans of oil and gas. Therefore KNE is sending the deepest solidarity message in our common struggles.

Comradely,
IRC OF CC OF KNE

Connolly Youth Support the People's Movement campaign for a No vote

European democracy at work

Most politicians, media sources and academics will not ask the question let alone entertain the notion that we are confronted by the European Union progressing quicker and quicker towards an all consuming super-state ala a 'United States of Europe'. But this is a reality that when studied will become obvious to all and leave only those behind the project with the anti-democratic task of denying the truth while forcing the reality upon us. This contradiction shall soon be apparent to all as the Belgian prime minister said 'The Constitution is the capstone of a European federal state.'

Europe has been moving down the path to a federal state for a number of decades. The leading figures behind the scenes, those dictating the process, have always known their ultimate goal and will deny democracy, bully, and force this upon us unless we face them down and fight for real and meaningful democracy in Europe. In 1958 Monnet,

largely seen as the founding father of the European Union, wrote 'the current communities should be completed by a Finance Common Market which would lead us to European economic unity. Only then would ... the mutual commitments make it fairly easy to produce the political union which is the goal.'

The longer the process went on the more obvious the political goal of a single European state controlled by central economic and political institutions became. The British Foreign Office (as it was known at the time) commissioned a report in 1970 that stated 'the plan for economic and monetary union (EMU) has revolutionary long term implications, both economic and political. It could imply the ultimate creation of a European federal state with a single currency ... All the basic instruments of national economic management (fiscal, monetary, incomes and regional policies) would ultimately be handed over to the central federal authorities.'

Accepting that Europe is clearly moving towards a super-state you may ask what is wrong with that, is it not just the natural progress of Europe? There has been nothing natural or open about this process. It has been politically driven by deception and fraud. The business and industrial leaders with their political representatives have connived to downplay the role of Europe so as to year by year increase their power behind our backs. There has been a deliberate policy to downplay the transfer of political power from nation-state to the EU and simply present the process as of securing economies and creating jobs. The fundamental problem with the European federal state being created is the lack of democratic transparency, accountability and opportunity to influence or control power for the vast majority of working people.

The constitution is a finishing part of the above process. It enshrines the supremacy of the Union, it lifts the European Court of Justice above domestic courts and it creates into law a right-wing economic system. This is far more than ideals and flags that most constitutions embody. The people of France and Netherlands rejected this constitution previously but just like when the Irish rejected Nice we are being forced to make the 'correct decision' a second time. This time, however, the establishment doesn't want to risk a vote so only Ireland is having a referendum. They may have changed its name but the essence, the legal and economic framework remains the same as Bertie Ahearne has confirmed, 'Thankfully, they haven't changed any of the substance' and more recently German Chancellor Angela Merkel 'The substance of the constitution is confirmed. That is a fact.'

So we are being presented with a European super-state that was rejected by the French and Dutch people previously. We must stand up for democracy by rejecting this constitution and rejecting the undemocratic process. Vote No!

Why Vote No?

For Democracy

This constitution has already been rejected by the French and Dutch peoples. Over 3,000 amendments were put forward by national representatives none of which were even discussed. The treaty was drafted by unelected officials and working groups with no transparency or accountability. This time only the Irish people have a vote as parliaments across Europe are denying democracy. If passed they will no longer need referenda for the constitution to be amended or changed.

For Sovereignty

EU law and the all important interpretation of law through the European Court of Justice (ECJ) will have primacy over national law. Power is further centralised in the European technocracy and in unelected officials. The sovereignty of nation states in vital areas like the economy and foreign policy, including waging war through 'peace making'

missions, disappears. Irelands influence within the union decreases with changes to voting structures and we will for periods have no commissioner.

For Public Services

This constitution goes much farther than national ones by laying down specifics of a right-wing economic system that will be enforced upon every state. The Services Directive makes privatisation a must whether people support it or not. It increasing EU competency in key areas like health, education, resources and transport. Irish infrastructure will be opened up to global trade deals and sold for business's to make profit not provide quality service. Elected governments loose their veto power in even more areas.

For Neutrality

We have seen the dangers to peace, security and truth created by the US military-industrial complex. The European constitution will create its own military-industrial complex and give increased influence to lobby groups harmful to world peace. A common defence and foreign policy will be framed and 'peace making' missions made by a European army compatible with nuclear armed NATO. Ireland will be part of this and neutrality only a memory.

For Workers Rights

Far from increasing and cementing workers rights this constitution and the European Court of Justice are driving down our conditions. Take the recent Laval case as an example. The ECJ ruled that Laval, a Latvian company operating in Sweden, could legally pay the Latvian minimum wage to its workers in Sweden. This crucial ruling will serve to drive down minimum wage, divide workers and increase racism and xenophobia.

What Have the Unions ever done for us?

Why Join a Union

The media and establishment parties attack unions for being 'uncompetitive' and for standing in the way of 'progress'. Some leftist parties attack unions for not being 'revolutionary' or 'hard' enough. The EU attacks the union's right to strike and workers right to organise. Management and bosses attacks unions for eating into their profits and for voicing staff concerns and issues. Worst of all in some parts of the world state-sponsored paramilitary organisations assassinate and harass union members.

There is a barrage of anti-union actions coming from all angles in our daily lives. Despite this, however, many young people are joining unions. There practical working experience shows the critical need for unions and the crucial role they continue to play. For example unions like BATU, the apprentices union, and IBOA, the bankers union, show a positive increase in their membership figures, especially in young members.

- Trade Unions are your voice in your employment. Many voices together are much louder than a solitary whisper.
- Unions actively win you better working conditions in salaries, pensions, health and safety, working hours and much more.
- Being a member and standing up for yourself shows pride and respect in who you are. Unions do not allow employers to walk all over you.
- In the current economic environment unions will increasingly play a crucial role in protecting your job and in making sure employers do not take advantage of the situation by making 'cost saving' cut backs – redundancies.

- Recent studies show stress in employment at unprecedented levels, unions actively campaign to achieve better work-life balances.
- Bullying and harassment are now common complaints, membership of a union can protect you from bullies or equally from accusations of bullying.
- Most of all, however, being a union member teaches you the invaluable workplace lesson of solidarity and unity. Victories do not come without struggle and trade unions can be your way for fighting for better rights in the workplace.

Only by sticking together will your demands be met.

Explaining Economics Part 1 **The Production Process**

Modern economics, what is taught in schools or presented on the news, is less an actual study of economics, the way in which society creates, as much as an ideological and politically biased presentation. That is, what poses as economics today is in fact 'bourgeois economics'. It is by and large the study of supply and demand and not the manner in which everything around us is produced. It is not a study of the production process.

One example of this would be at the end of each news bulletin the reader calls out the latest figures on the 'dow jones' or the 'isec index'. These represent an indication of a regions market performance based upon the top 100 companies in that region, determined by finance speculators and corporate giants. As a piece of news it is determined by and effects far less of us than say an industrial bulletin of union negotiations. The point being, the economics we are presented with are not really economics and are purposely made meaningless to our lives. This political management of our knowledge and education serves to distance us from the crucial study of economics and its everyday impact upon us.

The actual scientific study of the production process is where Marx found his philosophical progress took him. However, he certainly was not the first to approach it. Ancient Athenian scientists had tackled the question of production and more recently the political economists of Ricardo and Smith in 18th century England had examined it. Marx, with the invaluable help of Engels, was able to draw upon their analysis and experience to further the scientific study of our economic reality.

From this lengthy study and practice Marx was able to draw some certain conclusions:

We thus see that the social relations within which individuals produce, the social relations of production, are altered, transformed, with the change and development of the material means of production, of the forces of production. The relations of production in their totality constitute what is called the social relations, society, and, moreover, a society at a definite stage of historical development.

K. Marx, 1847 'Wage-Labour and Capital'

It is from the production process, how we produce, the technology available, the division of labour, and most importantly the ownership of the means to produce, society has its distinct forms, whether slave, feudal or capitalist.

The capitalist mode of production, for example, rests on the fact that the material conditions of production are in the hands of non-workers in the form of property in capital and land, while the masses are only owners of the personal condition of production, of labour-power. If the elements of production are so distributed, then the present-day distribution of the means of consumption results automatically.

K. Marx. 1875 'Critique of Gotha Program'

The mass of landless labourers were produced by the growth of capitalism and the disintegration of feudalism. The advancement in technology left many peasants and farm hands useless they were forced to the cities to look for work off the growing number of bosses. These workers have nothing to offer but their bodies and minds to be used where and when necessary by those who own land, factories, companies, business's, natural resources or capital resources. These facts of life develop the world around us. They ultimately shape and form our family relations from ancient forms of communal reproduction to our current form of monogamous marriage. They dictate the type education we receive or if we receive a formal one at all. The list does go on. And as noted by Marx above and most importantly they create the consumption and wealth patterns of inequality we see all around us.

Class Definitions

Before we examine the most basic class definitions a note on capital and labour is necessary.

Capital therefore presupposes wage-labour; wage-labour presupposes capital. They condition each other; each brings the other into existence.

K. Marx. 1847 'Wage-Labour and Capital'

In physical science Newton declared, 'For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.' This is true, by and large, across the sciences. Capital and wage-labour are each other's opposite. They could not exist without the other, as Marx puts it they presuppose each other. One's creation brought the other into existence. It is the exploitation of wage-labour by capital that recreates capital. The increase in relative strength of one is the weakness of the other.

When labour was strongest in Europe, through unions, communist parties, and the existence of the USSR, we won broad social reform and a social democratic system. Now, however, when labour is at an incredible low in Europe we have constant attacks and rolling back of these reforms, our health system, our education, our 5 day week, our retirement age, our pension schemes etc. Capital is clearly dominating wage-labour. The bosses are clearly dominating the workers.

Engels definition below is the simplest expression of who the bosses are and who the workers are:

By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern Capitalist, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labour. By proletariat, the class of modern wage-labourers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour power in order to live. F.

Engels. 1848 'Manifesto of the Communist Party'

It should be very clear now that the working class is by far the vast majority of people on this planet. Most people do not employ others. Most people (if lucky enough!) are employed. We live in a world where there are two obvious classes, and they are antagonistic, they are in conflict.

There are of course great disparity and difference within classes. There is the CEO of Nike and the man who owns the local corner shop, both capitalists. There is also the man on 200,000 a year wage and the man on 20,000 a year, both workers. This difference within wage-labourers is not like the conflict between classes, as this difference is not due to exploitation of one worker over another. We will examine this further in future editions of Forward. It is the struggle between classes that makes history and it is the victory of the majority class of workers over the minority of bosses that will ensure our futures.

Still to come in future editions of the magazine:

**Labour Theory of Value
Commodities and Labour**

Prices, Supply and Demand
Wages
Surplus Value and Profit
Competition and Imperialism

The Crisis in Global Finance

Editors Note: *Economists have studied and tracked the periods of growth and decline in capitalist markets over its history and determined that the overall level of profit accumulation, relative to early capitalism, are in decline. The collapse of socialist countries has extended the life of this global system but increasingly capitalism appears desperate to privatize every public service and resource in a vain attempt to preserve itself. Imperialism is increasingly aggressive and increasingly open in its form. Crisis must be understood and placed in an overall historical context. As socialists we must strive to study, understand and exploit these opportunities. This article attempts to explain the current economic crisis. It is not yet clear whether this will lead to a global recession but one thing is sure and that is there will be crisis after crisis if we do not successfully replace this system based upon private profit for a system based upon public service.*

Monday January 21st saw a huge crash in global shares, with the FTSE (the U.K. stock exchange) dropping 323.50 points, that's 5.48% off its value, equivalent to £77bn. And the U.K. was not alone, the Japanese Nikkei index dropped 4% and the French and German stock exchanges both fell by 7%. These are the largest falls in share prices since the 9/11 attacks in 2001.

This is the most dramatic demonstration yet of the severe turbulence in the international financial markets. What then are its causes and potential consequences?

Many economists have suggested that the immediate cause of the collapse was the news from America of financial difficulties for the companies providing financial backing on subprime mortgages. Others have argued that the financial markets have simply cracked under the pressure that has been mounting for months. Nick Parsons, head of strategy at NAB

Capital said; "There was no real trigger for what was a Black Monday. Overnight there was the very loud sound of pennies dropping." Certainly the current problems have their roots in wider problems in the financial markets.

Over the past few years, because of good conditions in the market, mortgage lenders have been giving money to people who, under different conditions, would be considered too risky to lend money to. Often the money that was lent to these people had in turn been borrowed from another bank. When the inevitable slowdown in the market came, these people were not able to meet their mortgage repayments and the banks that lent them the money they were unable to pay off their own loans, causing their loses to become a financial contagion which spread throughout the banking system. This is a major problem for the wider economy because modern capitalism, as Lenin observed in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, is driven by finance capital. Already we are seeing the initial effects of this with the housing market in the U.S. and the U.K. in steep decline and consumer spending down considerably. These three problems are likely to increasingly feed into each other due to the close links between the property market and the financial sector (a particular problem considering the current turmoil originated with mortgages) and will effect the overall strength of the economy has on consumer spending.

What then are the likely consequences of this?

Firstly, there is already concern that this could lead to people defaulting on other debts, such as those on their credit cards.

Secondly, it's going to squeeze pension funds.

Thirdly, it could lead to a contraction in the job market, making it harder for people to find jobs and making redundancies more likely for many workers as employers cut costs to preserve their bottom line.

Fourthly, and most importantly, the banks decision to cut interest rates in order to contain the crisis runs the risk of fuelling inflationary pressure, which will push the cost of goods up, further reducing consumer spending as well as limiting peoples' access to basic necessities such as food and fuel.

Exactly how far this crisis will go is difficult to say, but it's almost certainly going to get worse. One economist at the Dow Jones (the U.S. stock exchange) said the odds of a recession in the U.S. is eighty per cent and it's hard to conceive of the rest of the world remaining immune to this. On the other hand, it's not likely that this will become a depression as long as the rest of the global economy (especially Chinese manufacturing) remains strong. Despite the unlikelihood of this crisis becoming terminal, we must remember that it is in the nature of the capitalist mode of production to generate crisis such as this and that it will continue to do so periodically until it is superseded by a new form of economy, socialism.

Jan Kucera – A Victim of Fascism

While crowds of activists were gathering by Pilsen in the Czech Republic to mark the anniversary of the deportation of Jews by the Nazis 66 years ago, a young anti-fascist was fighting for his life in a nearby hospital.

Jan Kucera of the town of Pribram died on the 24th of January. He was killed for defending his friends from neo-nazis, who had been provoking them with Fascist salutes and racist insults. Stabbed twice, an hour before midnight, by a 20-year-old Neo-Nazi called Jiri Fous. Jan's friends called an ambulance and desperately tried to stop the bleeding. However he had lost too much blood from a wound in his back and died on Sunday morning in the hands of the doctors of the local hospital.

As an antifascist, Jan believed that there should be no platform for fascists or people who promote racism or bigotry. He died for what he believed in and for that we will honour his name. There must be no ground given to Fascists and we will continue to fight them in all our actions. Fascism divides people against each other and we must act as Jan did when he said, ***“I don't care who my friends are - I don't judge people because of their musical taste, their clothes or the colour of their skin. I judge people by what they do!”***

DATA Retention Comes to Ireland

In February 2008, new Data Retention laws came to Ireland, negatively affecting the monitoring of our Internet usage. From this date onwards, records of all emails, chat messages, attachments and Internet usage will be stored for up to 3 years for use by the so called “Justice” department.

This new law comes from the European Union and will step up the level of surveillance upon Irish citizens in their everyday usage of the Internet. Also the new laws could be used to monitor and prosecute young people who download movies and music through the Internet rather than buy them in stores like HMV, which charge ridiculous prices.

The CYM and the people of Ireland should oppose this new law, as an invasion of privacy and an extension of the police state which the EU is trying to create with the new “Lisbon Treaty.” Ireland is being used as a testing ground for these new laws before they are enacted in the rest of the EU and it is imperative that we resist them so that our European comrades do not end up in the same situation as we will be in soon.

Spanish Bombs

Spanish songs in Andalucia
The shooting sites in the days of '39
Oh, please, leave the vendanna open
Fredrico Lorca is dead and gone
Bullet holes in the cemetery walls
The black cars of the Guardia Civil
Spanish bombs on the Costa Rica
I'm flying in a DC 10 tonight

Spanish bombs, yo tequierro y finito
Yote querda, oh mi corazon
Spanish bombs, yo te quierro y finito
Yo te querda, oh mi corazon

Spanish weeks in my disco casino
The freedom fighters died upon the hill
They sang the red flag
They wore the black one
But after they died it was Mockingbird Hill
Back home the buses went up in flashes
The Irish tomb was drenched in blood
Spanish bombs shatter the hotels
My senorita's rose was nipped in the bud

The hillsides ring with "Free the people"
Or can I hear the echo from the days of '39?
With trenches full of poets
The ragged army, fixin' bayonets to fight the other line
Spanish bombs rock the province
I'm hearing music from another time
Spanish bombs on the Costa Brava
I'm flying in on a DC 10 tonight
Spanish songs in Andalucia, Mandolina, oh mi corazon
Spanish songs in Granada, oh mi Corazon

The Clash

Georgi Dimitrov On Fascism

Dimitrov was born in Bulgaria and from the Social Democratic Party helped found the Bulgarian Communist Party in 1919. As secretary of the Trade Union Federation he also became a leading member and figure of the Communist International, Comintern. Dimitrov achieved world reknown for successfully conducting his own defence when on trial in Germany, 1933, in the famous anti-communist Leipzig trials. Dimitrov made an invaluable contribution to the study and analysis of Fascism and to the tactics of popular resistance. Dimitrov died outside Moscow in 1949.

With the development of the very deep economic crisis, with the general crisis of capitalism becoming sharply accentuated and the mass of working people becoming revolutionized, fascism has embarked upon a wide offensive. The ruling bourgeoisie more and more seeks salvation in fascism, with the object of taking exceptional predatory measures against the working people, preparing for an imperialist war of plunder, attacking the Soviet Union, enslaving and partitioning China, and by all these means preventing revolution.

The imperialist circles are trying to shift the whole burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of the working people. They are trying to solve the problems of markets by enslaving the weak nations, by intensifying colonial oppression and repartitioning the world anew by means of war. They are striving to forestall the growth of the forces of revolution by smashing the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants...

That is why they need fascism.

It is characteristic of the victory of fascism that this victory, on the one hand, bear witness to the weakness of the proletariat, disorganized and paralyzed by the disruptive Social-Democratic

policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie itself, and, on the other, expresses the weakness of the bourgeoisie itself, afraid of the realization of a united struggle of the working class, afraid of revolution, and no longer in a position to maintain its dictatorship over the masses by the old methods of bourgeois democracy and parliamentarism.

Fascism is the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements of finance capital. Fascism is the power of finance capital itself. It is the organization of terrorist vengeance against the working class and the revolutionary section of the peasantry and intelligentsia.

The development of fascism, and the fascist dictatorship itself, assume different forms in different countries, according to historical, social and economic conditions and to the national peculiarities, and the international position of the given country.

The accession to power of fascism is not an ordinary succession of one bourgeois government by another, but a substitution of one state form of class domination of the bourgeoisie – bourgeois democracy – by another form – open terrorist dictatorship.

Before the establishment of a fascist dictatorship, bourgeois governments usually pass through a number of preliminary stages and adopt a number of reactionary measures which directly facilitate the accession to power of fascism. Whoever does not fight the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie and the growth of fascism at these preparatory stages is not in a position to prevent the victory of fascism, but, on the contrary, facilitates that victory.

Fascism is able to attract the masses because it demagogically appeals to their most urgent needs and demands. Fascism not only inflames prejudices that are deeply ingrained in the masses, but also plays on the better sentiments of the masses, on their sense of justice and sometimes even on their revolutionary traditions.

In practice it converts the workers and unemployed into pariahs of capitalist society stripped of rights; destroys their trade unions; deprives them of the right to strike and to have their working-class press, forces them into fascist organizations, plunders their social insurance funds and transforms the mills and factories into barracks where the unbridled arbitrary rule of the capitalist reigns.

Whether the victory of fascism can be prevented depends first and foremost on the militant activity of the working class itself, on whether its forces are welded into a single militant army combating the offensive of capitalism and fascism. By establishing its fighting unity, the proletariat would paralyze the influence of fascism over the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the youth and the intelligentsia, and would be able to neutralize one section of them and win over the other section.

Unity of action of the proletariat on a national and international scale is the mighty weapon which renders the working class capable not only of successful defense but also of successful counterattack against fascism, against the class enemy.

It should be stated categorically that any Communist worker, any revolutionary worker who does not belong to the mass trade union of his industry, who does not fight to transform the reformist trade union into a real class trade union organization, who does not fight for trade union unity on the basis of the class struggle, such a Communist worker, such a revolutionary worker, does not discharge his elementary proletarian duty.

Philip Agee Presente!

The members of Cuba Support Group Ireland have been deeply saddened by the news of Philip Agree's passing in Havana this week.

Philip had planned to visit Ireland in 2007 to speak about his inspiring life story which was captured so well in Bernie Dwyer and Roberto Ruis' film 'One Man's Story: Philip Agee, Cuba and the CIA'. The excitement and interest generated by his visit was testament to his internationally renowned reputation as a man of integrity and his great personal courage in lifting the lid on US human rights abuses and US sponsored terrorism in Latin America and elsewhere.

We were hugely disappointed that he was unable to travel to Ireland due to ill-health in April, and again in November, but we have the legacy of his life work as a dissident of great intellect and moral purpose who sacrificed his own career and personal safety to raise international awareness of covert and destabilising US actions in Cuba and other parts of the world.

Philip will always be remembered as a strong and supportive friend of Cuba and the members of Cuba Support Group Ireland send their deepest sympathies to Philip's wife and family. He will be remembered by all of our members who mourn his passing.

His last known media interview was with Alan Tourney of RTE Radio 1 – a 1-hour interview recorded in October that has yet to be broadcast. It would be a fitting memorial to his courage for it to be broadcast in full.

Stephen McCloskey
Cuba Support Group Ireland

Miami 5 New Years Message

Dear Friends:

Thank you for your words full of encouragement and brotherhood.

This year 2007 is coming to its end and in one way or another we all make an appraisal of our achievements and failures, as well as of our joys and sorrows in these last 12 months.

We know that time is relative, but we cannot avoid to measure it and, within it, to trace new goals: our near and far-away dreams.

There is something that clearly comes to view in our evaluation of this year: it is the incessant growing of the solidarity with our struggle for justice and freedom.

Of course, we know that still we have much to do in order to reach the truth to all corners and with it to gain the door to justice, but we can count on the tenacity that each one of our friends has demonstrated, on your indestructible attachment to reason and honesty and on your immense love to the Cuban people and its Revolution.

Most of the time my answer to your letter comes with a delay because I have so many commitments and I am involved in various projects, but you should know that you are, and you will be forever, in the hearts of the Five.

Happy New Year 2008! We wish you health, peace and love. A strong embrace from the Five.

¡Hasta la Victoria Siempre!

Greetings to friends,
In solidarity,
Antonio Guerrero
USP Florence, Colorado
December 2007

Ireland and the CIA

Last December a number of files were released and opened to the public. It is not often these events are reported upon and usually less often that we find anything of interest to report upon. However some files this time were different.

During the height of the cold war the Irish state, behind the back of its people and with no accountability what so ever, was aiding the US state in espionage and an information war upon the sovereign states of Cuba and Czechoslovakia.

In 1955 the Minister for External Affairs, and later Fine Gael leader, Liam Cosgrave officially and formally linked the Irish Intelligent Services, G2, with the CIA, continuing the subordination of our island to imperialism this time in the attacks upon socialist countries led by the US.

The files have revealed the CIA used students as agents to infiltrate organisations and pass information on. They also reveal the Irish Embassy in London as a conduit for secret files to be passed between the imperial governments of Britain and the US.

The Irish states complicity in the war upon socialist countries went even further by monitoring Czech and Cuban flights through Shannon, recording passenger, cargo and flight details before passing them on to Washington. If only the state was that careful with the US cargo through Shannon today!

We will supply such manifest data as becomes available in respect of future flights and are prepared to make available similar data in respect of a reasonable past period, going back if necessary to the initiation of the service.

Sean Lemass to US intelligence

6th Meeting of European Communist Youth Organisations

The 20th Century started with the excitement of the Great October Revolution. Socialist power had become the hope of workers and oppressed people not only in Russia, but also all around the world. Great October's Revolution opened the road and began the ending of exploitation. Contrary to capitalist ideas, socialism proved that workers could rule the countries economy as well and better, and that a system dependant on exploitation is not a destiny. Socialism secured a free health service and education system, and full employment under the state power of working class as guarantor. Socialism was the guarantor of world peace during its existence and demonstrated that in its opposition to imperialist ambitions by drawing back from the imperialist war in Europe and the partition of the world post WW1. During the Second World War, the USSR and communist parties, anti-fascist and partisan movement proved that they were the only defender of humanity against the evils of fascism.

With the re-establishment of the balance of power in the world politics following the Second World War, the communist movement raised the banner of socialism against the aggression of the capitalist-imperialist bloc led by the USA. The socialist and progressive popular republics even went further in weakening imperialism's strangle-hold on the rest of the world. They were also the great political inspiration of ideals for workers and especially the youth of capitalist countries, as well. Working classes of several capitalist countries, especially those in Europe,

were inspired by the social and political gains made in the socialist countries in their struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The end of the 20th century was not as hopeful as its commencement. Together with the dissolution of the socialist bloc during the 1990s, imperialist aggression gained momentum. Imperialism has promoted the implementation of capitalist reconstruction in Eastern Europe and the Far East which presupposes the demolitions of peoples' conquests, privatizations and more profits for big capital. At the same time they have been imposing the interests of monopolies through US, NATO, EU and growing Russia competitions. Together with these plans they promote smear campaigns against socialism aimed at young people, especially in the former socialist countries. Egalitarianism, class consciousness and social solidarity were replaced with the atomization of society based on individualism.

To promote its political hegemony, imperialism spread its military aggressions and sent troops all around the world. New wars, imperialist interventions and occupations, bloodshed of peoples all promoted. Changes in borders and challenges to sovereignty are being boosted, trying to divide peoples for monopolies to rule energy sources and wealth. Imperialist terror organization NATO assumed an important role as the striking power of imperialism, first in the Balkan operations leading to the disintegration of society in the former Yugoslavia where peoples during years of socialism lived peacefully together, and now also in the Middle East.

In Europe, the EU has promoted and given momentum to neo-liberal destruction that has deepened inequalities. It had a provocative role in the start of the civil war in Yugoslavia and the imperialist occupation that followed. Assuming significant roles during the capitalist restoration of the former socialist countries, the EU also served as an instrument to export counter-revolution and conflict among peoples. It has deepened further its imperialist character through the efforts of imposing of European Reform Treaty on the peoples of European countries.

What has been proved is that capitalism doesn't want and cannot solve peoples problems. Imperialist aggression will only successfully be opposed by a well-organized and decisive struggle of the working class. What we, the youth organizations have to do first is to adopt a decisive and common approach with the working classes against imperialism.

We the communist youth organizations of Europe, together with our other fraternal organizations of the world are struggling against imperialism using with the inspiration of the October Revolution and the experiences of constructing socialism.