

# FORWARD

#22

A YOUNG VOICE FOR SOCIALISM

**War On Drugs - LGBT TV - Dlisteanú na Stát Nemahdhlisteanacha**

## MODERN MODERN IMPERIALISM IMPERIALISM

The imperialists carve up large swaths of territory in Africa, Latin American and Asia. The economies of these countries are completely subservient to the major imperialist economies. If these nations attempt to resist and demand sovereignty, the financial interests use their influence on the state to exercise military action against these countries to ensure their profits are not challenged. This explains the invasion of countries like Iraq...

READ THE FULL PIECE ON PAGE 6



# Five-A-Side Fundraiser

Work Must Pay is a group of committed activists who have shown leadership among our youth in how to organise and fight back against the many unjust, unpaid internship schemes that the 26-County State has used to increase profits and reduce labour costs for, among others, the GAA (an organisation which already receives very substantial State funding), Microsoft, HP, the HSE, universities and ITs, Google, etc. The campaign's slogan tell you everything you need to know about what is at stake: "A day's work, a day's pay!".

On Saturday 1st October, a sizeable contingent of young (and not so young!) women and men attended a five-a-side fundraiser which was a great success, and where the majority of the funds raised will go to Temple Street Children's Hospital. Teams taking part included Sinn Féin Republican Youth (overall winners) IMPACT Trade Union, the Connolly Youth Movement, Misneach and the Workers' Party.

The whole day was an enjoyable experience for all, with several of the participants meeting up in John Clarke and Sons, Ringsend afterwards to enjoy a mesmerising game between Dublin and Mayo, as well as historic back-to-back titles for the Boys in Blue, the first time this has happened since 1977. The Work Must Pay campaign would like to pay a special thanks to Shane Lambert of IMPACT, who organised the venue for the day at a very reasonable rate, and without whom this event would not have been possible. A kind donation was also received from Unite branch 102.



# Fête de l'Humanité

Fête de l'Humanité is an annual festival held on the second weekend of September in northern Paris and run by "L'Humanité", formerly the daily newspaper of the French Communist Party (PCF), which is now independently-run. This year's gathering saw over 450,000 people attend. The festival is a mixture of culture (both from France and far beyond), music, sport, literature, film, debate and "rencontres" (meetings between comrades). One cannot help but be struck by the sheer number of political and cultural groups in attendance, with a significant portion of the stands run by departmental "fédérations" of the PCF and the MJCF (the PCF's youth wing, affiliated to the WFDY). The camaraderie and hospitality displayed by comrades from the PCF (and the MJCF) was humbling.

Much of the security during the Fête is provided by the CGT, France's most important trade union confederation, which has strong links to the PCF. The Fête serves in some ways as the French Left's principal gathering of the calendar year. There is a mix of both contemporary and historical issues debated across several venues

over the weekend. From the French Revolution to May '68, from the Paris Commune to the general strike of '33, the French Left certainly has a lot of experiences and struggles from which to draw lessons. Current issues discussed ranged from the refugee crisis to the proposed "Loi du Travail" (French labour law reform), which has met stiff resistance since its inception, spearheaded by the CGT and the PCF.

The "Global Village" represented organisations from all over the world during the festival, with two Irish organisations managing to hold down a stall for the duration of the weekend: the Communist Party of Ireland and Sinn Féin. A strong contingent from the CYM's Belfast and Cork branches manned the CPI stall for the three days. Cheap Leffe and Beamish proved popular with the revellers, despite the obvious language barrier with many of the locals!

One of the surprising things to note about the Fête is the sheer number of top-class acts that are brought in over the weekend, with the Chemical Brother, Yannick Noah, The 1975 and Lindsey Stirling all taking to the stage. This is all the more remarkable considering just how cheap a three-day pass is, at only €35.

Without a doubt, the CYM will aim to have another strong contingent at the Fête next year. It is also worth noting that COMAC (youth section of the Belgian Workers' Party) plays a large role in organising ManiFiesta on Belgium's North Sea coast, a festival which takes place the weekend after the Fête. If you are considering a summer break on the Continent for next year, these two festivals one after the other may seem like a solid option, else you could attend Avante (the festival of the Portuguese Communist Party) on the first weekend of September!



## The Representations of Class in Television Media

The importance of popular culture in shaping our view of the world cannot be understated. It has been well-documented that television shows, to take one example, can profoundly influence the opinions and behaviours of society rather than merely acting to reflect them. To cite a few cases, soap operas have been a factor in falling fertility rates in areas of Brazil as women emulated the small size of the on-screen families. The introduction of television to Fiji led to an enormous increase in eating disorders and poor body image among teenage girls on the archipelago. More dubiously shows like "Will and Grace", the American sitcom with a titular gay character, and "Orange Is the New Black", set in a women's penitentiary, are credited with advancing LGBT+ rights in the United States, leading Joe Biden, the U.S. Vice President, to state "I think 'Will & Grace' probably did more to educate the American public than almost anything anybody has ever done so far." when discussing his support for same-sex marriage. Given the power of popular media to influence such diverse areas of human life, it is clear it also informs our understanding of class relations in society. Here, we will explore some of troubling aspects of the representation or misrepresentation of class relations in television.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, the four most common occupations in the United States in 2014 were, respectively, office clerks, registered nurses and customer services representatives, and secretaries (other than legal, medical and executive). These four groups comprised over 10 million U.S. workers and yet, with the partial exception

of nurses, are largely absent from television shows, especially in leading roles. In fact, many shows tirelessly recycle the same few professions, namely lawyers, doctors and police officers. Whether it's "Grey's Anatomy", "Scrubs", "The Good Wife", "Suits", "Criminal Minds" or "Law and Order", these professions dominate the screen beyond all proportion to their actual numbers in society (the most common of these professions, lawyer, is only 25th in the U.S. being beaten out by jobs such as childcare worker, accountant and carpenter). Of these three overrepresented careers, two are firmly on the upper end of the income scale while the third is the embodiment of the preservation of the current system. When television studios do venture beyond these careers, it tends to be towards other high-earners such as marketers ("Madmen"), architects ("How I Met Your Mother") or even outright aristocrats ("Downton Abbey"). It is difficult to see, except perhaps in the case of police officers, why these professions should lend themselves to drama more than those less well-paid, especially as most of the drama hinges on the interpersonal relationships of the characters with their work merely providing a backdrop.

Even when television shows do focus on people of a more modest income level, economic aspects of their lives are perversely warped. Aside from spending almost no time at work and never having any serious money-troubles, characters with low to median income jobs inhabit homes that must be well outside their means. Consider the sitcom homes rented by waitresses, secretaries, and others in shows like "The Big Bang Theory", "Friends", or "Not Going Out". Not only are these homes enormous by any standard, they are often located in the centre of expensive urban areas like New York, Pasadena or London. These large sets are presumably preferred for cinematic and exposition reasons but they inevitably paint a false picture in a world where it can cost

ferred for cinematic and exposition reasons but they inevitably paint a false picture in a world where it can cost 400 U.S. dollars a month to rent a wooden box in San Francisco, and record numbers of young people are forced to remain in the family home due to sky-rocketing rent prices. The reality presented to us in our media effectively airbrushes out any issue of class relations in contemporary society.

Shows which do feature ordinary or less economically advantaged characters in leading roles regularly garner large followings – consider the success of "The Office", "Skins", "Shameless" or "Orange Is the New Black" – demonstrating that there is interest in outside the wealthy professional bubble. Unfortunately, however, many shows which do concentrate on the working-class present it as synonymous with the lumpen-proletariat. Portrayals often descend into 'poverty-porn' in an attempt to give a "true to life" or "gritty" feeling to the show. These shows tend to be heavy on drug-addiction, alcoholism and petty criminality with the problems faced by the characters mainly stemming from a lack of self-restraint, poor judgement, fecklessness or some other character defect rather than from any possible structural or societal source. That is to say nothing of shows like "Benefit Street", "The Jeremy Kyle Show" or "Boozed-up Brits Abroad" which purposely demonise working-class communities.

In summary, television media, when it is not openly demonising the working-class, completely obscures class issues faced by the majority of the population, choosing instead to glamourise and glorify wealthy professionals. As socialists, it is our position to recognise and point out these distortions in our media and to begin to construct new class-conscious portrayals of our society.

## The Death Of The War On Drugs

Public discussion on drug policy in recent years has focused on the failure of the so-called “war on drugs” to reduce drug addiction and drug-related harms. This has led to a growth in support among both the public and the liberal establishment for a ‘health based’ rather than a ‘criminal justice’ based approach to drugs, as many varying positions on drugs are now widely and openly debated. However this public discussion can only be meaningful if it interrogates the class basis on which drug related harms are distributed and the role which drugs play in hegemonic social control under capitalism.

First of all, whether we support or oppose drug use, we must acknowledge that the harms which can occur disproportionately affect those living in poverty. The Combat Poverty Agency raised this issue in their submission to the National Drugs Strategy, highlighting that drug addiction often compounds issues of homelessness, poor education and low employment prospects. Further, working class communities have taken the brunt of the consequences of the drug trade such as gangland crime and violence. Secondly, the use of drugs by hegemonic powers as a means of social control is often overlooked but is crucial to our understanding of the class distribution of the drugs issue. Antonio Gramsci theorised hegemony as the dominant ideas of the ruling class which are used as a means of control, aligning ‘public opinion’ with the interests of the ruling class. The manipulation of public attitudes towards drugs and drug addicts is an excellent example of this phenomenon.

For example in the US we see how the “war on drugs” was used as a tool to vilify those who presented a threat to established powers. John Ehrlichman, who was chief aide to President Rich-

ard Nixon when the “drugs war” was declared, has since admitted that the anti-drug message was deliberately engineered to target particular communities. Many years later in an interview he said “we knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did.”

This targeting of particular groups resulted in the massively disproportionate imprisonment of poor people and minorities. Another result of this systematic targeting of people for drug offences is that growing prison populations create opportunities for corporations to make massive profits from prison labour.

These patterns are replicated in Ire-

land. The Irish Penal Reform Trust reports that we have “uneven policing which in turn can result in higher levels of crime detection in certain areas or among certain groups of people”. There is also evidence of uneven sentencing based on people’s socioeconomic backgrounds. Further, drug-related crimes are much more likely to result in custodial sentences than white collar crimes, regardless of severity or impact on victims.

Therefore it is crucial that as the public debate on drugs continues, we constantly highlight the class analysis which goes beyond a mere pro- or anti- drugs agenda to understand the role of illegal substances in maintaining a class system which alienates the poor in favour of the interests of the ruling classes. Ultimately, while they are a symptom, drugs are not the cause of the societal harms endured by our communities - inequality is.



IMAGE: KMC PHOTO



## Imperialism and Ireland Today

Imperialism is Capitalism at its highest and most developed stage. Capitalism is primarily a system of competition within a market setting. As commodities are produced and sold, some private producers do better than others and this leads to a concentration of production. In other words, a smaller and smaller amount of centralized producers. Firms merge with each other and acquire weaker firms. To continue operating, these firms must acquire access to new markets. This primarily means the need for expansion into the poorer and less developed countries. To do this these firms require finance, which they receive from financial institutions. This leads to a further concentration of finance capital and the mutual dependency between industry and finance. The importance of financial institutions to the expansion of capitalism leads to an increased political relationship between the state and these financial interests.

This leads to the economic conquest of less developed nations with their resources taken by the more advanced economies, located primarily in Europe and the US. The imperialists carve up large swaths of territory in Africa, Latin American and Asia. The economies of these countries are completely subservient to the major imperialist economies. The vast majority of the profit made in the colonised countries goes back to the imperialist country. If these nations attempt to resist and demand some sovereignty, the financial interests use their influence on the state to exercise military action against these countries to ensure their profits are not challenged. This explains the invasion of countries like Iraq, the use of proxies to overthrow Libya and the attempted overthrow of countries like Syria.

Eventually, the imperialism reaches the point where there are no more countries to penetrate. The necessity for new markets and expansion leads to war with other imperialist countries, such as in the First World War when the rival imperialist powers sacrificed their working-class for the sake of acquiring other territories held by their rivals.

Therefore we can say that imperialism is the reason for many of the world's wars and the destabilization of sovereign nations. The struggle for democra-

cy at the national level is a struggle against capitalism at its highest level. Marxists look at the era of imperialism as also being the era of socialist revolution. Capitalism is at its most desperate and faces resistance by peoples in the most exploited areas of the world. It internationalises the class struggle. The struggle against war, exploitation and imperialist intervention is the same as the struggle for democracy, independence and sovereignty. This is the struggle for socialism and for the right of independent nations to democratically control their own resources. In Ireland, we face imperialism at several layers. The historic influence of British imperialism is still evident in the British control of the 6 north-eastern counties with Westminster making the decisions for the people of the six counties. 5,000 British soldiers are based in the north, with British intelli-



gence services such as MI5 also operating in the region.

In the southern 26 counties, the European Union is the most influential imperialist power. The EU provided financial assistance to the state in return for its obedience in servicing the debt through austerity programs and privatisation of industries, de-regulation of the labour market and the complete surrender of fiscal and monetary policy to the unelected commission in Brussels. This leads to high unemployment, precarious work conditions, the selling off of publicly owned assets to private companies and vulture funds circling over our housing stock while people are evicted and our water privatised.

The United States exercises huge control over the southern gombeenregime. The presence of primarily American Multi-National Corporations means the theft of our natural resources and the decisions that affect the Irish worker being made not in a sovereign parliament but in boardrooms around the world. The dependency on these corporations means divestment in Irish public services and a fawning of the US state. This dependent political relationship has led to the use of Shannon Airport by the US military as it engages in its imperialist wars around the Middle East. As a possible "reward" for the southern state's obedience, it may even be allowed join NATO and be a junior partner in impe-

rialism, with Irish workers dying in far-flung countries for the benefit of a class with no regard for them.

Imperialism also has a cultural side. In Ireland, most of our newspapers come from England, allowing the British imperialist state control our own way of thinking. The English language is the way we communicate, meaning the Irish way of seeing the world is suppressed and the Anglo-American perspective of society is forced on us.

## Dlisteanú na Stát Nemahdhlísteana

Ní héasca do phoblachtánaigh sóisialacha sa tír seo a dtuairimí maidir leis an gceist náisiúnta a chur in iúl d'óige an lae inniu. Nach bhfuil an t-iliomad ábhar buartha acu, idir muirir mac léinn, pá iséal, ainchíosanna, eisi-mirce agus sláinte mheahbrach? Is furasta spochadh asainn, ag spalpadh dogma polaitiúil a cuireadh i gerích le síniú Chomhaontas Aoine an Chéasta, nárb í sin fírinne an scéil? Cén nasc a bhfuil ag ár gcumha do phoblacht shóisialach ar fud an oileáin le sreachtail na linne seo? Luadh an focal "tír" sa chéad abairt, agus gan amhras, tuigtear brí an fhocail sin i gcomhthéacs an airteagail a bhfuil á léamh agat. Faroar, is micreacasma é brí an fhocail sin go minic do thábhacht tuisceana ar chúrsaí poblachtánachais níos leithne, agus an sreachtail a bhfuil de dhíth chun éilimh an ghluaiseachta sin a chur i gerích.

De ghnáth, má tá cónaí ort sna Sé Chontae is Fíche, 'séard atá i gceist nuair a deirtear nó a scríobhtar an focal "Éire", go hoifigiúil nó sna meáin, ná fearann an Stáit a bunaíodh mar Saorstát Éireann, nó an "Irish Free State", i 1922. De réir saineoilithe teanga na linne sin a chomhairligh de Valera, b'é "Saorstát" an leagan ceart ar "Republic" as Gaeilge. Níor thuig foireann aistriúcháin na Breataine amhlaidh, agus tugadh "Irish Free State" go faillíoch ar an dlínse nua seo as Béarla. Ba thoradh é an Stát seo ar an gConradh Angla-Éireannach agus, níos tábhachtaí fós, Acht um Rialú na hÉireann (1920). B'é an t-acht úd a chur críochdheighilt i mbarr réime don chéad uair, gan tuairim dhaonlathach muintir na hÉireann, mórlach ina measc a thacaigh le húdarás Dáil Éireann in Áth Cliath, a iarradh ach oiread. Ó scríobh de Valera agus an tEaspag Mac Uaid bunreacht an Stáit i 1937, tugadh "Éire" go hoifigiúil ar an Stát, mar gur mhaígh sé sealbh ar na Sé Chontae, rud a chuir olc ar na hAontachtóirí ag an am. D'ainneoin sin, níor chailligh "Éire" an t-oileán uile go practiciúil riamh, agus baineadh an

maíomh seach-chríche seo mar chuid de Chomhaontas Aoine an Chéasta. Níor bhain poblachtánaigh radacacha úsáid ariamh as ainm oifigiúil an Stáit fhrithghníomhaigh seo, ná ainm oifigiúil agus an ceart acu, mar gur mhacasamhail na Léinte Gorma agus lucht ar thaobh an Chonartha é.

Breathnaigh ar pháipéar nuachtán nó éist le craoladh nuachta sa lá atá inniu ann agus cloisfeá "rialtas na hÉireann", "Éire", srl. agus tagairt á dhéanamh do Stát an Deiscirt. Ní sampla uathúil í Éire (agus tuigfeá a bhfuil i gceist ag údar an airteagail seo nuair a úsáidtear an téarma sin!) don feiniméan seo, áfach. Tá clár folaigh ag baint leis an téarmaíocht seo, agus tuilleadh samplaí dó sa stair cheana féin: cuir i gcás "an Rúis" a thabhairt ar an Aontas Sóivéadach, "Meiriceá" a thabhairt ar na Stáit Aontaithe, nó "an Eoraip" a thabhairt ar an Aontas Eorpach. Céard atá acu ar fad i gcoitinne? Is iarrachtaí fo-chomhfhiosacha ar fad iad dlisteanú (nó a mhalairt i gcás an Aontais Shóivéidigh) a dhéanamh ar idé-eolaíocht na haicme cheannais, é a chur i mbéal an phobail gur chóir

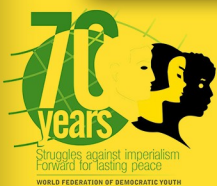
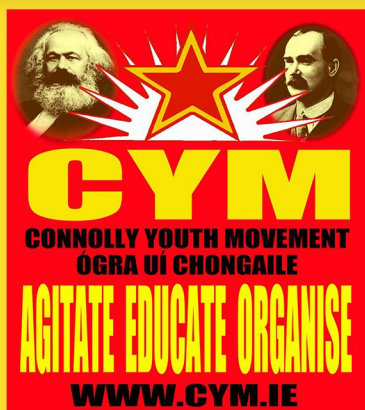
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Trí "Éire" a thabhairt ar Stát mhórlach an oileáin seo, déantar díspeagadh ar na céadta mílte duine ar thaobh eile na Teorainne ar mian leo "Éireannaigh" a thabhairt orthu féin. 'Sí údar íoróin nach bhfuil aicme cheannais na Breataine ar aon tuairim leis an Stát seo faoin téarmaíocht, toise go dtugtar "Poblacht na hÉireann" ar na Sé Chontae is Fiche ar fud na Breataine agus sna Sé Chontae araon, rud a léiríonn nach bhfuil comhaontas ann maidir le hainm an Deiscirt fiú i measc a gcomharsan béal dorais. Scaiptear an teagasc i measc pobail an Deiscirt gur "tír eile" í na Sé Chontae, rud a chuireann le dlisteanú stat nuachóilíneach na Sé Chontae is Fiche. Is seo foinse na néiginnteachtaí i bhféiniúlacht na hÉireann ó thuaidh agus ó theas, nuair a cheiltear stair réabhlóideach ár sinsear agus déantar an cluas bhodhar a thabhairt d'eagraíochtaí cultúrtha, go háirithe siúd a bhfuil cur chun cinn na Gaeilge mar phríomhtheanga na tíre, chun an sampla is reatha a luadh. Gan amhras, léirítear an cultúr bréagach seo go mion i ngeilleagar "bréagach" na Sé Chontae is Fiche nach bhfeidhmíonn ar son leasa formhór mhuintir na tíre seo, a bhraitheann ar chaip-

iteal iasachtach agus stádas an stáit mar thearmann cánach.

Mar a luaigh an Conghaileach breis is céad bliain ó shin, chuirfí an críochdheighilt tús le "carnival of reaction". Is fíor an ráiteas sin go fóill, go háirithe nuair a mheastar an dá dlínse in Éirinn an lae inniu. Ní thiocfadh réiteach na ceiste sóisialaí muna bhfuascláitear an cheist náisiúnta ina teannta. Má táthar ar lorg sampla níos fearr do thábhacht na straitéise úd, ba chóir breathnú ar thaithí Pháirtí na nOibirthe agus an Pháirtí Shóisialaigh, dhá pháirtí "den eite chlé" a thacaíonn le teoiric díchéillí "an Dá Náisiún" ar an oileán seo. Tá siad ar an dá pháirtí is seicteacaí in Éirinn, eagraíochtaí a bhfuil scoilt ghlan iontu idir an dá dhlinse. Is amhlaidh go gcaithfear an sreacht ar son flaitheas agus saoirse náisiúnta a nascadh leis an iarracht an bonna a bhaint den dá Stát, chun frithráite Státaire na heite deise sa Deisceart agus cosantóirí impiriúlachais na Breataine sa Tuaisceart a chur chun deiridh.



## WWW.CYM.IE

The Connolly Youth Movement is a youth organisation committed to fighting for democracy, freedom and unity in this country. The CYM takes part in the struggle to build socialism in Ireland and everywhere around the globe.

Since 2008 the crisis in Ireland has deepened which has seen many talented and gifted young people leave this island in search of a better life abroad. We as a youth organisation are fundamentally opposed to any government using its youth as a safety valve in trying to ease economic and political tensions. So we are determined to stay and fight the injustice brought on this and future generations.

Working with progressive movements to develop young workers' and students' consciousness in their own proud history and culture. As a member of the World Federation of Democratic Youth we struggle in opposition to imperialism and for liberation around the globe of all oppressed peoples, including ourselves.

The CYM has branches in Dublin, Belfast and Cork.

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CONNOLLY YOUTH MOVEMENT  
ÓGRA UÍ CHONGAILE