

FORWARD

A YOUNG VOICE FOR SOCIALISM

37ú
37th edition

2025
Iúil | July

**WELFARE NOT
WARFARE!**

The fight against
Militarism

The ruling class north and south
are trying to drag us into their
wars!



LET THEM WEAR SHORTS

The skorts vs shorts saga and the
struggle for women's recognition
in Gaelic games

**THE NECESSITY
OF IRISH-CUBAN
SOLIDARITY**

HOUSING IN THE NORTH

AND MORE!

**“OUR
FREEDOM
MUST BE
HAD AT ALL
HAZARDS”**

Theobald Wolfe Tone

INSIDE:

**WHAT WE
COULD
LEARN
FROM
WOLFE
TONE AND
THE
UNITED
IRISHMEN**

CLÁR AN ÁBHAIR *Contents*

3 Editor's Note

4 The Rise of Militarism

What ReArm Europe means for an Ireland in denial about its "neutrality" north and south.

7 At the Rising of the Moon: The Legacy of the United Irishmen

Each summer, Irish Republicans commemorate the 1798 Rebellion. Here, we testify to their influence today.

10 Let Them Wear Shorts

Discrimination in Women's GAA sees a misogynistic kitwear issue face massive backlash from the sporting world.



page 24: A capitulating empire chancing anything it can to maintain its dominant grip on the Earth



page 21: CATU Belfast campaign against local evictions in the Falls Road

13 On the Importance of Philosophy

How we think of the world, and its role on practically changing it through raising class-consciousness.

17 The Communist International and Fascism

Lessons from the strategies and tactics of the international communist movement in the 20th century.

21 Housing in the North: A Crisis Resurfacing

As one of Europe's most impoverished areas, how has capitalism and British colonial rule failed 1.9m people in Ireland?

24 Trump's "Liberation Day": What Are Tariffs All About?

It might be 2025's economic buzzword, but how long has this strategy been around, and what does it mean for the trade war?

27 Ireland and Cuba

Achievements of a people committed to socialism-communism and why the CYM is collecting medical aid to bypass imperialist US sanctions

A Chairde,

Forward's Summer 2025 edition comes at a transformative time for us in the Connolly Youth Movement, the working-class youth of Ireland, and proletarians the world over.

Against a backdrop of escalating wars and the rapid militarisation of Europe, we face no small task in combatting the social crises that are deepening as the ruling class pour billions into arms. Germany amassed a record-breaking military budget and we are seeing its fellow member states, including the Irish 26 county state, following suit with the developments of the destructive ReArm Europe programme. In the six counties, as military contracts enrich arms dealers and NATO membership dually with the British occupation already dictating its offensive affairs, our first article contextualises why we must be anti-militarists on a 32-county basis.

This issue addresses the forces driving these wars, as well as the trade implications at stake with tariffs hitting the globe since Trump's presidency restarted in the US this year. Moreover, we look at the violent sanctions that same empire have imposed to try stunt Cuba and its commitment to socialism. The island nation, with much resolve, has still been able to defy 40 years of economic domineering with ground-breaking developments.

We also turn to the necessity of why the endeavour in building socialism in our lifetime requires a robust philosophical undertaking from all

communists.

The Comintern a century ago understood this, which we discuss in an article exploring its strategies regarding a common approach towards fascism and what we can learn from it today.

Each year, the anniversary of the 1798 Rebellion marks an important time to gather and remember the heroic actions of Wolfe Tone and the United Irishmen. Our article outlines the vision of the United Irishmen and what we can learn from their struggle in the context of escalating imperialist conflicts.

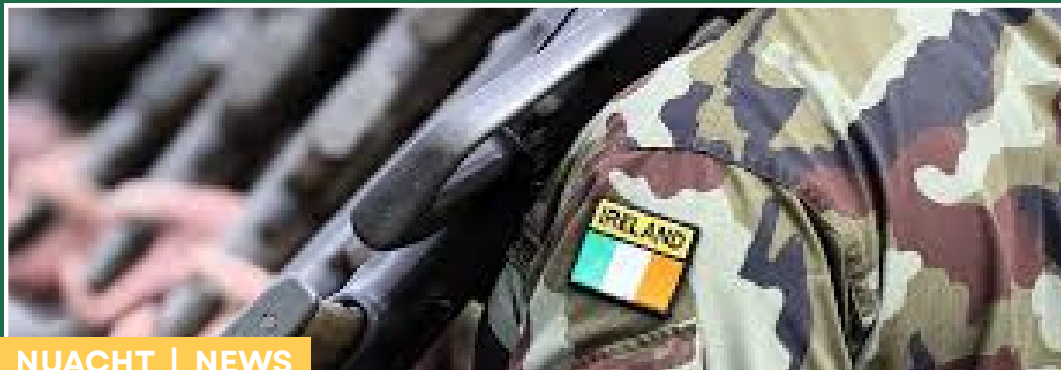
The 37th edition of Forward also features two key topics in the discriminatory practices, one on forced uniform in women's GAA, along with an article debunking far-right agitator's claims on who is responsible for the failures of housing in the north of Ireland.

Our imperative with this edition is for members and readers alike to take action against the capitalist war machine and all its discontents-genocide complicity, the stripping of funds for housing in the process, or otherwise. The CYM, as Ireland's communist youth, remain steadfast in our commitment to:

Fight Capitalists, Not Their Wars!

Troid in Aghaidh na gCaipitleach, ní a gCogal!

Forward Editorial Team, Iúil '25



NUAIGHT | NEWS

THE RISE OF MILITARISM

Somhairle Ó Tuathaláin

This year, the European Union announced its “ReArm Europe” initiative which hopes to see a budget of €800 billion spent on armaments by 2030. This is only the most recent of the EU’s ongoing campaign of militarisation. Whilst the EU continues to try and maintain its image as a liberal and progressive bloc, its militarisation efforts expose it for what it has always been: a bloc of imperialists.

What we see today has been decades in the making, and indeed between 2014 and 2023, EU arms spending had increased by 62%. Of course, throughout this period we have seen further privatisation and spending cuts to public services, so where does all this money come from?

The EU’s fiscal rules are created in such a way to discourage deficit spending or public debt, so of course these have been waived for the sake of further military spending and militarisation. The EU expects that €650 billion of the target amount will come from doing so. Already we have

seen Germany sidestep its constitution in order to remove the spending cap on its military. The other €150 billion is expected to come from EU loans, which it hopes will “enable a rapid increase of its production capacity, improve the timely availability of defence products, speed up the development of new defence products or the upgrading of existing ones”. Other possible avenues of funding will be redirecting existing EU funding to prioritise armaments, and directing savings into such investments.

In practice however, much of this spending will be coming at the expense of already stretched social services. Certainly this was the explicit recommendation of NATO’s General Secretary, Mark Rutte, in January 2025.

Of course, the rationale for this shift must be examined. There is no better way of understanding this, than by understanding who is set to benefit. The official reason is that



the EU wants to “protect its autonomy” by prioritising European arms procurement, instead of importing US-made weapons systems. EU officials have stated that this covers both small enterprises, through to the large monopolies such as Rheinmetall and Thales. Indeed, here in Ireland there are “dual use” companies which are hoping to benefit from such spending. In reality though, this arms spending will prove to be the same as it has been for decades. It will only consolidate the wealth of the monopoly-capitalists engaged in war profiteering, who in turn will have greater and greater leverage over politics, due to their increasing wealth and influence. In turn, the existence of a large arms industry makes war inevitable by ensuring that the means to wage war are already readily available, and indeed highly profitable. No amount of military spending is “wasted” as far as the profiteers are concerned.

This in turn drives further militarisation of the EU as a whole, as seen with the likes of PESCO and the EU Battlegroups. PESCO exists to coordinate research & development efforts across the bloc, again to promote “investment” in the arms companies of the primary European states and provide prospective customers. Likewise, the equipping of EU Battlegroups as a form of European “standing army” provides a reliable way of ensuring continued contracts, whilst also providing the European Union itself with the means of responding militarily to rivals, or to be deployed to protect the imperialist interests of the bloc.

The drive for larger standing armies can also be seen through recent efforts to reintroduce conscription, and in Britain there has been increased discussions around



Pictured: Disraced genocidaire Ursula von der Leyen

“national service”. We have seen Denmark, Latvia, Sweden, Croatia, and Serbia expand their “national service” schemes, with both Italy and Germany also considering the same. This is not merely a cautious measure however, as is evidenced by the fact that the Swedish government has ordered the creation of 30,000 military graves. Just in case, they say. Such measures are part of the normalisation of militarism. The existence of large, conscript-based standing armies also feeds militarism by ensuring that the means to wage war are also on hand, and that a large pool of reserves can be mobilised at short notice.

This forms part of the wider militarisation of society. James Connolly observed during the period of WW1 that the militarisation of society is typically followed by the application of military law. We have seen this with how Palestine Action was deemed a terrorist organisation, and its members detained without trial under “anti-terror legislation”, which has its legislative origins in wartime “emergency” legislation. Oftentimes, the expansion of the military is also accompanied by the further militarisation of the police

force whether it be in terms of equipment, or in terms of their “anti-terrorism” powers.

Of course, this is a Europe-wide drive to war and Ireland has not been exempt from it. Billions have been poured into military contract for weapons manufacturers in the six counties, yet we are told that there simply isn't enough money for the NHS or schools. We have also seen a propaganda war waged in the south that tells us we're “freeloaders” and that we need to “do our bit”. Such rhetoric has been enthusiastically taken up by Fine Gael and Fianna Fail, and even Sinn Féin has toned down its previous opposition to PESCO. On the one hand, the road to militarisation offers a great many back-handers and junkets for the politicians involved. It also offers a useful distraction to the plethora of social issues already facing Irish society. Any question of public housing, well-funded schools, and accessible healthcare are all sacrificed on the altar of “European security”.

The struggle against militarism will not be won in the halls of Leinster House. It must be won on a daily basis in our schools, our universities, and in our towns. At every level of society there are people who set to gain from militarism. It is our job to oppose them.



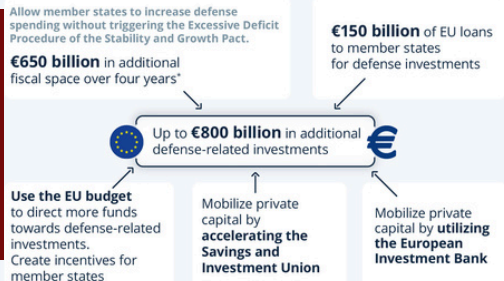
European defense firms like Rheinmetall (Germany), Thales (France), and Leonardo (Italy) saw valuations soar after the inter-imperialist war in Ukraine began in 2022. Thales have a post out in Belfast.



Pictured: Above- the announcement of armament by the European Union; Right- establishment statistics company Statista description of ReArm Europe

ReArm Europe: The EU's €800-Billion Defense Plan

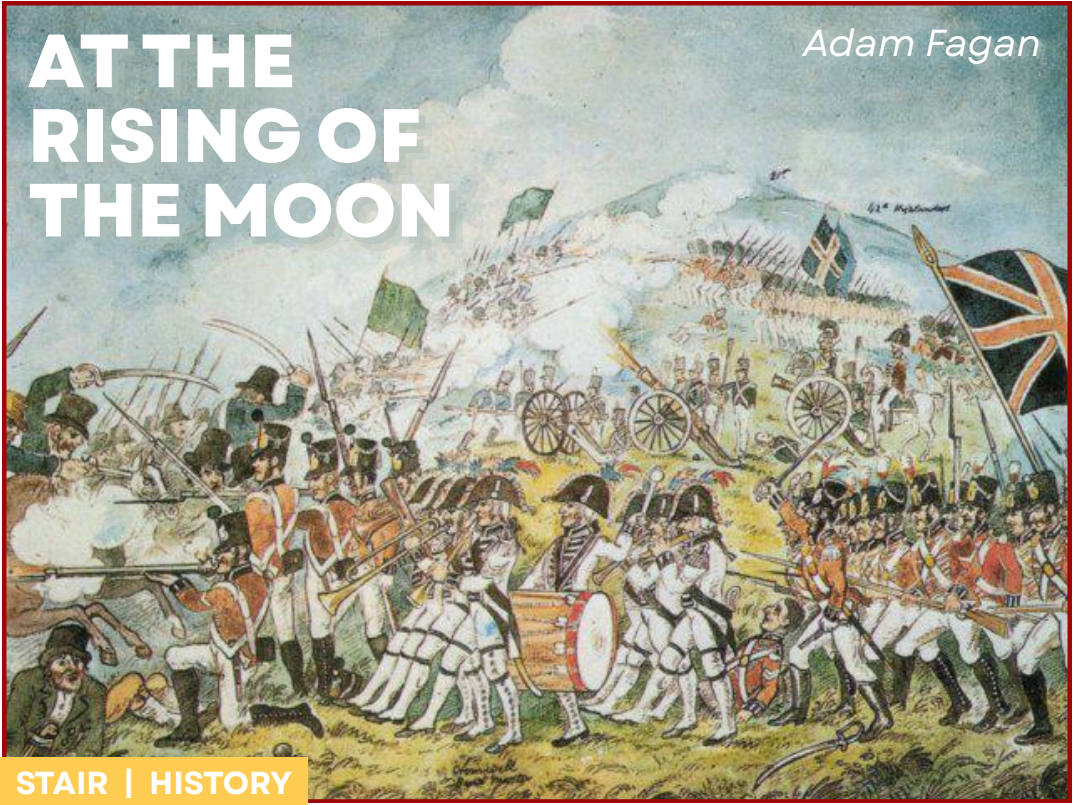
Components of the EU's "ReArm Europe" defense plan



* Assuming an average increase of 1.5% of GDP per member state
Source: European Commission

AT THE RISING OF THE MOON

Adam Fagan



STAIR | HISTORY

Each year, the month of June marks the anniversary of the 1798 Rebellion, which is generally marked as the first blow struck against Britain for an Irish nation. The rebellion, which was led by the United Irishmen and Theobald Wolfe Tone, marks an important point in Irish history, where the forces for an Irish republic were first forged against the backdrop of an oppressive aristocratic British Regime. The Rebellion was important for many reasons, and cannot be separated from the international context of revolution and upheaval against feudal aristocracy with instances such as the establishment of republics in France and America.

The beginning of the 18th Century was marked by the introduction of the Penal Laws, which were implemented by the absentee British Protestant Aristocracy

as a measure to limit the rights of Catholics. The laws limited Catholics in the realm of owning property, taking political office or being able to vote. This left a majority crippled population of Catholic peasantry, which generated revenue for the British Ruling Class through ground rents. The Penal Laws prevented any Catholic political force or prosperous economic class being able to emerge, this was especially important as a measure to control the Irish economy and benefit the absentee landlords who ruled. In the North, there existed emerging capitalists in the linen industry and alongside them, an emerging proletariat. Made up of Protestants and Dissenters, these groups also stood in stark opposition to the policy of the British ruling class in Ireland, who sought

to preserve Ireland as their feudal estate.

These different class elements were involved in various struggles, parliamentary or otherwise, against the feudal interests of England in the years preceding 1798. Various groups were involved in land agitation against tithes and taxes paid to the British government and church, these involved violent struggles from groups Catholic and Protestant alike. The Patriot Party and the Volunteers were formed as a force which struggled for an Irish parliament. This was in response to various acts such as the Cattle Acts and the Wool Act which prevented the export of Irish goods and hence, weakened any

chance at the growth of capital in Ireland.

Then, in 1793, the United Irishmen was founded. The United Irishmen composed of Catholics, Protestants and Dissenters alike. Their formation marked the first major defeat of sectarian attitudes in Irish society at that time. The foundation of the United Irishmen's was the unity between religious disciples on the basis of being part of an Irish nation. In 1795, shortly after the outbreak of war between Britain and the newly formed French Republic, the United Irishmen reorganised itself. After sharp crackdown from the British authorities in relation to the war, the reformist and conservative elements of

the United Irishmen largely defected. The organisation was reorganised "on a rebellious basis" with the objective of establishing a "republican government and a separation from England". This declaration marked an important step for the burgeoning republican movement, **Desmond Greaves** had the following to say on this development;

"The reorganisation of the United Irishmen was a turning point in Irish history. For the first time the Irish nation was exclusively identified with the Irish democracy."

"Equality: It Is New Strung and Shall Be Heard"



Inset, left to right:

William Corbet,
Michael Dwyer,
Robert Emmet,
Thomas Addis Emmet,
Lord Edward Fitzgerald,
James Hope,
William Jackson,
Henry Joy McCracken,
William James Macneven,
Samuel Neilson,
Arthur O'Connor,
Archibald Hamilton Rowan,
Thomas Russell,
Henry Sheares,
John Sheares,
James Napper Tandy,
Matthew Teeling,
Theobald Wolfe Tone



That is to say, like the movements in Europe and America which rose up against feudal monarchy, the Irish nation stood in direct opposition to not only colonial, but feudal despotic rule.

The rising itself broke out against a backdrop of brutal repression from the English authorities and their paramilitary groups. In 1796 martial law was effectively declared and brutal punishment was doled out against any suspected republicans. After years of preparation, the rising broke out sporadically across the country. With fighting beginning in Kildare, and some of the most decisive initial victories occurring in Wexford, rebellion was in full swing around the country. At this time, French General Humbert sent forces to Connaught in support of the uprising. The French forces achieved some success but like rebellions across the country they were defeated. What followed the 1798 rebellion was brutal repression and indiscriminate torture and killing from the English authorities.

Throughout the years leading up to and during the rising, Theobald Wolfe Tone was consistent in his support and fermentation of rebellion. Not only was he involved in directing the organisation of the United Irishmen, but he also fostered the development of the Democratic Republican ideals of the group. Tone

was captured during the rising after a heroic battle off the coast of Donegal, and died in captivity before his execution from British forces. His legacy will always be remembered as the founding father of Irish republicanism.

So what is to be learned from 1798 and the years which preceded it? The democratic and anti-sectarian ideals have influenced the Irish national movement for many years since. However the conditions since 1798 have matured. The political landscape has changed in Ireland since. Not only is Ireland partitioned, with a nominally independent free-state in the south and a British ruled state in the north, but also the age of feudalism is well and truly over in Ireland. Not only this, but the bourgeoisie have well and truly achieved their goals from the national struggle over the years. The ability for them to export commodities and capital from Ireland is now protected, and for them, there is no more national question worth discussing. Any national aspirations that are held by the Irish bourgeoisie are solely with respect to enhancing their ability to exploit the Irish worker. In this sense, the question of Irish freedom is solely in the hands off the Irish working class.

Tone and the United Irishmen fought heroically against the British empire at a time when the class

basis for international revolution had barely developed. Now, in the age of capitalist imperialism, the cause for the international working class to break free from its chains has never been so sure. Capitalism no longer plays any progressive role, and dominates the international working class, causing wars, economic depressions and the destruction of our planet. In the spirit of James Connolly, the only republic which in modern times could be considered progressive, is that of a Socialist Republic, established along the lines of scientific revolution. To follow the legacy of Tone and the United Irishmen, is to recognise this fact.



Pictured: A badge worn by a United Irishman in the Battle of Vinegar Hill, Enniscorthy on 21st June 1798.



NUACHT | NEWS

Pictured: A skort sported by Wexford Camogie

LET THEM WEAR SHORTS

Discrimination in Women's GAA

MÓC

individual player development and recovery. Whereas, in the same year female Inter-County players received just 700,000 Euros, this funding is more directed at the whole team. This raging disparity is all too familiar to any of our readers who understand the historical attitude and opposition to women's sports in general in Ireland. This opposition leads to the lack of opportunities we see for female athletes and young girls wanting to strive for a career in sport, or women and girls in general who just want to play sport casually.

Leading on from this, The Growing Up in Ireland Project has been tracking thousands of children born after 1998. It states that over a quarter of Ireland's 17 and 18 year olds maintain an unhealthy weight, and more girls than boys are overweight (30% for girls, 25% for boys). Only 66% of teenagers are getting the recommended amount of exercise (that being 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise). The gender split on this is even more

On 3 May 2025 Ireland was hit by a cacophony of news stories, all covering Camogie. While this sounds at first like great recognition for a seriously underfunded and underappreciated sport, it was not. All these news articles were covering a non-issue, whether players should be allowed to wear shorts or remain wearing skorts. While the skorts 'issue' needed to be solved, which it was on 22 May 2025, it most definitely is not the biggest issue facing Camogie or Ladies Gaelic Football (LGFA hereafter). Focusing on Camogie, this article will use the skorts issue to critically assess what needs to be done in women's Gaelic games at large from funding and opportunities to facilities, organisation and larger interest.

Firstly, looking at funding, women's Gaelic games are critically underfunded. Former Camogie Association President, Hilda Breslin, is correct in her assessment that this underfunding is a result of misogyny and discrimination against women partaking in sports. In 2021 male Inter-County players received 3 million Euros in government funding, this also is in large part focused on



Pictured: Camogie players in protest over the skorts rule

telling; 76% of boys are getting the recommended amount whereas just over half of girls are. Why is this trend happening? Many schools fail to offer Physical Education (PE) to students past Transition Year and many schools have shortened their lunch breaks in the aftermath of Covid-19. John Greene speaks about his experiences coaching an underage girls GAA team where he saw parents unsupportive of their daughters playing sport, schools failing to provide proper physical education, coaches struggling to get access to pitches for training and matches, and women reluctant to come forward for coaching and administrative positions due to a lack of encouragement in the past.

Thirdly, the facilities, and organisation for women's Gaelic Games are at best subpar. 5 students of University College Dublin (UCD hereafter) have spoken out against the unfair treatment and facilities found at UCD for Gaelic Games. Firstly, they state that in order to take trials students must fill out a Google Form with basic details and the highest level they have played. But, if any students put in that form that they played at Inter-County level they were automatically put into the second team and did not have to face trials. A student acutely observed how flawed this system of choosing players is, as making the team for a Division 4 county is a lot easier than for a Division 1 county. That's not even to mention the fact that coaches are choosing players that they have never even seen play!

The coaches for the trials also seemed disinterested and disorganised, splitting the 60 players of the first week of trials into four teams and letting them play two matches. And instead of taking notes and tracking the players they kicked a ball amongst themselves ignoring the women's game. By the end of the three weeks of trials numbers had halved to 30 students with most citing the trials being "not well run" as their reason. At the end of the trials coaches told players this was the "end of the road" and that they would be in touch. While players on the second team claimed that their training had already started while trials were on-going and that they knew of very few players who joined the second or third teams as a result of the trials. Two students interviewed also stated that they, alongside many others at the trials, were not informed about the existence of a third team, a team that struggled for numbers throughout the year!



Pictured: Munster rivals Cork and Waterford battle each other wearing the controversial and highly uncomfortable skorts, condemned by their players

Players on the second team have claimed that throughout the season organisation for matches has been poor with teams being selected at the very last minute specifically, the night before matches. At away games the UCD team would often not bring a medical bag or a physio with one player recounting a match played in Cork where a player received an injury to her hand and asked for an ice pack but was told that “no one had brought it”. Another player claims that at a different match away in Cork a player was badly hit in the eye and the Cork side’s physio had to enter the pitch to supply aid. This lack of medical care is simply an insult and if the other team does not have the medical facilities it will cause career ending injury or worse.

Both the first and second teams played in Queen’s University Belfast (QUB hereafter) on 14 and 15 March for the All-Ireland Semi Finals and Finals. Two players on the second team say that they were supplied with one night in a hotel, but had to cover their own costs, breakfast, and dinner. QUB provided lunches for both days after the Semis and Finals. One of the players stated “even watching our friends on the boys’ teams, watching what all they’re getting compared to us, and even compared to our first team, it just seemed so unfair the entire year.” The failure on UCD’s part to not match the funding the men’s teams get or even properly cover the costs for the women’s team is just another notch on the belt against women’s sport.

There were multiple issues with the team selection and the kits supplied. Firstly, regarding the team selection for the second team’s Semi Final: the team sheet was accidentally submitted alphabetically rather than by position. This resulted in the team captain being listed as a substitute.

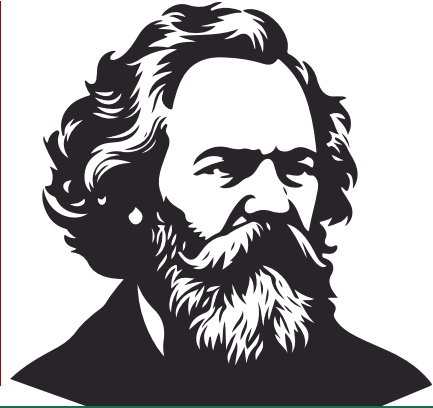
Finally, while interest in Camogie and LGFA is growing steadily it still lags well behind the men’s games. Between all the All-Ireland Finals in 2024 the Hurling Final had an average television audience of 1,037,000, the Football Final had an average of 889,000, the 2022 Camogie Final had an average of just 188,000, and worst of all, the LGFA Final had an average of 149,400. The statistics here are staggering. The gap in women’s Gaelic Games is stark and the Camogie Association and LGFA need to do something to breach the gap and promote interests in the two sports. Two easy decisions to make are a decrease in ticket prices, and to have more games televised live. While they will not fix the larger issue it will certainly help viewership numbers as most people just wanna watch the sports they love no matter if it’s men or women playing.

Women’s Gaelic Games are seriously at risk right now. Between funding, discrimination, scandal, and attention. The recent skorts fiasco was just a way of papering over cracks and sweeping the real issues facing the sports under the carpet.



Pictured: Cork Camogie lifting the trophy as All-Ireland Champions

TEOIRIC | THEORY



ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PHILOSOPHY

James Ward

The question has been asked: what is the use of philosophy? Where is its role in the struggle for socialism, in our organising and practical work as communists? This brief article attempts to answer these questions from the perspective of materialism.

To start, let us define the nature of philosophy. In a word, philosophy is the discipline of abstraction. It is the tool which allows us to bring all other areas of science and knowledge together and to make sense of them by means of organising their findings in a cohesive and rational way. Philosophy, thus, finds its own unique character in acting as the connector of human thought. The aim of philosophy is to understand the universal laws, patterns and movement that underpin all of reality, as well as the human cognitive process itself. This is why it must find its basis among the more specialised disciplines, such as chemistry for example, in order to collate the most broadly evident findings of such a discipline with the rest of human intellectual activity, such as history, or psychology.

Consequently, philosophy is the mortar holding the distinct bricks of knowledge together, but it also must, by necessity, stand above any specific field of investigation, unifying them into something more than their sum. Hence it is the most general form of thought. This means that it is the key determinant in creating an integral world-outlook. Indeed, philosophy is the nucleus or core of any worldview, its gravitational centre.

But what does it mean to subscribe to an integral world-outlook? It means to have a structurally complete understanding of the material world. An integral world-outlook encompasses questions of values, ideals, socio-political views, theoretical standpoints, aesthetic principles, judgements, convictions, class

position, the nature or meaning of life, and more. It is the comprehensive system or framework of thought of any given person in a definite socio-historical epoch. If you imagine a diagram consisting of manifold circles, each representing one of the aforesaid subjects, the point where every single circle must necessarily intersect is the realm of philosophy, hence why we call it the nucleus.

The feat of establishing a fully integral world-outlook was achieved for the first and only time in history by Marxism, which embodies a fully open, critical and scientific understanding of the universe. The doctrine developed by Marx and Engels broke away from the idealism of the bourgeois philosophers who preceded them, creating something truly epoch-making: a philosophy both objective and partisan. As the worldview of the proletariat, it has no class interest in deception or dishonesty, as every exploitative, ruling class ideology has had going back through the centuries. Each advancement of science is an advancement of the working-class as the harbinger of the new society, and ever-intensifies the contradiction of private property with modern social production.

So, philosophy is crucial in building our conception

of the surrounding world, but by what means does it accomplish this? Here we arrive at the importance of methodology- the vital and symbiotic counterpart of worldview. Method is the region of procedure and investigation, concerning the process of discovering the truth as well as the rules and devices thereof. Method is the cutting edge of worldview; it brings forth new insights which are then evaluated, organised and positioned relative to the existing historically conditioned frame of thought. As Marx wrote, "All science would be superfluous if the outward appearance and the essence of things directly coincided". Method fulfils this scientific role on the most universal scale.

Everyone, then, has their own philosophy, whether

they consciously adhere by it or not. It is inescapable. Every perception, opinion, assessment of any phenomena or object in the material world comes back to one's implicit, preexisting worldview, which determines the way that such things will be understood, in what context they will be positioned. If I say "I don't care about philosophy", I am suddenly making a cascade of inherent judgements about the nature of life, what is important and what isn't, trusting certain means of obtaining knowledge rather than others, etc.

So, the measure in which we can become conscious of our own philosophical belief system is the measure in which we can think critically by examining every assumption we have



Pictured: Marx and Engels amongst contemporaries in debate

Aged 15-35 and living on the island of Ireland?

Fight for your SOCIALIST FUTURE!



Want to build a
Cumann in your
area? Email us:
gensec@cym.ie

Join the
**Connolly Youth
Movement!**



Can't join us
but want to
support?
Donate

   @connollyym
cym.ie



**FIGHT
CAPITALISTS,**

**NOT THEIR
WAR!**



BRITAIN OUT OF IRELAND

IRELAND OUT OF EU

NO TO NATO, NO TO WAR!

about the universe, the truthfulness of every judgement we make, the meaning of truth itself, contradictions, limitations of our own thought, and so on and so forth. It is the measure in which, by force of will; of creative labour, we can retake ownership of ourselves, truly recognise our responsibilities to others and our place in the world. Hence it is the task of any revolutionary to transform their implicit worldview into an integral one, forged by the ruthless criticism of everything existing.

When we have accomplished this task – although there is no set point where the task is “complete” – we can contribute to the maturation of our class struggle by determining the best ways to organise ourselves along the most effective principles. Since organisation is the sole weapon of the proletariat, it is successful only insofar as it is focused, incisive, and unwavering in its dynamic representation of the objective interests of the workers. The root of all errors in the advancement of the labour movement has always been idealism of one form or another. Hence it is the duty of all class-conscious individuals to be militant in their ideological-theoretical struggle, study, and work.

In sum, philosophy represents the highest and most central stage of our thinking, as Marxists and as humans. It allows us to solve problems of the most pressing nature to our time and conditions. Further, it is indispensable in coming to the correct political, strategic and tactical conclusions in our revolutionary praxis. Therefore, it is the rightful domain of all people who are sensitive to the advancement of their class, nation, and humanity entirely.

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL & FASCISM

Tomás Sheehan

In the 1920s, the Communist International (Comintern) shifted its strategy in a new direction. Previously, it had adopted a “United Front” approach. This strategy, acknowledging that the communist party represented a minority of the working class in many countries, saw the communist party “propose to join with all workers belonging to other parties and groups and all unaligned workers in a common struggle to defend the immediate, basic interests of the working class against the bourgeoisie”. The intention was that this proposal would force the leadership of the non-communist working class parties, namely the social-democrats, to cooperate, or be seen by their members as obstacles to working class unity.

However, following the 6th Congress of the Comintern, it was assessed that capitalism was entering into what was called its “Third Period”, following the October Revolution and the formation of the Soviet Union. The first period followed immediately after World War I, where there was a crisis of capitalism and a resulting revolutionary upsurge by the working class, which was ultimately smashed by the forces of capital. This was followed by the second period, which saw a consolidation of capitalism and a further assault on the working class, influencing the defensive and



Pictured: Bulgarian communist Georgi Dimitroff

compromising nature of the “United Front” strategy. Then came the third period, which was again to be a period of capitalist crisis and revolutionary initiative.

In light of this, the strategies and tactics of the communist parties adapted to a more militant and offensive quality, a return to “class against class”. Critics of this period have characterised it as “ultra-leftist” and “sectarian”. In some cases, CP’s split trade unions to form alternative or parallel red trade unions, that would follow the leadership of the communist party. In general, there was a sense of revolutionary fervour among the communists that resonated with the working class, as the communist parties in many instances were growing to become major forces within the working class, and the situation for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism seemed ever more imminent.



Pictured: A Turin factory council during Biennio Rosso in Italy- a key topic of strategy and debate in the second Comintern

One of the primary theses which underpinned this strategic shift was that of “social fascism”. This posited that much like fascism, the ideology of social democracy has the function of securing the rule of capital and preventing the establishment of the rule of the working class, ie. the dictatorship of the proletariat. It identified social democracy as a “mainstay” of capitalism.

This reflected the experience of the working class after the end of the first world war, where social democracy “supported the predatory treaties (Brest-Litovsk, Versailles); it actively aligned itself with the militarists in the bloody suppression of proletarian uprisings (Noske); it conducted armed warfare

against the first proletarian republic (Soviet Russia); it despicably betrayed the victorious proletariat (Hungary); it joined the imperialist League of Nations (Albert Thomas, Paul Boncour, Vandervelde); it openly supported the imperialist slave-owners against the colonial slaves (the British Labour Party); it actively supported the most reactionary executioners of the working class (Bulgaria, Poland); it took upon itself the initiative in securing the passage of imperialist “military laws” (France); it betrayed the general strike of the British proletariat; it helped and is still helping to strangle China and India (the MacDonald Government); it acts as the propagandist for the imperialist League of Nations; it is capital’s herald and organiser in its struggle against the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR. (Kautsky, Hilferding).”

Nevertheless, despite the crises of 1928 and the Great Depression, the tactics of the third period were unsuccessful and the exploitation and destruction perpetrated by monopoly capitalism continued. Most significantly, 1933 saw the overthrow of bourgeois democracy in Germany and the rise to power of the Nazis, where the “mainstay” of capitalism had shifted from social democracy, to fascism. This, along with the swift severity of the anti-communist suppression which followed, caused yet another strategic shift within the Comintern, towards the “Popular Front”.

In contrast to the “United Front”, the popular front was not just to be a coalition of “proletarian” parties, but an anti-fascist front of the working class and those sections of the bourgeoisie perceived to be opposed to the rise of fascism, which the 7th Congress of the Comintern described as the “dictatorship of finance capital”. In some cases this meant the involvement of communist parties in the formation of united front governments with the social-democrats and other forces, such as in France. In other instances, it meant functionally the subservience of the revolutionary movement to the bourgeoisie, and as such the hindering of socialist revolution in order to maintain alliances against the spread of fascism.



Pictured: Lenin taking note at the Third Communist International in Moscow, USSR



Pictured: Poster titled “To the Lighthouse of the Communist International”

This strategy can only be understood in the framework of the greatest threat yet to the USSR and socialism, that being the rise of fascism and . It was increasingly evident that war between Nazi Germany and the USSR was inevitable, with France and Britain refusing to join with the Soviets in an anti-German pact. As the centre of socialism internationally, it was naturally a priority for the communists to defend its position. The defeat of the USSR would have signified a significant step backwards from world revolution, just as was seen following the counter-revolution of 1989-1991. In this context, the “Popular Front”, can be considered somewhat a success, in that it contributed to and facilitated the ultimate military defeat of fascism by the USSR in the Second World War.

However, with the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943, what was intended to be temporary tactical realignments, became permanent strategy. The popular front, and the united front, sowed illusions as to the possibility of the peaceful transition from capitalism into socialism, which without the centralised organisation of the Comintern to allow for debate within and coordination of the communist movement, contributed to the uncontested proliferation of opportunist trends within certain communist parties before and after WWII.

So how can communists in Ireland learn from these strategies in the context of a growing far-right threat?

There have been renewed calls for the formation of popular fronts among sections of the Left. Last year we saw the creation of the “Nouveau Front Populaire” in the France, which participated in parliamentary elections with the PCF, but also the PS and the ecologists. While the front obtained the highest vote, its programme did not resemble that of a communist party, not challenging France’s participation in the EU or NATO, let alone proposing the social transformation of French society.

Returning to the social-fascism thesis, which must be studied more closely within the communist movement, it is undeniable that in the face of revolution, the ruling class has used social democracy to maintain their power. Social democracy cooperated with fascism, in opposition to the communists, and a relationship between the two is certain, as is exemplified by recent trends that have indicated a direct correlation between the implementation of austerity by “left-wing” parties, and the subsequent growth of the fascist and reactionary forces.





Pictured: The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, where the Popular Front was inaugurated.



In the Irish context, there is not a communist party with the strength or influence to command a popular front, nor are there the political circumstances that would drive the social-democrats or sections of the Irish bourgeoisie to such a coalition. In the French context, the Popular Front may have prevented the RN from achieving a parliamentary majority in the most recent elections, but through association with the most reactionary sections of social democracy, those who implemented the harshest anti-worker austerity following the 2008 crisis, the PCF will only further discredit itself to the French working class. In the Irish context, the Popular Front would be an offer of subservience to bourgeois rule that would neither strengthen the political movement of the working class, nor combat fascism.

Some Trotskyists still maintain that the strategies of the Third Period were instrumental in the rise of fascism in Germany, and that the United Front remains the correct tactic. But what functionally would a United Front in Ireland look like? Those social democratic parties that would be invited to such a front, Labour, the SocDems, the Greens, SF, have all demonstrated their character as parties that defend the interests of bourgeois exploitation, either through previous direct participation in bourgeois government, or through expression of intention to do so. There is no interest, no incentive, for these organisations to entertain such a prospect as joining a United Front, which in function and composition would be no different to the popular front with the participation of the bourgeoisie.

There are clear lessons that can be learned from the experience of the Comintern in its struggle against fascism and for liberation of the working class. Ultimately, it was correct in its assessment during the third period that the only way to combat the rise of fascism was socialist revolution, and that both the forces of fascism and social democracy would fight against this. History has demonstrated that if the working class is to win state power when the revolutionary situation arises, the Communist Party must be prepared to lead an alliance, not of proletariat and bourgeoisie, but of the working class and the popular strata, and this can only be achieved through the independent organisation of the working class.

HOUSING IN THE NORTH: A CRISIS RESURFACING

Aidan

A manufactured housing crisis has gripped Ireland in recent decades and is one of the most pressing issues facing the working class of Ireland. Most of the attention has been focused on the south where the crisis has been most acute, but the 6 counties are on the same trajectory, driven by the same neoliberal policies with rapidly growing homelessness, growing waiting lists for social housing, rents spiralling out of control and rampant housing insecurity.

Homelessness in the north has more than doubled over the past decade. The latest housing bulletin published by the Department for Communities in March 2025 reported that 31,719 households (not people) were registered as homeless, a 132% increase over 13,644 in 2015. This figure does not account for those suffering from “hidden homelessness” who are not recorded on official statistics. A 2024 report from the Simon Community estimated there to be 8,500 households falling into this category, which they considered to be a conservative estimate given the lack of data. In total, over 40,000 households can be considered homeless at minimum. Despite this, tens of thousands of homes lie vacant, creating an artificial scarcity, while thousands of council houses have been privately sold off under Right to Buy schemes.



To tackle the growing crisis, the 6 county executive’s programme for government nominally committed to building 5,850 new social homes by 2027. Due to budget cuts, the actual number of homes being built is already falling far short of the target, with only 1,000 set to be built this year. Another £62 million is needed for it to hit the original target; the British government is eager to spend over £1 billion per year to maintain its colonial apparatus through Operation Helvetic, however. All sorts of schemes such as the Local Housing Allowance are indirectly subsidising private landlords rather than tackling the root of the problem and spending money on the construction of social housing.

This crisis did not appear out

of nowhere; rather, it is the result of conscious decisions by a neoliberal government and is endemic to our wider social system. It is intrinsic to the capitalist mode of production which has turned housing into a commodity and allowed the free market to be responsible for adequate housing, fostering a parasite class of landlords. The housing sector is dominated by private companies and landlords who buy up properties to be let at exorbitant rents.

Neoliberalism and the corresponding erosion of the welfare state is capitalism's natural response to the falling rate of profit. The housing crisis is increasingly exploited by far-right thugs who, in a desperate struggle against this reduction in their living standards, use immigrants as a scapegoat to obscure the contradictions of capitalism in crisis and carry out pogroms against refugees. In reality, this is a class issue and will be resolved through class struggle alone in order to supplant our antiquated economic system with socialism.

When we consider the composition of Stormont and the typical bourgeois parties, it becomes clear why these policies are being pursued. The register of interests shows that a quarter of MLAs are landlords, and there have been countless scandals involving MLAs who have evaded registering their properties. The exact same thing occurs at a council level - SDLP councillor Declan Boyle was discovered to own over 30 undeclared properties in Belfast's Holylands area, preying on young students forced to live in his slum housing.

While it is well-known that the partitionists Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil are parties of landlords, one of the chief collaborators with British imperialism in the 6 counties, Sinn Féin, unsurprisingly have a vested interest in landlordism



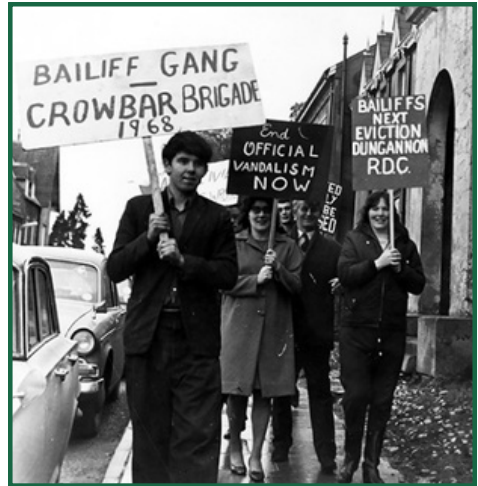
also, with quite a number of TDs and MLAs being registered landlords, despite their faux radicalism over housing issues.

Housing issues in the north are intensified by sectarianism with widespread segregation between Catholic and Protestant communities. Many streets in Belfast are physically divided by so-called “peace walls”, while Derry is split not only geographically but demographically by the River Foyle. Many areas are deemed unsafe for certain members of the community to be in, and school children are taught from a young age to be extremely cautious about which street they walk into while wearing their school uniform. Loyalist paramilitaries often violently intimidate Catholics or ethnic minorities, and it is no wonder why the most recent pogroms have originated in loyalist strongholds.

Community Action Tenants Union (CATU) has been building a militant, all-Ireland campaign to challenge the power of landlords by organising tenants in their community and campaigning for universal public housing. Through the power of organised, direct action it is capable of protecting tenants from predatory landlords and resisting unjust evictions. Branches have already been established in Belfast and Derry, as well as throughout the 26 counties.

What Ireland needs is the elimination of landlordism. Money used to fund warfare or subsidise landlords must be used to fund universal public housing on a large scale, the property of large landlords must be nationalised, and all vacant dwellings must be expropriated and renovated for public housing. A perpetual housing crisis will exist so long as capitalism exists. As Engels said a century and a half ago, “it is not that the solution of the housing question simultaneously solves the social question, but that only by the solution of the social question, that is, by the abolition of the capitalist mode of production, is the solution of the housing question made possible.”

A genesis of housing protests in the north of Ireland, from Caledon, Tyrone's civil rights pioneering to today's campaigns.



TRUMP'S “LIBERATION DAY”

Alice Twomey



Trump's trade war represents an attempt to fundamentally restructure the US Empire in preparation for escalating inter-imperialist conflict with China. Since the implementation of the Bretton-Woods system at the end of WW2 the US Dollar has been the “World Reserve Currency”, and this has been a centrepiece of the imperial architecture of the US. By examining the history and development of this system, we can understand why this is happening, and what we can expect to happen next.

Protectionism is a system of restrictions placed on imports in order to “protect” domestic industry from foreign competition. Tariffs, taxes placed on imports, are one example. A 10% tariff on steel means that if you import €100 worth of steel, you pay a tax of €10. Effectively this raises the price of imported steel, allowing domestic steel factories to compete with more developed or more efficient foreign steel factories. There are many other protectionist measures that can be used, but all have this role of maintaining profits in domestic industries in the face of foreign competition.

Historically this “fostering wing of protection” has been an important part of capitalist development, being used to turn agrarian societies into industrial societies, “of forcibly abbreviating the transition from the medieval to the modern mode of production.” In “On the Question of Free Trade” by Marx, along with its preface by Engels, they chart out how it was used in Britain and the US to kickstart economic development. However this comes at a cost, the more industry develops towards monopoly capital, the more it...



will need to expand and conquer foreign markets. Protectionism then goes from facilitating the growth of domestic industries, to preventing them from expanding into imperialist monopolies capable of the division of the world, and so must be done away with.

Of course the US is not an agrarian society looking to industrialise, it is a deindustrialising society looking to reverse the trend. To understand what is happening now, we must understand this trend.

The Bretton-Woods conference took place in 1944 and, while the system it established only lasted until 1970, the US Dollar has been the world reserve currency since then. What this means is that almost all international trade is done using USD, even trade not involving the US. This has given the USD the status of what Marx calls “World Money”.

This benefits the US enormously. When other countries import goods they exchange their local currency for USD, and then buy goods with USD. This exchange lowers the value of their local currency, and makes imports more expensive. This must be balanced with exports, where USD is exchanged for the local currency. This is because most money has no use-value, a currency is only the embodied labour of the state that uses it, i.e. the balance between imports and exports. USD is an exception to this, its use-value is in the facilitation of international trade, in the status of the US as the largest imperial power in the world. This allows the US to import more cheaply than any other country. It allows the US to create more money, more debt, and more capital than any other country. Control over the USD means that US sanctions are uniquely able

There is a cost to this however. First it effectively devalues all the currencies in the world, instead of only devaluing the USD. USD inflation is felt through the whole international trade of the world, not just in the US. Second, and more important to the US, as pointed out by Trump's chair of the Council of Economic Advisors, Stephen Miran it undercuts US manufacturing. This system only functions because the USD is easily available everywhere in the world, mostly thanks to US imports. The US ran a massive trade deficit of \$918.4 billion in 2024, as an example, thanks to the USD subsidising imports. This accelerates the process of deindustrialisation in the US by ensuring imports are cheaper than domestic production.

Under normal circumstances this is of no concern to US capital. Wherever production is located, if they own it they will make profit. However the rise of China and the spectre of inter-imperialist war threatens this arrangement. If war were to break out between the two this reliance on imports would wreak havoc on the American military industry. As an example, China produces 1,005,090,000 tonnes of steel compared to just 79,457,000 tonnes in the US⁶. To quote Trump "If you don't have steel, you don't have a country".

The US must continue to export USD for USD to remain the world reserve currency. They do this currently through imports, however deindustrialisation weakens the US military and strengthens China, which now stands as a threat to this system. The tariffs will be used as both protection, and negotiating leverage to construct a "security zone", surrounded by "barbed wires" as a new structure of empire. Instead

of the US exporting dollars through imports, the US seeks to force its imperial bloc to purchase USD under threat of tariffs, isolation, and war. This changing imperial architecture divides the bourgeoisie. The drive to war is of enormous benefit to the war industries. It will allow them to cannibalise companies reliant on cheap imports, or cheap debt, and the whole of the civilian and consumer sectors. The whole national bourgeoisie of countries within this "security zone" will be subject to monopolisation. A successful implementation of this whole plan would serve to massively intensify the concentration of capital in the hands of the monopolies in the US war industry at the expense of all other sections of the bourgeoisie.

If successful they will concentrate capital into fewer and fewer monopolies and accelerate the division of the world and rush to inter-imperialist war. The sections of the bourgeoisie facing destruction likely cannot resist this. If the US "allies" can resist being monopolised it is only if their own monopolies are strong enough, and ready enough for war. The only force capable of resisting the relentless push to war is the organised proletariat. There is a lot of work for us to do.



Pictured: Donald Trump and his Irish minion Conor McGregor



NUAHT | NEWS

¡PATRIA O MUERTE!, ¡VENCEREMOS!

*Armaan
Solkar*

To our Cuban comrades across the Atlantic we extend a fraternal hand tinged with envy. We look at Cuba as a shining beacon of development and socialist realisation. From the eradication of illiteracy to being in the forefront of medical care and vaccine development, Cuba shows the international working class a life that awaits us and a future that remains firmly in our hands. "Patria o Muerte", or "Homeland or Death", exclaimed Fidel Castro to a crowd haunted by US imperialism. A few months later, he added the phrase "Venceremos", or "We Will Prevail". Castro's certainty and heroic spirit echoes the determination of the Cuban people in their fight against US imperialism, which still rages on.

Never has US monopoly capital relented in its war against Cuba. In 1960, America welcomed the burgeoning socialist state with a trade war. This was in response to Cuba nationalising its industries and giving power to the



Pictured: A Ché Guevara memorial celebrating his Irish roots in Derry

workers. The trade war which began with Eisenhower slashing Cuban imports and cutting off diplomatic ties, developed into a decades long blockade under Kennedy.

The effects of this blockade has been devastating for the Cuban people. All aspects of life are affected; health, education, access to even basic food and provisions, as well sports and culture. Child healthcare suffers particularly as most of the specialist equipment required comes from the US.

Despite the unrelenting force of US capital, Cuba paves the path forward for its people. Cuba was the first country in the world to eliminate mother to child HIV transmission; they dramatically lowered infant mortality rates; and have made staggering developments in vaccine care. All this has been achieved through the socialist organisation of their country that puts the wellbeing and safety of its people over all else.

Venceremos. Cuba thrives in spite of constant attack. Bourgeois media points out the struggles of the Cuban people and places the blame not on the decades long trade war but instead constructs some dystopian idea of socialism. Cuba's government is the people, and it works for the people. To become a member of the Cuban Communist Party (PCC),

all one must do is be nominated by their neighbours and be voted in at their local branch.

Participation in democracy is easy, transparent, and available to all. Cuba has multiple mass organisations, such as the Cuban Women's Federation, and trade unions such as the Cuba Workers Federation. Almost every Cuban is part of one of the many mass organisations where debate is had over legislation and policies. Every person has the opportunity and means to engage in local and national politics. This is in stark contrast to liberal "democracies" such as Ireland, where there are hardly any means for the average worker to make their voice heard; and when we try to do so by means of unionising or protest, we are shut down and brutalised. Irish democracy is built for the capitalists, landlords, and serves the interests of international capital. It is no wonder that a system built to oppress the working class doesn't give power to the worker.



Jeremy Harwood
Jonathan Guinness
John Biggs-Davison M.P.

A Monday Club Publication



“History, in general, treats the working-class as the manipulator of politics treats the working man- that is to say, contempt when he remained passive, and with derision/hatred and misrepresentation whenever he dares evince a desire to throw off the yoke of political or social servitude.”

~ James Connolly

Connolly Youth Movement's Medical Aid for Cuba

Supplies Required:

- Face Masks
- Re-hydration salts
- Pregnancy supplements
- Bandages (all sizes)
- Wound dressings
- Ibuprofen (tablets and liquid)
- Paracetamol (tablets and liquid)
- Cotton wool
- Period products
- Nappies
- Powdered milk
- Baby formula
- Baby biscuits



OR make a donation directly to our fundraiser. All funds will be used for purchasing supplies for Cuba.



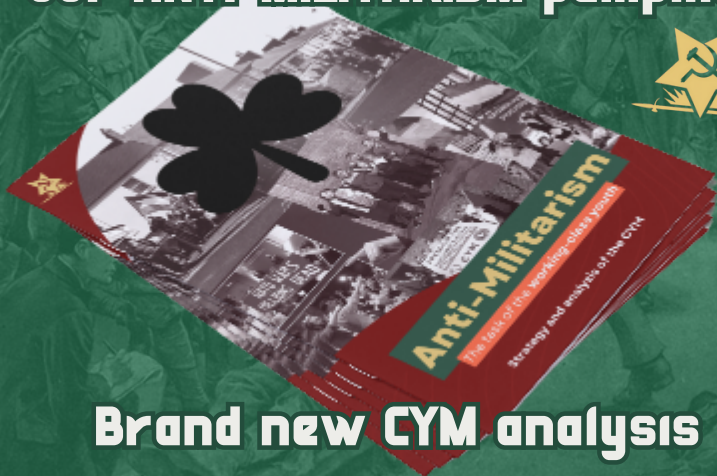
communications@cym.ie
@ConnollyYM

The bourgeois media attempts to paint the Cuban revolution as a despotic attempt to grab power by a bunch of radicals. This interpretation is so starkly askew from reality that it might as well be a comedy. Cuba thrives and it will continue to thrive. The Irish Communist movement must learn all it can from the island across the Atlantic and apply it to ours. We must not ignore the hardships of the Cuban people under attack from foreign capital because they are our hardships. We must stand in solidarity with Cuba.

In 2023, the CYM delivered vital medical aid to Cuba on a two week brigade organised by the Cuban Institute of Friendship with Peoples. This year, all throughout the month of July we will run outreach stalls collecting essential supplies such as: baby formula, bottles, and bandages all across the country. We will also be running fundraising events such as a film screening in Dublin of 'Yo Soy Cuba'.

The CYM remains dedicated to helping our comrades in any way we can. The working class movement is - and can only be - the international working class movement.

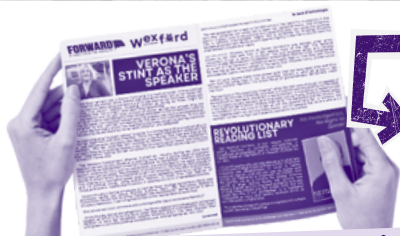
our ANTI-MILITARISM pamphlet



Get yours by contacting finance@cym.ie or catching one of our stalls!

Brand new CYM analysis

FORWARD
A YOUNG VOICE FOR SOCIALISM
wexford
Loch Garman



ARTS & LITERATURE • SPORTS • CULTURE • HISTORY • YOUTH • MUSIC • READING • PROTESTS & EVENTS

A NEW MONTHLY BULLETIN FOR THE YOUTH OF THE SOUTHEAST



Message @CYMWexford for more info!

EMERGENCY FUNDRAISER

Aid and resources urgently needed for our comrades in Palestine

- Distributing food baskets
- Sourcing clean drinking water
- Tents and housing costs for displaced and precarious people
- Preparing communal meals



To preserve what is left of humanity: global solidarity by **Palestinian Communist Youth Union (PCYU)**





FORWARD

A YOUNG VOICE FOR SOCIALISM

CÚIS NA hÓG, CÚIS NA hÉIREÁNN

The cause of the youth is the cause of Ireland



Forward Magazine is supported by our readers. Please consider supporting us at ko-fi.com/connollyyouthmovement.

Go raibh míle maith agat!

€5

£3.50



If you are 15-35 living in Ireland, join us! Visit cym.ie/join and we will get in touch shortly.

