

Forward

Voice of the Connolly Youth Movement

Issue 4/Spring 2005

£1/€1.50

FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHTS



This year the CYM launches its latest campaign calling on the young people of Ireland to join trade unions. This is arguably the most important venture undertaken by the organisation since its re-foundation back in 2002

Trade Unions have played a crucial role in the raising of living standards of workers in Ireland and throughout the world.

However union membership has receded over the last 10 to 15 years. This development is coupled with the decline in union activism. There are two possible reasons for this. The first is the liquidation of the socialist states of eastern and central Europe, which has greatly undermined the confidence of the organisation of the working class.

The other possible reason is the net effect of twenty years of 'social partnership'. For those

readers who do not know what social partnership is, it simply means that trade unions are locked into an agreement with government and business organisations. This is not a new idea. A similar industrial policy known as corporatism was used in fascist states during the early part of the last century.

The CYM and our parent organisation, the Communist Party has been among the most consistent opponents of so-called partnership agreements.

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Twenty years of 'partnership' compromised its independence moreover undermining internal democracy, strategic flexibility and limiting the power of workers to take strike action.

Another important point to note regarding partnership is the myth that it has been some class of overwhelming success. Certainly Capitalists have little to complain about. The last number of years of industrial stability has nicely complimented the economic growth. Workers on the other hand may feel a little short changed.

Businesses being owners of the 'means of production' already have a big advantage over workers in matters of labour relations.

Therefore starting point of such agreements always would be on an unequal basis. It is clear too most genuine socialists that 'partnership' has to go. What is less clear is where to go from there.

Some socialists would argue that the problem lies squarely with the union 'bureaucracy' or a 'reactionary' leadership holding back the frustrated working class.

Unfortunately nothing could be that simple. Even when with the return of former communist and anti-partnership trade unionists Mick O'Reilly ATGWU General Secretary little will change in terms of the direction of the labour movement.

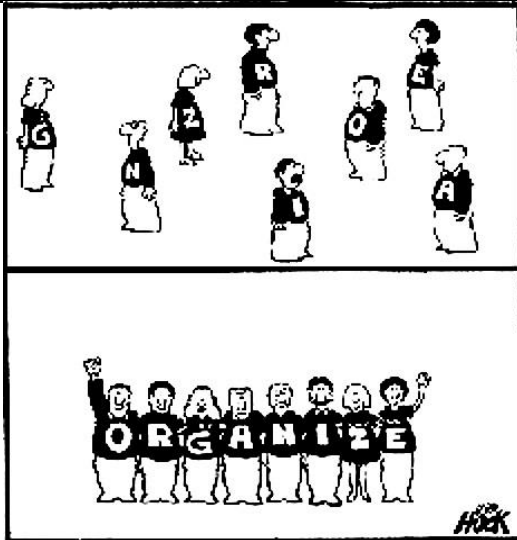
Workers have come out in favour of social partnership time and time again because it provides security.

How patronising are those university student and pseudo-marxists who decry those workers as traitors? Very few of those weekend revolutionaries have real experience of unions never mind having to raise a family on an average industrial wage.

Its is our opinion that if the left is to mount a serious challenge to partnership than sectarian diatribes against the labour movement can only hinder the cause.

This brings us back to our to the subject of the CYM latest campaign. As we see it, Ireland has changed dramatically in a very short space of time. Today Ireland is the single most globalised economy in the world. What this means is that fewer employers are based in Ireland.

Many of the foreign companies who have set up in Ireland are anti-union employers. Therefore more and more Irish jobs are un-unionised which has made the labour movement weaker.



We call on workers to join unions, to understand their rights and to fight for what is there democratic right. The fight back in the trade union movement must come from below. But the labour movement will not be strong enough to overcome twenty years of dependence on partnership unless it can recruit more workers from outside its traditional strong hold, manufacturing and public sector.

The Trade Union movement must encourage the much neglected service workers who have been the biggest growth area of employment in the last 15 years.

Trade Unions did not build with the consent of capitalists but on the unity and confidence of the working class. Trade Unions are not revolutionary but defence organizations, however it is impossible to envisage socialism without them.



Capital's Offensive: The Flexible Workforce!

'Flexible', 'restructure', 'competitive', these are the buzzwords we here used today by the PD's, FF, FG and by the 'right' globally. What do these words really mean for young workers? Job losses, job insecurity, part-time work, and little effective union representation.

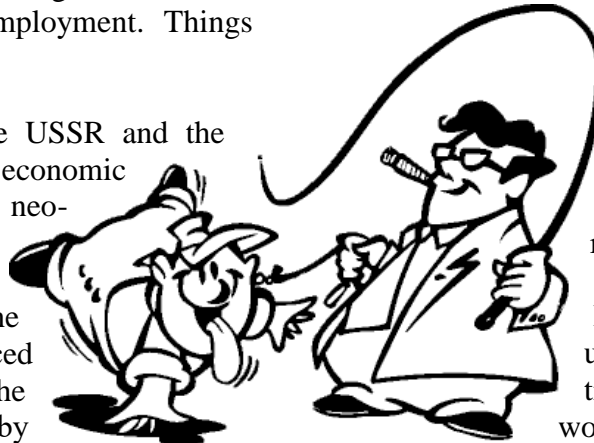
For large periods of the nineteenth and twentieth century labour was on the offensive. Organised workers demanded and won their rights. Unions were growing and active in struggle. Capital was forced to make concessions. Maximum working hours, minimum wage, equal gender opportunity, and other rights were won by workers across Europe and farther afield. The global strength of the USSR financially, militarily and psychologically encouraged and enabled workers in the west to fight for better conditions and secure employment. Things have changed.

Since the collapse of the USSR and the passing of Keynesian economic thinking, the ideas of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism have won favour in the EU and the US, and have been forced upon the Third World. The 'Third Way', represented by Blair and Schroeder is neither Labour nor Social Democratic, rather it is the strengthening of the offensive underway by Capital on workers and their unions. Blair has achieved levels of privatisation and introduced 'reforms' Thatcher could only have dreamed of. Harney, Brennan and the FF/PD coalition are attempting the same.

The global economic downturn has enabled companies to carry out 'restructuring', which for workers means redundancy and little prospect of new work. Flexibility for a company means the ability to off load workers when things are tight and re-hire on

temporary contracts when needed. This means little job security, which has grave consequences for workers and their families.

Already figures show a huge increase in the percentage of the workforce in temporary or part-time work, compared to 10 years ago. The Labour Force Survey of 1986 shows 21,600 part time workers, just under 2% of the total workforce. The LFS report of 2004 shows 308,000 part-timers, just over 16% of the labour force. The pattern is clear.



Marx explained one of the reasons that make this offensive possible is the existence of what he called the 'industrial reserve army of labour.' This reserve army of labour is all the unemployed, the part-timers looking for full-time work, all the temp. workers, and today even all those groups in other countries. There is a huge 'industrial reserve army of labour' globally.

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The effect this has is that employees can fire easily knowing they have millions who can replace, wages are kept low because you can always find someone to work for less. Workers are afraid to join Unions as this may get them fired. Workers are afraid to fight for better conditions as this may get them fired. Solidarity among the domestic and international working class is completely undercut as employers create this massive competition for the scraps they are offering. Racism and sexism and all forms of discrimination infest.

This is where we are at today in Ireland, in Europe, in the US and in the world. This is the offensive of capital. Workers won the right to a five-day week, now many work six days. Workers won the right to minimum wage, this fails to increase at the same level as inflation and so in practical terms has

decreased. Workers continually fight for a fair retirement age, some companies in Germany just raised theirs from 65 to 70. With all the new technological advances one would hope workers conditions would be improving, sadly this isn't the case. Instead of technology being used for the advantage of the many, it is used to secure more profits for the few. Workers are played by Capital against one another and so our response should be to unite, domestically and globally. The only way to stop this onslaught by Capital is to unite. A united workforce will not allow itself be used and exploited. A united workforce will win back what we already won and will gain many more victories. A united workforce will put an end to this offensive by Capital.

Workers of the World Unite!

European Union

Democracy: EU Style!

The EU gets bolder and bolder as time goes on, they no longer even try to hide the blatant abuses of power, misuse of *our* money, lack of democracy and the general undemocratic nature of what is quickly becoming a 'super state'.

The latest controversy rests with the elites attempts to bully through the proposed constitution.

A resolution passed in the parliament on October 14th recommends all governments to coordinate their activities for a 'Yes' vote. It also presupposes a 'Yes' vote when it says, "the ratification process in all Member States should be accomplished by June 2006." Worse than this Kathy Sinnott, MEP, complains they have been told to 'sell' the treaty in their home countries, and to minimise the debate at home as well as choosing the time of the referendum to maximise the 'Yes' vote. "I see little evidence of democracy in the strategies being designed to guarantee a positive outcome to the Constitution." Worse again is the Councils willingness to supply funding, *our* money, to the 'Yes' side, one side of the debate!

This latest news, with very little doubt, shows the antithesis between the EU and democracy. They are incompatible. Genuine, fair and equal debate around this treaty are near impossible as one side has all the money and all the political power.

The people of Ireland, however, must show the elites that they will not tolerate this glaringly obvious totalitarian manner in which the EU carries its business. We must also show the Irish government and the 'socialist' Bertie that we have not forgotten Nice 2 either. We must once again come out in opposition to the EU's imperialist and undemocratic designs. Vote 'No' to the constitution.

For more information check out the 'People's Movements' website, www.people.ie

'Partnership': ME ARSE!

The word partnership implies a positive outcome for all equal parties. The fact of the matter is 'partnership' has benefited employers, not workers.

The first 'partnership' deal was reached in 1987 and so far we have had 5. The 'partners' are the government, employers, trade unions, farmers, and the community sector. This is an alliance or 'partnership' of capital, land, and labour, with the expressed aim of benefiting all. However, this is not possible, as the interests of labour and capital are opposed, they are irreconcilable. Newton's law expressed everything has an opposite, 'for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction'. Labour is to capital as air is to fire.

"As the power of capital increases, the power of labour decreases."

As the wealth of the capitalist increases, the relative wealth of the worker decreases, i.e. his social position decreases. 'Partnership' has strengthened the power of employers over workers, it should be called 'incorporation' as it incorporates the worker into the drive to increase profits.

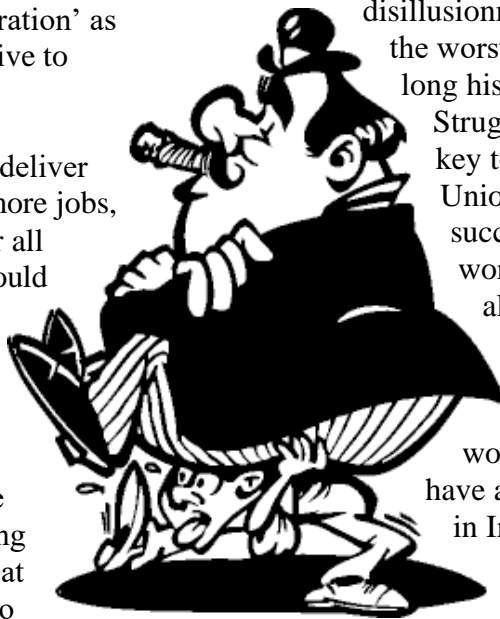
'Partnership', it was claimed, would deliver for workers greater social equality, more jobs, increases in the standard of living for all workers, and greater tax equity. It would strengthen, not weaken Trade Unions and would prevent further privatisation. Only 'more jobs' has been achieved, thanks more to the generous tax incentives to multi-nationals than to 'partnership'. These MNC's drive for profit above anything else, as can be seen in the recent 'great escape' of Dell among many others to

cheaper parts of the world, produce a false and very unstable growth in the economy as most are not here for the long run. As for social equality, Ireland is now one of the most unequal countries in the EU and the OECD. Increases in standards of living have come for some, but in relation to the increase in rate of profits, their social position has actually decreased. Many did not even gain the initial increase. 'Partnership' has been part of the recent increased affluence of some and increased poverty of many. It has played a crucial role in implementing, 'flexible' workforce policies, a huge blow to job security and the rights of workers to decent time off, and a good standard of living.

But by far the most crippling blow 'partnership' has struck to workers in Ireland, is the incorporation of Trade Unions into the structures of governance thereby leaving them impotent. The restrictions placed on their striking ability, and their exclusion from increasing numbers of workers in the private sector has led to great stagnation and

disillusionment. We are living in the worst period of Ireland's long history of trade unionism.

Struggle, battle, and fight are key to successful Trade Unions, and therefore to the successful representation of workers demands. This has all but disappeared, although hopeful signs appear from apprentices and bus workers. Trade Unions have always played a key role in Irish labour history; 'partnership' is smothering this



The Connolly Youth Movement calls on all workers to pressure their trade unions to reject 'partnership' and return to our fighting union tradition.

'Partners' to a neo-liberal agenda!

(Miriam Murphy – Democracy and Public Services in Europe.)

During the period of Social Partnership Ireland transformed from a country in dire economic straits with very high unemployment and emigration, into a wealthy country performing remarkably well on a range of economic indicators. Despite this economic 'success', exceptionally high levels of relative poverty, inequality, social exclusion and polarisation remain in Irish society, and indeed have been exacerbated.

In order to promote social justice and solidarity, inequality must be addressed and redistribution is essential to this effort. Over the period of Social Partnership and within the Agreements, official equality objectives have shifted from a desire to remove social inequities to a much reduced focus on addressing poverty and discrimination (unrelated to income level or class position). The newer goals involve a significantly lesser commitment to redistribute by the state.

In terms of redistribution, the period of Social Partnership has been characterised by a trickle-up of wealth in parallel with economic growth; income inequality has increased and meaningful participation in the Partnership process by excluded groups has not resulted from the inclusion of their representatives as Partners.

In Ireland, key policy decisions which affect distribution outcomes are negotiated in the arena of Social Partnership. This method of decision making draws the participants into a 'consensus' which operates to deny the existence of any fundamental conflicts of interest between the 'Partners'. This rules out ideological debate. The discussion of



alternatives, other than those framed by the dominant economic theory in Irish Social Partnership i.e. neo-liberalism, is prevented.

Social Partnership in Ireland increasingly advances a neo-liberal ideology. Throughout the Agreements this is evidenced by the emphasis on the over-riding importance of competitiveness, the use of market terminology and meanings, the incorporation of child care strategies into labour market policies and the implicit assumption of, and reliance on, a trickle-down effect. Other indicators of the status of neo-liberalism in Social Partnership include the

prominence of education's role as an integral part of the strategy of adaptation to changing global economic circumstances, and the decision, in the most recent Agreement, for national policies to be dictated by the global market economy.

It is not enough to push for the reform of individual measures on equality or inclusion in Social Partnership. The priority should be to challenge the very ideology Social Partnership serves. This ideology values inequality as a desirable pre-requisite for the concentrated accumulation of wealth by the few, and therefore does not seek to eliminate inequality. The natural opposition to the *status quo* must cease being 'Partners' to it.

Why Rural Redevelopment and Agriculture is Important.

Since Ireland's entry into the European Community in the 1970's, Irish farmers have been dependant upon the financial aids dispensed by that entity's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the purpose of which was ostensibly to bring stability to prices and ensure markets for agricultural output.

Historically its chief concern was upon output produced, which in turn ultimately favoured big farmers who could produce more for less i.e. what is known in economics as favourable economies of scale. Over time, this led to a striking stratification across Irish farming communities, as some farmers grew bigger and richer, while others economic standing deteriorated. Meanwhile, the EU and European political elite's have tried to justify such anti-small farmer policies by relying on the discourse of responsiveness to the market – in other words, the need to replace unprofitable small farmer production by highly profitable agricultural capitalist and monopoly enterprises. The end result – the increasing impoverishment of small farmers, reduced to despondency by want and insecurity resulting in many leaving the land while agricultural monopolies accumulate the leftovers.

For those that struggle to remain on the land, life is difficult. Out of the 150 thousand farms in Ireland today, only 50 thousand can be classified as economically viable. Of the remaining non-viable farmers, the majority of them have no other source of income. But poverty is not exclusive to small farmers. In fact the majority of people in rural communities are not actually involved in farming and a substantial live in entrenched poverty. Two thirds of Irish people suffering from deprivation or who live below the poverty line live in rural areas. Household income in the midlands and south-east is now

below 85% of the national average, while on the border and in the west it is just under 90%. In fact this poverty is much more severe than what is experienced in urban areas as the rural poor quite frequently lack public transport, and other public amenities such as readily available access to hospitals. A most recent example of this lack of services was provided by the Bank of Ireland's termination of its mobile bank van that serviced the rural Gaeltacht communities of Connemara and Mayo leaving hundreds of people without any practical or frequent access to banking.

The Irish government in recent times has produced a great deal of rhetoric on rural development, but this is as far as policy has got. The recent cutting of agricultural and rural development projects and the closure of Teagasc centres are a clear signal of their 'commitment' to issues of sustaining rural communities. The CYM believe that the continuing existence of market relations in agriculture has an essentially erosive effect on the fabric of rural life. Its impact is felt in the cities too, as increased migration into urban areas aggravates the infrastructural strains and stresses of congestion. A more effective policy, centred around the requirements of Irish rural life, would require an independent economic policy with rational integration of agricultural planning into an overall economic plan under a state machine no longer subservient to the dictates of the European Union.

Rip-Off Ireland

Thanks to our government, Ireland is now the most expensive place in Europe to work and live. Ordinary working people are working harder than ever but have less and less to show for it. Irish working people are sick and tired of their hard earned money not going as far as it should be. In this government's life- time, they have introduced or been responsible for introducing 27 new stealth taxes and charges. As a cursory glance at figures from 2002 show, it is very clear just how much this government is ripping the Irish people off.

This government has also increased the cost of sitting the Junior and Leaving Certificate. Indeed, even the fee for getting a passport has seen a significant increase.

However, one of the biggest problems in Ireland is the huge rip- off within the insurance business. Since 2002, insurance premia have increased three- fold. Small firms are being stretched to breaking point. Young drivers are being forced into substantial debt in order to be allowed on the road. And families are under ever increasing pressure just to have insurance for what is already theirs.

Another area of rip- off is the retail sector. English chain stores are some of the biggest culprits here. These English chains are charging outrageous prices for goods in comparison to those charged in England. Argos has been shown to be 18% more expensive here in Ireland than in England. Habitat is 25% more expensive. Perhaps the worst offender is Tesco, which is as high as 87% more expensive for certain items in Ireland. The extra cost that Tesco have in Ireland ranges from detergents and toiletries to dairy products and groceries to hardware.

In this same area there is also the serious problem of mark- ups. Again, a cursory glance at the figures is shocking. Beef is

For example:

V.A.T. has gone up by 8%
Motor Tax has risen by 12%
Hospital Charges are up by 26%
V.H.I. have increased by 18%
Bank card charges are up by 108%
Bin charges have risen by 29%
E.S.B. has gone up by 13%
College fees have risen by 9%
Parking fees are up by 25%
Bus fares have increased by 9%
T.V. Licence is up by 40%

marked- up by 143%, milk by 126%, eggs by 142% and cabbage by 155%. Carrots are marked- up by a whopping 193%, but the worst of all is potatoes which goes up by 300%. This practice of marking- up the most basic food stuffs is putting a strain on ordinary working people. It is a problem that this government should be dealing with, but yet again, it is failing the Irish people.

Right across the board Ireland is now the country to be in if you want to be ripped- off. Ireland now has the most expensive line- rental for telephones in Europe. At €24 a month, this is €10 above the European average. Indeed, Eircom, which is one of the worst offenders in creating rip- off Ireland, has even increased its line- rental up to three times in a single year. What is worse about Eircoms rip- off policy is the actions of the telecom regulator. While one might expect they would be looking out for the ordinary Irish customer, they would however be wrong. The regulator have constantly approved the line- rental increases and shown themselves to be a tool of big business.

As most young people will know, it is alcohol that is often most associated with rip- off Ireland. Ireland has the highest level of duty on wine in the EU. In fact, it is five times higher than the EU average. The duties on spirits are not far behind, at the second

highest in Europe. People who go to Spain on their holidays will know that a bottle of Baileys (an Irish- made drink!!!) can be less than half the price as here in Ireland. This is the story across the board in relation to the price of alcohol. The outrageously expensive drinks business in Ireland is an absolute disgrace.

One of the most worrying areas in which Irish people are being overcharged is the health service. A simple visit to a G.P. in Ireland will set one back €45. This same visit is free in many other EU countries, but even those where there is a charge it is more like the €25

charged in Barcelona. An eye test in Ireland will cost about €25. This is double that of Spain and even treble that of other countries such as Germany. The fact that the Irish health service is so expensive just adds insult to injury considering that it is so sub- standard in many other ways in comparison to other European countries.

It is about time that steps to deal with rip- off Ireland were taken by the government. Irish people have always been an extremely hard working people. The least they deserve is proper value for their hard earned cash.

Gender

Women in the Workplace!

A recent report, *Women and Men in Ireland 2004*, published by the Central Statistics Office, shows still massive inequalities in pay and representation in Ireland's workforce between men and women. Women, overall, continue to earn almost one-fifth less than men. Women also are at much higher risk of poverty than men are, and of course, women are much more likely to be left a single parent than men, 90.9% to be exact!

Ireland again lags behind the rest of the EU when it comes to women's representation in politics, only 13.3% of TD's are women compared to an EU average of 22.1%. In addition, women are few and far between in the highly paid jobs. These figures all point to an economic and political structure that is almost entirely male dominated and a gender based division of labour that pays male labour far more than women's do.

The lower paid sectors of work are almost entirely female dominated, 82% of graduates in health and welfare are women, areas like child-care, with little government legislation, leave young women open to gross exploitation. Behind all this lies a system that is based on exploitation. Women are one of its many victims. In contrast to this, today in Cuba women represent 46% of the workforce an increase from 19% in 1953, a majority working in the highly skilled technical sector. Women also represent 57% of all university students and 27% of parliamentarians. Great strides forward but still much room for improvement. (*UN 2000 report.*)

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The truth, not fully recognised even by those anxious to do good to women, is that she, like the labour-classes, is in an oppressed condition; that her position like theirs, is one of merciless degradation. Women are the creatures of an organised tyranny of men, as the workers are the creatures of an organised tyranny of idlers. – Eleanor Marx

Review

‘The Missing Piece in the Peace Process.’

By Ken Keable

Any nation which oppresses another forges its own chains. – Karl Marx

This short pamphlet includes a brief look at the history of Northern Ireland, and a call for the withdrawal of Britain and the unification of Ireland. It presents an interesting viewpoint for an Irish reader, as the target audience is the British working masses and ‘left’ activists. Its subtitle portrays this clearly, ‘Why British people must campaign for Britain to withdraw from Northern Ireland.’

The pamphlet reminds us of the basic injustice done to Ireland and the undemocratic nature of the ‘six counties’, which is all too often forgotten in the complexities of contemporary northern politics. It also makes the crucial point that regardless of one’s views of republicans and their tactics the unification of Ireland is still the best policy for the working people of both islands.

The author makes clear from the beginning, and reiterates it several times, the basic fact that the entity that is Northern Ireland is a remnant of colonialism. Unification of Ireland

is the logical conclusion to the process of decolonisation. He also dispels the myth of ‘two nations’, by arguing if the so-called other nation change their religion they do not change their nationality, also many of the Protestant churches and organisations including the Orange Order are all-Ireland bodies. All colonies and former colonies have settler populations, how long does it take for them to settle, and what about the great Irish Protestant patriots, Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmet, Thomas Davis, Parnell, and Grattan, to name just a few

“The inclusion of a colony with a perpetual state of emergency within the British state poisons our Parliamentary democracy, poisons our system of justice, undermines our freedom of speech and threatens the civil rights of every British citizen. It obstructs progress towards a more open society, inflates military spending, and enhances the power of the military establishment and the secret services in our society. It constantly threatens our stability, costs billions of pounds, and costs lives. It also preserves, within our society a hotbed of militarism, religious fundamentalism, sectarian hatred and discrimination, and political backwardness.”

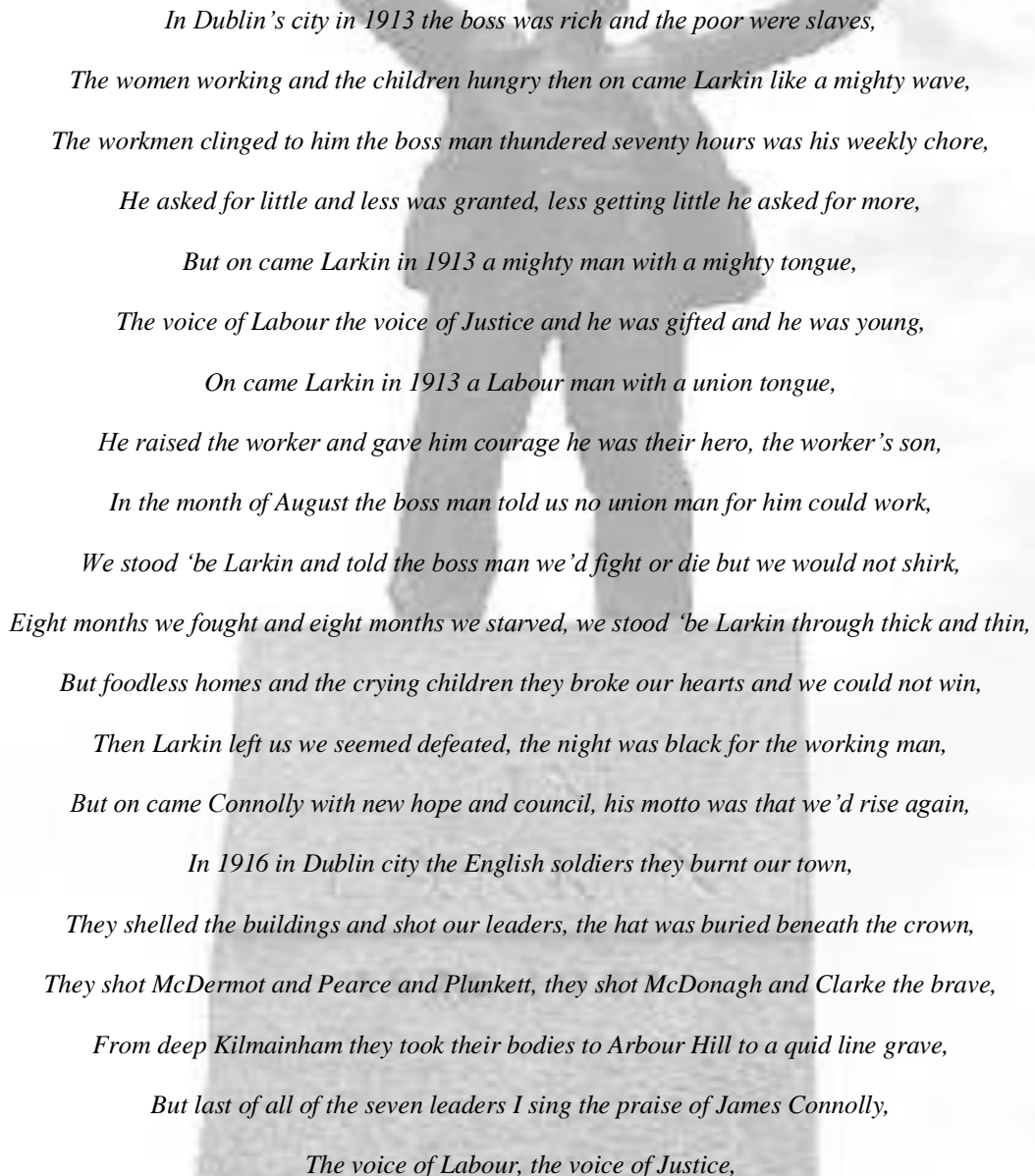
The working class of the Protestant community have often been held to ransom by their bosses, with the argument of maintaining unionist unity, they have lost out raising their own identity and instead have been ‘fodder’ for right-wing politicians. The working class of the Catholic community have lost out, though all forms of state and private discrimination, thus creating sectarian hatred. The policy that prevents working class unity of course serves the elite’s purposes. The old policy of divide and rule created the monster that is sectarianism.

Keable argues the Good Friday Agreement has made huge steps forward, but of course is not an end in itself. A return to the apartheid regime of Stormont is not possible without a breach of the agreement. It, for the first time, holds up principles of equality, human rights and non-discrimination, for both communities. But most importantly Keable sees it as offering a way to gradually eliminate sectarian hatred and with this unionism will seem less relevant.

1913 LOCKOUT

Written by Donagh McDonagh

This song recalls the famous lockout of 1913 and the brave rising of 1916. It celebrates the role of 'Big' Jim Larkin and then of James Connolly in the life of Dublin's working class.



*In Dublin's city in 1913 the boss was rich and the poor were slaves,
The women working and the children hungry then on came Larkin like a mighty wave,
The workmen clinged to him the boss man thundered seventy hours was his weekly chore,
He asked for little and less was granted, less getting little he asked for more,
But on came Larkin in 1913 a mighty man with a mighty tongue,
The voice of Labour the voice of Justice and he was gifted and he was young,
On came Larkin in 1913 a Labour man with a union tongue,
He raised the worker and gave him courage he was their hero, the worker's son,
In the month of August the boss man told us no union man for him could work,
We stood 'be Larkin and told the boss man we'd fight or die but we would not shirk,
Eight months we fought and eight months we starved, we stood 'be Larkin through thick and thin,
But foodless homes and the crying children they broke our hearts and we could not win,
Then Larkin left us we seemed defeated, the night was black for the working man,
But on came Connolly with new hope and council, his motto was that we'd rise again,
In 1916 in Dublin city the English soldiers they burnt our town,
They shelled the buildings and shot our leaders, the hat was buried beneath the crown,
They shot McDermot and Pearce and Plunkett, they shot McDonagh and Clarke the brave,
From deep Kilmainham they took their bodies to Arbour Hill to a quid line grave,
But last of all of the seven leaders I sing the praise of James Connolly,
The voice of Labour, the voice of Justice,*

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Tourism, a dangerous industry!



Above: Plastic Irish Culture

I have recently returned from a rural and remote part of Ireland, where I was surprised and unhappy to find very high levels of animosity and unfriendliness to visitors. This made me think. How can a country known for its thousand welcomes and ‘*craic agus ceoil*’ culture become like this? My thoughts proceeded like this:

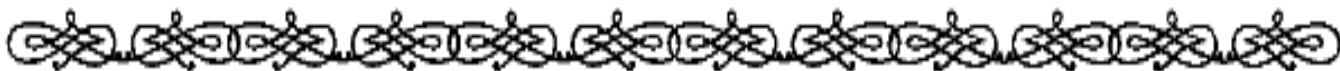
As Ireland moved away from subsistence farming and more towards industries based on capital production and accumulation profit seeking and individualism replaced co-operation and community. Tourism is one such industry, representing 3.7 billion euro or 5.5% of our GNP between the years 1990-2000. Ireland has in recent times been a favoured place of holiday for many across the globe.

Ireland’s mass migrations to Britain and the US have encouraged this. The massive tourist industry has fuelled huge competition between neighbours in small communities for the millions of euro spent annually. This competition has broken down old ties, including family ones. Surely, this would mean a friendly face to all visitors as we beg for their money, on the surface it does. Smiles are a plenty, and ‘paddywhackery’ abundant, to live up to the Hollywood version of Ireland expected by tourists.

We are in grave danger of turning our healthy culture into the ‘plastic paddy’ culture so loathed by many as we search for ever more ways to attract tourists, and more importantly capital. Tourism is a profitable industry, many thousands of jobs in Ireland depend on tourism, one-third of all jobs created in the nineties. Our economy is heavily dependent on tourism. All the same, we are on a slippery slope to ruining that which we wish to show off to the world.

The turning of our culture into a commodity to be exchanged in the markets place will see an end to the very essence of that culture as a reflection of the rich tapestry and experience of our history and traditions, of our lives. Tourism, as an industry, should come with a warning ‘Culture, watch out!’.

Figures taken from Irish Hotel Federation Report.



Forward welcomes letters, articles, comments, or any contributions from its membership or readers. These can be mailed to the below address or e-mailed to connollyyouth@hotmail.com

Forward,
7 Bloom Lane,
Dublin 1.

Latin America Fights Back!

The new year 2005 is also year 47 of the Cuban Revolution. For 46 years Cuba has maintained its independence and its socialist path next door to the mighty imperialist power. Every US administration has vowed to defeat the Cuban revolution, by invasion, by blockade, by subversion, by terrorism. The Mafiosi, which once controlled Cuba in alliance with Batista continue to enjoy the sponsorship of the US government.

The present government of George W. Bush is even more intimately connected with the Cuban Mafia than any previous administration – you could say that they have had more success in taking power in the US than in Cuba.

Nothing exposes the hypocrisy of the “war on Terror” more than the case of the Miami Five, five Cubans sent to the US to counter the terrorist plots against Cuba being hatched in Miami, Florida, and now held in US prisons on spying charges. Not only Cuban exiles are allowed to openly plot terrorist acts, but those who work to foil their plans are jailed.

The Connolly Youth Movement supports the worldwide demands for the release of these brave men.

Venezuela, like Cuba, has withstood a barrage of attacks since Hugo Chavez was elected in 1998 including a coup d'état, work stoppages organised by the employers, and a



continuing media campaign unrivalled in its mendacity, not even by Fox News. After their crushing defeat in the presidential recall referendum and subsequently in the regional elections, the opposition were left without political resources, so they turned once again to acts of terror. The state prosecutor, Danilo Anderson, was murdered by a car bomb, and guess what, Venezuelan exiles in Miami are implicated in the plot.

Venezuela is pushing ahead with its campaigns to bring a health service to the poor majority, to develop education for those who have been deprived of it, to distribute unused land to the

landless and hence achieve food sovereignty, and to develop democracy in which people can participate.

This program, called the Bolivarian Revolution, is seen as a continuation of the 19th century struggle for independence led by Simon Bolivar.

In August this year, Venezuela will be host to the 16th World Festival of Youth and Students. An Irish preparatory committee for this festival has just been set up.

The principal ally of the US on the continent is the murderous regime of Alvaro Uribe in Colombia. In forty years of armed struggle, the revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) remain undefeated. Alongside the armed forces of the state, unofficial paramilitaries carry out atrocities against any opposition, against peasant organisations, against trade unions. They have murdered trade unionists on behalf of the state, but also on behalf of big companies, such as Coca-Cola.



The union, which organises Coca-Cola workers, SINALTRAINAL, which has seen many of its organisers assassinated, has called for a boycott of Coca-Cola products. The Connolly Youth Movement fully supports this call.

We applaud the decisions of Student Unions in UCD and TCD to implement this boycott in their shops.

On February 29th last year after a campaign orchestrated by the US, and following the pattern of the failed coup in Venezuela. The USA and France kidnapped the President of Haiti, Aristide, and whisked him away to the French client state the Central African Republic, and installed a puppet regime headed by Gérard Latortue.

How easily they could overcome their differences over Iraq! To their shame the members of the UN Security Council endorsed this illegal act. The leadership of the occupation forces has been taken over by Brazil, in spite of the election of the Left-talking President Lula. Argentinian and Chilean troops, among others, are also participating. These forces have not only failed to protect the human rights of the people of Haiti from the violence of the puppet government - they have actively participated in the repression.

The Connolly Youth Movement calls for an end to the occupation and the return of President Aristide to Haiti.

Theory

Connolly on Trade Unions and Socialism

From Socialism Made Easy



What the Socialist does realise is that under a social democratic form of society the administration affairs will be in the hands of the representatives of the various industries of the nations; that the workers in the shops and factories will organise themselves into unions each union comprising all the workers at a given industry, electing all foremen etc., and regulating the routine of labour in that industry in subordination to the needs of society in general, to the needs of its allied trades, and to the departments of industry, to which it belongs; that representatives elected from these various departments of industry will meet and form the industrial administration or national government of the country.

But the enrolment of workers in unions patterned closely after the structure of modern industries, and following the organic lines of industrial development, is *par excellence* the swiftest, safest, and most peaceful form of constructive work the Socialist can engage. It prepares within the framework of capitalist society the working forms of the Socialist republic, and thus, while increasing power of the worker against the present enroachments of the capitalist class, it familiarises him with the idea that the union he his helping to build up is destined to supplant that class in the control of the industry in which he is employed.

Letter from an imprisoned Comrade (Dec.21 04)



Dear Comrades,

Three years ago, in December 2001, a judge in Miami Florida, Courtroom sentenced us with the most severe and long sentences that she could conceive. We still keep in our minds those days, in which each one of us exposed our statements. Because I was the last one was sentenced I had the great luck to accompany my four brothers to their sentencing hearings and I could see the firmness and the dignity with which they confronted that difficult moment in which a disproportionate and cruel sentence was imposed to each one of us.

The year 2004 is coming to a closure and our heart cannot avoid to feel the pain of today's world, in which impoverishment is growing day by day. It's recorded that at least 842 million starving people inhabit our planet. More than 120 million children do not have a primary school to attend. Every year 11 million children continue to die of diseases that can be prevented or cured. Meanwhile the rich people make themselves richer. With the payment of their foreign debt the undeveloped countries finance the squandering and opulence of the developed countries. Over 900 billion US dollars are expending every year for military purposes, without thinking of a concrete solution for the many problems of the humanity, and creating conflicts and wars that destroy cities, kill innocent people and promote the growing of terrorism.

But, in front of these tragedies that cause a deep pain, we keep our optimism and our faith in the just revolutionary struggle of people that will make possible a better world based in justice, solidarity and peace.

These sentiments accompany us those days of our sentencing hearings. They are sentiments that we have learned from our fraternal and heroic people, which in spite of blockades, threats, aggressions and natural disasters have kept its victorious path in the construction of Socialism. A man that is able to feel that way will always be a faithful man to his homeland, and to humanity and that man will be forever invincible.

A better world is possible. A big hug,

Antonio Guerrero

More on the Miami 5.....

Film Showing: **'Mission Against Terror.'**

Liberty Hall, 5th April, 7.30.

Free admission.

This film tells the heroic story of the Miami or Cuban 5.

These 5 monitored and collected information on known terrorists to protect and save innocent lives. Instead of the terrorists being arrested the 5 were round up. Since then, and having served months in solitary confinement, they have been in maximum-security prisons in the US, haven been sentenced to a combined 75 years term.

Connolly Youth Movement

What We Stand For

Capitalism's consistent global crisis has driven poverty, war, unemployment, emigration, and debt throughout the world.

We in Ireland witness the superficiality of the much lauded 'Celtic Tiger' which only gave temporary security to a small number of workers while making multi-nationals richer and further marginalised the poorest in our society.

The conservative and neo-liberal policies of the Fianna Fail and Progressive Democrat coalition government has already begun to privatise public enterprises and dismantle the social gains made by Irish workers over the past 100 years.

As part of a growing opposition to these developments both nationally and internationally, a group of young workers and students influenced by the Communist Party have re-founded the Connolly Youth Movement, Ireland's young voice for socialism!

The CYM is an independent organisation for young activists carrying forward the revolutionary aspirations of James Connolly. Our goal is to win the support of Irish youth for the establishment of '*An Irish Socialist Republic*'.

We are an all-Ireland movement. Following in the footsteps our Irish revolutionary forefathers, Catholic, Protestant and dissenter traditions are united within our ranks. The partition of Ireland in 1922 was far from being the natural democratic conclusion to Ireland's struggle for freedom, but instead as James Connolly had predicted it created a '*carnival of reaction*'. Exaggerating the sectarian divide in the North and giving Catholic church unrivalled authority over the majority in the South.

We seek reunification of Ireland and an end to British rule in the north.

We oppose the European Union as an undemocratic, imperialist alliance of former colonial powers rivalling the USA in a bid to impose its will on the people of the developing world.

We demand full employment and seek to develop the education and skills of all Ireland's workers and students.

We are part of a world movement against globalisation and imperialism. As internationalist, we support the struggles of oppressed peoples of the world and the right of all nations to their own self-determination.

We support the trade union movement. We call on workers to end support for the 'partnership' agreements and fight for progressive policies in the workplace. We see the need for trade union recruitment of new workers in Ireland's growing labour force.

Please send me more information about the Connolly Youth Movement.

Name:

Address:

.....

E-mail:

Phone: Mobile:

Return to: CYM, c/o Connolly Books, 7 Bloom Lane, Dublin 1. connollyyouth@hotmail.com