ORGANISE!

Leveller

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After May 10th Where Now?



General Strike!

Striking workers say no to pensions robbery and working 'til they drop. We will not pay more and work longer for less!

Thousands of public service workers in Northern Ireland joined 400,000 strikers across the UK in a one day strike on Thursday 10th May. Members of NIPSA, the Public and Commercial Services Unions (PCS) and the University College Union (UCU) took the action against pension cuts and the raising of the retirement age. The largest health service union, Unison, did not take part in the action.

Hundreds attended lunchtime rallies in Belfast and Derry. Speaking after the Belfast rally NIPSA General Secretary, Brian Campfield said union members had shown their "determination to protect their hard-fought entitlement to decent pensions".

"NIPSA, in conjunction with other trade unions both public and private sector, is determined to protect the interests of ordinary people against the onslaught from the coalition government on their pay, terms and conditions, job security and the vicious assault on the welfare state".

NIPSA members in the health and social care sector were also taking part in the strike action between 12pm and 2pm. Not all of the NIPSA members balloted were able to get out on strike on the day. Many workers in smaller, contracted out, departments, felt they were forced to go to work. NIPSA had not given their employers the legal minimum notice for strike action so workers were threatened that going out would be illegal.

It is being reported that another strike date has been set for June. In taking action we are showing that we won't sit back and see this capitalist 'crisis' used as yet another excuse to rob us. It is not enough that we are robbed day in and day out as a result of capitalist exploitation - the bosses and their lackeys in government are tightening the screws while their profits soar and they spend billions on privatisation and war.

Only the working class can defeat the 'austerity' measures that are crushing us all, in both the public and private sector, in and out of work. We have the power together to grind their economy to a standstill - hitting the bosses and politicians in the pockets for a change.

The most effective means of defeating this onslaught is through a general strike. Nothing less will succeed - to do it we need to organise all working class people, public and private sector, in the unions and outside them, employed and unemployed, women and men, students, and migrant workers.

We need to link up with those general strikes that have occurred in other parts of Europe and across the world. Capitalism is a global system and must be opposed on a global scale.



Women Reclaim May Day



Tuesday 1st May women organise a picket and sit in at a Belfast city centre dole office in protest at cuts and welfare reform

On Tuesday 1st of May Belfast women organised a protest and sit-in at a city centre dole office proclaiming "empty Cameron and Clegg's purse - not ours!". Women and men from Organise! joined the protest organised by women:

> *who are (and whose families are): Community Workers, Civil Servants, we work in the Private Sector, and for the NHS, we work as volunteers, we are unemployed, lone parents, immigrant workers, we are pensioners and teenagers. We are from the communities of, North, South, East and West Belfast. We are individuals and we are in organisations. BUT unlike the 23 Ministers who help to make up the British Government, we are not millionaires.*

The protest was held in opposition to the governments Welfare Reform Bill and ongoing attacks on social services and jobs. In a statement calling on people to join the protest Anne McVicker, of WOMEN'STEC, said:

> *It is not just the "reforms" in benefits that we are concerned about, but the whole dismantling of the National Health Service...*

This should mark the start of a campaign based on direct action against cuts and 'austerity' measures. It is a welcome step in the reclaiming of the true heritage of May Day. A message based on the resistance of working class people to capitalism.

Vita Cortex Victory



After 139 days of occupation the occupiers of Vita Cortex have accepted a settlement. The dispute began when receivers KPMG went in and told the workers they would have to apply for minimum statutory redundancy to a government fund.

The slogan outside the factory summed it up:

> *€2.5 million for three company directors. No redundancy pay for 32 workers with 847 years service.*

Vita Cortex was asset stripped by its owner Jack Ronan as he attempted to move production to Athlone to boost his profits.

The workers who had been occupying the factory since the start of the dispute, staying in over Christmas, built up huge public support.

Their occupation forced the company to agree a settlement they are happy with and provides an example for other workers in struggle.





Belfast May Day Parade: A View From The Rear

Although it didn't rain, the annual Trade Union May Day parade turned out this year to be a dictionary definition damp squib.

Assemble at Writers Square, few pointless speeches from bureaucrats, quick walk round the town, be on your way, thanks. At least the walk seems to be getting shorter. On the march itself, Trade Unions get to go first, everyone else shoved in together behind the last band, as an afterthought, seemingly tolerated rather than welcomed on the parade.

Being in the mix at the tail end means walking with some people you'd rather not. Who wants to be in the same universe as the dregs of the 32 County Sovereignty Movement (who are not even a 'left wing' group; what were they doing there?), never mind walking a few steps ahead of them?

None of this is any different to previous years, but at least up until this year the parade has returned to Writers Square (or previously St Georges Market) where there were stalls, giving the opportunity to distribute papers and pamphlets, sell a few books, have people come up and show some interest. This year, due to ICTU being unwilling or unable to pay Belfast City Councils (ridiculous) stallholder levy, there were no stalls at the parades end.

Being at the back means getting there last, by which time everyone in front has left already, leaving the unappealing option of walking about trying to pimp papers in the best leftist style to the few stragglers who remain (we didn't).

Whether this is a one-off for this year or the new format for the day, we don't know. From the ICTU bureaucracy's point of view it's probably for the best; it means that in effect the only viewpoints heard on the day are their own, at the start. Organise! will admit to getting there too late to catch the start of said speeches, and to not listening anyway, though we can guess that they were grand statements about resisting 'The Tory Cuts' that will not be backed up with any real action.

Overall, valuable pinting time was lost, and if its going to be like this from now on the question has to be asked: Is it really worth it?



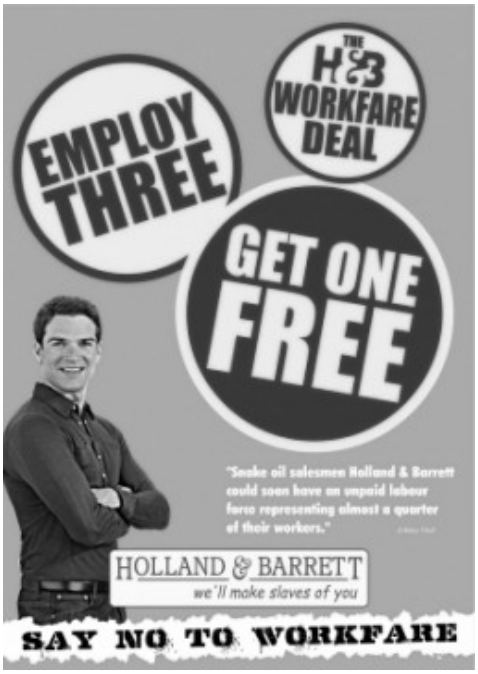
Meanwhile our comrades in the Solidarity Federation took part in action against workfare on 1st May.

Dressed in prison garb Bristol Solidarity joined the 1st of May Group on their Workfare flashmob. The first action took place inside Primark, stunned shoppers were given leaflets as the Workfare Prisoners helped to stock shelves. Surprisingly security quickly bundled the workfare volunteers out of the store. It would appear that having free-labour is only acceptable to them if the victims of this modern day slavery are hidden from the public eye. Further pickets were held at the Holland and Barrett store in Cabot Circus and Wilkinson's on Union Street.

Both London SF branches called an anti-Workfare roving picket through central London, as well as attending an electricians' picket and, least interestingly, the official, Trade Union Congress (TUC) march. Various branches of McDonalds, Greggs, Holland and Barrett and Pizza Hut – amongst others - were forced to lock their doors and race to their shutters to chants of "IF YOU EXPLOIT US, WE'LL SHUT YOU DOWN!" and "YOU SAY WORKFARE, WE SAY WARFARE!"

Saturday 5 May saw joint action against workfare by Liverpool Solidarity Federation and UK Uncut Liverpool. We held pickets at both Holland and Barrett stores as well as at WH Smith and distributed over 1,000 leaflets to the public.

In the lead up to the National Conference on Workfare due to be held in Brighton on 26 May, Brighton SolFed have organised two weekends of pickets against workfare beneficiary Holland & Barrett in Brighton and Hove on the 12th and 19th of May. Organise! will be taking part in action against Holland and Barrett on the 19th of May, contact us for details.



IWA-AIT First of May 2012: Against Capitalist Austerity Measures, Exploitation and Oppression - for Workers Self- Emancipation!

This year's May Day has special significance as it marks the 125 Anniversary of the murder of the Haymarket Martyrs by the government of the United States in 1887. In 1886 an international campaign was launched in support of the 8 hour day. As part of that campaign a strike was called in Chicago on May 1st 1886. On May 4th during a demonstration called in support of the strike, a provocateur bomb exploded. The state sought to blame the anarchist who had been at the forefront of the campaign. The government arrested 8 Anarchists, Parsons, Fischer, Engel, Spies, Lingg, Schwab, Neebe and Fielden. Though clearly innocent, Parsons, Fischer, Engel and Spies were hanged November 11 1887 and Lingg died in prison. The murder of the four men, who become known as the Haymarket Martyrs, sparked a massive international protest and lead to May 1st being declared International Workers Day. A day born out of the brutality of the state and the heroic struggle of the workers and one that belongs to the international proletariat.

On this May Day we are yet again seeing capitalism and the forces of the state attacking the working class. The world is in the grip of an economic crisis resulting from the inherent instability of capitalism. Globalization has set capitalism free from the constraints of national boarders and the oppression of the state is increasing and is being used by governments to attack working class resistance in the interest of international capitalism.

But though today we face remarkably similar conditions to those faced by workers at the time of the first May Day, thus so far there has been a different response by the international working class. The early workers movement turned its back of reformism and sought to build revolutionary unions and launched a powerful fight back against capitalism. Today workers are mainly organized in reformist trade unions that are unable and incapable of coming to terms and resisting the changing nature of globalised capitalism.

To succeed workers must reject reformism and electoral politics and once again turn to internationalism, solidarity and direct action as a means of organizing as a class to directly confront the capitalist economic dictatorship. A dictatorship that is now being clearly revealed across Europe and especially in Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain where vicious austerity measures are being imposed on workers.

That these Southern European economies are under attack is not surprising. A powerful group of Anglo-American financiers agreed in November 2009 that a diversionary attack on the euro, centred on the weaker Mediterranean economies, would be an ideal means of relieving pressure on the battered US dollar, then at a record low. This was followed by media attacks and coordinated financial speculation targeting the so-called PIGS countries: Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain.

These attacks have been met with growing workers resistance which the IWA has fully supported. There was lately a General Strike on March 22 in Portugal as reported by AIT –Portugal and the USI-AIT is active in the protests against the hard austerity measures in Italy. The protests have been, and are going on in Greece, and the workers at the Kilkis hospital showed the path by occupying the hospital. It was a General Strike on March 29 in Spain, and further mobilizations are initiated by the very active CNT-AIT against the government massive onslaught on workers conditions and rights!

Over the last year the IWA has also been involved in countless, international campaigns and solidarity actions in support of workers worldwide. On March 29, 30 and 31 the IWA also organized a successful Action Days against Capitalist Austerity Measures, Exploitation and Oppression. It is through such campaigns and solidarity actions rather than just words that the IWA is expanding.

The IWA consist of older and newer Sections which the commemorations this year show: The USI-AIT is 100 years, the NSF-IWA is 95 years, the young and vital IWA Section, ZSP-IWA is 5 years. Besides this, in the end of this year, it is 90 years commemoration of the IWA and it`s (re) founding in Berlin!

On this May Day 2012 our message to the workers of the world remains the same as at the time of the Haymarket Martyrs: Capitalism has and always will remain a system based on exploitation and oppression. It is a barbaric system that results in human misery, ecological disaster, unemployment, fascism and wars.

As such capitalism cannot be reformed. Reformism is used by capitalism to undermine and weaken workers self-organization, struggle and emancipation. The only path to emancipation for us as workers is to take control of our own struggle: A struggle that is directed against and outside of class collaborationist structures and that through Direct Action and Solidarity confronts and defeats the Capitalism and establishes Libertarian Communism!

For Workers Self -Emancipation!
Long live the IWA and Anarcho-syndicalism!

Oslo, April 28 2012
IWA- Secretariat



CNT-AIT in Barcelona


USI-AIT Parma, Italy


ASI-AIT Beograd, Serbia





CNT-AIT in Aragon



Solidarity Federation, Liverpool.





Anarchists in Donetsk, Ukraine.







CNT-AIT France



Organise! Belfast

Time to get their Religion Out of our schools



Cardinal Brady is not solely responsible for Fr Brendan Smyth's continued abuse - it is the church as a whole that has acted to protect paedophile priests

Only those who have been living in a cave, or wearing theocratic blinkers, could be unaware of (or in denial of) the latest sick turn in the saga of abuse that is the history of the catholic church in Ireland. It has been revealed that the actions of now Cardinal Brady facilitated the continued abuse of children by notorious paedophile priest Brendan Smyth after 1975. He had the names and addresses of those being abused by Father Brendan Smyth but chose to keep them within the church. Parents were not even informed.

It is certainly true, if appallingly understated, that in his own words Cardinal Brady was part of:

> *an unhelpful culture of deference and silence in society, and the Church*

In 1984 an ineffectual 'children ban' imposed on Brady by the Church was actually overturned. The Bishop of Kilmore, at the time Bishop McKiernan, permitted Smyth to return to the role of hearing confessions, celebrating Mass and allowed him contact with more children that he went on to abuse up until 1993. Secure in the knowledge that him, and others like him, would be protected by the cloth.

So the faithful do a three monkeys act and reassure us that all priests are not paedophiles. This misses the issue - the Church is rotten to its very core, at every level.

Brady's actions are not unusual. In terms of the behaviour demanded of him by his Church he can actually claim he did nothing wrong. Of course this is akin to the defence of Nazis that they were 'just following orders'. Rome rule knows no other authority and acts in the manner of an independent empire defending its own.

The facts are that the Brendan Smyth case is not a one off. In Belgium the bishop of Bruges, Roger Vangheluwe, resigned in April 2010 after admitting that he had sexually abused a boy for years when he was a priest and after being made a bishop. The former head of the Catholic Church in Belgium, Cardinal Godfried Danneels, had advised the victim not to go public with his story until Vangheluwe had retired in 2011. Following this an enquiry found abuse in nearly every diocese, and 13 alleged victims had committed suicide.

In the United States the church has paid out millions to the victims of sexual abuse. Abuse that was covered up by the church as they hid abusers and ignored complaints. A report commissioned by the church itself found that over 4,000 US Roman Catholic priests had faced sexual abuse allegations in the last 50 years, in cases involving more than 10,000 children - mostly boys.

While the Pope spoke of "the pain and the harm inflicted by the sexual abuse of minors" in his 2008 US tour he had previously ignored complaints. Archbishops had complained about a Fr Lawrence Murphy in 1996 to a Vatican office led by the future Pope. They received no response.

Fr Murphy, who died in 1998, is suspected of having abused some 200 boys at St John's School for the Deaf in St Francis, Wisconsin, between 1950 and 1974. The Pope had known for years about the accusations and did nothing.

This tragedy goes far beyond Ireland and the US. The church has covered up thousands of cases of abuse in Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Malta, Spain - all over the world.

Isn't it time these bastards and other pious abusers like them were kicked out of our schools?

Religion, with its systematic abuse and attempts at closing young minds has no place in the education of our children.



Heard nothing, saw nothing and definitely saying nothing.



Welfare 'Reform' Attacks Limbless



Do you think I actually give a fuck?

Half a million are set to lose their Disability Living Allowance across the UK in the latest attack on our most vulnerable. This attack goes by the misnomer of welfare reform in an attempt to disguise a sick attack based on cutting £2.24bn from the welfare budget. Not even those who have lost limbs will necessarily be eligible for the new personal independence payment that replaces DLA.

Anarchists for Choice



The second discussion at this year's Belfast Anarchist Bookfair saw the formation of Anarchists for Choice, a group that aims, in the short-term, to build opposition to the 'All Ireland Pro-Life Walk'. This report was written by Conrad Lennon, who took part in the meeting.

The North American-based anti-abortion group, Crossroads, are marching around Ireland to 'convert the hearts and minds of others at the grass-roots level' with 'prayerful, peaceful protests and sidewalk counselling.' [1] *This includes several stops in the North of Ireland, including Belfast, where a meeting was held on Saturday 28th April to discuss how the pro-choice voice can make itself heard.*

Crossroads are driven by fundamentalist Christian theology, having come into existence 'in 1995 as a response to [pope] John Paul II's call to the youth of the world to take an active role in the pro-life movement in order to establish a Culture of Life.' The group's tactic is 'to spread the message of life and love through the means that the modern world provides... radio, television and newspaper... as well as religious media outlets.' Last year saw the group's first large scale activity in Ireland – a country which has no legal provision for abortion whatsoever. This year they aim to increase their activities, against what they see as a liberalisation of the country's attitude to free choice, with a series of marches and rallies from the 18th June to the 14th July.

The argument Crossroads put across is based on biblical babble – 'we strive always to join our efforts, prayers and small sacrifices with the sufferings of Christ' – and on highly emotive imagery and language. Crossroads are not out to engage in debate, they are out to proselytise, and to polarise people's attitudes to abortion in an attempt to preclude rational discussion. From the experiences of other countries, they can see that where rational consideration and the right to choose are held above religious doctrine and the profferings of holy-*men*, their fanatical hardline anti-abortion/ anti-choice position is unsustainable. Here, the influence of the church means that abortion remains illegal, forcing women to use unregulated and potentially unsafe abortion methods, or travel overseas for the procedure, creating unwanted stress and expense.

The main focus of activity for the pro-choice movement in Ireland is in providing support for women who want or require an abortion and campaigning for the right to choose to be legalised. However, it is also necessary to oppose groups like Crossroads, and to present an alternative to their aggressive anti-choice position. This means opposing their marches and prayer-protests at ground level. It is the aim of pro -choice campaigners to have a presence at every event of their all Ireland march, to ensure that their right-wing Christian position is not presented without challenge, and that there is a demand for the right to choose to be legalised in Ireland.

At the meeting in Belfast it was decided that people would organise to oppose Crossroads, in cooperation with those organising elsewhere. If you would like to be involved in these activities, please get in touch – anarchistsforchoice@gmail.com.

[1] From http://crossroadswalk.ie/about-us/



Gay Blood Still Banned

Ongoing archaic nonsense in Northern Ireland, as Edwin Poots continues to dodge the question on the lifetime ban on gay men giving blood. Health Minister Edwin Poots claimed, "Safety must be my primary concern and I want to ensure public confidence in our blood supply".

We know your real reasoning though, Poots. Because homosexuality of course is an abomination! The earth is a few thousand years old and Samaritans are bad, except that one who was good that time.

The risk with a gay man's blood in the donation system is similar of that of any other man's blood. Lifetime bans were lifted by Health Ministers for England, Scotland and Wales in September 2011. The group Bloodban who were part of campaigning for the lifelong ban on gay men to be lifted; have pointed out just how ludicrous the ban is:

A straight man who has unprotected sex with a different girl every weekend can give blood; a straight man who has had unprotected sex with a prostitute can give blood after just 1 year; those who have had unprotected sex with an intravenous drug user can give blood after 1 year; those who have had unprotected sex abroad in a high risk HIV country can give blood after 1 year. While in Northern Ireland gay men continue to be banned for life, even if they've only ever had sex with one partner - and even if they use protection.

Even with no limits on who can give blood the risk of infection is 1 in 3.48 million. You're 4 times as likely to get hit by lightning!

Blood donor selection criteria and a wide range of other blood safety measures, including stringent testing, mean there has been no documented transmission of a blood-borne virus in the UK since 2005, with no HIV transmission since 2002.

Despite all of these facts, backed up by the latest scientific research from around the globe. Despite the criteria being unfair & prejudicial. Despite the need for more blood donors. Despite all this, Health Minister Poots still insists that the lifetime ban on gay men giving blood is in the interest and safety of the public.

4th Belfast Anarchist Bookfair



Discussion and browsing at the stalls

The fourth Belfast Anarchist Bookfair took place on Saturday 28th April at the Centre in Little Victoria Street. Opening the doors at 12 noon over 150 people came along throughout the day to browse, chat, buy books, pick up info and participate in discussion.

The first discussion of the day was on co-ops, collectives and 'free' space. Different speakers gave brief introductions to their projects/activities. Jason Brannigan talked about both the Just Books Collective, a worker's co-operative with a history stretching back to 1978, and the North Belfast Housing Co-operative, which is in the process of getting its first property. Hugh, from na Crosbhealai cafe in King Street gave a run down of the activities and vision of that workers co-op and Clem described the setting up of the Creative Workers' Co-op. Tiziana outlined the work of the Northern Ireland Co-operative Forum in supporting the establishment of co-operatives and working with many different types of co-ops on the basis of agreement with the co-operative principles. Koldo from the occupied Peoples' Bank in Belfast described their activity and the plans they have for the building as a cultural and social space.



Just Books stall

Discussion about the nature of different co-operatives, how co-ops could, or indeed in some cases could not, be part of a movement for a better world.

This discussion was followed by a meeting that saw the launch of Anarchists for Choice (see report on page 7).

Organise! and the Just Books Collective would like to thank everyone who made this event a success.



Discussion on co-operatives, collectives and free space



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Just Books Collective
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Libcom
Libertarian communist online resource with forums, library and global news
http://libcom.org

Seomra Spraoi
Dublin Social Centre
10 Belvedere Court, Dublin 1.
http://www.seomraspraoi.org

Shell to Sea
Campaign to move Shell's gas pipeline offshore from County Mayo
http://www.shelltosea.com

Solidarity Books
43 Douglas Street, Cork.
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