

Forward

Youth-Culture-Democracy

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CYM Statement on Global Crisis

September 2008

The exact causes of the current crisis in capitalism are difficult to unravel and comprehend in the midst of events. The full extent of the fallout is still being revealed. The respective strengths of class forces are being played out in a global struggle with definite outcomes yet to be decided. But there is one thing we can say for sure. The events we are witnessing are a direct result of the anarchic system of capitalist production. The lack of regulation, transparency and accountability, in a word planning, in the major source of profit in the capitalist world, the financial services, has caused a crisis that threatens millions of jobs worldwide and entire countries economies.

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Bourgeois economists will blame individual greed, a few rogue traders, the State falling behind financial realities and will present us with many more half truths. The full truth, which some of these economists know, is that Capitalism is not just unfortunately prone to crisis it actually creates crisis on a regular basis as a systemic product of its market and productive anarchy. Crisis in Capitalism furthers the centralistic and monopolistic trend we have witnessed in global economics for the last century and more. Competitive Capitalism, although the mantra of bourgeois economists, has not existed for a long time. In fact, as Lenin correctly described, we have been living in an era of monopoly capitalism, Imperialism, and the crisis that reoccur on a regular and almost predictable basis serve to destroy the weak and strengthen the powerful.

What we are witnessing in the most crucial area of capitalist economic activity is nothing more than the siphoning off of weaker institutions, businesses and companies and the strengthening of the more powerful. The exact consequences of the current crisis are impossible to predict as class struggle, that global force, is ongoing and our actions will help determine that outcome but if Capitalism continues as the global economic system the likely outcome is fewer in control and so a further monopolisation of economic and political power.

In the banking industry we will have fewer banks. In insurance services we will have fewer insurers and as is also increasingly evident in airline services we will have fewer major players. The knock on effect for small business will follow this trend with the smallest players either going bankrupt or giving in to their larger competitors in one way or another and the trophy story rags to riches dreams of the few lucky 'entrepreneurs' will find it harder to get the backing they need.

While the above is surely a likely result within a capitalist framework it is not the most important outcome or the most critical. The real losers, those that will suffer most, are as usual ordinary workers and in the typically patronising way their suffering will be seen as an unfortunate by-product of capitalist 'restructuring'. It is working people loosing their jobs, loosing their houses, having to make essential cut backs, seeing their pensions collapse that are really feeling the pinch. Working people are the victims of this great injustice and so working people must fight back.

Stand Up and Act!

It is not good enough to accept our lot in this world as our inevitable lot. The world we live in is subject to class struggle. The amount of relative injustice in this world is subject to class struggle. Working people are the more numerous class and yet they are the weakest class. This is the reality we must acknowledge, face and change.



Government intervention, in its current form, is not good enough. In fact, it is not welcome for their motives are not, nor more importantly the outcome, job protection. The part and complete nationalisation of major financial institutions, the bailing out of the Banks, will not secure jobs. These institutions will still be run upon a capitalist model. They will still, for financial survival within a States budget, need to cut costs meaning job losses. The packages currently being prepared by the US, British and Irish governments, among many more countries, are about one thing and that is the survival of the capitalist method of production, of monopoly capitalism, of Imperialism, of the very system that has created this crisis for us all.

The CYM vehemently oppose these deals as, in their very mildest form, corporate welfare but at worst as a desperate attempt to save global capitalism and its powerful elite. We also criticise those on the so-called 'left' in our own country who have supported these measures and who are failing working people. Now is the time for all democratic and socialist forces to be working to exploit, expose and overthrow the anarchic system that has left us in this mess and not be working to patch it up.

I was lucky, but many people I served with were looking at deployment to Iraq only 2 years after returning from Afghanistan. It was the national guard for Christ's sake and they were asking for way more than part time.

Anonymous US Soldier who agreed to interview with *Forward*

September 2008

Forward: At what age did you join the army?

U.S. Soldier: 19

Forward: What motivated you to join?

U.S. Soldier: School money

Forward: What other options do you feel you might have had?

U.S. Soldier: Loans. (The average loan to undergraduate students in the U.S. is \$50,000)

Forward: What branch of the military were you in? What was your Military Occupational Specialty (MOS)? Did you choose your MOS or did the military? If you chose your MOS, why?

U.S. Soldier: 77F, Fuel Supply Specialist, in the Army National Guard. I chose National Guard because it paid for school [and only required] doing army sh** only part time. I chose 77F because it had the shortest training time. Laziness and an overall disinterest in any long-term military commitment were primary influences.

Forward: What are the duties of your MOS?

U.S. Soldier: Set up mobile refuelling stations. Driving tanker trucks.

Forward: What is the culture/atmosphere promoted in the U.S. military?

U.S. Soldier: Listen to a Toby Keith song, and you'll have an idea. (Just to clarify, Toby Keith is an infamously jingoistic war-mongering country/pop musician that has written several pro-war songs).

Forward: Did the military meet your expectations? Did you find that U.S. recruitment efforts accurately represent the roles a soldier plays in the military?

U.S. Soldier: Not at all. I was lucky, but many people I served with were looking at deployment to Iraq only 2 years after returning from Afghanistan. It was the national guard for Christ's sake and they were asking for way more than part time.

Forward: What, if anything, differed from your expectations?

U.S. Soldier: I did not expect such a high number of deployments.

Forward: Do you think about politics?

U.S. Soldier: Of course. My personal involvement in the military was key in increasing my political

awareness. Most notably my intense opposition to the Iraq war would most likely have been lessened if my ass wasn't on the line.

Forward: Do you think the US is changing? If so, for better or worse?

U.S. Soldier: I think we are in a critical time when things can start getting better or really hit the shitter. The next few years will be key.

Forward: What is the reception like for troops coming home?

U.S. Soldier: Always seemed really good from what I could tell. I don't think people see the military the way they did during Vietnam. I think most Americans know that the majority soldiers don't like what they do. If there were more opportunities in America, the government would probably have to reinstitute the draft.

Forward: Do many people where you are from join the military? If so, what is the most common reason for joining?

U.S. Soldier: Most people I worked with joined for college money. Some did it for the extra cash.

Forward: How are soldiers looked after by the State? What benefits did they offer in your branch of service? Do you believe the benefits are worth the cost for most soldiers?

U.S. Soldier: It honestly depends on the situation. A dear friend of mine has eventually dropped out of college even though that was her primary reason for joining because constant deployments delayed her education to the point that she simply lost interest. Maybe it would have happened anyway, but she went from a pre-veterinary major to a full-time bartender in between gigs in warzones. For me, the benefits worked. For her, she was f**ked over too often to use them.

Forward: What advice do you have for those who are considering joining the US armed forces and those that are currently serving?

U.S. Soldier: I would say that if you are committed to the ideals of our government and literally will kill for them no matter what they are, then go the fuck ahead. But if I actually like a person I would do everything I could to prevent their enlistment.

Letter to God!

Dear God,

Aug '08

The other night, the Rev. James Dobson's ministry asked all believers to pray for a storm on Thursday night so that the Obama acceptance speech outdoors in Denver would have to be cancelled.

I see that You have answered Rev. Dobson's prayers -- except the storm You have sent to earth is not over Denver, but on its way to New Orleans! In fact, You have scheduled it to hit Louisiana at exactly the moment that George W. Bush is to deliver his speech at the Republican National Convention.

Now, heavenly Father, we all know You have a great sense of humor and impeccable timing. To send a hurricane on the third anniversary of the Katrina disaster AND right at the beginning of the Republican Convention was, at first blush, a stroke of divine irony. I don't blame You, I know You're angry that the Republicans tried to blame YOU for Katrina by calling it an "Act of God" -- when the truth was that the hurricane itself caused few casualties in New Orleans. Over a thousand people died because of the mistakes and neglect caused by humans, not You.

Some of us tried to help after Katrina hit, while Bush ate cake with McCain and twiddled his thumbs. I closed my office in New York and sent my entire staff down to New Orleans to help. I asked people on my website to contribute to the relief effort I organized -- and I ended up sending over two million dollars in donations, food, water, and supplies (collected from thousands of fans) to New Orleans.

But this past Thursday night, the Washington Post reported that the Republicans had begun making plans to possibly postpone the convention. The AP had reported that there were no shelters set up in New Orleans for this storm, and that the levee repairs have not been adequate. In other words, as the great Ronald Reagan would say, "There you go again!"

So the last thing John McCain and the Republicans needed was to have a split-screen on TVs across America: one side with Bush and McCain partying in St. Paul, and on the other side of the screen, live footage of their Republican administration screwing up once again while New Orleans drowns. So, yes, You have scared the Jesus, Mary and Joseph out of them, and more than a few million of your followers tip their hats to You.

But now it appears that You haven't been having just a little fun with Bush & Co. It appears that Hurricane Gustav is truly heading to New Orleans and the Gulf coast. We hear You, O Lord, loud and clear, just as we did when Rev. Falwell said You made 9/11 happen because of all those gays and abortions. We beseech You, O Merciful One, not to punish us again as Pat Robertson said You did by giving us Katrina because of America's "wholesale slaughter of unborn children."

So this is my plea to you: Don't do this to Louisiana again. The Republicans got your message. They are scrambling and doing the best they can to get planes, trains and buses to New Orleans so that everyone can get out. They haven't sent the entire Louisiana National Guard to Iraq this time.

So please God, let the storm die out at sea. Your faithful servant and former seminarian,
Michael Moore

Book Review

'Good Friday: The Death of Irish Republicanism'
Anthony McIntyre

Anthony McIntyre is a former member of the Provisional IRA. He served 18 years in the H-Blocks for the killing of a Loyalist. Whilst in prison, like many of his comrades, he began studying and successfully completed a Phd writing a dissertation on the formative years of the Provisional IRA. Since his release from prison he has become a figurehead for elements within Republicanism opposed to the direction of Sinn Féin. For seven years he has published an online journal known as 'The Blanket'.

His post-prison activity has come at huge cost to both him and his family. The PSNI have raided his house and confiscated his computers, he has been picketed by Sinn Féin members for speaking out against the murder of another Republican, his wife has been accused of being an agent because of her nationality and he has been marginalised from the community at large as a 'dissident'.

McIntyre is different from most Republicans opposed to the Good Friday Agreement – he doesn't support the continued use of armed struggle.

'Good Friday' is a collection of articles written over the past ten years which chart the path of Sinn Féin from the failure of the Provisionals campaign to Sinn Féin as part of the Executive.

The book is interesting primarily because it is an honest approach to the failures of the modern republican movement. There is no window dressing, just an honest and concise approach to difficulties Republicans now face in developing alternative tactics and strategy.

The book is also valuable as a chronology of Republican events from someone within the movement who has had the courage to speak out. However, as with many accounts it is short on alternative approaches that have not themselves been pursued for years by other Parties. Those who have fought for a political form of struggle have tended to be overlooked or written out of history as being irrelevant compared to the converted militarists.

We would pose the question if a successful alternative to the Good Friday Agreement develops is it not in itself a development out of the processes unleashed by the Good Friday Agreement? Has it not availed of the space opened up, the time for reflection and analysis and the exposed contradictions?

Campaign Update: Shell to Sea Alive and Kicking

Shell to Sea is an ongoing campaign opposed to the plans of Shell E&P (representing Shell, Statoil and Marathon) in relation to the Corrib gas field, off the coast of Mayo, on the grounds of - safety for the local population, protection of the environment and of a special area of conservation and the belief that the natural resources of Ireland should benefit Ireland and its people. It will continue until the very questionable deals done by the Government and multi-national companies are re-negotiated to better benefit the people of Ireland, with the consent of local people directly affected by works.

'Modern Ireland' has seen successive deals done and legislative changes made to best accommodate multi-national companies to profit from Ireland's natural resources at our expense. In 1987, Ray Burke gave up our stake in our natural resources, meaning we have no rights or say in our gas and the only benefit we will get are scant taxes, which were also reduced below 50%. In 1992, while Bertie Ahern was Finance minister, our taxes were reduced to just 25%, and allowance made so that all exploration costs could be written off against tax, meaning Ireland would get next to nothing from our gas. The Irish Government has consistently put the profits of Oil Companies ahead of the interests of its own people and in the current context of a search for money surely this is an area needing revisiting.

The corruption continued as Frank Fahey, Minister for Marine and Fisheries at the time, gave planning 6 miles inland, 6 miles out of his jurisdiction, without which Shell E&P would have had great difficulty with their plan to refine inland. Perhaps the most frightening deal done to accommodate Shell, was the granting of a compulsory acquisition order, for the first time in Irish history to a private company, allowing them to enter private property to carry out work without the owner's permission.

There has been strong opposition since plans began. At first people were just concerned that things were not being explained properly and they did not fully understand, but once people started to put questions to the bodies set up to 'consult' with the public, it became very clear why things were not being explained.

The first major issue was the safety of the people in the immediate area of the proposed pipeline. Never before has an inland refinery been in a populated area and never has it been laid through unpredictable bog land carrying untreated gas at over 200bar pressure.

The threat to the people of Rosport is real as confirmed by many independent reports like the Advantica report. A specialist from the UK has warned **"If this project goes ahead as is, you may pack your bags and leave now"**.

The area of Broadhaven Bay is a special area of conservation. There has already been a negative impact on the wildlife and environment in the area from the work which has been carried out. Sand martin's nesting grounds (sand cliffs), have been destroyed, drilling has taken place in eel nesting grounds during nesting season, trees have been felled during nesting season, the Erris water supply has been shown to have over twice the recommended level of aluminium.

Senior planning inspector with Bord Plaenaela, Mr. Kevin Moore **said "this is the wrong site; from the perspective of minimizing environmental impact, this is the wrong site; and from the perspective of sustainable development, this is the wrong site."**

The proposed Corrib refinery will pump 250 million cubic feet of damaging emissions per day into the atmosphere and between 200,000 and 300,000 kg of methane gas will be annually cold vented into the atmosphere from Shells' gas processing plant. This will have a negative impact on the quality of air people breathe in the area.

Irish natural resources will be depleted with almost no financial gain to Ireland and its citizens. The current fiscal rates are among the lowest in the world and stand only to benefit the oil companies. While throughout the world it is standard practice that the people also benefit from their natural resources Ireland seems an exception.

- Norway: 78% Tax and a state owned oil company Statoil
- Nigeria: 30% Tax with 55% state participation in the Company gaining 5%-7% royalties
- Venezuela: 65.7% Tax with 65%-85% state participation in the Company gaining 67.7% royalties
- Ireland: 25% Tax with 0% state participation gaining 0% royalties (Note the 25% will be written off 100% against exploration costs)

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The campaign first came to public light throughout the country when five farmers went to jail because they refused to obey a court order preventing them from protecting their land from Shell E&P who were trying to lay the pipeline dangerously close to the men's family homes. They became known as the Rosspart Five and the Shell to Sea campaign gained massive public support. A national campaign was built on the support gained for the Rosspart Five and massive demonstrations were being held outside the site the proposed for refinery in Ballinaboy.

On November 10th 2006 the Gardai were ordered to use force to break the will of the campaign. People were attacked with batons, thrown into ditches, dragged by their legs or hair, limbs were broken, heads were busted and the picket were smashed. These acts of police brutality got scant but none the less powerful coverage on national news and the country was in shock. It was then that powerful PR lobbying kicked in and the media began to silence the protest. It became clear there actually a no-arrest policy and more incidents of bullying, intimidation and outright violence took place however these criminal acts received even less coverage.

More recently the Campaign received new focus when the biggest underwater pipe laying ship in the world, the Solitaire, arrived in Killybegs, Donegal. More and more locals were being re-energised and re-activated to join the ones who had maintained the campaign during the lull. Old friends and supporters were greeted with the same warmth and welcome, which has always existed in this truly amazing rural community.

A water-based protest group trained regularly in their inflatable boats and kayaks. They took part in many activities, including a protest involving inflatable boats, kayaks and three swimmers who's lives were endangered when a massive digger threatened them.

There was also a lot happening on land. The Camp, a focal point for activists from outside the area, had to be maintained and run well. There were pickets organised at the gates of the Glengad compound and indeed throughout the island at petrol stations.

When the solitaire arrived in Broadhaven Bay, there were great efforts to disrupt work on land, including five protestors using lock-on pipes to form a human circle and block the road.

While all this was going on, local fisherman, Pat O'Donnell and his sons, were defending their rights to fish in the bay.

Shell had tried to intimidate Pat, by threatening him with legal action if he did not comply with their order to remove his lobster pots. They then informed him that they would remove his pots and compensate him later confirming that they have no regard for law or proper procedure and are perfectly happy to flaunt it and pay a fine which would be a drop in the ocean to such a giant corporation.

END THE SIEGE
Stop Shell in Rosspart



When the Highland Navigator, which has a remote submarine vessel, came to remove the pots, Pat called on the Gardai to come to his aid in protecting his fishing gear and although the water unit was clearly in the area it took them over five days and legal pressure to respond. During and after this time Pat and his sons with the support of a handful of local fisherman had to stay at sea around the clock to guard their pots. On one occasion while Pat was ashore a Shell surveying vessel came within feet of his sons much smaller vessel and it was only after Pat made a plea to the captain to spare his sons lives that a collision was narrowly avoided.

When the Solitaire arrived Pat and his sons remained in Broadhaven bay to protect their pots but the Gardai wasted no time in coming to arrest them under section 8, Public Order Act. On release the Garda in charge asked Pat not to go back on the water to which Pat said he wouldn't if they could protect his pots from interference. When the Garda said they would not do this Pat said he had no choice but to go back on the water. Pat and his sons arrested again twice in the following days.



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When the Solitaire arrived in Broadhaven Bay local school principal Maura Harrington went on hunger strike in an effort to draw the captain's attention to the many flaws of the project his ship was involved in and to convince him to reconsider. She had pre-empted the act by sending a letter to the Captain one month earlier; making clear her intention and what her conditions for coming off would be.



It is understandable that many felt they couldn't support the action however; it would be wrong to condemn Maura, unless they have walked in her shoes and felt the same fear as her community. Maura's hunger strike brought the campaign to high level of tension and although many did not support the tactic, support for her and her demands was strong. The community and the camp rallied around her. In Dublin there was a daily vigil outside Shell HQ, which built in numbers.

After eleven days on hunger strike, the Solitaire left Irish waters to go to Scotland. Once it was confirmed, Maura made a statement and came off her hunger strike.

These latest events and success show the power people have when mobilised and the CYM will continue to support Shell to Sea, its activists and supporters.

In the current crisis it is vital we link all of the above to the larger question of the Irish economy and begin to make demands for an alternative democratic economy for the people.

EU Democracy Revealed!

For the Lisbon Treaty to be enforced, according to the EU's own rules, it needs to be ratified by all member states by January 1st 2009. The Irish people voted No to the Lisbon Treaty thus, according to their own rules and procedures, killing this current Treaty. While we may have been the only State to hold a referendum if we are to believe opinion poles many more would have voted No.

The Irish vote only serves to reinforce the original rejection of the EU constitution by the French and Dutch people. Even the President of France has admitted if put to the people it would have been rejected again. Truly, the further centralisation of political, economic and military power driven by European Monopolies, Banks and unelected Bureaucrats is unpopular with working people of Europe.



The reaction of EU technocrats and pro-EU politicians displays the appalling lack of democracy and indeed disdain for democracy at the heart of **this** European political project.

- **The treaty is not dead. The treaty is alive, and we will try to work to find a solution.** José Manuel Barroso, president of the EU Commission (press conference, 14 June 2008)
- **I am convinced that we need this Treaty. Therefore we are sticking with our goal for it to come into force. The ratification process must continue.** Frank-Walter Steinmeier, German Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs (Reuters, 14 June 2008)
- **We think it is a real cheek that the country that has benefited most from the EU should do this. There is no other Europe than this treaty. With all respect for the Irish vote, we cannot allow the huge majority of Europe to be duped by a minority of a minority of a minority.** Axel Schäfer, leader of the German Social Democratic Party in the Bundestag (Irish Times, 14 June 2008).
- **The Lisbon Treaty is not dead . . . It is imperative that they vote again.** Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, former President of France and principal author of the EU Constitution (RTL television, 19 June 2008).
- **They are bloody fools. They have been stuffing their faces at Europe's expense for years and now they dump us in the shit.** Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France (Times, 20 June 2008).

The positive and thankful response the Irish vote got from people all over Europe proves we are no fools. CYM received hundreds of emails from young people across Europe thanking us for our role in the No vote.

People must ask the question why are the elite so scared of referenda? They know their project is unpopular and that they are building a Europe with a minority's interest at its heart. They fear democracy. That is why socialists and communists across Europe must be to the fore in fighting for democracy and sovereignty meaning control of a countries resources and economy as this is the Achilles Heal in the Imperialism we face.

Wave of violence against Trade Unionists

A recent 375 page report by the International Trade Union Confederation, ITUC, outlined in great detail the 144 murders, 800 cases of torture, 5,000 arrests and over 8,000 dismissals of workers for Trade Union activity that took place in 2006. Many of these activists are in the front line of the struggle against global Imperialism and suffer horrendously for their commitment to workers rights and a better world for all to live in.

The 144 murders stands as a 25% increase on previous years and highlights both the growing militant resistance to the extremes of capitalism but also the increasingly vicious response of the State. ITUC General Secretary Guy Rider stated "Workers seeking to better their lives through trade union activities are facing rising levels of repression and intimidation in an increasing number of countries."



www.killercoke.org

78 of those killings were committed in Columbia where both State and State-sponsored forces continue to wreak havoc upon working peoples lives. Columbia remains the most perilous place on earth to be a Trade Union activist and the Connolly Youth Movement would like to reaffirm its commitment to the Boycott Coca-Cola Campaign seeking to highlight in particular the plight of SINALTRAINAL (National Union of Food Industry Workers) union members who suffer intimidation, kidnapping, torture and assassination in their efforts to win better conditions in Coca-Cola owned bottling plants. For more information on this campaign please check out <http://www.killercoke.org/who.htm> The 78 murders in Columbia in 2006 is only a sample of the 1,165 documented trade union assassinations that have happened there since 1994. An uncounted number remain missing.

Other countries listed involving murders were Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Cambodia, Mexico, Guatemala, Guinea and Iraq.

Striking about this report, particularly coming from ITUC hardly a radical Union International, was the condemnation of growing repression and intimidation in industrialised countries like the United States, Australia and Switzerland. It also named and shamed a number of multi-nationals with a particularly bad record with of course Killer Coke (Coca-Cola) topping the list followed closely by Wal-Mart, Goodyear and Nestle.

Even a peripheral glance at this report shows the Imperialist world we live in with mutli-nationals, monopoly capitalism, leading the way in abuse and degradation of peoples in the most vulnerable countries while workers in the homes of these multi-nationals also suffer crackdowns and intimidation if they step out of line. We must learn not to be divided and conquered. We must overcome, against the odds, the racist divisions Imperialism creates and fulfil the great slogan, Workers of the World Unite!

Useful Union Sites:

- www.wftucentral.org
- www.ituc-csi.org
- www.union-network.org
- www.global-unions.org
- www.etuc.org
- www.ictu.ie

Connolly Bookshop

43 East Essex Street

Temple Bar

Dublin 2

www.comunistpartyofireland.ie/cbooks





Explaining Economics Part 3

Having previously looked at the nature of economics being based upon the study of the method of production and introducing the meaning of value and how labour creates all value we will now move on to see how the price of commodities including our labour is determined.

Prices, Supply and Demand

So if it is labour that creates value and commodities, the prices we pay at the cash register etc. for the product or service are ultimately determined by the amount of labour involved in producing what you are buying. The more labour needed to make the thing the more you will pay for it.

Their price (a commodity) is thus determined by their cost of production.
K. Marx. 1847 'Wage-Labour and Capital'

This seems common sense and it is by and large and yet it is not how economics is presented. If you are to watch business news, and get through the boredom of it, you would be convinced that supply and demand was the be all and end all of economics. What 'supply and demand' does is for periods increase or decrease the market price of a product above or below its actual value. It causes the changing prices, the fluctuations. The more people want something the price can be raised slightly, but it is raised from its actual value which is determined by the amount of labour needed to create it.

Supply and demand regulates nothing but the temporary fluctuations of market prices. They will explain to you why the market price of a commodity rises above or sinks below its value, but they can never account for that value itself.
K. Marx. 1865 'Value, Price and Profit'

Supply and demand plays a minor role in determining prices relative to the ultimate causing factor, the production process, and labour is the key to the production process. Fashion trends, fads, celebrities and most importantly the media also cause temporary fluctuations in prices but again they too only play a secondary role. It is the 'labour theory of value' that should be news headlines as it is this which enables us to see and understand the exploitation that is inbuilt into the capitalist method of production, just as exploitation was built into feudal society and slave society before that.

Wages

Labour, as we have shown already, too is a commodity and so like every other commodity has a price that is determined by the labour needed to create it. We call that price a wage. It is what the owner must pay to use us, just like the office space or the raw materials they need. So what is our price or our wage?

Our price or value is also understood through the 'labour theory of value'. What is needed to keep us working, to educate and train us in the required task, to raise more children to take our place in the workforce etc. is our cost of production and so is our price on the market.

Like that of every other commodity, its value (labour) is determined by the quantity of labour necessary to produce it ... A certain mass of necessities must be consumed by a man to grow up and maintain his life. But the man, like the machine, will wear out and must be replaced by another man. Beside the mass of necessities required for his own maintenance, he wants another amount of necessities to bring up a certain quota of children that are to replace him on the labour market and to perpetuate the race of labourers.
K. Marx. 1865 'Value, Price and Profit'

Just as distortions and fluctuations are caused in the price of material goods and services by supply and demand so too is the price of labour, or our wage. In times of great unemployment where the market place is flooded with workers wages are kept low, little above starvation levels for most. But in times of 'boom' or where industry is growing more can be given and 'concessions' made to workers demands. The trade union movement can play an important role in raising wages above their actual value.

Wages also differ across the working class according to different jobs. Why is this you might say? This is because more training is needed for some jobs and training and education is an extra cost as the person is out of labour for that period. So the cost of the third level education in a labourer must also be calculated into certain jobs.

Upon the basis of the wages system the value of labouring power is settled like that of every other commodity; and as different kinds of labouring power have different values, or require different quantities of labouring power for their production, they must fetch different prices in the labour market.
K. Marx. 1865 'Value, Price and Profit'

Again we must understand these explanations as across the entire system and not reduce them to individual factories or offices. It is the system of production as a whole we are analysing. In this context we will see some of Lenin's greatest contributions to Marxism and most relevant to today his development of the theory of Imperialism as the highest and most developed form of capitalism.

Wages therefore are only a special name for the price of labour-power.
K. Marx. 1847 'Wage-Labour and Capital'

Latin America *Rising*

EL SALVADOR

The electoral successes of El Salvador's socialist's looks set to continue into the New Year. Already the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) control more than 50% of mayoral positions. Locally, the FMLN are the dominant political force controlling much of the local administrations. Now the FMLN look set to bring their local dominance to the national stage. Salvador's socialists look set to win the parliamentary elections in January, and, more importantly, the presidential election in March. According to a recent poll, the FMLN have a 9 % lead over the pro-imperialist ARENA party's candidate, though there is still a lot of work to be done with 44% of the population still undecided.

As El Salvador gears up for a presidential election in March 2009, the left- wing candidate is focused on taking the presidency from the ARENA party. Elections in El Salvador have always been close and next year's will be no different. This month, Mauricio Funes, (FMLN), has vowed that they will tackle the corruption that has become rampant under ARENA, create jobs and give preferential treatment to the poor. He has also pledged to restore relations with Cuba. The FMLN have also stated their intention to join the trading block established by Venezuela and Cuba, as well as withdrawing Salvadoran troops from Iraq. This is an election of huge importance, as the Salvadoran people attempt to shake of the yoke of Yankee Imperialism that exists there more than in any other Latin American country.

ARENA, the ultra right- wing ruling party, which is made up of the paramilitary death squads that massacred the Salvadoran people throughout the 1980's civil war, have ruled the country since the war ended in 1989. For the sixty years previous to this El Salvador was ruled by military presidents almost continuously. The military and oligarchy have long held the reigns of power and done all that they can to institutionalise inequality and keep the peasants and the working class down. During the civil war they used military dictatorship and death squads, both heavily backed by the United States, now there is little doubt that they are preparing to use what ever means necessary to ensure that the elite don't lose power. The big question is how far will ARENA and their backers go to maintain their hold on power in El Salvador?

The increase in FMLN's support is due to its activist's hard work and increasing effectiveness in grassroots political struggle. Their activists are with the people on the ground and are involved in the struggle against ARENA's pro American right-wing policies. ARENA have been responsible for the relentless implementation of neo- liberal policies. The people are tired of continuing privatisation and erosion of what little workers rights had existed. ARENA are attempting to privatise just about everything within El Salvador. They have already succeeded in privatising banks, the electricity and telephone companies and have even gone as far as the pension system. They have recently made attempts at privatising health care. The FMLN has been to the fore in supporting doctors, nurses and other health care workers in opposing this. Poverty is at extremely high levels throughout El Salvador. Coupled with other social problems such as spiralling organised crime and 3500 murders each year, ARENA have shown themselves to be incompetent at dealing with these problems, both which have reached epidemic levels under their so- called leadership.



ARENA are already using the force of the state against the FMLN and other political activists. They have introduced anti-terror laws that are influenced by the US Patriot Act of 2006. This legislation is central to the state repression of anti-government activists and the FMLN. It is being used by ARENA for political arrests and for cracking down on anti-government and anti-privatisation protests. Another tactic being used is state-sponsored assassinations.

In October 2007, Alejandro Funes the 27 year old son of the FMLN's presidential candidate was beaten to death. In January of this year, Wilber Moses Funes an FMLN mayor was assassinated. In May, a 19 year old anti-water privatisation activist Hector Antonio Ventura was also murdered.



FMLN Presidential Candidate Mauricio Funes

Another aspect to these election is the involvement of the United States and their threats against the Salvadoran people if they vote the FMLN into power. The US ambassador to El Salvador admitted recently that they had interfered in the 2004 vote. Their interference is what handed victory to their ARENA allies in what was an extremely close election. Statements from the US condemning the FMLN and threatening to cut off money sent from Salvadorans in the US to their families in their home country tipped the election away from a FMLN victory. This leads to an important question and one which the United States must answer. Will they continue this interference in Salvadoran elections or will they allow the people to make their own decision about what President they want without these sort of threats? This remains to be seen but given the recent interference and threats in Bolivia and Venezuela we remain sceptical.

An Experience of Ethiopia

Tears, Smiles and Struggle

Stepping off the aeroplane and walking through the terminal in Addis Ababa that cool but colourful scented air engulfed me. There is something about those first few breaths that instils the thought this is not a regular Terminal in a regular city. No, this place is different.

Our first commute of the Capital, from the airport to our bed-sit was done under the veil of night. The sun may not have lit the Addis sky that first time but in no way was my mind shadowed by the sheer magnitude and scale of poverty that would unfold before us in the coming weeks. How does one equate that for millions, nay billions of the world's inhabitants, live and suffer in similar or worse circumstances, and not go into the depths of depression and despair, lose all hope and faith in humankind. How can one retain the belief that inherently – man will do good, when such poverty exists that starves so many of our brothers & sisters of life?

In my opinion the answer lies in the people themselves.

We drove 14 hours from Addis to our final destination of Robe, which is located within the Bale region of Ethiopia north east of the capital. Travelling along asphalt roads that all too quickly turned into the roughest dirt terrain, giving one's spine a serious workout! As the hours passed we were greeted by all 4 seasons, from the basking heat on the vast open plains to the extremes of snow, hail and thunder storms on steep mountain slopes. What I found myself doing was gazing out the window at locals that had the most amazing smiles you could ever hope to see. The wearer of these smiles themselves had little or nothing in the sense of material possessions but their spirit, which is battle hardened through constant cycles of poverty & its related illnesses, are nonetheless stronger than I ever thought imaginable.

We settled in Robe after a day or two's rest the time was coming upon us. All of the preparations, all our fundraising, all our anxieties and worries, the countless hours travelling were in one way finished but in another way had only begun. It was our first day working in the orphanage, our purpose for this experience, which is run by the Mother Teresa Sister's. We were told what to expect and how it was but in reality words don't hold much worth. It was only until that moment when we pulled inside the gates of the orphanage and were greeted with great cheers, claps, screams (and sneeze's I'm sure) that every fibre inside of me got such an instant connection. It was so overwhelming!

Walking through the orphanage, being escorted with your own personal entourage, greeting and meeting all the residents. Quite easily you could be fooled into thinking this place isn't actually too bad. But you have to look at it in two ways. As a refuge to the residents, who range from the worst mental and physical disabilities to the most vulnerable of old and young it was undeniably a happy, loving and peaceful place to live. Getting to know certain individuals as the weeks went on in all truthfulness the happiness was real. But I got to learn more about their personal stories and tragedies. I became all too aware of the gravity that grips a population of a third world country. It's those personal stories that could be told by countless people that have to live the life of mere surviving, that one must instil to understand how bad the state of things are. We in our privileged States do have our own struggles and problems. We don't have it easy but in relative terms!

That Orphanage and the many like it, amidst the sullen landscape of poverty is a beacon of light for those unfortunate souls that really need it. To be taken in is truly a gift but it's the poor unfortunates outside that are the forgotten and this bandaid can never be a just solution.

What I think I really want to convey is that in my short stay surrounded by poverty of which I had never before witnessed one can still find hope. Hope from within the people that they will survive and overcome.

EON

Connolly Youth Movement

Youth - Culture - Democracy

Ógra Uí Chongaile

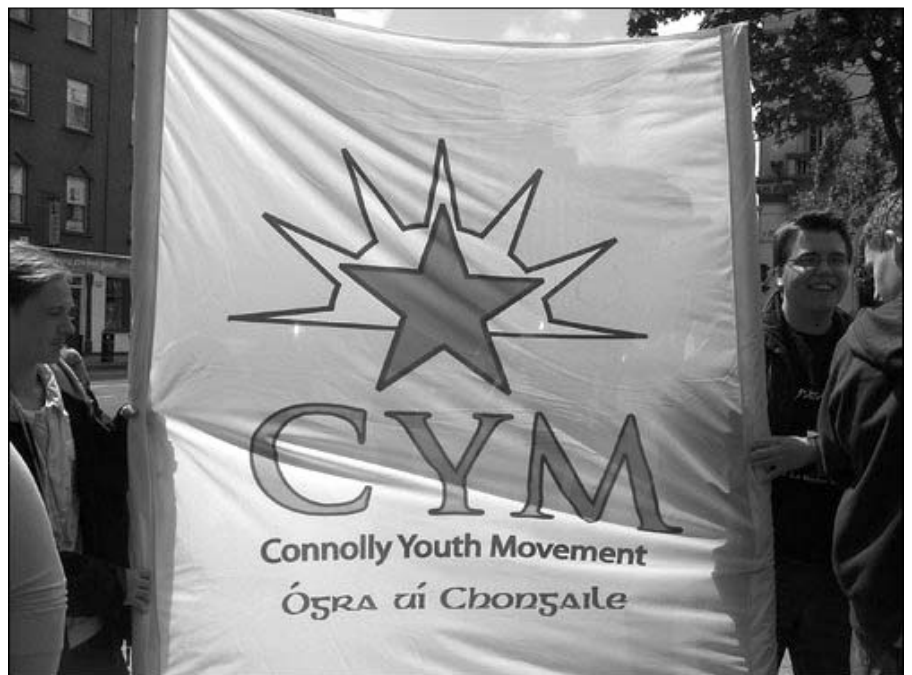
Óige - Cultúr - Daonlathas



The Connolly Youth Movement (CYM) is an all-Ireland socialist movement committed to the education and politicisation of young people. The CYM contains young people from many different backgrounds who have come together through their common belief in class struggle and their opposition to the inequalities of the capitalist system. We are committed to fighting for young people's rights whether through unions, on the streets or in the communities we live in. We are affiliated to the Communist Party of Ireland and work with them to forward the cause of socialism amongst young people of Ireland.

Named after the revolutionary working class leader, James Connolly, we take inspiration from his thoughts and actions to continue his struggle for liberation today. As internationalists, we also learn from the worldwide experiences of comrades like Rosa Luxembourg, Ho Chi Min and Lenin. Formed in 1964, the CYM has always defended the rights of the youth and today is no different, we will continue to organise, educate and agitate for a Worker's Republic and a socialist world.

- We seek the reunification of Ireland and an end to all forms of imperialism and exploitation.
- We are opposed to the European Union and see it is an undemocratic imperialist alliance seeking to impose its will on working people.
- We support the trade union movement and actively encourage young people to join and get involved in their union. However, we oppose the 'Partnership' arrangement as it cripples unions fighting capacity.
- We are members of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY.). We actively support socialism in Cuba and elsewhere around the globe.



Join us in our Struggle!

Connolly Youth Movement

Ógra Uí Chongaile

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