

# anspréach

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Independent non-profit Socialist Republican magazine



## MAN & CUBA

CHE GUEVARA - THE INTERVENING YEARS

### NOT A SUMMERTIME PLOY

Rainbow Capitalist & Proud?

### THE AMAZONIAS

Destroying the Earth's  
Lungs

### DIPLOCK COURTS

They Haven't Gone  
Away You Know

### BHA

A New Movement for  
Social Housing

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Dear reader,

**An Spréach** is an independent Socialist Republican magazine formed by a collective of political activists across Ireland. It aims to bring you, the reader, a broad swathe of opinion from within the Irish Socialist Republican political sphere, including, but not exclusive to, the fight for national liberation and socialism in Ireland and internationally.

The views expressed herein, do not necessarily represent the publication and are purely those of the author. We welcome contributions from all political activists, including opinion pieces, letters, historical analyses and other relevant material. The editor reserves the right to exclude or omit any articles that may be deemed defamatory or abusive.

Full and real names must be provided, even in instances where a pseudonym is used, including contact details. Please bear in mind that you may be asked to shorten material if necessary, and where we may be required to edit a piece to fit within these pages, all efforts will be made to retain its balance and opinion, without bias.

**An Spréach** is a not-for-profit magazine which only aims to fund its running costs, including print and associated platforms.

Is iris poblachtach sóisialta í **An Spréach** curtha le chéile ag roinnt gníomhaithe polaitiúla. An aidhm atá leis ná tuilleadh léargais agus dearcthaí ón phobal poblachtach sóisialta a chur i do láthair mar léitheoir, ábhar nach mbaineann amháin leis an troid shaortha shóisialta náisiúnta in Éirinn agus idirnáisiúnta.

Ní hionann na dearcaidh luaite anseo agus dearcadh an fhoilseacháin ach is iad dearcaidh de chuid an údair iad. Cuirfear fáilte roimh gach gníomhaí polaitiúil ábhar a chur ar fáil, ailt tuairimíochta, litreacha, anailís stairiúil agus gach aon ábhar cuí san áireamh. Tá sé de cheart ag an eagarthóir ailt clúmhillteach nó ionsaitheach a fhágáil ar lár.

Caithfear ainmneacha iomlána agus fíor ainmneacha a bheith ar fáil, go fiú nuair a úsáidtear ainm cleite, sonraí teagmhála ábhartha san áireamh. Ná déantar dearmad, tá seans ann go n-iarrfar ort eagar a chur ar do shaothar sa dóigh is go bhféadaimis an spás leathanaigh a líonadh mar is ceart. Tá seans ann ar a bharr sin go ndéanfar coiriú ar phársa le seo a eascú ach déanfar achan iarrachta an cothromas agus dearcaidh an phársa sin a thabhairt, gan claonadh.

Is iris neamhbhrabúis í **An Spréach** a sholáthraíonn airgead maidir le costais reatha amháin, costais clódóireachta agus tairisí atá bainteach léi.



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To Vote Away Their Wealth

### TEAGMHÁIL CONTACT

Ríomhpoist / Email:  
[info@anspreach.org](mailto:info@anspreach.org)

Suíomh gréasáin / Web  
[anspreach.org](http://anspreach.org)

Facebook  
[/anspreach](https://www.facebook.com/anspreach)

Twitter  
[@anspreachmedia](https://twitter.com/anspreachmedia)

### SCRÍBHNEOIRÍ CONTRIBUTORS

Tiarna Mulvenna & Eimear Magee

Fionnbarra O'Dochartaigh

David Swanson

Pól Torbóid

Xavier Beardwood

Fra Hughes

Pádraic Mac Coitir

Colum Mac Giolla Bhéin

Sean Matthews

Pádraig Mac Goill

Kerron Ó Luain

Éamonn Ó Cleirigh

James Connolly

### EAGARTHÓIR EDITOR

Ciarán Ó Briain

### DEARTHÓIR DESIGNER

Réamann Ó Duibhghinn



# The Amazonias

By Tiarna Mulvenna & Eimear Magee

*"I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. And then I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if our house is on fire. Because it is" - Greta Thunberg*

August 19th 2019 - Monday afternoon, the people of Sao Paulo were going through the motions of their daily routine, grabbing a coffee on their lunch-break, picking up their kids from school, relaxing in a park; when the city entered twilight zone. A thick cloud of smoke descended on the city for one hour. Reactions on Twitter questioned 'judgement day' and 'the apocalypse'. However, the answer lies in the fact that where there is smoke, there is fire. The fires were burning over 3000km away, in the Amazon rainforest where the number of fires has tripled since last year. From July 2019 over 7,200 square miles of the Brazilian rainforest has burned, this represents an area larger than the entire city of Tokyo. There are two main causes of these fires (1) natural fires, and (2) farmers using a 'slash and burn' technique to clear land for crop production and livestock; the main cause of these

extreme wildfires.  
***"From July 2019 over 7,200 square miles of the Brazilian rainforest has burned"***

So what do these fires mean for The Amazon? The Amazon is a complex ecosystem, home to 10% of the world's species of animals, plants and birds, as well as home to various indigenous tribes. As a global population, we emit vast amounts of greenhouse gases. We burn fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas in our daily activities, from heating our homes to powering our cars. We also contribute to greenhouse gas emissions in ways we don't realise, or don't want to realise. Everything from where we buy our clothes to how much meat we consume directly affects the amount of CO2 we release into the air. The Amazon is a useful tool in that it acts as a huge carbon sink, absorbing carbon in the air and storing it within its ecosystem. If we continue to emit greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and, as an added detriment, destroy natural resources which absorb these emissions then we are confronted with a warming planet - threatening our very existence. Scientists predict that a deforested Amazon will not only stop taking in the earth's CO2 emissions, it will begin releasing stored CO2 back into the atmosphere. Nobre states that, if 60% of The Amazon were

to degrade to a savanna, it could unleash the equivalent of five or six years' worth of global fossil-fuel emissions.

In modern times, it's easy to think that a new innovation is just around the corner. That somehow science or technology can fix the damage inflicted on this iconic rainforest; but this is not the case. Investigations into regrowth following a wildfire confirm that things will never go back to how they were. In the years following a fire, the larger trees - which could be up to 1000 years old - begin to die either from root damage, vulnerability to winds or infection. With no trees, there will be no birds, animals, plants, fish or even people - The Amazon is an interdependent eco-community and when nature is disrupted, the domino effect commences. The Amazon is still burning and action needs to be taken fast but the political climate in Brazil has different ideas.

It may be surprising for some that the magnitude of the Amazon fires is not only perhaps the most perturbing environmental disasters of modern times, but it also signifies the President's political degradation of the environment and of its indigenous people. Precisely because of its policies which have been designed in a way that ruptures the very being of the Amazonias. Enter the incumbent president Jair Bolsonaro, who assumed office on the first of January 2019. The position

of the President on Brazil's environmental policy is unfortunately subordinated to industrial interests seeking greater access to the protected areas of the Amazonias. As a consequence of this, the indigenous communities of Brazil's Amazonias are robbed of their land rights as well as facing potential violence from the actions of Brazil's Agriculture industry. The initial attack launched by Bolsonaro manifested upon his signing of an executive order which afforded the Agriculture industry authority in certifying indigenous land. A depressing scene for many indigenous people, 'justified' on Twitter by the President as an integration technique for these citizens "isolated from true Brazil". What is striking here is the utter neglect of the tradition of indigenous tribes, demeaningly reduced as outsiders of the true Brazil.

***"it signifies the President's political degradation of the environment and of its indigenous people."***

Another weapon in Bolsonaro's armoury, Ricardo Salles. The newly appointed environmental minister whose track record displays more concern for the interests of miners and the Agriculture industry than for any environmental concern. A dismal irony of this appointment is that just shy of a month

before his assumption of office, Salles was convicted of altering environmental maps for the benefit of mining companies under his office as the Environmental Secretary for Sao Paulo in 2016. Senator Randolfe Rodrigues of the political party Rede Sustentabilidade has even accused Salles's actions, in circumventing the authority of environment protection agencies like IBAMA, as catalysing the fires in the Amazonias and condemned his failure in doing nothing to prevent the "catastrophe we are seeing in the Amazon". This condemnation led the party to call for Salles impeachment in August. One would ask why then would President Bolsonaro adopt such a decision if he claims to 'love' the rainforest. Yet, his actions contradict his very words, but more so than this, his pro-business policies that have decidedly ostracised environmental policy concerns. According to official data from Observatorio do Clima, Bolsonaro's cuts to Brazil's environmental enforcement agency amount to \$23 million. Not only has Bolsonaro made cuts to environmental funding, he has also made cuts to officials who have highlighted the damage of his crisis-laden policies.

The scientific evidence of how detrimental 'slash and burn' techniques are for The Amazon is staggering. President Bolsonaro has refused to act, time and time again, and yet people still support his decisions. Climate change is a tricky concept to motivate

collective action for because we don't see its effects in everyday life. We have witnessed hotter heatwaves in summer and we have seen protests on the news but on a day to day basis many people don't see or feel a changing climate. The invisibility of climate change is how political figures like Bolsonaro can dismiss the burning of The Amazon and push for expanding the agricultural industry instead. This is why the smoke in Sao Paulo is of chilling significance, when people in the city were trapped under a dark cloud - the city was in standstill. We need to begin thinking about climate change as that huge dark cloud over Sao Paulo - before it becomes our reality. •



# CAIRDE CRÓGA GO BRÁCH

**F**ionnbarra O'Dochartaigh and his twin sister Deirdre, were born at 134 Bogside, Derry in 1944. Since his mid-teens he has been a radical community activist. He held leading positions in both the Derry Unemployed and Housing Action Committees and on January 1967, in Belfast, he became the youngest co-founder of the Civil Rights Association (NICRA). Last serving secretary of the Derry Citizens' Action Committee (9/10/68 - 12/8/69) until The Battle of the Bogside (12-15 Aug. '69). In recent decades is International Treasurer of its '68 Commemoration Committee.

A trained journalist, his critically acclaimed controversial titles focus on local and national history, which include: (1994) 'Ulster's White Negroes - From Civil Rights to Insurrection' and the fully illustrated (2010) 'IRELAND: England's Vietnam 1960s-1990s Writings of a civil Rights Veteran'. He describes his politics as socialist republican or "Connollyite".

Referring to the poem, he said, "On the night following Mickey's funeral. The family had retired early. At the kitchen table I sat alone thinking of two younger friends and comrades: Mickey and Patsy and the other long-suffering hunger-strikers. I rarely feel emotionally moved to write a poem but decided to honour them as best I could. Once pen and paper in hand some inner force took control and amazingly, within about twenty minutes the first draft flowed

into the page. I felt few would understand mentioning a particularly long-necked and well-feathered creature. Looking back it was symbolic of that era because of its frequent tendency to bury their heads in the sand, thus...."As politicians like the Ostrich stood".

The poem, with pictures and details on Michael Devine and Patsy O'Hara was published as a Memorial Card and personally distributed to both families, comrades and countless sympathizers at home and abroad following their funerals. Fionnbarra asked us to share this historical poem, with small edits and a foreword he had hoped to have included previously. We at An Spréach are privileged to do so. •

## CAIRDE CRÓGA GO BRÁCH (Brave Friends Forever)

O're James Connolly House, the black flag few  
While 'neath it wept comrades old and new  
Hundreds lined in columns long  
To bid a last farewell to our martyred sons.

Filing past each flower decked bier  
The common people, sighed, 'mid tears  
For two workers' sons had come back home  
To we Bogside folk, forever, each our own.

Like hundreds, naked, lay in jail  
Each cell their tomb, a sole blanket grey  
Comrades all, on protest stayed  
Neither to meet, nor, 'hello' say.

For five long years in solitude  
No books, or papers, ever to read  
The outside world was far away  
Even God's sunlight, denied, each day.

They cried for justice, but few took head  
The rich man as ever, stayed aloof  
The clerics, mainly they were deaf  
As politicians like the ostrich stood.

When all other means, did not prevail  
On hunger-strike went ten, some, for o're sixty days  
Yes, freedom came, but with it death  
While the May Flower blooms, we shan't forget.

Fionnbarra O'Dochartaigh  
Samhradh, 1981,  
Doire Colmille



## CAPITALISM & THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

By David Swanson

**T**he first prescription of western society is to teach students about capitalism. The values of individual competitiveness and the necessity of a free market are instilled from a young age; a capitalist state comprised of politicians, the church and business leaders influence our education to respect current economic procedures and to remain passive about our social environment and the circumstances in which it exists. We're often told that capitalism is the result of human nature, that it's inevitable to have owners of money that dictate to those who possess nothing but their labour power. However, as Karl Marx methodically articulates in his literature, this has no natural basis, nor is it common to all historical periods. It is our duty to examine where capitalism originated, what it entails and whether there is a progressive alternative.

There is no doubt that capitalism initially provided a source of progression from feudalism. The bourgeois revolutions which swept most of Europe, particularly in England, France and Germany throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, increasingly accelerated the role of production. Where society's basic necessities were made in isolation by individual peasant tenants and farmers under feudalism, human labour became increasingly collectivised under capitalism. Examined in the context of historical materialism, the viewpoint that an epoch of history should be evaluated by how production is established, it is undoubtedly true that the transition from feudalism to capitalism determined a growth in productive forces and the organisation of labour.

However, due to its fundamental contradictions, capitalism is inherently flawed and arguably more dangerous than its feudal predecessor. The wealth of present day society consists of an 'immense collection of commodities', products which are made for exchange on the market rather than for human necessity. This has produced a division of human labour, a situation where society is divided into numerous groups producing different items, which can only be accessed through trading with each other. Whilst capitalism initially provided a source of progression in boosting the rate of production, it has become toxic. People enter social relationships not on the basis of genuine interest in our human counterparts, but because we ultimately want to formulate an exchange of commodities.

More still, it has produced a situation where some can profit from this process through the work of others. With more simple forms of commodity circulation, the ultimate aim of the producer is the fulfilment of their own needs, not to increase wealth. A blacksmith can trade a product for money before acquiring a product from a carpenter which is equal to the same amount of labour time, in a process which simply acknowledges the use-value of a product formulated by human labour. The division of labour is apparent, but not exploitative. Marx explains this process through the acronym Commodity-Money-Commodity (C-M-C). However, capitalism has naturally developed into a much more frightening proposition because of its internal contradictions, producing the rabid inequalities that have become internally fabricated into the practices of modern society.

This is done through the hoarding of money. Some will sell their commodities without fully completing the final point of the C-M-C cycle, with the aim of capitalising further upon society's division of labour. A new cycle has begun which Marx details as Money-Commodity-Money (M-C-M'); the money which

is originally obtained is advanced with the intention of creating surplus value. This is a process which requires exploitation; capitalists must purchase labour-power itself and exploit it to create individual profit. This is done by firstly advancing a sum of money into creating a place of employment, most commonly known as privately owning the means of production. Workers are encouraged to sell their own labour-power to these institutions, producing commodities for the individual capitalist to trade on the market in return for a fixed wage which is calculated from the initial investment. As the alternative is insecurity and unemployment, this can be whatever is deemed acceptable by the employer, producing a system in which workers will create goods which have a use-value which is worth considerably more than what they are actually paid. In an average working day of ten hours in today's society, a worker will produce the goods that their salary is worth in the first five hours. Everything else is surplus value, or capital, accumulated from the sale of the commodity on the market. This will be used to invest in more workers and production lines to further line the inside of an employer's pocket.

This is not capitalism's only flaw. Due to the nature of the system itself, workers cannot afford to buy the goods they create. As every employer is in direct competition with each other to accumulate more profits, wages continually drive lower as a result. This then creates a massive problem for modern capitalists; the goods they make cannot be sold and this contributes towards economic crises like the recession of 2008. As the unsustainable prerequisites of capitalism create an unbalanced crisis of over-production and limited profits in a society of only capitalists and workers, employers have to look abroad to non-capitalist markets to realise their ambitions. This inevitably means invading non-capitalist regions and forcing them to comply. The state's declaration of neutrality in capitalist economics is thus exposed as a

lie; politicians and state forces are influenced by the power of big business and provide the ammunition to keep the system functioning. This has been theorised as imperialism and is viewed as the highest stage of capitalism. Raw materials are imported from a colonised country for an even cheaper rate than national figures as trade is dictated by the now imperial power. This strengthens capitalism in the latter whilst committing the occupied nation to the same set of exploitative circumstances as the national worker.

Why is this so dangerous? Capitalist national states are competing against each other to secure these global resources. The economic system's competition has the potential to reach its highest form at any time: imperialist war between capitalist states. The ruling class of national societies whip up nationalist sentiment to lure populations to fight for their country's honour: all so capitalism can survive. The two World Wars of the twentieth century show just how frightening this scenario can become, but they are certainly not an abstract period of history. There are countless examples from Bonaparte to Bush of how the ruling class can encourage workers to fight for freedom of the market rather than themselves. Dividing workers along national lines to fight each other in aid of the global 1% is a vital capitalist mission statement.

If we are to truly confine this unsustainable mess to the past, socialism must become a reality. Just as capitalism was seen as a progressive step from feudalism, so too is socialism from our current economic conditions. This is a system in which human labour is no longer an exploitative class attribute; goods are produced in a democratically centralised form of production on the basis of human need rather than profit. Production for the sake of individual gain is abolished; a state controlled by workers who are accountable to the masses nationalises industry and places workplaces under internal democracy to prevent production becoming competitive businesses between a few privileged individuals. This ensures that public services like transport are accessible to everyone and fairly priced for use; health and education cease to be private commodities and are free for all from the cradle to the grave. Social housing programs are formulated to distribute land equally on a non-profit basis to combat an ever-increasing housing crisis and put a permanent brake on the corruption of private landlords. The working class no longer pay for the mistakes of the privileged in economics and imperialist war; heavy taxation and a dripping trail of blood from endless war crimes is forcibly confined to history. The fundamental contradiction between capital and labour is erased for good.

Whilst articulating the need for socialism, we must also remain resolutely opposed to those who would simply reform capitalism, rather than abolishing it. Most commonly associated with those who advocate Keynesian poli-

tics, a narrative is articulated that capitalist crisis is simply a shortage of demand. State governments should borrow infinite amounts of money and spend, whilst taxing businesses appropriately to redistribute wealth to average households to kick-start the economy and solve demand issues. It seems easy, but it is fundamentally flawed. As Marxists consistently advocate, capitalists are not simply interested in markets, but profitable markets. No employer produces for the sake of producing, but for the sake of profit alone. As this can only be successfully negotiated through the exploitation of human labour, we must fully abolish capitalism in favour of socialism to fully eradicate the contradictions of our current conditions.

More still, reformists argue that the state in its current form is a neutral apparatus which can be used productively rather than constructing a new reality. This is another fundamentally flawed narrative which is doomed to failure and must be vociferously challenged. Deciding every few years which member of the ruling class will repress and crush the people through parliament is the real essence of capitalism, even in the most democratic republics. Career politicians of various stars and stripes continually articulate their commitment to democracy, but the most pressing areas of concern are forever off the table. A vote on our economic conditions is always noticeably absent; capitalism is a non-negotiable framework under a state dictated by the ruling class. Any campaign rooted in changing the status quo is violently repressed by state militaries and police hired to protect the richest 1%'s domination of the means of production. If that sounds dramatic, take a flick through history. While the state of the ruling class remains functioning, it only gives those who exploit us a chance to regroup and discuss tactics. The politics of big business, the clergy and the parliamentary class must be fully smashed by a campaign of organised labour and replaced by a new framework controlled by ordinary people at the heart of production.

To make this system a reality we must advocate for socialism from below – prioritising and strengthening a mass movement of the working class to create the society we want to see. History shows that it is essential that the working class needs a vanguard of party power to direct and guide the masses whilst injecting socialist theory, but nothing can replicate the energy and drive of self-generated worker agitation. Mass strikes put employers on the back foot in their campaign to further deplete a worker's wages. Rejecting sectarian and xenophobic rhetoric which seeks to divide us through community agitation concerns the parliamentary class. Rejecting the conditions we find ourselves in through a united front of class war has been proven to topple capitalism from Saint Petersburg to Santa Clara. It is the duty of the party to mobilise this self-agitation and assimilate into the mass movement, directing its potential through a programme of transitional demands which will continue to raise class-conscious-

ness and drive towards the successful implementation of socialism.

We must also remain acutely aware of the strength of international solidarity. As capitalists muddy the waters of an international front through nationalist rhetoric, socialism requires exploited workers to throw off their affinity with national identities and fight under one banner of internationalism. This is not to say we shouldn't be proud of where we're from, nor does it advocate a centralised government autocratically ruling from one location as head of an international bloc. It simply recognises that while our class cannot be false to their country, neither can we be false to our class outside it. Capitalist states will repeatedly attempt to destroy socialist programs through armed conflict, often collaborating in an despotic inter-state alliance to crush it at source. History shows that only those campaigns which are firmly grounded in internationalism stand a chance of surviving the onslaught. Workers must continue to show a visually transnational cohesion by organising strikes, pickets and demos which formulate solidarity with other comrades around the globe. Ultimately, we must remain internationally organised and refuse to back down until socialism has become a global reality.

Engaging with the rhetoric of the current pillars of society is complicity in our own oppression. It is critical that we challenge those who believe that our current conditions are a product of human nature and that there is no viable alternative. Socialism is the only way to save humanity. Through internationally organised mobilisations of working class solidarity we can not only find protection from exploitative employers, but a route towards a different society based on the need of the many. Act locally and think globally to change our current exploitative conditions; a future of equality lies only in the hands of the worker. Through the international alliance of the working class, we can bring capitalism to its knees and truly end the dynasty of the privileged few who exploit human labour. Workers of the world, unite. •

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- 6 Socialist Appeal (2019), Issue 300, 8th January
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## FOR THE CITIZEN ARMY

By James Connolly

*The following was published in Workers' Republic, on October 30, 1915.*

**T**he Irish Citizen Army was founded during the great Dublin Lock-Out of 1913-14, for the purpose of protecting the working class, and of preserving its right of public meeting and free association. The streets of Dublin had been covered by the bodies of helpless men, women, boys and girls brutally batoned by the uniformed bullies of the British Government.

Three men had been killed, and one young Irish girl murdered by a scab, and nothing was done to bring the assassins to justice. So since justice did not exist for us, since the law instead of protecting the rights of the workers was an open enemy, and since the armed forces of the Crown were unreservedly at the disposal of the enemies of labour, it was resolved to create our own army to secure our rights, to protect our members, and to be a guarantee of our own free progress.

The Irish Citizen Army was the first publicly organised armed citizen force south of the Boyne. Its constitution pledged and still pledges its members to work for an Irish Republic, and for the emancipation of labour. It has ever been foremost in all national work, and whilst never neglecting its own special function has always been at the disposal of the forces of Irish nationality for the ends common to all.

Its influence and presence has kept the peace

at all labour meetings since its foundation, and the knowledge of its existence and of the spirit of its members has contributed to prevent the employers and the government from proceeding to extremes against the fighting unions. It has in a true and real sense added many shillings per week to the pay of the union members, since it and it alone has prevented the Government doing in Dublin what it has done in Barry, namely, send soldiers in to do dockers' work during a strike. Nationally it has done much more.

When the great betrayal was perpetrated on Ireland, and John Redmond and his followers, aided by all the capitalist press of the country, joined in a conspiracy to rush the young men of Ireland into the ranks of the British Army, the first stirring blow struck against that betrayal was the historic meeting in Stephen's Green on the night of Redmond's Mansion House fiasco. Who took the field that night in spite of the massed battalions of the British Army, waiting the word in every barrack square in Dublin? It was the Irish Citizen Army sprang into the gap, and by its fearless presence gave new heart and hope to the dismayed and betrayed people of Ireland.

When the first deportation order was issued to the first victim, Captain Robert Monteith, who leaped to arms and invited the people of Dublin to hurl their defiance in the teeth of the Government? Who rallied to the meeting despite torrents of rain, and in face of the open demonstration of armed force by the Dublin garrison? Again it was the Irish Citizen Army. Who on every occasion on which the enemy has struck his blow at those who stood for freedom has ever hastened to the side of the victims

declaring their cause to be its own? THE IRISH CITIZEN ARMY!

Who, when the protest meeting was held in the Phoenix Park under directions of the Volunteer Committee, were the only armed body to attend and declare their adhesion to the cause of their imprisoned brothers in arms? THE IRISH CITIZEN ARMY!

An armed organisation of the Irish working class is a phenomenon in Ireland. Hitherto the workers of Ireland have fought as parts of the armies led by their masters, never as members of an army officered, trained, and inspired by men of their own class. Now, with arms in their hands, they propose to steer their own course, to carve their own future.

Neither Home Rule, nor the lack of Home Rule, will make them lay down their arms. However it may be for others, for us of the Citizen Army there is but one ideal – an Ireland ruled, and owned, by Irish men and women, sovereign and independent from the centre to the sea, and flying its own flag outward over all the oceans.

We cannot be swerved from our course by honeyed words, lulled into carelessness by freedom to parade and strut in uniforms, nor betrayed by high-sounding phrases. The Irish Citizen Army will only co-operate in a forward movement. The moment that forward movement ceases it reserves to itself the right to step out of the alignment, and advance by itself if needs be, in an effort to plant the banner of freedom one reach further towards its goal. •

# MAN & CUBA

## Che Guevara - The intervening years

By Pól Torbóid

**C**he Guevara. Is there any other revolutionary held in higher esteem across the international freedom struggle? Having found immortality in martyrdom, the Argentine's contribution to Cuba, and indeed International Socialism, cannot be questioned.

Che's contribution began, as he boarded a shaky boat bound for Cuba, with 82 other armed revolutionaries. Of those aboard, only 12 made it ashore to join their comrades. Among them were Che, and brothers Fidel & Raul Castro. This first notable act was followed by their journey into the Sierra Maestra, which would become a growing Rebel base of operations.

That part of Che's story is told often, as is the victory of the Rebels in Santa Clara and, consequently, Havana. Much is said about these parts of his life, and indeed his death, with that oft' repeated quote attributed to Ernesto moments before his demise, "shoot", he said, "you are only going to kill a man".

Those last few words, if indeed they do belong to him, probably had more meaning than he realised at the time, with everything he had achieved in life, and indeed death, and he being reduced to just 'a man'. The lesson for all of us, as individuals immersed in the broader collective, that we could achieve so much more.

As rebel convoys marched on Havana in early January of 1959, it would be a full eight and a half years later that Che was to die beneath a Bolivian sky, many thousands of miles from Cuba.

Less is said of those intervening years, where Che's contribution to the struggle had taken on a different form. The fatigues might have remained, but gone were the guerrilla bands and the immediate risk to life. The jungle was replaced with an office, his rifle a pen, and the endless green of his previous environment was now piles of white and yellowed paper - the machine of the revolution would need to be safeguarded by other means - and he was at the helm.

It was not until 1961 that Fidel declared the revolution a socialist one. A full two years since the rebels had seized the state apparatus, and attempts to form a regime with the liberal economists floundered against the rocks of agrarian reform.

Arguably, US Imperialists had strengthened Cuba's revolutionary character inadvertently, and hastened the pace of Socialism. Nationalisation became an increasingly relevant part of the Cuban economy, as failing businesses and economic sectors were acquired by the revolution, thereby ensuring the economy moved forward, albeit jerkily so, and that jobs were supported and wages ensured. The commitment to the Cuban people at this point cannot be overestimated.

Eventually, all sectors of the economy would be consolidated into what was then called 'consolidados', under the remit of a minister and various administrators, each consolidado would be organised more effectively and no longer in pursuit of profit. It was Che who pioneered this.

How he came to be the head of the Department of Industrialisation (INRA - Minister of Industries) and

later, the National Bank of Cuba, is an often scrutinised and humoured point. Legend has it that, as the Council of Ministers met for a frantic late night meeting, amidst the backdrop of spiralling relations with the United States, Fidel asked for "a good economist" to take over the National Bank of Cuba. Che, weary-eyed and over-worked, raised his hand, whereupon he was met by surprise, most notably from Fidel, who said, "I didn't know you were a good economist?" Che, now more alert, retorted, "Oh! I thought you asked for a good Communist."

He got the job.

Che, now affirmed in his roles, immediately set about taking control of the country's financial resources. He prevented the continued flight of capital from the Cuban state with various technical maneuvers, including changing all Cuban banknotes with a military precision, having had them pre-printed in secret. Consequently, anyone with significant Cuban cash reserves that the Rebels did not know about, was rendered unable to financially subvert the state - all eyes were on the Florida coastline.

The creation of a foreign trade agency in conjunction with a Cuban exodus from International financial institutions dominated by the United States, occurred alongside the complete withdrawal of Cuban gold reserves from the US. These acts and others, parallel to the creation of a new bureaucracy and administrative process, allowed the state the complete control of Cuban industries and Banking, and consequently, the Cuban economy.

Central to the success of economic output was an accounting system that would effectively manage

the checks and balances of the economy, ensuring good supply and demand. Che envisioned the use of computers and pioneered their introduction into the economic management of the state. Taking classes in mathematics and other subjects, Che was effectively learning as he went along, emphasis on 'effectively' as he became a master of the Cuban economy, spearheading industrialisation and the transformation of the banking system.

With greater networking, advice and support from other socialist states, specifically the USSR, Che, with a handful of others, conducted a grand tour of the economic & accounting systems employed by friendly states across the globe.

This was the time of 'The Great Debate' - discussions around the impact of material incentives and moral ones. Che was a strong advocate of the latter, and he increasingly developed this view as he grasped with the use of material incentives in the Soviet states. He challenged how the Soviets had understood Marxism, and labelled their position as 'dogmatic', opting instead to set up an alternative economic management system in Cuba than that advocated by the USSR.

Moral incentives would be front and centre, and through this, they would develop 'the new man'. Che understood that to effect real revolutionary change, not just in the economy, but in the minds of the Cuban people, material incentives would need to be almost eradicated in place of moral ones.

Such was the debate within Cuba at the time, that various Cuban industries continued to employ

Soviet models at the behest of Che's best intentions, as he sought to domestically consolidate the revolution. It was a conversation conducted in private and public, being carried regularly in Cuban magazines throughout the early to mid Sixties.

Che felt so strongly about the debate around material incentives within a socialist economic framework, that he offered a further critique of the political economy of the Soviets in 1966, concluding that without a dramatic change in policy, capitalism would return to the Soviet Union.

Material incentives were not, and still have not, been eradicated within Cuba, but economists of the time often indicate that Che was right in his suppositions. They may not agree on all the points that he made, but they do affirm that Che had a better understanding and foresight than most others at the time.

As an internationalist, he understood the need to build

national freedom struggles within the confines of a single state, and that such nations could, and should, act as a springboard toward other struggles. Indeed, this was the basis upon which he embarked upon the Cuban revolution, having developed a mutual understanding with Fidel that they would not stop at Cuba. Che's eyes were not just on Latin America, but the globe.

One day, with Che's notable absence, Comrade Fidel alighted a podium in Havana. To the assembled masses, he held aloft a letter. The pen that had written it was Che's, "... I say farewell to you", said Che, "to the comrades, to your people, who now are mine."

Che had prepared the Cuban economy for the road ahead, ensuring not to abandon it until such times as it's survival could be guaranteed in his absence. "I formally resign my positions in the leadership of the party," he continued, "my post as minister, my rank of commander, and my

Cuban citizenship."

Onward he marched to find a new people, embarking upon a new journey - on a continuation of the path that he had set out upon on that fateful day, when he boarded that rickety boat to Cuba. He did not know it then, but this journey was to be his last.

Che's death, and his contribution to the international freedom struggle is often minimised to a caricature, emblazoned across the shirts and bedroom walls of humanity's global youth. Such a caricature often prevents any analysis that moves beyond Che's very obvious militarism. The man wore rebel fatigues to the UN after all.

But Che was more than that. He was the embodiment of the real revolutionary, confronting tasks head on, viewing each part of the struggle as a means to an end. All indications were that militarism and the use of violence, to Che at least, was just another task to be learned and perfected on

the road to socialism; as was the grand task of economic reform and management, and the development of 'the new man'.

Che understood that the real work began after, not just in the conversion to Communism, but in the transition of the human soul.

An Argentine; Cuban; Doctor; Economic Theorist; Marxist; Rebel Commander; Father; just 'a man'. Che was fully aware of his contribution to humanity; an awareness he approached, not with ego or arrogance, but with an appreciation of the path he had taken in life and, consequently, death.

As Fidel stood upon the podium, and approached the fifth paragraph of that fateful letter, Che's words, through him, echoed out to the Cuban people, "I have lived magnificent days". •

# NOT A SUMMERTIME MARKETING PLOY

By Xavier Beardwood

As autumn approaches, pride season ends. Businesses and banks pack up their rainbow gear until next summer rolls around, patting themselves on their backs for their shallow allyship.

Rainbow capitalism is the exploitation of queer people for profit. Our symbols are taken from us, placed onto a product, and sold back to us. The disturbing reality is that many of us not only fall for it by buying whatever shiny rainbow item they advertise, but thank them for it without ever questioning their motives and practices. Unsurprisingly, these 'allies' are far from ethical.

Clothing companies such as Primark and H&M, source their 'progressive' apparel from countries with poor working conditions, poor protection for workers and little to no rights for the LGBTQ+ people who live there. They will gladly stand by as queer people, who aren't paid anything near a living wage, make their rainbow sequined shirts and they will turn a blind eye if those workers are arrested, assaulted or killed for being queer. They promise they will donate 10% of the price of each pride item to a LGBTQ+ charity, but that's an insignificant amount, a drop in the ocean of the multi-billions they make in profits each year.

Nestlé, who had a large presence in Dublin pride this year, are infamous for their mistreatment of workers and the people native to the land they source their products from, most notably the mothers they manipulated into buying their formulated baby milk instead of breastfeeding, despite knowing the mothers could not afford it.

***“Nestlé, who had a large presence in Dublin pride this year, are infamous for their mistreatment of workers and the people native to the land they source their products from”***

Smirnoff aggressively advertise their products with weak and shallow slogans such as “labels are for bottles”, exploiting the community's issues with substance abuse, as LGBTQ+ people are more likely to abuse alcohol than heterosexual and cisgender people.

A prominent sponsor of Belfast pride this year was Concentrix who, in 2016, were responsible for thousands of low-income people being wrongfully stripped of their tax credits.

Every one of these companies, alongside many others, are not the allies we need nor deserve. To them, we're merely an advertisement opportunity. To us, they're supposed to be praised for their support. Many people, particularly older members of the community who had to navigate through life when homosexuality was a crime and couldn't even dream of such mainstream support, will give them that praise. It's understandable why they'd enjoy walking down the high street and seeing rainbows everywhere, but we can't become blindsided and allow pinkwashing, or fool ourselves into believing that this is progress.

Pride is no longer considered a riot, a protest or a march, it's a parade. A parade in which the corporates have their expensive floats and branded rainbows, where representatives of the state which oppresses us are given the space to lead the parade, where the grassroots community groups and activists are overpowered, outnumbered and silenced. We are told what we can and cannot say, who we can and cannot criticise, that we have to remain politically neutral and do as we're told otherwise we won't be allowed in.

The theme of Dublin pride this year was 'Rainbow Revolution', but there is nothing even remotely revolutionary about a capitalist parade. Similarly, Belfast pride drew on their theme from the 50th anniversary of the

Stonewall riots, with the theme 'Rights Now' being derived from a quote from the trans activist and pioneer Marsha P. Johnson. Both of these prides are examples of how we have been steered so far away from the Stonewall riots and how pride began.

***“there is nothing even remotely revolutionary about a capitalist parade”***

It's an insult to hold Stonewall activists like Marsha P and Sylvia Rivera in such high regard while undermining their socialist values. Pride, at its roots, is socialist.

Sylvia Rivera faced ridicule from many when she spoke out against the movement being dominated by white, cisgender, middle and upper-class members who didn't care about anyone else in the community, with footage of her being booed by the audience when she rightly spoke about how trans people, people of colour and working class people were being left behind. Even pre-Stonewall activists such as Frida Kahlo, a proud bisexual communist have been made more palatable to a liberal and right-wing audience by undermining her values and beliefs and profiting from her image wherever possible. Mark Ashton, an activist and communist from Portrush was the founder of

LGSM (Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners), the anti-Thatcherite movement which showed the world how solidarity and socialism are key to liberation.

These radical queer activists stood for what pride should be about and achieved more than any rainbow capitalistic endorsement ever has, and ever will.

Some will argue that we need these corporations in order to afford to host pride events, but don't we have a duty as a minority group to stand in solidarity with others and against the corporations who mistreat them, even if those corporations seek to fund our events? At the very least, pride organisers should be wary of who they allow in as sponsors.

Really, the sponsorship is not needed. There are numerous examples of pride festivals who reject endorsement and still manage to host a wide range of pride events. In Ireland, Foyle pride is a great example of this. It is community-funded and community-lead, using fundraisers and donations to organise a full week of events. It's a space where people aren't silenced for being 'too radical' but rather encouraged to be. There are no corporations, no police, just local LGBTQ+ people and their allies. It's not a pride parade, but a pride march and protest, as it should be.

***“These radical queer activists stood for what pride should be about and achieved more than any rainbow capitalistic endorsement ever has”***

Some prides are likely too far gone to ever reject rainbow capitalism, but the entire community isn't, and there is hope. The real activists and grassroots community organisations, who are the ones which work relentlessly all year round to obtain the rights denied to us, are rising up against these mainstream parades, organising alternative prides to reject rainbow capitalism, pinkwashing, and the corporations which are only interested in raking in pink pounds.

We must stand together as socialists and LGBTQ+ people, because there is no queer liberation under capitalism. •



The Irish Republican Army patrol Grafton Street, Dublin, 1922.



# WHY WE MUST DEFEND THE BOLIVARIAN REVOLUTION

## 10 Days In Venezuela

By Fra Hughes



**A**s an independent political activist living in North Belfast I received a short communication from an online acquaintance which simply read. “Hey Fra, here is something you might be interested in”. It was an invitation to join the Simon Bolivar Circle of New York on a food sovereignty delegation to Venezuela August 19th-28th 2019.

Now I have accepted invitations previously to Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Lugansk and the Occupied West Bank but this would be the first time I would consider visiting Latin America. I have to confess the idea was very appealing, an opportunity to go on a guided tour to meet the Chavistas, the people defending the socialist revolution, some of whom were growing food in rural communities to break the sanctions and feed the people of Caracas? Surely this is an example of people helping people. Pueblo A Pueblo. Socialism and community cohesion in action?

My mind was made up I was going.

Now anyone who has witnessed the violent anti-government demonstrations on the television or the Juan Guido self-anointed Presidential attempted coup might be

forgiven for wondering how safe Venezuela is to visit. I went onto the British Foreign and Commonwealth travellers’ site to see what advice was available? It painted a vision of robberies by gun point, kidnapping, violence and anti-government demonstrations. Added to an article printed in the Independent newspaper stating the people were starving in Caracas and some had even broken into the zoo and hunted down the animals for food I must admit I was having some reservations.

I decided simply to do what was right and that I would be to stand in solidarity with the people. What I found on arrival completely debunked that narrative. I found a beautiful welcome from friendly warm and engaging people with a ready smile. If I thought the welcome was awesome, in reality I had only scratched the surface. The first night as you can imagine was about meeting the other delegates from America, England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. The first day in Caracas entailed meeting two Venezuelan ministers who discussed the illegal American and EU imposed blockade and its effects on the economy. A second meeting was with a human rights group detailing the impact on individuals of the sanctions.

Then after lunch we walked freely around the Simon Bolivar Square in Caracas and signed a NO TO TRUMP petition organised by a local

trade union group. This was where I first saw real life in real time on the streets of Caracas, couples eating ice cream, children playing in the park, others having coffee, beer or lunch in the cafes.

No violence, no government opposition, no military repression of the people, no starvation, and without visiting the zoo I believe the animals there were in good order and well fed. The humanitarian crisis affecting Venezuela portrayed by the western media following the lead of its political class is completely false. I would go even further and admit it is a damn lie! It is yet another propaganda war being engineered in the media to create a consensus in the western societies for sanctions and military intervention in order to usurp a democratically elected government and enslave the citizens of Venezuela to IMF imperialist financial colonisation. For banks and global corporations to access control and profit from the natural resources of Venezuela which rightfully belong to its peoples.

The Guido coup failed. The people support the government.

We had breakfast with Luis Britto a renowned scholar and author. We met Carolus Wimmer of the Communist Party. We visited a purpose built community centre based over five floors which included a gymnasium, fencing classes,

football /basketball pitch ,guitar lessons, literacy classes, a crèche, after schools club, gymnastic coach ,singing, music ,dancing and guitar classes.

As part of the peoples fight, we visited a farmers collective in Carache in the Yaracuy province seven hours from the capitol. There farmers are cultivating land to grow natural organic vegetables. The illegal sanctions are preventing the importation of food not grown locally, so the farmers who now have restricted access to seeds and chemical pesticides have resorted to cultivating vegetables that are indigenous to the region while using traditional farming methods to kill pests and weeds to improve the yield at harvest.

While this was a challenge in the beginning they are now feeding over 300,000 people with plans to expand. As part of our commitment to the trip many of the delegation including myself broke the sanctions by bringing in seeds to Venezuela and donating them to the Pueblo A Pueblo cooperative, in my case I brought 1kg of organic carrot seeds.

We chatted to Ricardo and Laura, leaders in Pueblo A Pueblo, two long standing community activists with a proven track record of defending the people. We were informed that the inflationary pressure on the economy due to sanctions was having a huge effect on food prices so much so that the collective believes if they could supply 20% of the food market with cost price foods they would control this inflationary pressure .At the moment they are supplying 5% of the market and that in itself is a huge achievement.

We also visited the distribution centre about 4 hours from Carache and three hours from Caracas. Finally as part of our journey we visited San Agustin a Barrio above Caracas in the mountains where the food is distributed. The food is priced at farm labour plus distribution costs saving up to 30% on the supermarket price.

We accessed the Barrio sometimes referred to as the slums via cable car. This state of the art Swiss made public transport system was built by the socialist government. It sends out an unmistakable message that all citizens are valued by the state. It alleviates a two hour walk from the Barrio’s typically taken by people heavily laden with food, water, and

schools bags - into a trip that now takes 5 to 10 minutes on heavily subsidised or free public transport. When added to the subsidised fuel, petrol and food prices it is clear the government of the people is really aspiring to bring millions out of poverty. In seeing the success of the Pueblo A Pueblo initiative, the government now has its own programme “CLAP” where land reform introduced by President Chavez has reclaimed 3 million hectares of once privately owned land into farm worker collectives to help end food poverty. Although 37 million hectares still remain in private ownership, many in the hands of foreign capitalists.

As a result poverty in Venezuela has fallen from 40% to 20%, extreme poverty from 20% to 5%. Education which is free has been extended out to the point where 1 in 3 children are enrolled in class and 1 in 9 attend university. A social housing programme achieved over 2 million new homes built to replace the slum housing in the Barrios with 3 bedroom, two bathroom apartments on small estates which include schools and health clinics. Pensions are now the norm for the elderly, child mortality rates are falling, and adult literacy rates are rising. It is a project of success.

I find it incredible in a world of neo-liberal austerity where we in the west are having frequently to pay higher rents, health care costs and education fees - that Venezuela is leading the way in showing us all how to support the marginalised, the poor, and the vulnerable by spending 74% of its budget on social welfare programmes and the infrastructure.

Where the people who benefit the most have consistently voted for the Chavez/Maduro vision of a more equitable society and where the only opposition is centred on a right wing member of the elite who has been groomed from the time of his American college education to destabilise and usurp this democratically elected government that is bringing hope, health, education and welfare to millions as opposed to millions going in profit to the corporations and the globalist IMF?

This is why we must defend the Bolivarian Revolution. Not for political ideology .Not for any anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, anti-globalist, unipolar world order but simply and unequivocally because of the achievements of the government in bringing social justice to

the people.

The illegal American and EU sanctions which are described at times as economic warfare and economic war crimes have led to food shortages that the farming collectives are trying to redress. It has led to higher inflationary pressures on the Bolivar which the government is trying to redress by giving bonus payments to the people so they can pay their bills and meet their commitments. Sabotage and electronic hacking of the electricity systems have been rife and has led to mass black outs which have endangered lives. There has been 40,000 deaths attributed to the western imposed medicinal boycott of vital treatments to counteract cancer, malaria, TB, high blood pressure and diabetes. Maintenance prevented on elevators, cancer treating radiation machines, the cable car transport system are all due to lack of spare parts prevented from entering the country. The boycott on Venezuelan trade, commerce and banks – alongside the illegal seizing of Venezuelan assets in America, England and the EU of over 50 billion dollars – has had an estimated loss of 340 billion dollars to the Bolivarian economy since 2015.

The people of Venezuela are being collectively punished by America and the EU for their continued support for a socialist government that is successfully re-orientating the economy towards the advancement of the people and not the advancement of capital. The people are steadfast and we must be steadfast too in our support.

*Hasta la victoria siempre!* •

## OCT - DEC 1969

The sixth in our series of '50', chronicling history from five decades ago. This issue deals with the period of October to December 1969, and continues coverage of the mounting conflict in Ireland, the fight for civil rights in the US and topics relevant to international Socialism, and the imperialist intervention in Vietnam.

9th October - Ernesto 'Che' Guevara was executed on CIA orders in Bolivia.

10th October - the Hunt Report was published which recommended disarming the RUC, abolishing the B-Specials, and the formation of new part-time force, later to become the UDR.

11th October - 3,000 loyalists, enraged by Hunt, advance on Catholic Unity flats in Belfast and fire on RUC, killing Constable Victor Arbuckle, the RUC officer to be killed during 'the Troubles'. British army confronts loyalists with tear gas for first time in Belfast. Two Protestant civilians were shot dead by the British Army during rioting.

19th October - UVF member Thomas McDowell was severely injured when a bomb he was planting exploded prematurely at a power station near Ballyshannon in County Donegal. McDowell died from his injuries on 21 October 1969. McDowell was also a member of the Ulster Protestant Volunteers (UPV) a paramilitary style organisation formed by Ian Paisley.

29th October - The US Supreme Court ordered immediate desegregation, superseding the previous "with all deliberate speed" ruling.

31st October - The Ulster Volunteer Force detonated a bomb at the grave of Wolfe Tone in Bodenstown, Sallins, County Kildare.

3rd November - In Cairo, Egypt the Arab League make a deal that gives the PLO in Lebanon refugee camps freedom from government interference as they plan to recruit and train fighters for their army.

4th November - Author Alexander Solzhenitsyn was expelled from Soviet Writers Union.

5th November - In Chicago Judge Hoffman ordered that the trial of Bobby Seale be separated from 7 others in the Chicago 8 trial. Seale, the founder of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense and one of the Chicago Eight, was later sentenced to four years in prison on sixteen counts of contempt of court.

15th November - The Soviet submarine K-19 collides with the American submarine USS Gato in the Barents Sea.

15th November - A quarter of a million protesters staged a peaceful demonstration in Washington, D.C., against the Vietnam War.

20th November - 80 Native Americans, all college stu-

dents, seized Alcatraz Island in the name of "Indians of All Tribes." The occupation lasted 19 months. They offered \$24 in beads and cloth to buy the island, demanded an American Indian Univ., museum and cultural centre, and listed reasons why the island was a suitable Indian reservation.

24th November - the investigation into the 'My Lai Massacre', which revealed the mass murder of unarmed South Vietnamese civilians at the hands of U.S. troops, began. Lt William Calley was later found guilty of murder, and sentenced to life imprisonment at hard labour. Calley was the only person ever charged in connection with the events at My Lai. President Richard Nixon in 1971 ordered him released from prison and placed under house arrest, and finally a federal judge threw out all charges against Calley and ordered him freed. Although the charges were later re-instated on appeal, he served no more jail time for the massacre at My Lai!

25th November - John Lennon returns his MBE medal in protest to the British government's support of the war in Vietnam.

4th December - Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, two members of the Black

Panther party are assassinated by Chicago police in an apartment on the West Side.

8th December - Over two separate locations, the Los Angeles police launch surprise attacks on the Black Panthers. Party members and children are arrested by some 400 police officers and SWAT. A shoot-out involving Roland Freeman (an original member of the BPP) leaves him with mass bullet wounds. He survives.

18th December - legislation to establish Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) was passed.

26th December - the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) detonated a bomb at the Daniel O'Connell monument at the southern end of O'Connell Street, Dublin. The blast occurred at 4.30 am and the bomb was believed to be comprised of 10 pounds of gelignite and exploded behind one of the four cast-iron angels at the foot of the monument.

28th December - Republican movement splits into the Provisional IRA and Official IRA. The split in the IRA became public knowledge on 11 January 1970.

## NOTES FOR REVOLUTIONARIES

"Under a socialist system every nation will be the supreme arbiter of its own destinies, national and international; will be forced into no alliance against its will, but will have its independence guaranteed and its freedom respected by the enlightened self-interest of the socialist democracy of the world"  
- James Connolly

"There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism, and that is - working whole-heartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in one's own country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy and material aid) this struggle, this, and only this line, in every country without exception"  
- Lenin

"They will not criminalise us, rob us of our true identity, steal our individualism, depoliticise us, churn us out as systemised, institutionalised, decent law-abiding robots. Never will they label our liberation struggle as criminal"  
- Bobby Sands

"The idea of freedom is inspiring. But what does it mean? If you are free in a political sense but have no food, what's that? The freedom to starve?"  
- Angela Davis

"Our economic system and our planetary system are now at war. Or, more accurately, our economy is at war with many forms of life on earth, including human life. What the climate needs to avoid collapse is a contraction in humanity's use of resources; what our economic model demands to avoid collapse is unfettered expansion. Only one of these sets of rules can be changed, and it's not the laws of nature."  
- Naomi Klein

"If we have a correct theory but merely prate about it, pigeonhole it and do not put it into practice, then that theory, however good, is of no significance"  
- Mao Zedong

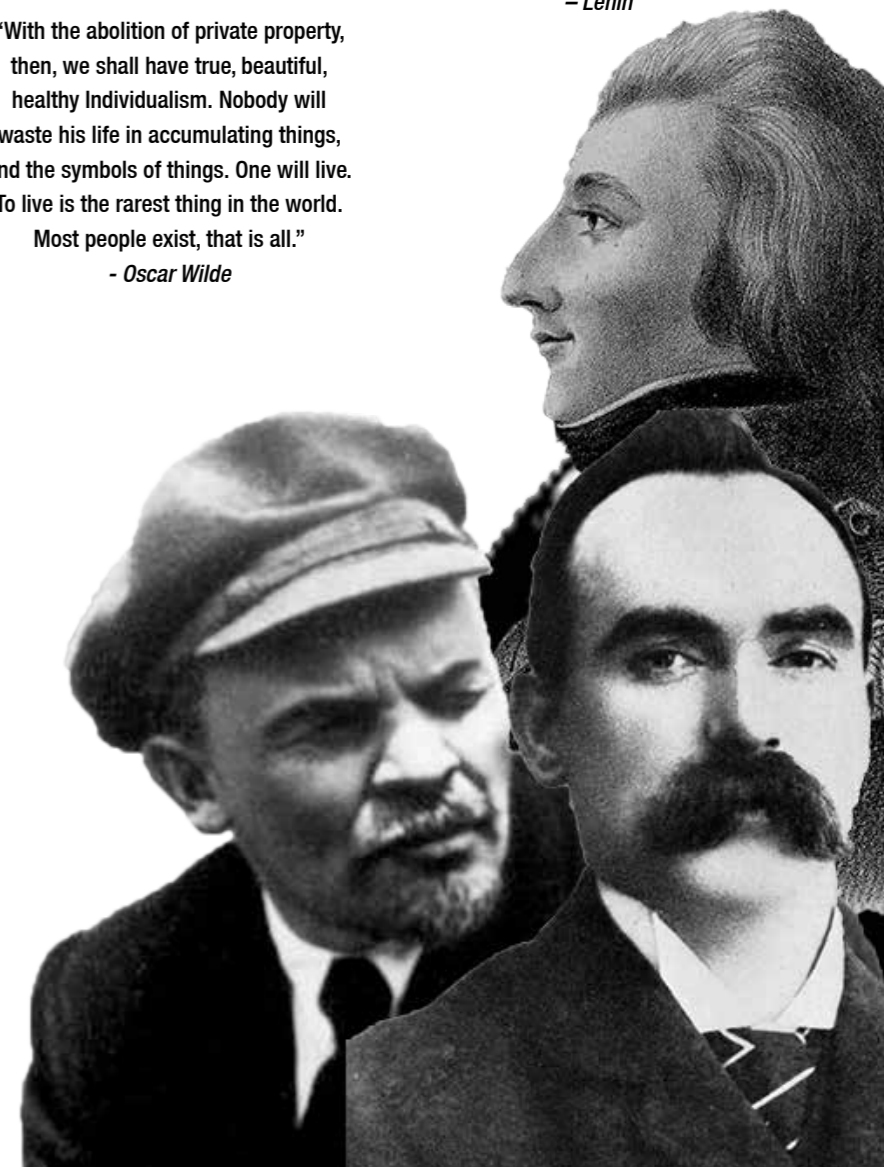
"I became a Communist by studying capitalist political economy, and when I had some understanding of that problem, it actually seemed to me so absurd, so irrational, so inhuman, that I simply began to elaborate on my own formulas for production and distribution"  
- Fidel Castro

"From my earliest youth I have regarded the connection between Ireland and Great Britain as the curse of the Irish nation, and felt convinced, that while it lasted this country would never be free or happy."  
- Theobald Wolfe Tone

"With the abolition of private property, then, we shall have true, beautiful, healthy Individualism. Nobody will waste his life in accumulating things, and the symbols of things. One will live. To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all."  
- Oscar Wilde

"If you walk through life and don't help anybody, you haven't had much of a life"  
- Fred Hampton

"The feminine section of the proletarian army is of particularly great significance... the success of a revolution depends on the extent to which women take part in it."  
- Lenin



# DIPLOCK COURTS

They haven't gone away you know

By Pádraic Mac Coitir

For centuries the English have done all in their power to suppress rebellion in Ireland. Apart from many massacres and the banishment of millions from the country there were also millions who died due to starvation as their food was stolen to feed England's armies in other parts of their empire. At the same time they wanted to give the impression that all of this was done legally but many draconian laws were brought in. During the 1798 United Irishmen Rebellion many of the rebels were sentenced to death by English judges and as time went by those Englishmen were replaced by willing Irishmen as they sat in all their finery looking down upon those who took up arms against a government that was denying civil liberties to millions of Irish people.

As each rebellion took place more laws were brought in but no matter how brutal they were it didn't deter those willing to embark on armed struggle. When the latest conflict erupted in 1969 Irish republicans defended their communities from attack by unionist gangs assisted by the RUC. The six county statelet set up after partition was run by the unionists who had nothing but contempt for not only republicans but also nationalists and Catholics. Discrimination in jobs, housing and education was rife and at every turn more laws were brought in by a judiciary that was made up of unionists, most of whom were members of the Orange Order.

The English judiciary always claimed their system was the most democratic and fair in the world but I would argue it will always protect the ruling class and is very much against the downtrodden not only in their own country but also here in Ireland. For centuries there were jury courts where it usually comprised of a judge and 12 men. This system was supposed to give the accused a fair trial but in many cases it led to innocent people facing the hangman, being sentenced to many years in prison or banished to places like Van Diemen's Land.

As the conflict became more intense a lot of men and women ended up in gaol, either interned or on remand before being sentenced. The unionists claimed the conflict was started by the IRA but in 1969 it was a very small organisation. Within a few short years it became a formidable guerrilla army which was inflicting heavy casualties on the British army and the RUC. As well as thousands of British soldiers fighting the IRA the judiciary was another weapon in their arsenal. The courts continued to use juries but the British government decided to once again change their laws and in 1973 they introduced a system which would become known as Diplock courts- named after an English lord. This effectively meant that anyone charged with a political offence would face a judge sitting on his own without a jury.

In 1977 I was sentenced to three years in a Diplock court. I was young and didn't fully understand the workings of a court and felt very intimidated by the whole affair. Hundreds of men and women were sentenced in those courts, many of whom were charged with offences after confessions were beaten out of them in interrogations

centres such as Castlereagh in Belfast and Strand Road in Derry. Most would end up in the H-Blocks and Armagh gaol enduring years on protest for political status.

In 1982 I was once again in front of a Diplock court but this time I was better prepared and was taking in more of the surroundings. I was very lucky to be acquitted after a three day trial but it wasn't because the judge sitting on his own felt that justice was the order of the day- there was no evidence against me and I should never have been charged in the first place. In 1987 myself and a comrade were facing serious charges and faced a man sitting with his red gown and wig looking at us with contempt. We had to laugh when he spoke about him being both judge and jury and the prosecution barristers nodded and they agreed we would get a fair trial. That trial lasted 12 days and after a number of weeks we were sentenced to 20 and 18 years respectively.

Whilst back in the H-blocks I met many men who were given heavy sentences after little or no evidence was produced against them. Some appealed the sentences but others thought there was no point because they knew they would never get justice in a British court. Most of the political prisoners were released after the Good Friday agreement was signed and those who signed it said it would be the beginning of the end to discrimination in courts and in society in general. As we have seen over the past 20 years little has changed and the very Diplock courts that are said to be a thing of the past are being used today to imprison republicans. •



## THE SYMPATHETIC JUDGE

And so said the judge speaking clearly, if not severely,  
This is the price you pay for being in the UDA  
Murder, mayhem, disarray this is your reward, your stipend, your pay  
Whilst we pondered this case we have locked you away  
Not for years but a couple of days  
Had you been in the IRA we would simply have thrown the key away  
As you can see we must at all times be aware  
Act with impartiality, evenly, fair  
Having heard your former colleagues in the RUC  
I must admit that I do agree  
You acted out of solidarity  
With the rest of descent society  
Although you acted rather rash  
Some might even say a little harsh  
Now, I hope you listen to me  
In future don't act unilaterally  
You were provoked we're not blind we can see  
But throwing bombs into bars is not the remedy  
For the taking of lives you have already paid  
With your good name, your career, and family perturbed  
To send you away would be absurd  
A custodial sentence will be deferred  
Colum Mac Giolla Bhéin

# Never Be Deceived

The rich will never permit you to vote away their wealth.

By Sean Matthews

As Capitalism and our global ruling class continue to threaten the world through war and the destruction of the environment the only force capable of changing this situation is the working class locally and internationally. Time and time again the world has seen ordinary people using the tools of direct action, self-organisation and direct democracy to fight for change. It is these ideas and successes that we try to build on in today's fight for a free humanity.

Anarchist communism and revolutionary syndicalism is more than an abstract vision of the future and it is more than nostalgia for the revolutionary movements of the past. It is a living working class tradition that lays the foundations for the future society in the here and now.

It aims for a complete overhaul of the way that society is governed and organised, to "revolutionise" all economic, social and political arrangements.

We mean a free and classless society where the means of production are commonly owned, a society that is self-managed and democratised, with no hierarchies, no oppression, and no ruling class. It means a self-managed, socialist society, egalitarian and democratic, with collective ownership and individual freedom.

While anarchists largely accept Marx's critique of capitalism, we draw different conclusions on whether elections and the state can be used as a vehicle of revolutionary change.

Leninists say that since the state is the instrument for a class to carry out its interests, then the workers and their allies need their own state. They need it in order to overthrow the capitalists and create a new socialist society of freedom and solidarity. Over time, Marxists say, the task of holding down the capitalists and their agents will become less important, as the new society is solidified and the

state will gradually wither away.

However, anarchists have a different conclusion, viewing the state as a centralised structure of domination by minorities and an instrument of class rule, not simply because it constrains the individual or because anarchists dislike regulations.

Such a supposed "workers' state," however it comes into existence, would only result in a new ruling class of bureaucrats, exploiting the workers as if the state was a capitalist corporation or set of corporations. History has more than justified this prediction as Michael Bakunin warned well over a century ago, "Either one destroys the State or one must accept the vilest and most fearful lie of our century: the red bureaucracy... the people will feel no better if the stick with which they are being beaten is labelled 'the people's stick'... Freedom without socialism is privilege and justice, and socialism without freedom is slavery and brutality."

For anarchists, the repression, social inequalities, and militarism of the self-described regimes of "actually existing socialism" and "people's democracies" of the last century are not temporary "distortions" or a "degeneration" of an otherwise-emanipatory Marxist practice. They are the logical outcomes of authoritarian and statist politics.

Instead, the anarchists propose that the workers and oppressed organize themselves through federations and networks of workplace assemblies, neighbourhood councils, and voluntary associations. They should replace the police and military with a democratically coordinated armed population (a militia), so long as this is still necessary. Such associations would provide all the coordination, decision-making, dispute settling, economic planning, and self-defence necessary—without a state.

From the Workers Party in the 1980s to the Proxies 'armalite and ballot box' mantra to the corrupt ANC in South Africa, to Syriza in Greece are all a logical conclusion of trying to use the master's tools to bring down the master's house that

ends in failure. Any left wing republican party aiming at state power, no matter how well intentioned, no matter its size, no matter its program needs to take note.

Indeed in the early stages they often refer to participating in elections as 'tactical' or to gain 'publicity'. However, in the end the gaining of votes becomes more important than any principles. When militancy is funnelled into elections or a workers' party, it eventually results subjugation of working class militancy and empowerment to the X factor soap opera spectacle of elections.

The reality is that instead of so called 'destroying the confidence of the people in these institutions and bring them tumbling down in ruin with a few TDs or a few MPs of the right calibre, pursuing the right policies' to paraphrase the words of IRSP

co-founder Seamus Costello, history is littered with examples of parties eventually becoming game-keepers instead of poachers.

Indeed if you look back at the period from the early 20th century when universal suffrage started to become common you can observe a cycle of the energy of revolutionary upsurges and uprisings being channelled and co-opted through institutionalised power and corruption that go nowhere part from a few crumbs at the masters table. Sometimes they win a token reform for a period that are subsequently rolled back, frequently by the same 'radical' party as it 'matures' and becomes 'pragmatic' bound by the pressure of international capital or even a right wing military coup as we have witnessed across the world in the last few decades.

This transformation into the cull da sac of reformism is not just simply the result of a 'sell-out', a 'betrayal' or a 'crisis of leadership' but flows from the failure to build of a different type of organization built on popular self-management and direct democracy from below that removes top down centralized control.

The dominance of authoritarian, statist and hierarchical organizational praxis on shades of Irish republicanism and the wider left where 'loyalty' and 'discipline' to the movement or personalities was placed more highly than critical debate and internal democracy is a damaging recurring legacy and needs to be challenged.

There are too many generals and vanguardists in search of an army, for whom recruitment figures and election results are the main yardstick of success. For us revolutionary change is a question of consciousness: the consciousness that would make generals redundant. Building a working class revolutionary counter-power to the point where it can take over society, replace the state and capital. This means building a mass base.

Being anti-statist does not necessarily mean you do not defend or enforce material gains won in struggle such free education, healthcare, minimum wage etc but that reforms are part of wider the revolutionary project. The key is that reforms and short term

victories such as abortion rights, higher wages, social housing etc or even a future border poll are won through mass direct action, mobilisations and self-organisation without directly relying on leaders or phoney 'representatives' to it for us. Only than can we confront the problems in our own lives collectively, working together against the whole system of capitalism and the ways it tries to divide us. As Frederik Douglas urged, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."

At the end of the day radical social transformation will only be possible when the majority of people understand the need for -social change, become aware of their ability to transform society, decide to exert their collective power to this end, and know with what they want to replace the present system not by waiting on some messiah as Karl Marx made clear when he stated, 'the task of workers emancipation is the task of workers themselves.'

We should have learnt by now that political parties may say they are fighting for your rights and your interests, but their central aim is to build for their own selfish interests and election campaigns. Collective Direct action and militant street mobilisations such as the recent decision by the Chief Executive of Hong Kong Carrie Lam to scrap the un-popular extradition bill, to the campaign against the water charges in the North and household tax in the South to the workers occupation of Harland and Wolf Shipyard teaches us to control our own struggles while building a culture of resistance that links with others in struggles in struggles.

Instead of sowing illusions in the parliamentary path that always ends in cycles of disempowerment, broken promises and betrayals; imagine if all that energy, resources and finances was instead put into building a our own institutions of mass, collective self-organisation in our housing estates, communities and workplaces replacing the rule of governments, landlords and bosses.

After all, the establishment of No Go Zones in the early 1970s such as Free Derry when entire communities took back control for a short time was to some extent probably considered more of a threat to the authority of the British state than armed struggle. This in no means devours the tactical use of armed resistance in self-defence particularly when it complements a mass movement rather than seeking to control one.

Hence, in 1969 when former FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover described the Black Panther Party for Self-Defence as "the greatest threat to internal security of the country" he wasn't referring to their 'armed self defence' but to their Serve the People programmes from free breakfasts, to free medical aid and literacy programmes.

By involvement in everyday struggles, we build tomorrow today, a new world in the shell of the old. The fight against the state, against capitalism, and against all oppressions is one fight and those who make a half revolution dig their own graves.

Anarchism builds on the core principles of Left Republicanism of liberty, equality and fraternity to its most revolutionary conclusion. If we really want to build 'new republic', and to avoid merely replacing one set of rulers for another, the largely state-centric republican left needs to rethink its understandings class, power and the nature of the state.

To date with all its contradictions, Kurdish national liberation movement represents a small beacon of hope that have placed direct democracy, women's liberation, social ecology and internationalism at the centre of its liberation project. Its about time Ireland does the same. •

In the last few months of 2018, a group of community, political and trade union activists in Belfast started to discuss the possibility of creating a radical housing group in Ireland's second largest city.

As discussion centred around the need for an organisation that would organise and defend the rights of both public and private tenants, it became clear quite quickly that the formation of such a group, willing to get its hands dirty in the fight for fair housing, would be a radical departure from similar groups that had gone before it.

Belfast Housing Action wasn't formed in a vacuum. The context in which it came about, and its continued existence, owes itself to the stinking habits of unscrupulous landlords and let-

ting agents only too willing to siphon off any additional profits from a housing system already creaking under the weight of the misery and poverty of the masses.

As rents continue to rise parallel to the stagnation of incomes, the real cost of housing is going up. This is compounded by the various players in the housing market; landlords whose singular aim is the largest amount of profit possible; and letting agents paid by landlords to find tenants, who then additionally charge those same tenants simply for being found. Those agencies, often-times the gatekeepers to the rental market, have been charging twice to get tenants through the proverbial gate.

This hypocrisy was laid bare in a recent court case. In June of 2018 'Paul Loughran v Piney Rentals Limited and F5 Property Limited' found that tenants who were charged specific fees were effectively paying for work carried out on behalf of another party - namely, the landlord. Letting agents were being paid twice for the same service.

Throughout 2019, BHA received information indicating the continued use of those fees by a large section of letting agents across Belfast, putting those agents firmly in their cross hairs. In mid August of this year, after some initial planning, BHA fired the first shots in its war against illegal fees.

"Your letting agency has been highlighted to us as one that continues to charge illegal letting fees..." said the notices sent to various businesses in the west of the city, "...we demand that you immediately cease the practice or we will take action against your letting agency."

Faced with the likelihood of protests outside businesses, numerous letting agents buckled immediately. Various commitments, both verbal and written, were given by

Campbell & Co, UPS and McGranaghans not to charge illegal letting fees. Some agents however, intransigent and presumably used to setting their own terms of engagement with people, refused to go down without a fight.

TMC Estate Agents, which has offices on the Upper Lisburn Road and the Andersonstown Road, refused to engage with BHA and the notices sent via email and delivered by hand. Consequently, as highlighted in a recent video posted on their social media accounts, activists from Belfast Housing Action visited their offices and delivered a formal notice of its intention to commence protest actions. Actions that would have been unrelenting, with plans drawn up for occupation of the offices in question and lists assembled of activists willing and able to play a full part in the action.

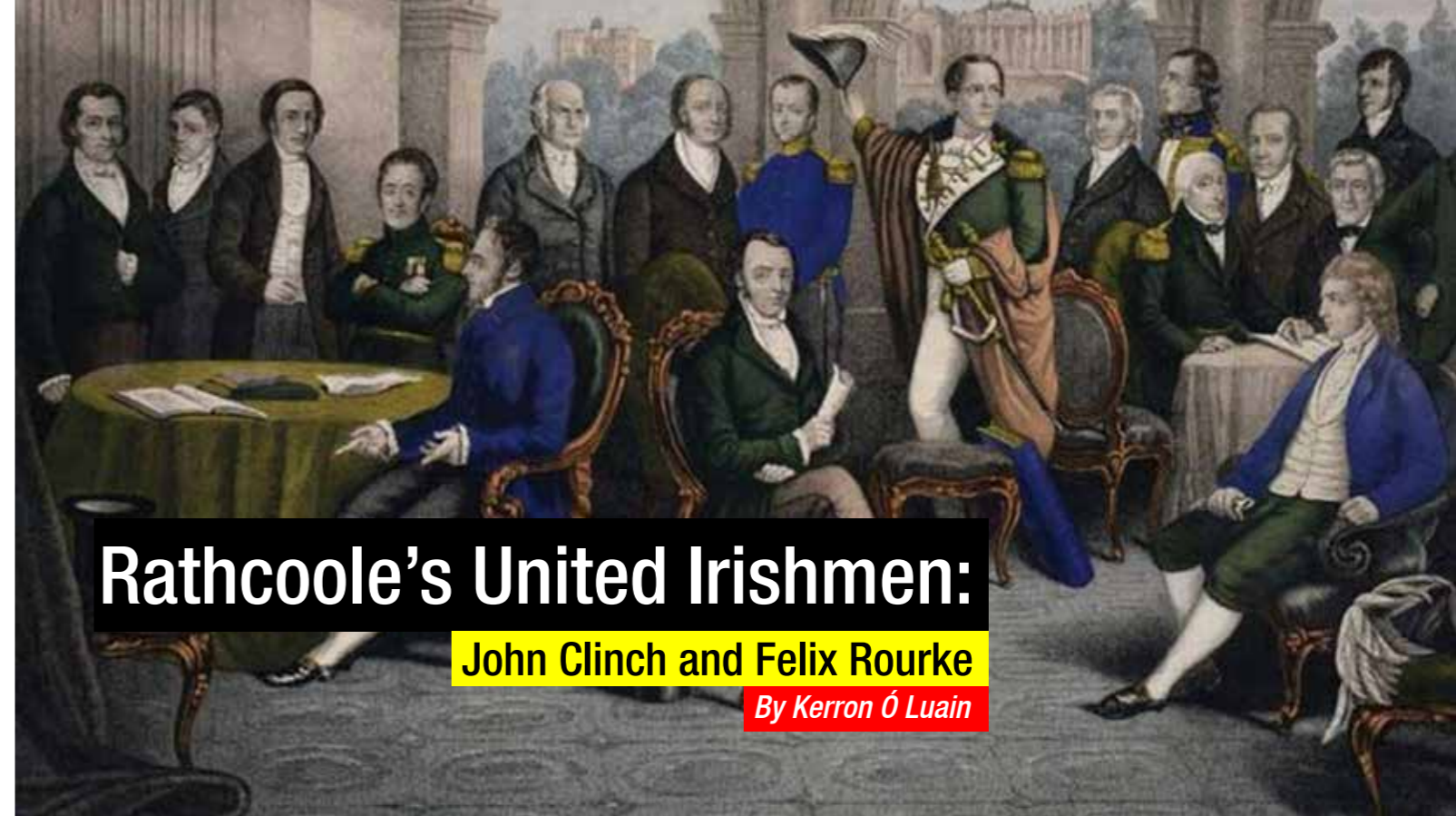
A BHA internal intelligence team also began the process of collating information in relation to linked and supporting businesses, allowing the future ramping up of pressure on TMC via external businesses.

Such pressure was brought to bear that TMC Estate Agents eventually engaged with BHA, and although they didn't go down without a fight, they, like the rest, relented.

These victories, though small and ongoing, play a vital role in the foundation of Belfast Housing Action as an organisation very willing and able to directly intervene in an unfair housing system. In continuing these types of actions, BHA is acutely aware of the need to rectify the core issues within the housing industry running parallel - artificial demand created by those that control the market.

With this in mind, it now has its eyes on the social housing sector. Placing no faith in private industry, it believes that demand can only be resolved by a massive house building campaign focused on the needs of tenants. BHA is now in the process of identifying space across Belfast; sites like the old Mackies site and others, with a view to commencing broad campaigns and bring about the building of more social housing.

We would urge anyone in the Belfast area who agrees with the aims and objectives of BHA to get involved with the organisation or its campaigns. With its eyes on the future of housing in Ireland, Belfast Housing Action won't be going away any time soon. •



## Rathcoole's United Irishmen:

John Clinch and Felix Rourke

By Kerron Ó Luain

Some readers of this magazine will be familiar with Thomas Pakenham's book *The Year of Liberty: the Great Irish Rebellion of 1798*, first published in 1970. While a well-researched book that did much to expand our empirical knowledge of the rebellion, it advanced a theory which stated that the rebel impulse for acting was largely agrarian and sectarian. This theory held sway until the 1990s when scholars such as Jim Smyth and Kevin Whelan, among others, began to place the process of politicisation at the centre of events. This interpretation emphasised the role of powerbrokers such as landlords and merchants in cultivating a liberal and even radical politics among the populace from the top down.

Meanwhile, from the bottom up, the grassroots activities and the spread of the political networks of the Defenders and United Irishmen, particularly from the mid-1790s, were highlighted as equally important, if not more so. For these scholars, the rebellion took place not as a consequence of underlying resentments towards landowners or the Protestant denominations, but rather as a result of the political graft of activists in the years leading up to it. My recently published book, *Rathcoole and the United Irish Rebellions, 1798-1803* (Four Courts Press, 2019), is a micro-history of the rising in my hometown of Rathcoole in County Dublin. The purpose of micro-history is

to interrogate grander theoretical questions in small places. In this instance, the objective was to test the competing theories of the rebellion as sectarian/agrarian or primarily political in a small community of 18th century Rathcoole.

Passing in a south-westerly direction through present day Rathcoole, two remnants of the 18th century appear almost immediately upon entering the village. Rathcoole House, home to the young United Irish recruit John Clinch, and the Church of Ireland church stand only yards from one another. For many years passers-by would have been unaware of Rathcoole's deep connection with the 1798 rebellion. Unlike in Co. Wexford, where statues of pikemen stand proudly in town centres, Rathcoole displayed no such markers until the bicentenary commemorative events of the rising took place in 1998. That year, a plinth was constructed near the Court of Petty Sessions in the centre of the village, while a small plaque was erected on the Church of Ireland church wall. The plinth commemorates those from the locality associated with the rising and the plaque remembers two local bakers shot dead by crown forces. These two symbols are the only existing suggestion that the area may have experienced a major rebellious convulsion in years gone by. To the modern observer, Rathcoole and its environs are of little historical significance. A more visible and detailed marker, which would explain in greater depth the experience of 1798 in the locality, is long overdue.

The first indication that radical ideas had reached Rathcoole in the 1790s was when John Clinch became a member of the Society of United Irishmen on 16 March 1792 at just 13 years of age. He was proposed by a Mr Rainsford and Mr Aylward and was brought before the

society at the Music Hall, on Fishamble Street in Dublin, where he was sworn in with around forty members of different religious backgrounds present. Contemporaries took note of the youthful character of these radical political organizations. The rise of the Defenders in the early 1790s through the channels of Dublin's philanthropic societies had prompted Lord Kilwarden to refer to 'clubs of beardless urchins discussing politics and religion'.

The Clinch family were the primary minor-gentry figures in the locality around the year 1779 and up until the time of the rebellion. John Clinch was the son of a man of considerable wealth and had received some education. The majority of Rathcoole's populace were only partially literate during this period. Yet, the United Irishmen had a sufficient cohort of readers in Rathcoole who could engage with republican publications such as *The Press*. For those unable to read, local leaders such as Clinch could convey the United Irish literature which had been sent to Rathcoole from the capital and thus garner support for the republican cause.

Niall Ó Cíosáin has described this practice of 'reading aloud', which was central to United Irish politicization, as having occurred in both a 'vertical' fashion, where those reading conveyed the social superiority of the literate, and in 'horizontal' form, where reading took place among equals. E.P. Thompson has also noted this practice in late 18th and early 19th century England whereby 'very few of the working people can read well enough to read a newspaper; although papers are taken (and read aloud) at the blacksmith's, the barber's and ... public houses.' •

# BELFAST HOUSING ACTION

By Pádraig Mac Goill



In the period leading up to the 1798 rebellion Clinch sought to be elected a captain in the rebel corps of Rathcoole but was unlucky in that the other main contender was the brother of Felix Rourke, Bryan Rourke. The Rourkes were also from Rathcoole and Felix Rourke's influence was such within the United Irishmen that he saw to it that his brother was chosen for the position. Clinch was not to be deterred and owing to his enthusiasm was happy to stay on and serve with the lower rank of sergeant of the Rathcoole corps. It is not known when Felix Rourke was first sworn in as a United Irishman, and he may even have been initially taken into the fold by the younger Clinch. Nevertheless, Felix Rourke would become the village's most active and senior United Irishman from 1797 onwards. The later chronicler of the United Irishmen, R.R. Madden, described Rourke as having been, at the beginning of 1798, 'a very young man, of great zeal in the cause'. Rourke was born in 1765 to a small farmer who kept a turnpike gate and operated a carman's stage between Rathcoole and Naas at Blackchurch. The Rourkes lived at Broadfield about a half a mile from Rathcoole. After completing an apprenticeship in Dublin as a shoemaker, and later having been employed as a clerk, Felix Rourke returned to assist his father on their small farm.

By the spring of 1798 his activities had earned him the attention of the society's uppermost leaders. He won the trust and confidence of Lord Edward Fitzgerald who demonstrated his friendship to Rourke when he presented him with a gift of his favourite mare shortly before the outbreak of the rebellion. Rourke also knew another prominent United Irishman, Samuel Neilson, on a personal basis, referring to him as the 'noble-minded editor of The Northern Star'. Rourke was subsequently appointed Colonel of the Kildare United Irishmen and took part in numerous battles in North Leinster during the summer of 1798, along with the ill-fated 'march into Meath', which was a last-ditch effort by Dublin and Wicklow rebels to raise that county.

Rourke found himself confined to jail following the rising of 1798 and during the debates around the Act of Union 1800. He was released during the summer of that year and made his way to Ulster where he found himself in poor circumstances, earning a meagre wage from a career on the stage as a comic character in Belfast. In 1801 he returned to Dublin and took up a post as a clerk in a brewery owned by a Mr Robinson near St Stephen's Green. He soon established contact with Robert Emmet and they began to plan towards the 1803 rising.

On the day of the planned rebellion, 23 July 1803, Charles Rourke, owner of a tavern in Thomas Street and brother to Felix, allowed men to gather in his establishment where, according to Madden, 'there were crowds of country people drinking and smoking, in the highest spirits, cracking jokes, and rallying one another, as if the business they were about to enter on was a party of pleasure'. Felix Rourke passed hurriedly back and forth between the tavern and John Hevey's house at 41 Thomas Court where some of the leaders were gathered.

Although Felix Rourke was appointed to command a body of County Dublin rebels that were to assemble at the Coombe, the slipshod nature of the rising meant that this never came to pass. Due to an unfortunate explosion which had occurred at a rocket depot on Patrick Street on 16 July, Emmet's hand was forced and the attempt was wrought with poor coordination and confused reports from the outset. The planned rebellion and attack on the Castle descended into a hasty march up Thomas Street that ended abruptly when Emmet issued countermanding orders upon the realization that any hopes of success had evaporated.

Rourke was arrested following the attempt and then tried and sentenced to be hanged in Rathcoole. On the day of his execution, when Rourke reached Rathcoole, he was met by Captain Bernard Clynch, a magistrate from Peamount near Newcastle, whom

Madden later described as 'one of the terrorists of his day'. Clynch, although spelling his surname slightly differently, was likely related in some way to the Clinches of Rathcoole. The Rourkes were spared the added grief of having their son executed outside their home as the influence of a local gentleman and family friend saw that part of the sentence dismissed.

Rourke was instead brought to the burnt-out house of Catholic cleric Fr Harold where Clynch made every effort through the use of gratuitous violence to solicit a reaction from him and endeavoured to deny the attending priest administer the last rites to the condemned man. Rourke remained calm and dignified. He was hanged from one of the rafters of Harold's former home.

The Freeman's Journal reported that during the execution the village of Rathcoole appeared to be deserted of its inhabitants and that not a single person wearing colourful clothing was seen. Rourke's body was handed over to his friends who had him buried at a site known as Bully's Acre, on the grounds of the Royal Hospital in Kilmainham where Robert Emmet was also later interred. The Kildare rebel Bernard Duggan stated years later to Madden that of the 20 people the government put to death following Emmet's rising 'there were only four men who were really concerned in the conspiracy, namely – Mr Emmet, Henry Howley, Felix Rourke, and Mr Russell'.

•  
*Kerron Ó Luain is an historian, a Socialist Republican and an Irish language activist from Rathcoole, County Dublin.*



## LENNON & PEARSE

### A Working Class Hero

By Éamonn Ó Cleirigh

As soon as you're born they make you feel small, by giving you no time instead of it all. In 1970 John Lennon put pen to paper and wrote the song 'Working Class Hero' about the impact that imperialism and capitalism was having on the working class and the education system. Being interviewed at the time he said that it's for people "who are working class, who are supposed to be processed into middle classes, or into the machinery". 58 years before the song was recorded, in 1912, Pádraig Pearse spoke about a similar machine, the Murder Machine, England's education system in Ireland. Pearse outlined that imperialism and capitalism not only impacted negatively upon the educational system but it was a deliberate policy and weapon in the imperial arsenal.

They hurt you at home and they hit you at school, they hate you if you're clever and they despise a fool. The British understood that in order to truly conquer a nation the natives would have to think and speak like their occupiers, walk and talk like them and in essence become them. The view of the empire was that if they conquered the mind then its subjects would be easier to rule, that they would become part of their empire

and the 'civilised' world. They understood that to effectively do this they would need to break down the native language, the family unit and culture, making people ashamed of who they are, their community and language, that they are inferior beings. The bata scór was deliberately introduced by the Brits to punish children in school for using the Irish language, making them feel ashamed and inferior, creating obedient subjects fearful of their masters.

***"Pearse outlined that imperialism and capitalism not only impacted negatively upon the educational system but it was a deliberate policy and weapon in the imperial arsenal."***

Keep you doped with religion, and sex, and TV. And you think you're so clever and classless and free, but you're still fucking peasants as far as I can see. The promotion of foreign sports such as soccer in Ireland, social media and the materialistic and commercialised culture pumped out by the media is all part of Britain's Murder Machine. Brainwashing the masses through these means suits the agenda of the imperial rulers, creating a distraction from the injustices that

we suffer by their hand at home and around the world. It leaves us largely uneducated and disorganised, unable to provide any form of resistance to their rule.

When they've tortured and scared you for 20 odd years, Then they expect you to pick a career, When you can't really function, you're so full of fear. In Pearse's view, the traditional role of a teacher was to foster and nurture their student's interests and talents. Britain's education system is to create little machines, developed on a constant conveyor belt in their institutions, to serve the industrialists or to serve on the front line in Britain's imperialist ventures.

'Til you're so fucking crazy you can't follow their rules. Pearse and Lennon both recognised the fundamental injustices of Britain's Murder Machine and raised this in writings and in songs. They didn't just highlight these injustices but they done something about it, being militantly anti-imperialist. The consequence of this was that both were branded as madmen for their beliefs and both died at the smoking end of a gun, the trigger pulled by pro imperialist forces. The ideas and teachings of Pearse and Lennon live on and in the words of Fred Hampton, 'they can kill the revolutionary but never the revolution'.

A working class hero is something to be! •



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