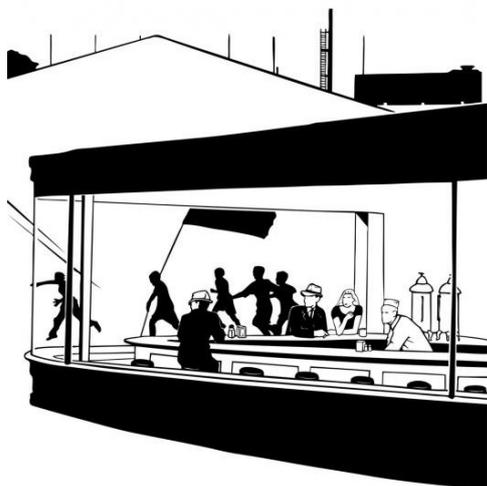




FRIDAY 13th STRIKE 1



Tens of thousands of workers: in education, health, the civil service, forestry, rivers and environment, fire and rescue, and public transport are striking across Northern Ireland today in opposition to the cuts and job losses agreed by "our" politicians in the Stormont House Agreement.

This agreement represents an intensifying of the attacks working class people have been forced to endure over the last 40 years. It is estimated that £25 billion will be plundered from public spending. Despite claims that the most vulnerable would be protected

there is no extra £2 billion secured from Westminster - the money to offset some aspects of welfare reform have to be found elsewhere by the Stormont Executive. They have agreed to take a loan from the treasurer to pay for at least 20,000 redundancies. Northern Ireland's block grant is being lowered, there is a commitment from the Stormont executive to "realise" the value of our public assets. This means selling off everything they can, including Translink and Belfast Harbour Estate.

Job losses are already happening in both the public and private sector. The business and political classes enthusiasm for lower corporation tax, that they claim will create jobs, will see more money taken out of the NI economy - the block grant will be reduced to reflect revenue losses for Westminster! In reality this is a massive transfer of money from the poor to the wealthy.

Wide-ranging welfare "reform" has already been implemented. Changes to housing benefit which increase the gap between the level of payments and what is actually charged by landlords, along with layoffs, has seen a visible increase in homeless people living on

the streets.

The number of food banks has also rocketed as the ill, unemployed and working poor are forced to rely on them in the face of falling incomes and rising costs.

The Stormont House Agreement is the latest instalment in an ongoing class war. We need to fight back with the same resolve as the enforcers for capitalism in Stormont, Westminster and the EU. Today is a start. An impressive start that reflects the anger and determination of union activists and members. Today we have are showing that there is indeed power in a union. However we need to go further. This battle will not be won in a day - more strike action is necessary.

We must also begin the task of building a real alternative to the economics of capitalism that hammer us harder and harder each day. Some claim we need a new political party to represent our interests as workers. Others, lying outright, claim that they are such a party. But no matter the intentions the election of Syriza in Greece remind us that there can be no parliamentary road to salvation. Elected to oppose austerity they have been forced to implement it.

What is needed is working class self organisation in our communities and workplaces. A new revolutionary union movement under the control of its members and based on direct action and direct democracy. A union movement that realises that the only way to stop the capitalist onslaught is to destroy capitalism once and for all.

UNLUCKY for STORMONT



If you don't fight...



...you can't win!

STRIKE AGAINST AUSTERITY

Join Belfast SolFed at a public meeting after the rally in:

The Warzone Centre
Little Victoria Street



STRIKE AGAINST CAPITALISM

Solidarity Federation



"The General Strike, initiated by one determined organization, by one industry or by a small, conscious minority among the workers, is the industrial cry of Stop the thief, which is soon taken up by many other industries, spreading like wildfire in a very short time".

Emma Goldman.

Solidarity Federation are building a new revolutionary union: an organisation of workers which seeks the abolition of capitalism and the state. Capitalism because it exploits, oppresses and kills working people and wrecks the environment for profit worldwide. The state because it can only maintain hierarchy and privilege for those who control and their lackeys; it cannot be used to fight the oppression and exploitation that are the consequences of hierarchy and the source of privilege. In their place we want a society based on workers' self-management, solidarity, mutual aid and libertarian communism.

That society can be achieved by working class organisations based on the same principles - revolutionary unions. These are not trade unions concerned with "bread and butter" issues like pay and conditions. Revolutionary unions are means for working people to organise and fight all the issues - both in the workplace and beyond - which arise from our oppression.

As such we are actively opposed to

Sinn Féin a party of Austerity

Sinn Féin have been making much of their so called leftwing credentials since the launch of their "Stop Tory Cuts" campaign. Many of their activists are pushing the claim that Sinn Féin is a leftwing party heading up resistance to attacks on the working class north and south. With their eye on the prize of being in government both north and south they have been talking left for some time in the Republic. In the north however it has been harder for them to pull this off given their record of implementing cuts since they went into government at Stormont. So what are we to make of them blocking the last stage of the Stormont House Agreement? An Agreement that they were the first major party to sign up to after-all. Undoubtedly their attempts to present themselves as an anti-austerity alternative hold no water but the pressure of today's industrial action has had an impact. Can we trust them to represent workers interests from now on in? Not at all! Against their spin and propaganda they have a track record of imposing cuts, closing hospital departments, running down schools. The 2007 programme for government committed all the executive parties to a "neo-liberal" anti-working class agenda. Beyond the "protections" to those on benefits Sinn Fein insisted they had secured, until Monday, the Agreement they signed up to is still one that would destroy jobs, communities and lives. Just like the rest of the parties up on the hill Sinn Féin are no alternative.

sectarianism, racism, sexism and homophobia and other tendencies used to divide workers and weaken our struggles for our common interests.

Organising in Locals and across industries we aim to support our members and other workers in struggle where we live and work. Our activities are based on direct action - action taken by workers ourselves, not through intermediaries like politicians and trade union officials; our decisions are made directly by the members involved.

We are also organised on a regional basis and, in Ireland, we are actively building our union across the island.

We welcome all workers - including the unemployed, retired, stay-home parents and students - who will work within our Aims and Principles and seek to create revolutionary unions to fight the class struggle.

If you are interested in getting involved contact us at:

belfastsolfed@gmail.com