



On 12 June, 1,621,037 Irish people came out to vote on the Lisbon Treaty—the renamed EU Constitution previously rejected by the French and Dutch people. Of these 1,621,037, the majority, 53.4%, voted No to the Treaty, and 34 of 43 constituencies recorded No victories.

Since the result was announced, Connolly Youth have been flooded with emails, texts and phone calls from young people across Europe thanking us and congratulating us for the great result. Far from isolating ourselves in Europe, we are now more popular than ever with the people of Europe.

Ireland, the only country where the Treaty had to be presented to the people to decide, has for now halted the process of centralised integration being led by the European Union. Where to now for the elites of Europe is another question, but this certainly represents a setback for their plans and a major victory for all anti-imperialists and for the youth and workers of Europe.

Much has been said about why the Irish people voted No, and much more will be said. The establishment media will present the No vote as narrow-minded, xenophobic and chauvinistic, drummed up by right-wing scaremongers in the No campaign. The reality, however, is very different. The vast majority of the No campaigners, those on the streets and on doorsteps talking to voters, were anti-imperialist democrats who understood the very real implications this Treaty would bring to democracy across Europe. The reasons Irish people voted No were because the realities of an undemocratic, centralised, reactionary European Union are being seen all around us.

The arrogant manner in which this Treaty and its precursor have been

forced upon us was expressed by many No voters in saying, “We will not be bullied into voting Yes!” The European Court of Justice, an institution given authority by the Lisbon Treaty to interpret the much-lauded Charter of Fundamental Rights, has been seen clearly to have come down on the side of Big Business, failing to protect the right of workers. The clear militaristic designs contained in numerous articles of this and previous Treaties, of the Union enabling it to engage in “peace-making” missions and increasing military budgets and research on top of the requirements to “liberalise” (code for privatise) our public services, the Irish people understood very well what they were voting on and accordingly rejected it.

We have heard all sorts of comments by our own elite and the European that we have isolated ourselves and that ratification must go ahead. But the simple fact remains that if the Union wishes to maintain its own democratic façade the will of the Irish people must be respected. On the other hand, the Union’s increasingly obvious contempt for democracy and its imperialist nature are very much coming to the fore, Barroso’s recent comments being an example.

Young socialists and communists must be to the fore in the struggle against the European Union and the struggle for democracy and sovereignty. These are not narrow-minded nationalist aims but Communist support for self-determination and Internationalist championing of national liberation. Democracy and the democratic argument ever remains the Achilles heel of capitalism in its Imperialist phase.

“The ratification process is made up of 27 national processes, 18 Member States have already approved the Treaty, and the European Commission believes that the remaining ratifications should continue to take their course.”—José Manuel Barroso

Who voted No? Fishermen, small farmers and farming communities, industrial, manufacturing and service workers, students, even small business owners voted No. The simple answer is people who have seen their freedom restricted, livelihoods affected and the democratic ability to resist and change this disappear.

As Marxist Socialists we must exploit every contradiction Imperialism brings forth. As seen by our recent victory, democracy remains a strong ideal amongst working and young people. We will continue to encourage and champion this in Ireland, and we strongly encourage anyone awakened by the recent debate to come forward, be counted and join the Connolly Youth Movement.

Solidarity Message from KNE

Dear comrades of the Connolly Youth Movement,

Please accept our warmest greetings for this important victory of NO to the Lisbon Treaty. The Irish working class and youth have sent a decisive NO to the Lisbon Treaty.

We congratulate you for the hard struggle that you gave and the contribution of Connolly Youth Movement to this result especially among the young people of your country.

This result has an important reflection not only in Ireland but in all the countries of European Union. The Irish people through their rejection of the renamed EuroConstitution have managed to send a message of disobedience to imperialist orders and EU's directives despite all the blackmails and different kind of pressures that have been exercised to them.

Your big success gives us great courage for our everyday struggles against monopolies and imperialism and inspires us to continue our efforts in Greece.

On behalf of CC of KNE

Giannis Protoulis
Secretary of CC of KNE

Massive union May Day rallies across Greece

Thousands and thousands of workers participated in the May Day rallies organised by PAME, class-based trade union, in 70 cities and towns across Greece, all marked by massive turnout and a striking participation of youth.

In Athens many thousands of workers, men, women, immigrants, young workers and students gathered at Syntagma Square. A representative of General Union of Palestinian Workers, and a women immigrant worker from Ukraine greeted the rally alongside trade-unionists from different sectors.

The main speech was delivered by PAME's George Perros who underscored PAME's support for immigrant workers in Greece and voiced our solidarity with the working class of Turkey, condemning the banning and oppression of the May Day demonstration in Istanbul by the Turkish government.

The rally put forward a resolution demanding a referendum over the Lisbon Treaty and thousands of signatures were collected among the workers. The rally concluded at the US Embassy with slogans against imperialism.

The realities of life in a US prison

Once more we witnessed the risk that our Five unjustly imprisoned brothers face in United States prisons. On Sunday 13 April, at about 12:30 p.m., while we were visiting him, a very grave disturbance occurred which interrupted our visit and resulted in a lockdown.

While we were sitting in the visiting room, we thought we could hear a quick succession of gunshots and shouting. They told us not to move; it was almost 3:00 in the afternoon when about 10 guards entered and ordered us to leave, three of them accompanying the families who visited. Going through the door, outside the room we had to press against the wall to let guards pass by with stretchers. We realized it was a very grave situation.

Upon leaving the building, in the outside area there was an ambulance, emergency cars and many vehicles. We were barely able to say good-bye to Tony, while he remained composed and asked us to be calm. He told us a lockdown was certain. That is what happened.

On Monday, Univisión network gave the announcement that a serious incident occurred in the U.S. Florence Penitentiary, that two prisoners were killed and several were wounded by the guards' shots. More than 200 prisoners were involved in a fight; a group of them were celebrating the birthday of Adolf Hitler and other racial groups got into the fight. Two prisoners were killed, five wounded and the prison was placed in lockdown for an indefinite period of time.

They are serving sentences in those prisons, never having harmed anyone, with unjust convictions on charges that were never proven, in a trial that was manipulated by the Cuban-American mafia interests, who are in turn supported by the U.S. government.

Ten years of prison and we are still waiting the decision of the 11th Circuit Court of Atlanta, in the third appeals process of this case. Yet, our brothers remain courageous, optimistic and full of dignity.

With all our affection and appreciation from the families of the Cuban Five, Maruchi, sister of Antonio Guerrero

Shock, shock and more shock

by Gareth Murphy

Having read *No Logo* and *No Fences*, and not being overly impressed, I hadn't planned on reading Naomi Klein's latest book, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. However, on receipt of a copy of the book I decided to

give it a go. To my delight, this time the Canadian journalist has, by and large, hit the nail on the head and revealed in an easy and readable format how global powers, both institutions and governments, through technocrats, torture and catastrophe, have prolonged the life of capitalism and maintained their dominance in the world.

The central point of the book is that right-wing academics, a certain group of them known commonly as the “Chicago Boys,” having been taught at Chicago University in Milton Friedman’s Department of Economics, use and even create catastrophes to enforce what they call “economic reform” on a country. This “reform” is in fact the stripping away of a state’s control over any aspect of their economy and economic policy, handing it over to market forces for the profit of international capital. We may know this as the “Washington consensus,” economic shock therapy, neo-liberalism or neo-conservatism but in plain language this is nothing less than Imperialism. It is important to note that Klein rarely uses the word Imperialism, and so any use of it in this article is by me.

The book explains, giving a bountiful supply of historical examples, that the fall-out of a major catastrophe (9/11, hurricane Katrina, the Pinochet coup, collapse of socialism), leaving the population dazed and confused, is exactly what Governments need to enforce unpopular and anti-democratic economic policies that in a state of normality would be fiercely resisted by a population. So, in the wake of hurricane Katrina the US government was able to force the privatisation of education, establishing “charter schools,” publicly funded but run for profit by private entities according to their own rules (corporate welfare). The Government had been trying unsuccessfully to enforce this for many years, along with the sale and cleaning up of public housing. Republican Congressman Richard Baker, in the midst of all the suffering, commented to a group of corporate lobbyists: “We finally cleaned up public housing in New Orleans. We couldn’t do it, but God did.”

Following 9/11 the US was able to use the chaos and confusion (stirred and impassioned by their own hype) to pass through “reforms” that clamped down on civil liberties and greatly reduced the ability of citizens to resist economic change, again a much-needed environment for Imperialism to act.

This is how, Klein argues, it has occurred in the US, where at least a level of democracy and human rights still prevails. She also outlines in numerous chapters the far more horrific events of Chile, Bolivia, Argentina, Poland, Russia and today Iraq. In these countries, she argues, the confusion caused by a coup or change in government, while often being managed and planned by the same think tanks, did not create enough chaos for “reform” to pass unopposed, and so, hand in hand with economic shock therapy, came deliberate policies of terror, including electric shocking. Torture, she argues, rather than being unfortunate and isolated mistakes is the deliberate accompaniment to neo-liberal economic change in these countries.

Torture is used to crush opposition and to ideologically control and prepare the population for the devastating effects the economic change brings for the vast majority. Just as electric shock therapy was originally used and designed on patients to erase their minds and try rebuild them, the electric shocks of torture attempt to psychologically rebuild the consciousness of citizens into passive, non-active acceptors of change. Indeed Klein gives details of some horrifying treatments on mentally ill patients in the US, treatments done without their consent and secretly funded by the CIA for research on torture technique. Klein again backs up all her statements with examples from all over the world.

There is one major criticism that can be made, however, and it is the obvious mistake of a non-Marxist writer. Although Klein explains with clarity the predatory and ruthless actions of Imperialism and its ideological elites, she fails to satisfactorily answer the question why they behave in such a way and why Friedmanite economists and technocrats have dominated. To quote Klein,

Are they “true believers” driven by ideology and faith that free markets will cure underdevelopment . . . or do the ideas and theories frequently serve as an elaborate rationale to allow people to act on unfettered greed while still invoking an altruistic motive?

Whether they truly believe is not the point, nor is it greed that drives the project and process. Klein doesn't understand or chooses not to use class struggle as an explanatory tool. Her own idealism, combining elements of Keynesian economics and anarchic democracy, that is anti-corporate as opposed to anti-capitalism itself, means she doesn't see Imperialism today as the result of laws within capitalism combined with class struggle. The weakness of the global socialist and social-democratic movements, with their biggest blow coming from the events of 1991, and the corresponding strength of Imperialism means that superstates like the US and EU have the ability to implement policies that will maximise profit creation to prolong the life of capitalism, at our expense.

Her flaw is most evident when dealing with the collapse of socialism in Poland and Russia.

For Klein, elements of the leadership of Solidarity were forced into a situation of accepting “economic reform” as a must once socialism was dismantled. This view fails to see Solidarity as it was, a counter-revolutionary movement funded by the CIA, manipulating workers' genuine concerns and issues in Poland. Klein views the events as democratic revolutions, again failing to see them as counter-revolutions and victories for corporate capitalism—the very system she claims to oppose. The victory of right-wing economic thinking in governments and institutions is merely a reflection of the strength of Imperialism today. However, its need to maintain rule through deception, terrorism and torture is equally a reflection of the general

opposition to the dominant economic model. In a perverse way, this is where we can draw spirit and inspiration from.

Criticism standing, this is a fascinating book and most importantly is readable by anyone.

Fly a flag of Freedom

When they force their hands on us,
We lose our voice, our freedom of choice.
And our fallen brothers in the mud,
We walk on their grave, sullen and with moss
Fly a flag of Freedom, a Freedom for who?

If the people of the land speak out
Against a power with the upper hand
But the leaders of this dear our Isle
Have given their allegiance to the Corporate Giants
Fly a flag of Freedom, the Freedom for who?
Fly a flag of Freedom, it's not me and it's not you.

The Saints and Scholars are gone, no more
It's Suits and Collars, with fancy advertisement boards
We owe our power to our feline friend
But work every hour that God sends
Fly a flag of Freedom, a Freedom for who?

Our Struggles vibrate on a string and echo the beat of a drum
The Work is done by the many, the people, the power, the strong
Fly a flag of Freedom, for Freedom is our dream.

—Eoghan O'Neill (CYM activist)

No revolutionary movement is complete without its poetical expression. If such a movement has caught hold of the imagination of the masses, they will seek a vent in song for the aspirations, the fears and hopes, the loves and hatreds engendered by the struggle. Until the movement is marked by the joyous, defiant, singing of revolutionary songs, it lacks one of the distinctive marks of a popular revolutionary movement; it is a dogma of a few, and not the faith of the multitude.—James Connolly, New York, 1907.

The labour theory of value

The labour theory of value is the very basis and foundation upon which economics can be understood. It is the key that Marx and Engels found through their studies and is the basis of understanding exploitation in capitalist society.

The scientific method of studying economics begins with the manner in which all things are created. Marx and Engels continued the study of classical economists by starting their analysis at the beginning, how we produce everything.

What creates everything around us? What gives value to otherwise useless matter? Labour, work, creates all value. The apple on the tree comes from nature but as a valuable object it is useless until picked from the tree by someone's labour. Labour alone creates value. It is the application of our strength, tools, know how to material that creates food, objects, art, culture, etc. etc.

What is the common social substance of all commodities? It is labour. To produce a commodity a certain amount of labour must be bestowed upon it, or worked upon on it.—Karl Marx, "Value, Price and Profit" (1865)

If labour produces all value, then it is only those who labour that create worth. It is those who work that create what we need. It is workers who grow the food we eat, it is bus drivers who provide the service we need, etc. Those bosses, capitalists, who employ us, who pay for our labour through wages, don't actually create value themselves. They just own us who do.

. . . The working class alone produce all values.—F. Engels, "Introduction to Wage-Labour and Capital" (1891)

Commodities and labour

We have said above that labour creates all value. It is only through labour that we can create commodities. What, then, are commodities? Commodities are anything that can be bought and sold to create more wealth, more capital. Commodities, as such, have not always existed, just as capital as we know it has not always existed. It is the capitalist method of ownership, production and exchange that creates commodities, and the production and sale of commodities expands the system.

The labour theory of value not only says that labour creates value, it also shows how labour is the measure of value. That is when we ask the question, how much does something cost, we could be asking how much labour went into the production. The more labour that goes into creating something the more it costs.

The value of a commodity is determined by the total quantity of labour contained in it.—K. Marx, "Value, Price and Profit" (1865)

Compare that of an apple and gold. Which one is more expensive, which one requires more labour? In forthcoming editions we will have to look at “prices” of commodities, because other factors of course play a role too. But labour is the dominant determining factor in the cost of commodities. It is the comparison of labour time spent in the creation of commodities that is reflected in their differing prices.

A commodity has a value, because it is a crystallisation of social labour. The greatness of its value, or its relative value, depends upon the greater or less amount of that social substance contained in it . . . The relative values of commodities are, therefore, determined by their respective quantities or amounts of labour, worked up, realised, fixed in them.—K. Marx, “Value, Price and Profit” (1865)

Labour too, however, is a commodity. It is the vital ingredient in the production of goods and services, and ultimately capital. Labour is the vital commodity.

Labour-power, then, is a commodity, no more, no less so than is the sugar. The first is measured by the clock, the other by the scales.—K. Marx, “Wage-Labour and Capital” (1847)

Labour is used by those who own capital to create more capital. Those who do not have the resources to buy and pay for the factory or office, the material resources, the training and education and most importantly the labour have only their labour to sell. They are forced by circumstances to sell their labour-power to the boss.

What they [workers] actually sell to the capitalist for money is their labour-power.—K. Marx, “Wage-Labour and Capital” (1847)

. . . Precisely from the fact that labour depends on nature it follows that the man who possesses no other property than his labour power must, in all conditions of society and culture, be the slave of other men who have made themselves the owners of the objective conditions of labour. He can work only with their permission, hence live only with their permission.—K. Marx, “Critique of the Gotha Programme” (1875)

In 1988 Davison Budhoo, senior economist at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) resigned on ethical grounds. In a 150-page resignation letter Budhoo proved, with statistics and facts later verified by several independent investigations, that the IMF was purposely miscalculating, misrepresenting and outright lying in its economic reports on countries to force a particular policy line on that country. In his own words, “What we had done, over the years, was to manufacture statistical indices . . . that would allow us to prove our point, and push a particular policy line, irrespective of the economic realities and circumstances of the country.”

The IMF, whose purpose allegedly is to stabilise developing economies so as to encourage investment and support from international capital and to safeguard them from the worst fluctuations of the international market, is in fact doing the very opposite. It is, according to Budhoo, purposely provoking crises in developing countries to force them to beg upon their hands and knees for loans and assistance from the very people who have caused that crisis. In return for assistance they are then forced to swallow the three strands of development as proposed by the IMF and World Bank (the lender): cuts in public spending, privatisation, and free trade. This makes a mockery of bourgeois economic claims to the power of the hidden hand of the market.

Budhoo, having resigned following the IMF's actions in Trinidad and Tobago, used that country as his primary example of how the IMF operated. However, Trinidad and Tobago was "only one country from the host of Third World nations where we are perpetrating the same economic nonsense, with the same catastrophic consequences."

In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, the IMF often used figures pulled out of thin air, saying that it had "unconfirmed reports . . . indicating that unpaid bills amounted to TT\$1.1 billion." This would have represented 6.5% of GDP, had it been true. In fact the government owed virtually nothing in unpaid bills at that time. The IMF would not say where the unconfirmed reports came from.

In their labour costs evaluation the IMF more than doubled Trinidad and Tobago's relative unit labour cost (RULC) figures. A healthy RULC would have indicated that Trinidad and Tobago could successfully diversify its export base and service what foreign debt it had. However, the IMF's falsification of these figures became the pretext for massive currency devaluation, cuts in government expenditures and a freeze on public sector wages.

The reason these details have been resurrected for this edition of *Forward*, besides being important to know, is in the light of the many similarities in practices and design that exist between the IMF and the European Union. Both will manipulate, lie, deceive and bully countries into their line. They will not listen to people and will stop at nothing to realise their imperialist ambitions. The European Union is a very live and active force to be reckoned with in our lives. Just like the IMF to developing countries, the EU is out to turn Ireland into a feeding ground for profiteers, with scant regard for our lives and existence.

It is high time we took power away from these stooges and built democracy based on people and people's needs.