



UNITY

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Lockdown the economy!

I HAD anticipated that I would be writing about a different topic this week, not because I thought the virus was under control or anything but I was hoping we would have had information and decisive action from those in power.

Watching Boris Johnston and his advisers give the first of their weekly updates didn't provide me with any re-assurance.

Against the trend across Europe the British government asks people to be sensible in self-isolating and work from home if you can.

The rest of the world looks on in amazement at the approach of the British government and its cavalier approach to the spread of this virus.

No attention seems to have been paid to the land border in Ireland and the different approach of the southern government in closing schools in particular.

The Northern executive initially fell in behind the British government advice before the Deputy First Minister Michelle O'Neill broke ranks 24 hours later.

The pattern since has been predictable, politicians backing the line according to their national identity.

The people on the other hand are not waiting on advice from political

By Mel Corry

figures they are taking precautions to protect themselves and their families.

Many schools remained closed this week and will remain so despite the Stormont policy.

St Patricks day festivities have been cancelled and pubs clubs and restaurants have been closing.

The markets have suffered their worst hits ever recorded this week despite international interest rates being slashed to give them a boost.

The knock-on effect is clear to see with billionaire parasite Richard Branson calling for a bailout for his ailing airline.

A number of things are becoming clearer by the day in this place.

Number 1: Having different health systems on one small land-mass with different policies and structures will contribute to further distress on both sides of Britain's border in Ireland.

Number 2: The failing economy will affect the most vulnerable in our society disproportionately to the Richard Branson's of this world, who will remain billionaires despite the progress of the virus.

We must have a joined up all Ireland approach to this crisis as the only thing that makes sense.

Low paid and precarious workers need the added pressure of economic uncertainty removed for their lives.

We need a freeze on price rises at this time and workers paid if they are off work as a result of this turmoil.

We need mortgages, rents and utility bills to be frozen until people are in a position to pay and without making themselves even more vulnerable.

We need a people's quantitative easing. the British government has the ability to do this having their own currency.

The fact that this is not being considered in the Eurozone tells you all you need to know about the EU and its priorities.

The upside of this crisis is the re-emergence of community spirit whether it's a GAA club or a marching band the sight of young community minded people ensuring the most vulnerable in our society are not left to rot as Johnston's policy would have us do.

When the dust settles on this terrible crisis, we will re-build, the challenge for the organisations of the working class is do we save capitalism or create what people have been doing organically look after one another.

We must build to take back control, "Our demands most moderate are we only want the Earth"

Editorial

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Budgets, envoys and an Inquiry

WHILST people have quite naturally been preoccupied with the coronavirus question other things have been happening.

For instance the Chancellor Rishi Sunak presented his budget to parliament in the 11th March.,

Who is Rishi Sunak you might ask. Well, the new kid on the block is an unknown addition to the Cabinet who has a background in business having worked for Goldman Sachs and was a director of Catamaran Ventures, a company owned by his father in law billionaire NR Narayana Murthy.

However in typical Tory style he told us that tax cuts he proposed would boost prosperity immediately by putting money in people's pockets. He claimed that a "typical" employee would be better off by £104 per year, £2 per week.

The Institute of Fiscal Studies questioned his figure stating savings would be nearer £85, £1.63 per week.

Economists also pointed out that just 8 per cent of the personal gains from the tax cut will go to the poorest fifth of workers, meaning those on better incomes will benefit most.

Sunak told the Commons that with rises to the so-called National Living Wage of £8.72 per hour someone working full time on the minimum wage will be more than £5,200 better off than in 2010. We wonder about that.

As if we haven't got enough problems it seems we are going to be saddled with a Special Envoy to Northern Ireland courtesy of Donald Trump.

"Proud Irish American" John Michael Mulvaney, affectionately known as 'Mick', whose family hails from County Mayo, is the one. He has described himself as a "right-wing nut," is not convinced about climate change, and stated that the US media only paid attention to the corona virus because "they think this is going to be what brings down the President."

He told the USA National Catholic Prayer Breakfast that the principles of the faith are manifest under Trump. However the Pope described Trump as "not Christian" over his immigration policies.

Cead Mile Failte, Mick.

Oh yes and the RHI Inquiry Report went public- (Pearse McKenna's page on the 12 page copy)

Lenin on social distancing (Letter to Inessa Armand, 1920)

Dear Friend,

Please write a note to say what's up with you. These are foul times: typhoid, influenza, Spanish 'flu, cholera.

I've only just got out of bed and am not going out. Nadya has a temperature of 39° and she's asked to see you.

What's your temperature ?

Don't you need something to make yourself better ? I really ask you to write frankly.

Get better !

Yours Lenin

Unity Appeal Fund

We hope we will continue to have the support you have so generously given us - both in donations and words of appreciation.

We still need all the help we can get so we can continue to print Ireland's working class weekly paper published by the Communist Party.

We will be happy to receive donations, no matter how small - or large !

I am sending £.....to the Unity Appeal Fund.

Name.....

Address:

Please send all donations payable to: **Unity Paper**,
PO Box 85, Belfast, BT1 1SR

One Ireland, one solution: one all-Ireland constitution

Statement by the Communist Party of Ireland
15 March 2020

Covid-19 hastens the deepening structural crisis of the capitalist system

THE CPI expresses its solidarity with all those affected, and who will be affected, by this growing health crisis, and to the health staff and emergency services in the front line.

The health services throughout the country, from Belfast to Cork, are wholly inadequate, having experienced more than a decade of harsh cuts, bed closures, lack of investment, staff shortages, and the priority of private corporate medicine over a decent, well-funded public health service.

The Covid-19 health crisis exposes once again the immediate need for one all-Ireland public health service.

The virus is not subject to partition and knows no borders.

In times like these the need to act on an all-Ireland basis is clearly revealed.

It also exposes the conflicting interests of policy-makers in London and the policy-takers in Belfast, who have little or no say in how they should react to the pandemic, to ensure the health and safety of all citizens living in the North and the close ties with those living

in the South. We call on the Northern Assembly to disregard the British government's strategy of "herd immunity," as the extent of re-infection in Japan shows it to be incorrect, and to co-ordinate their efforts on an all-Ireland basis.

The Tory government will make use of this crisis as an opportunity to rid themselves of what they regard as costly, unproductive citizens, namely the old and vulnerable.

The health and safety of the Irish people, north or south, cannot be left to this barbaric logic, and we as a people need to act in solidarity and kindness to those most at risk.

We, as a nation, have difficult choices to make over the coming weeks.

We either step up our efforts and implement aggressive social distancing and tracking to try to slow the rate of infections and therefore the death rate, though at significant economic cost, or we follow the British lead and accept attrition of the old and the vulnerable but stabilise the economy more quickly.

The question becomes one of people or profit.

We cannot allow the interests of those who profit dictate our fate.

Read full statement at
www.comunistpartyofireland.ie

Gaelic map launched

A FEW days ago Turas, the Irish language group based in east Belfast launched its "Gaelic Map of Belfast" in a ceremony at Belfast City Hall.

The colourful map was drawn up with expertise help from Queen's University and artist Andrew Wilson and is divided into two sections, the townlands of Belfast and the contemporary Irish scene in the city.

Irish language education officer at Turas, Gordon McCoy, designed the map saying it was aimed at tourists and "people who don't know much about the Irish language and want to know more."

McCoy who had done two previous maps of east Belfast took on the task but it turned out to be more difficult and took him two years rather than the six months he expected and that is why it is split into two sections.

He makes the point that they wanted to show what Irish language is in Belfast and also tried to show that it has a cross-community element to it in the city, sentiments echoed by the Lord Mayor, Daniel Blake who added that the language is a "huge part of the rich shared history of Belfast."

The fact that Turas is an east Belfast based organisation proves that the language is not just a nationalist thing.

No amount of stupidity coming from people such as DUP MP Gregory Campbell with his "Curry my yoghurt" comments will alter that.