


UNITY

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A dog's breakfast

By Lynda Walker

TO suggest that the present situation of the so called no-deal Brexit is now beginning to resemble a dogs' breakfast would be an understatement to say the least.

If the electorate had been informed in 1975, when they were asked to confirm the Heath governments decision to be part of what is now the European Union, that leaving it would lead to the apocalyptic scenario outlined in 'Operation Yellowhammer' then there is no doubt the 'No' vote would have prevailed.

Of course Yellowhammer could be just scaremongering as other claims certainly are but it can create a situation where shortages are deliberately engineered and as we know companies do not need much of an excuse to raise prices of their products in order to enhance profits.

In our part of the world one factory owner in the North West complained that a no-deal Brexit could cause problems for employees who live in Donegal, yet the following day the pro-EU *Irish News* reported that the Common Travel Area agreement will enable Irish and British citizens to move freely between the two islands and across borders. No problem there then.

Another story was that 40,000 dairy cows were to be slaughtered, a claim that was also called scare-

mongering by the Ulster Farmers Union.

Whilst we would have no faith in the Tories negotiating a deal that would benefit working people above their class interests we would equally have no faith in the EU negotiators doing a deal that would be beneficial to a county wishing to leave the EU.

They know that there is a possibility that one country leaving on acceptable terms could lead to others wishing the same. Their *raison d'être* is to maintain this neo-liberal economic and imperialist political entity not to oversee its breakup.

But what do we make of what is happening over the water? Well we have the Green Party MP Caroline Lucas contacting a number of women across the political spectrum in order to form a female cabinet of national unity, essentially a national government, to facilitate a parliamentary move to block a no-deal Brexit.

Some of these women leave a lot to be desired as they include Liberal Democrat leader Jo Swinson, a convinced right-wing Orange Book Lib Dem with what has been described as an unattractive record of support for austerity policies.

They also include former Tory Treasury minister Justine Greening,

another austerity lover and Heidi Allen and Anna Soubry who both joined Change UK before it fell apart. However Lucas had to issue an apology as she failed to include any women of colour which was basically in football parlance an own goal.

We also see Jeremy Corbyn proposing an alliance with Remain parties to secure a vote of no-confidence in Johnson's government, he becoming an interim prime minister leading to a general election in the belief that Labour would win.

Unfortunately circumstances could put a Labour victory in jeopardy and it seems that Corbyn is becoming increasingly isolated with John McDonnell now stating that in the event of second referendum he will campaign for Remain.

He was supported by Diane Abbot who said she will also campaign for Remain. Where such a stance puts those Labour supporters who voted Leave is anybody's guess.

There seems to be an idea that to remain in the EU is to strike a blow against the Tories, and the Farage mob and that is all the politics you need.

On the eve of the 1975 referendum English historian EP Thompson noted that there were some "sillies" in the Labour movement who did not understand the nature of the European Community. It seems that in today's Labour Party the "sillies" have won the day.

Editorial

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Don't blame Brexit

THE 2016 referendum result certainly put the proverbial cat amongst the pigeons, and to quote another maxim the pebble dropped in the pond has certainly seen the ripples go far and wide. As far as the United States it seems where divisions between Republicans and Democrats have emerged over the possibility of a no-deal Brexit.

The US national security advisor to Donald Trump, the modern-day version of the Mad Hatter, John Bolton, was in London last week meeting Prime Minister Johnson and telling him that that the US supports a no-deal Brexit, promising that the UK would be "first in line" to strike A trade deal with them. However cynics might just see this as a ploy by right-wing mates helping out a right-wing mate.

The joint chairman of the US Ad Hoc Committee to Protect the Good Friday Agreement, James Walsh, has claimed Bolton's proposal is a "political and economic mirage," and has stressed that Congress would not endorse a trade deal if the GFA was jeopardised by Brexit. His comments were echoed by the House of Representatives speaker Nancy Pelosi.

As from day one of the 2016 decision pro-EU elements in our part of the world have claimed that Brexit threatens the GFA, with no evidence to back up such a claim we might add, but it's quite possible that Walsh and Pelosi have already made their minds up.

These two should take note of the comments made last week by Irish News columnists Allison Morris and Alex Kane, who come from both sides of the community.

Both expressed pessimistic views brought about by recent events here. We have seen confrontations with the police over the issue of bonfires. The divisions emerging over the prosecution of soldier 'F', IRA chants at a concert, a Sinn Fein MEP shouting a slogan at a hunger strike commemoration, to name just a few things.

Both Morris and Kane based their views on the present situation here.

If the GFA is under threat it certainly isn't from Brexit.



ON Wednesday 21st August *Raise Your Voice* was launched at the MAC in the LAB in Belfast. *Raise Your Voice* is a project that will tackle sexual harassment and sexual violence across Northern Ireland.

This endemic problem will be approached in a variety of ways; through working directly with the community, increasing public awareness, educating organisations on best practice and lobbying for legislative advances in this area.

The goal is to create true cultural change in order to tackle the root causes of these behaviours, and to empower people to act to change this in their own lives and communities.

"This means that we will be working directly with the public. In Year 1 we want to hear from women, girls and non-binary people of all ages, religions, cultures and abilities.

"In Year 2 we will work directly with men and boys, with a view to tackling the growth of sexist attitudes, raising awareness of the impact of sexual harassment and sexual violence, and passing on skills around bystander intervention," said a spokesperson.

Raise Your Voice is led by the Women's Resource & Development Agency (WRDA) in partnership with Women's Support Network (WSN), Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network (NIRWN) and Reclaim the Agenda.

It includes a broad and diverse steering group to ensure that the work is inclusive and far-reaching.

This project is funded by Rosa UK Fund for Women & Girls under their Justice & Equality Fund and Times Up UK. It is a pilot and will be innovative, far reaching, inclusive, and embedded in communities.

For further information:

www.raiseyourvoice.community/

Rally to support the Shipyard workers

THERE have been "positive discussions" regarding the sale of Belfast shipyard Harland and Wolff, according to the administrators.

Last Friday the accountancy firm BDO confirmed the existence of potential buyers.

A spokesperson said: "There have been positive discussions with interested parties for the sale of the business as a going concern."

"It is hoped that these discussions may result in credible offers."

Susan Fitzgerald, regional coordinating officer for Unite union, said: "There is now a very, very strong possibility of saving this yard for future generations."

Workers are continuing to mount a round-the-clock protest in front of the shipyard gates and a call has gone out for people to rally in solidarity there this Friday at 12.30pm.

Denise Walker Regional Organiser of GMB spoke of how solidarity has poured in from the trade union movement, including the Ferguson Shipyard, throughout the UK and Ireland and also internationally.

"We have had incredible support too from the public with generous donations of food etc."

"We have had football teams, musicians, poets, playwrights and comedians and even the renowned photographer Bobbie Hanvey visit and share their talent with us."

"On Sunday past we had a great event where we called on the Auld Hands to come back to the yard and lay their hand print in concrete in an event called 'The hands that built the shipyard' and the Sunday before we held a family fun day."

Professor John Barry at QUB has asked academics and researchers working on climate, energy, sustainability to sign an open letter calling on the people of Belfast, Belfast City Council and political parties to support the workers at



and and Wolff and ensure the long-term future of this historic industry.

"Harland and Wolff is vital not only for the workers, families and other businesses that are dependent upon the employment provided but it is in the strategic interests of the regional economy to make the inevitable transition to a low carbon economy," it states.

Textile workers in County Derry have also added their voices of support.

Speaking at the mill in Derrylane outside Dungiven, Marion said: "What we see at Harland and Wolff is exactly the same as what many of our colleagues in textile-manufacturing had to go through – ruthless destruction of the high skills this country's economy was once built on."

"The Scottish government showed that the powers to be can act in the interest of working people by declaring their intention to intervene in the threatened closure of the Ferguson Marine Shipyard."

Marion posed the question, "Why can the same not be done here? Are the workers at one of the most prestigious industrial units in the world not worth every attempt to save their jobs and the future of the Shipyard?"

A last minute addition to the Flax Mill Yard Fest is a public talk on the Shipyard, with Ernest Walker speaking from the CPI.

continued

Solidarity from the South Yorkshire Festival

WE send greetings of Solidarity to the workers in Harland and Wolff shipyard-and support their demand to Nationalise the Shipyard.

Above is the message taken to the workers at Harland & Wolff Shipyard last week from participants in the South Yorkshire Festival at Wortley Hall, Sheffield on the 11 August.

Helen Crickard, Anne McVicker and Lynda Walker, all members of the Belfast Trades Council initiated the message and took it around stalls at Festival. They got about 150 names and could have got more.

Some who signed include Anne Scargill, Women Against Pit Closures, Tosh McDonald-ASLEF, Bill Adams TUC Yorkshire Regional organiser and many more trade unionists.

They had a bit of help from the Freedom Riders (pensioners) too who provided the paper & clipboard.



Helen Crickard and Lynda Walker deliver a message of solidarity from the South Yorkshire Festival.

Cont.

As Denise Walker affirmed, "moral and resolve on the protest remains strong, and the unity and dedication of those workers should be a small indication to any potential future owner of the commitment this group of workers have for their shipyard."

Viewpoint

The problem of rainbow capitalism

By Creig McRoibín

WHAT is pink capitalism? Pink capitalism refers to the marketisation of LGBT+ culture and the exploitation of the LGBT+ demographic by capitalist businesses, for the purpose of a profit rather than for the implied purpose of an altruistic care for the LGBT+ community.

In recent years we have seen an increase in businesses coming out as 'Pro-LGBT+', whilst this is a good thing and does serve to help normalise our community, is it for a care in the LGBT+ community?

Job discrimination is a massive problem which the LGBT+ community faces, particularly trans people, but for LGB people this issue is also a big part of our lives.

A recent example of a company who came out as pro LGBT was Primark.

In the north of Ireland Primark produced a range of 'LGBT' clothes and accessories in the run up to pride in Belfast, whilst this was a good thing for LGBT representation, it contributed a peculiar look of erasure, having little to no Trans nor Bi representation, two groups in our community which often face erasure.

It should also be pointed out that these clothes and accessories were produced in Turkey, a country which does not have *any* legal protections for LGBT+ people in employment, education, healthcare, housing etc.

Provisions of the Turkish Criminal Code on 'public exhibitionism' and 'offences against public morality' are sometimes used to discriminate against LGBT people.

The Law on Misdemeanours is



CYM members on this year's Pride March in Belfast

often used to impose fines against trans people.

On top of this the ex-minister of Women and Family affairs also said in 2010 "I believe that homosexuality is a biological disorder, and this disease must be cured."

Whilst some opted to donate all their profit from their LGBT+ range to an LGBT charity, Primark opted to donate 20%, and keep the other 80%.

This type of exploitation of the LGBT community seeks to pander to a marketable demographic, namely, white gay men, whilst sidelining people of colour, women, and trans people.

Another company to market themselves to the LGBT community is the alcohol company 'Smirnoff', who launched an ad campaign targeting the community with slogans like 'Labels are for bottles' and 'Heterosexual? Homosexual? Who gives a-sexual?'

Whilst this does bring us into the limelight more, it does nothing to address the fact that LGBT people have a substance abuse rate two to three times higher than the general populace.

It should also be noted that again,



THE 26th anniversary of Foyle Pride Parade took place on Saturday 24 August 2019.

The launch of Newry Pride-Thursday was on the 22nd August at 2pm in Bellinis, Merchants' Quay Newry. The Pride parade and international festival takes place in Newry city centre over 10 days culminating with the main day on the 31st August 2019, 2-3pm -

Pride Parade Assemble at The Quays Shopping Centre at 1pm
info@prideinnewry.com



Smirnoff's campaign had no mention of Bi or Trans people.

Pride and the rainbow flag has long stood as a symbol of resistance, protest and disobedience, of accepting the labels that our oppressors gave us and saying 'Yes I am gay', 'I Am Lesbian', 'I am Bisexual' or 'I am trans', and seeing this not as an insult, but as an accurate and positive descriptor.

The mere act of us changing the connotations behind these labels from bad to good was an act of protest.

We must reject Pink capitalism and embrace genuine queer liberation.

Creig McRoibín is a member of the Connolly Youth Movement