

IWW Newsletter **Wildcat 4**

An injury to One, an injury to all June 2020

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As I write, in cities across the USA there are huge popular expressions of rage against an oppressive racist system; last night there was rioting in Paris in the face of another death at the hands of the Police. In the UK there is widespread concern about the extension of state power on the pretext of the Covid-19 pandemic; the future of the capitalist economy could hardly be less certain.

It's worth remembering then, that organising through the IWW gives us a powerful response to the challenges we face as individuals and as a class. The "deep social and economic transformation" talked



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Organising Department News

- This year's Organising Summit is cancelled because of Covid-19 restrictions. The Organising Department will put on a series of online events instead.
- Organising campaigns are often funded locally by branches but the Organising Department also has a budget that can support local organising. Branches have recently taken a haircut for the Covid-19 Fund so if funding is required for local organising please get in touch with organising@iww.org.uk and we can discuss your needs.
- Please remember to keep the Organising Department updated about any local organising and that we have a programme to support workplace organisers and branches called Your Job Your Union.
- Beautiful new reps cards are being made that will replace our existing tatty laminated ones. These will be issued to reps shortly alongside a survey and a basic re-accreditation process.

about on the ICL-CIT website, can only be achieved when people come together in workplaces and neighbourhoods and organise democratically, taking direct action of all kinds to improve their lives and advance the struggle against capitalism.

Politics and political parties cannot and will not deliver the change we need. Marches, although impressive, will not transform the sinews of society. We organise, we join hands, we build solidarity: when we say "the Revolution is now" that is not a childish assertion that victory is at hand, it means that we are putting in place today the organisation, the behaviours and the strength we need to build a new world.

Wildcat relies on your input. Please contact me at newsletter@iww.org with ideas for pieces, take some pictures for the newsletter too! There are some important news stories in this issue, along with some interest pieces. The newsletter, FW's, is what you make it.

IWW Goes for ICL-CIT Affiliation

On the 23rd May the Delegate Executive Council (DEC) passed a motion to affiliate the Wales, Ireland, Scotland, England Regional Administration (WISERA) to the International Confederation of Labour (ICL-CIT). The motion noted that the IWW is currently affiliated with 'friend' status which is generally reserved for

organisations of 75 members and less. This was an all-in or all-out vote to rationalise IWW standing with ICL-CIT.

The similarities and common ground shared by the IWW and ICL-CIT were raised in the discussion, as was the importance of co-operation and co-ordination with comrades around the world in struggles we all face. These



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kind of links, it was pointed out, benefit all organisations involved and would allow the IWW to have an influence on organising and campaigns across state borders.

From the ICL-CIT website: “The ICL brings together a number of anarcho-syndicalist and revolutionary unions from around the world. It is born out of their desire for closer collaboration and to add an international dimension to their local work, which will allow them to coordinate with comrades around the world

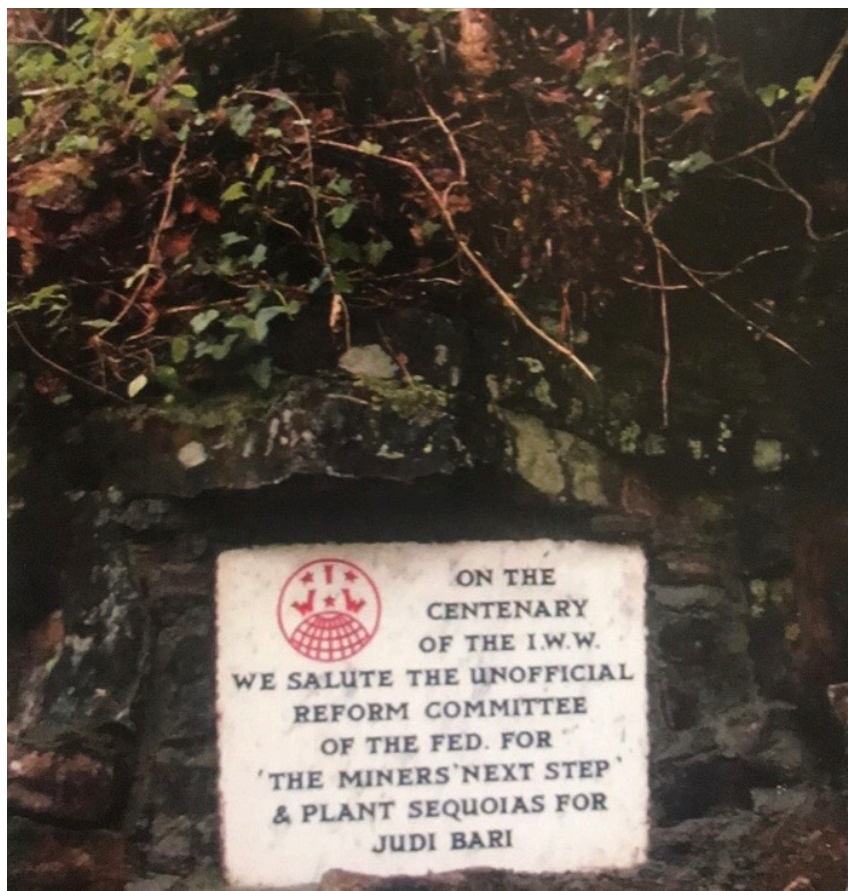
and make their struggles visible to a global audience. Its main goal is to contribute to deep social and economic transformation worldwide.”

“In order to define who we are and what we stand for, the ICL and its member organisations have agreed upon a number of principles, such as solidarity, class struggle, internationalism, horizontality and federalism, independence, direct action, antifascism, and the protection of the environment.”

The ICL-CIT was formed by bigger unions as a response to organising being stifled by other national organisations in their constituent countries. The IWW will Pay an affiliation fee of £1,250 per year which works out at 4.2p per month per member. This affiliation will not affect everyday organising or running of the IWW, but it will, it is hoped, make big improvements in our ability to take on bigger companies; affiliation opens up potential for the union.

More about ICL-CIT here: www.icl-cit.org/

An IWW Centenary Plaque in the Woods



The stone itself came from Italy and was set in place in June 2005 in Gareg Lwyd Woods, Camarthenshire, by Ilyan Thomas, a lifelong Wobbly.

It commemorates the Centenary of the IWW, is also a memorial to Judi Bari, Earth First and IWW activist (d. 1997); it mentions the Unofficial Reform Committee, authors of The Miners' Next Step.

Ilyan had cards printed in 2011 to coincide with the Centenary of The “Miners’ Next Step”. On the card there is a quote from Ilyan about the stone:



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The Communications Committee is Back



Over the last few weeks the Committee, which mainly consists of branch communications officers has been meeting regularly. With a huge need to improve our communications, this is great news. There is lots to do so the committee is meeting every fortnight at present.

All Branch Communications Officers are committee members, and it would be great to see as many branches as possible involved. If your branch doesn't have a Communications officer, or another member would like to attend instead, please contact commsadmin@iww.org.uk to be added to the mailing list.

“It took millions of years to create this piece of marble. It was a miracle that it was able to hitch thousand kilometres lift from Carrara to Camarthen to be delivered for free to become the IWW centenary marker, just in time to be inscribed and set in rock for the Centenary.”

Sadly Ilyan now has vascular dementia or he would have written this article himself! On visits to various protest camps, demonstrations and gatherings, armed with free leaflets and compilations of 20th Century international protest songs, interviews and films, Ilyan used to collect endangered tree saplings and bring them to his woodland in Penbre. He also propagated hundreds of sequoias and other trees which

he planted around South West Wales.

The woodland he looked after is a special place with a lot of history and is still accessible to the public.

The Stone will be a memorial for future generations to consider. Jill Bach

References:

The Miners Next Step a pamphlet produced collectively by disgruntled workers fed up of so called reforms. See: 1912 The Miners Next Step at libcom.org to read the pamphlet.

Judi Bari, Revolutionary, see IWW Archives website for history of this amazing woman.

23rd May DEC Meeting Minutes Highlights

Some other highlights from the Delegate Executive Council meeting:

- Two Co-chairs were elected: Christopher Wood-Archer (Northumbria) and Jake Harvey (Edinburgh). One of the co-chairs chairs meetings and the other one acts as secretary.

Online decisions:

- New auditors are to be appointed

- There will be a dues waiver due to Covid-19 hardship
- The Hardship Fund was officially established and branches are to pay from their funds to support it.

4 motions were considered:

Motion 1. To disband the anti-fascist committee, recognising that it hasn't been functioning. Its functions to be decentralised to branches, and responsibility given to the Equalities Committee. The



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committee was intended to advance IWW anti-fascist activism in workplaces but never really filled this role. This motion was passed.

Motion 2. To transfer the IT Committee to Admin Dept. Motion passed.

Motion 3. That a £1 rate for self-employed members be created. In light of increasingly precarious self-employment and sham self-employment, self-employed members will pay this lower rate. This motion was passed.

Motion 4. That WISERA Affiliate to the ICL-CIT as mentioned in the story above.

This motion was passed.

Other Business:

- Rule change motions which can't be decided by DEC are now going to go to referendums by email with officer elections.

- There is an ongoing discussion in DEC about the position of union officers, in particular how we might preserve the benefits of experience when officers change; how best to create teams around officers and how to facilitate the working of those teams.

- Presently there are three paid administrators for WISERA, they are:

Communications administration, Finance administration and Membership administration. There is ongoing discussion in the DEC about available hours for this work, and the appropriate scale of the role of paid administrators in the IWW.

- Next DEC will be on the 22nd August. Any member can submit motions to the DEC, they need to be submitted one month before the meeting and then they are sent out to branches to be discussed; from these discussions delegates are given mandates for the meeting.

From a Fellow Worker

There's been loads of stories and outrage over the actions of large companies during the coronavirus pandemic.

We've seen billionaires asking for bailouts while we know behind the scenes they're finding new ways to grow their wealth. Decades old companies have collapsed after a few weeks of financial pressure, leaving thousands jobless while their executive teams and shareholders have received massive dividends in previous years. The greed is nothing new but you always

hope for a glimmer of humanity during something as far-reaching as this pandemic. Idealistic? Yeah definitely. It's a fault of mine, but I think the vast majority of people do believe that the human is the most important thing during a time like this.

The company I work for has announced that a large percentage of the workforce is "at risk of redundancy," a stay of execution, along with a furlough for staff randomly through the business.

They've made changes that have directly impacted the quality of product provided to

their customers and that have also greatly increased the workload of the reduced workforce. They've made all of these changes to make the mismanaged company financially viable. There are issues that have been visible for months at least, and the Covid-19 crisis has just accelerated them, but it's also helped hide mistakes. Large companies using government programmes ostensibly to help workers are in fact being bailed-out.

There's a reluctant acceptance that there'll be a global recession following



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