

**DIRECT****ACTION**

Industrial Workers of the World

An Injury To One - Is An Injury To All!

# INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DAY!

# MAY DAY

May Day, or International Workers Day, is a day of workers' internationalism. Proposed by American workers' delegates at the founding conference of the International Workers Congress (IWC) (the 'Second International') in Paris in 1889 it was formally recognised as an annual event at the IWC's 2nd Congress in 1891.

The idea that workers have no country, that we are workers of the world, is written into the DNA of May Day in more ways than one. May 1st was proposed and adopted because it marked the beginning, in Chicago USA, of a wave of nation-wide strikes demanding an: "Eight-hour day with no cut in pay". The strikes across the USA involved both native born and immigrant workers. They involved men and women. They involved workers who were white as well as black workers and other people of colour.

In WISE-RA (the Wales, Ireland, Scotland and England Regional Administration of the IWW) we are proud that we continue that internationalist tradition of organising workers regardless of national origins. We are also proud of our international solidarity work and in our opposition to imperialism and militarism around the world. (You can read more about our work in these areas in the pages of Wildcat, past and present).

May Day was also initiated in recognition of the importance of the struggle for the eight-hour day. This struggle is one that we continue to fight today in new forms; like zero-hours contracts where we don't know if we'll have enough hours to pay for our needs, like 'flexible' working hours that 'flex' to the needs of capital and not the needs of workers, like 'crunch time' where workers are pressurised into working long hours to meet impossible deadlines.

May Day is a day of worker solidarity. The idea that workers have common interests, regardless of their occupation, is one of the principles that has underpinned the IWW since our inception. We are, as our name says, an industrial union, not a trade union. We organise by industry because we recognise that what workers have in common is not our occupation – cleaner, porter, orderly, nurse, doctor – but our relationship to the boss class.

This year, 2026, is an important year for us in WISE-RA to remember worker solidarity. It is the 100th anniversary of the General Strike, the only ever general strike in British history. The Strike began on 4th of May 1926 and it involved workers from a range of industries coming out in support of striking



miners. Another General Strike may not be imminent in Britain or Ireland today, but when we join pickets and take action in solidarity with other workers we are keeping alive the spirit of the General Strike.

Today – when we are witnessing the rise of the far-right across the world, when there is an ongoing genocidal push against Palestinians in Gaza, when anti-union laws continue to frustrate our attempts to fight back in the workplace – it is easy to feel like the tide of history is against us. May Day reminds us, however, that the struggle for workers' freedom has never been easy and that we have been able to prevail in the past and can continue to do so in the future.

This year, 2026, is the 140th anniversary of that pioneering May Day march in 1886. Those struggles in Chicago 140 years ago were brought to a dramatic end through state repression. Albert Parsons, Lucy Parsons' partner, was stitched up by the courts and, along with three other labour organisers, hanged for his part in organising the demonstrations. On the day of the hanging, Lucy and her children were stripped and thrown naked into a jail cell and released only after her husband was dead. State repression, however, did not defeat the struggle as state after state in the USA passed laws limiting the length of the working day. Capital cannot exist without labour, we can only be defeated if we give up the struggle.

On this May Day we stand with workers all over, and from all over, the world, and inscribe on our banner our words of international worker struggle:

**An injury to one is an injury to all!**

**ONEBIGUNION.IE**

# PAWA TOUR IN IRELAND: MIGRANT RIGHTS ARE WORKERS RIGHTS

We would like to thank each and everyone, from the organisers to the participants, who took part in a successful migrant workers event in Belfast at the weekend.

The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in conjunction with the Pan African Workers Association (PAWA) would like to thank the staff at the Education and Empowerment Centre for their support throughout the day and Belfast Food Not Bombs for providing food and beverages.

The series of talks, which were held in both Belfast and Derry, formed part of the Union's ongoing #EveryWorkerNeedsAUnion campaign.

IWW and PAWA workplace representatives and organisers formed part of the discussion in which they listed a host of obstacles they had to address or overcome as migrant workers, in order to challenge issues they faced daily within the workplace.

Speaking following the Belfast afternoon event, one of the participants commented on the day's gathering, said, "I think it was an important event created in order to begin conversations on the need for workplace organising.

"The importance of knowing your rights and obtaining training breaks down the fear and isolation felt by many migrant workers. Not only within the health and care setting but other places of employment, as we have heard today."



**UNIONISE THE FIGHT**  
PAWA & Black Trade Unionist Activists  
open discussions in Derry

Another worker said, "Some of the personal testimonies of workers have been harrowing. These voices need to be heard more often and I would like to thank everyone for having the confidence they have in speaking out and calling upon workers to unionise."

A spokesperson for the IWW said "It was a great event to hold and that was made clear by the level of engagement and the conversations had.

"Everyone agreed that there is a growing necessity for workers to become more aware of their rights as workers. Events such as this have to be viewed as just the beginning.

"Workers need to be given the opportunity and confidence of being empowered by organising and standing up for their rights. We believe that begins by reaching out at events like this and joining a union. You can join the IWW today wherever you work or live to begin that fight back alongside other workers".

In the coming weeks, further details will be released on further discussions taking place in Dublin.

To find out more on how you can get involved locally please email PAWA Ireland at:

[PAWA@IWW.ORG.UK](mailto:PAWA@IWW.ORG.UK)

## BULLDOZER #5 OUT NOW!

The latest edition of the IWOC Ireland zine **BULLDOZER: The only vehicle for prison abolition!** is available free to prisoners or by donation for supporters & solidarity.

BULLDOZER is written and produced by incarcerated workers in Ireland, is now available directly from IWOC:

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