

**A WIN FOR THEM IS A WIN FOR ALL WORKERS
AND FOR OUR HEALTH SERVICE**

SUPPORT THE NURSES AND MIDWIVES!

Nurses and Midwives should get the full support of all workers and of the general public for their planned campaign of strike action for pay increases and pay equality.

Leo Varadkar's chastising of the nurses and midwives for scheduling strike action on a weekday as opposed to a 'quieter' Sunday that would cause less 'inconvenience' is pure hypocrisy. His government presides over the daily inconvenience of 700,000 on hospital waiting lists and hundreds daily left on trollies.

A determined struggle that has a real political impact is required to force this government to concede on pay and the initial scheduled days of action announced by the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation and by the Psychiatric Nurses Association, if followed through, are an indication of seriousness.

WORKERS UNDER ATTACK

Rising costs and rents are making it impossible for nurses and other workers to make a living in Ireland. This is a reality hundreds of thousands of workers and young people can relate to.

Staff reductions and retention problems have put an unbearable strain on work conditions. This struggle is as much about protecting and improving the health service as it is about pay and conditions.

The comprehensive one tier National Health Service funded by progressive taxation and free at the point of us that we need requires decently paid staff across the board.

Continued overleaf...



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The economic arguments from the government, especially Minister for Finance, Paschal O'Donoghue against meeting the nurses and midwives' demands are bogus. He was rightly called out for presenting false figures on what settling pay claim would mean for the government finances in his article in last weekend's Sunday Business Post.

It is manifestly untrue that there is no recruitment and retention problem in the health service. The HSE spent almost €250 million on agency staff in the first nine months of 2018. Agency staff are more expensive to hire per hour than directly employed staff with private recruitment firms pocketing a big share of the cost.

SUPER-RICH RAKE IT IN

There likewise doesn't seem to be an issue with the government raising the pay of the HSE director to almost €250,000.

Politicians from the capitalist establishment have no problem seeing the salaries of business executives rise relentlessly. A recent ICTU survey on executive pay calculated that the average remuneration for Chief Executives in the top 26 companies in the state was €2.3 million!

All nurses and health workers, whether in the INMO or other health unions, should support their colleagues. A win for one group helps others groups. Two of the teachers unions are also about to ballot for industrial action to likewise fight for pay equality.

SOLIDARITY NEEDED

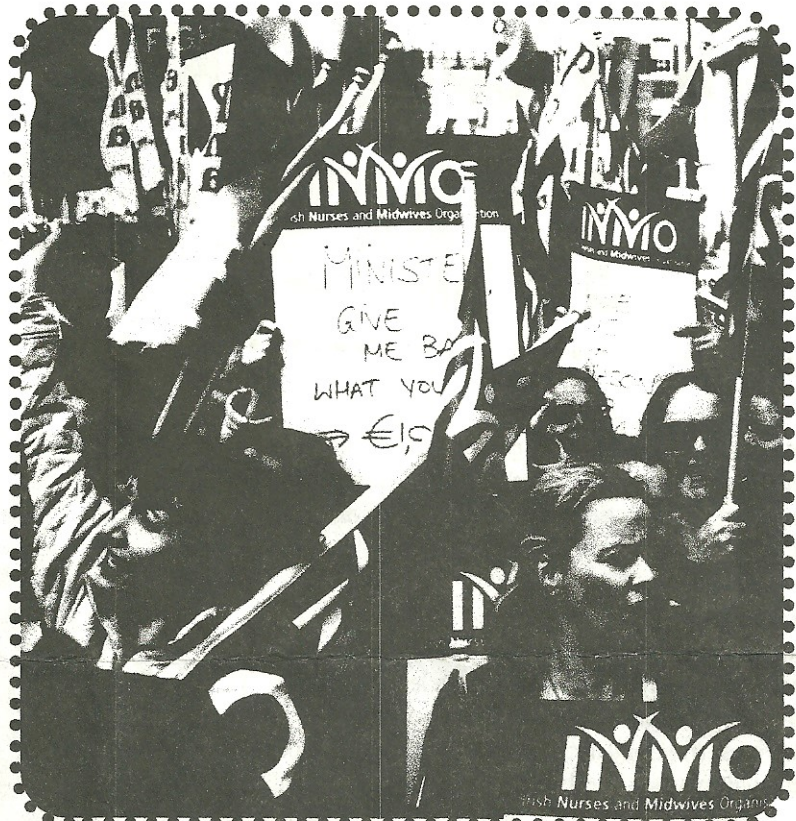
Unfortunately, there are some in the trade union leadership who do not see it that way. SIPTU Health Sector Official (and Labour Party councillor!), Paul Bell's interview on RTE radio this week was a display of absolute treachery. He not only defended not balloting SIPTU nurses to join their colleagues in the INMO and PNA on the pickets but effectively supported them crossing the pickets on strike days.

For some in the leadership of the trade union movement the defence of previous poor deals that offer only partial and snail's pace restoration of what was taken away from workers during the crisis matters more than supporting workers who are attempting to force the pace of pay restoration and pay justice and with the rising cost of living.

Socialist Party and our Solidarity members and public representatives will be visiting picket lines and supporting the nurses in any way we can.

DID YOU KNOW?

- There are 2500 fewer nurses now than there were in 2008.
- Over 70% of the 2018 graduating class of nurses intend to emigrate.
- Only 18% had been offered permanent contracts by the HSE despite previous assurances given that graduates would be offered permanent posts.
- Current staffing levels in the health service are unsafe by international standards.



JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

We live in a rigged capitalist economy that benefits the super-rich, big business and property developers. We get a housing crisis, wage restraint, an undermining of our conditions and drastically underfunded public services, while they amass enormous wealth at our expense.

We need to build a new movement of the working class in this country. Such a movement would end the private ownership of the key wealth and resources of society by bringing them into public ownership, under the democratic control of working class people. Only on this basis we can really provide for all our needs, and build a secure and environmentally sustainable future. If you agree, then join us today!

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Organisation: Socialist Party

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