

# CONGRESS 2009 mayday ORGANISE TO DEFEND

## ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS OF STRUGGLE AND ACHIEVEMENT

May Day is “International Workers’ Day” or “Labour Day” which celebrates the social and economic achievements of the “Labour movement”.



in Dublin in 1979 when 50,000 marched. This event was linked to the tax marches of 1979 and January 1980. Following demands from the Dublin Council of Trade

Unions in 1994 the first Monday in May was declared a public holiday.

May Day originated with the demand of the American trade union movement for the 8 hour day towards the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The American ‘Federation of Organised Trades and Labor Unions’, made the demand in 1884 and declared that, if it was not conceded legally by 1886, they would call a general strike. The demand was not conceded and the period saw many bloody battles between capital and labour on the issue.

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In 1889 a call was made by trade unions for an international day of strikes to take place world wide on May 1<sup>st</sup> 1900 in pursuit of the 8 hour day. A May Day meeting was held in Dublin in 1890 organised by the Gasworkers Union, who had won the 8 hour day and was supported mainly by dockers and railway men.

May Day is of particular importance this year. The global crisis of capitalism is affecting workers in every land. Unemployment, reduced living standards, cuts in education and health services is universal. The rich expect the poor to pay for the crises. The social and economic achievements of our movement are under threat. There is a real danger that workers in the developed world will be faced with the poverty known to previous generations. Organised labour must organise to defend our achievements.

May Day events were organised as part of the Irish general strike held in 1918 against conscription to the British army. One of the biggest May Day gatherings took place

Workers’ and trade union power stems from increased numbers, more efficient organisation and clear decisive policies. So this year, hands across the world, united internationally, we have a greater chance to build a future that recognises the dignity and worth of working people rather than the greed of exploiters.

CONGRESS 2009  
*mayday*  
**ORGANISE TO DEFEND**

**Dublin Council of Trade Unions**

Make the greedy not the needy pay

No to pay, health, education and social welfare cuts

Tax the wealthy

Organise all workers into trade unions now

Protect workers pension schemes

Invest in a recovery plan to get the economy going

March with your trade union or community organisation

Bring your banners

Trade union speakers

**Assemble 2.00p.m. Sat. 9<sup>th</sup> May**

**Garden of Remembrance,**

**Parnell Sq., Dublin 1**



**SIPTU**

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STRONGER TOGETHER

**CONGRESS**

Irish Congress of Trade Unions

