

WORKERS SOLIDARITY

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Twenty Two Years of Anarchist News

www.struggle.ws/wsm

1916: 90 YEARS ON



GOMBEEN NATION

This Easter marks the ninetieth anniversary of the 1916 rising. There is an unedifying scrabble by every politician in the state to wrap the green flag around themselves and stake their claim to be the inheritors of the tradition.

From Micky McDowell across to Gerry Adams, Bertie Ahern to Enda Kenny, every party, paramilitary and sect are raising the flag. The 1916 proclamation however if taken to mean anything should surely give them some discomfort.

* The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunity to all its citizens.....cherishing all children of the nation equally...

* Is this what the state is doing when it

deports children and their parents, when the Gardai beat people up at protests and in custody, where people are locked up in jail for defending their communities and homes, when workers lose their jobs to be replaced with cheaper labour, where resources are denied to schools whilst the rich are free to pay no tax, when we live with a two tier health system with overcrowding and waiting lists for the poor and exclusive private clinics for the rich. Does this Republic really provide equal opportunity and equal rights or does it depend on your wealth?

*We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland...

* Maybe this doesnt include the Corrib gasfield or any other oil or gas field, which the state under practically every govern-

ment has given away to the multinational oil companies, but you would think it should. Does it include other assets like Coillte which owns 7% of Irelands land and is being prepared for privatisation?

2006 will provide plenty of opportunity for many a politician to pose as a great patriot and to seek to bask in some reflected glory, but really none of them represent our interests, the interests of the working class, none of them offer any real hope of a break with the system of exploitation and oppression under which we live. To defeat that system and to build a society that truly cherishes all of its children equally will take a revolution built from below in every workplace, community and town in Ireland.



NEWSPAPER OF ANARCHISTS IN IRELAND



Pat Rabbitte and Immigration

Turning on workers?

Labour leader pat Rabbitte showed his opportunism when he called for a look at work visas for EU nationals. He raised the spectre of 40 million poles chasing "Irish Jobs". It was a thoroughly disappointing turn by Labour but hardly surprising.

Coming after the massive show of strength by the unions during the Irish Ferries dispute, this call succeeded in moving the debate away from workers rights and onto the basest populist nonsense. It pits worker against worker not worker against boss.

The strategy of the progressive wing of the labour movement is to recruit the new EU workers into the unions and keep the standards of employment up. "Workers of the world unite" was an old slogan that Pat Rabbitte should remember from his Workers Party days. But when power is the objective principle is an expensive

commodity. There was a deafening silence from the ranks of the Labour Party. Apart from a few letters in the Irish Times there was no outcry. The truth is that the Labour Party is all about acquiring power, why else the pact with the anti worker Fine Gael party? The senior ranks are filled with power hungry careerists. The biggest problem with Rabbites pronouncement is that it



"Workers of the world Feck off"

Pat Rabbitte, Leader

plays into the hands of the anti/immigrant forces, the racists and the capitalists who seek to keep the working class divided and weak.

But the interests of the working class are far from Pat Rabbites mind. He reckons that by playing this populist card he can outflank Sinn Fein by playing on peoples worries about jobs and instead of pointing

the finger at the bosses he is in effect blaming immigrants. Much as in the US successive waves of immigrants, including the Irish, have been scapegoated. Whilst there is displacement and a race to the bottom this can only be tackled by unionising and workers struggles. The state will only serve the interests of capital and any efforts to control immigration will simply feed the black economy, divide workers and give employers the threat of deportation to hang over immigrant workers.

Pat Rabbitte was once a member of the Workers Party which preached international socialism of a kind. Electoralism and reformist politics has lead him and many others to this point. Don't hold your breath for any favours from Labour should they acquire power. As always the best defence lies in the self organisation of the working class and direct action to achieve change.

Joanne Wins: We All Win

Friday February 24th saw one of Ireland's biggest and most anti-union firms back down. Dunnes Stores wrote to sacked shop steward, Joanne Delaney telling her that she had been reinstated in her job at the Ashleaf Shopping Centre in Dublin.

Joanne had been sacked for wearing her MANDATE union badge. Management thought they would put the boot in at a store where only a minority are union members. They got a surprise. A local support group formed and held regular protests outside Ashleaf. Letters and emails of protest flooded in, solidarity protests were held at other Dunnes branches. There was a growing threat of some of their customers doing their weekly shop elsewhere.

Joanne was very courageous in standing her ground. The protests organised by the local support group and the socialist & anarchist organisations did make a difference. It's a small victory

but one that shows if we dare to fight, we also dare to win.

Joanne thanks all who supported her. She said "it was the support and solidarity of fellow trade unionists who organised protests throughout the country, and shoppers who use the Ashleaf outlet, who by wearing a Mandate stick-on badge and complaining to management, have done so much to bring this situation about."

Joanne was back at work on Monday February 27th with her union badge pinned to her uniform.

The Executive of MANDATE has agreed "to pursue the idea the idea of a National Wear Your Union Badge Day throughout Dunnes Stores outlets". This should be followed up and tied into a union recruitment campaign.

Wal Mart: Cut Price Employees?

The supermarket giant Asda, a subsidiary of Wal-Mart, has recently taken over 12 Safeway stores in Northern Ireland. It has also been ordered to pay £850,000 in compensation to staff at their huge distribution centre at Washington in the north east of England.

340 employees had been offered a once-off 10% pay increase if they agreed to give up a bargaining agreement enjoyed by their union, the GMB.

The workers overwhelmingly rejected the offer and subsequently took industrial action that won a 5 % pay increase. In addition an employment tribunal ordered the company to pay £2,500 a head in compensation.

Our unions leave a lot to be desired, but even a bad union is better than no union. If unions are no use anymore, as some will tell us, why do the bosses try so hard to break them?

Joe King

Anti War: Back to Basics

This March marks the third anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. Everyday we see the result; bombings, killings, torture and other atrocities.

There are no reliable estimates for those who have died but most put the figure at 100,000 or higher. It's clear that the invasion didn't help the people of Iraq and it is equally clear that the occupation is making the situation worse.

Ireland continues to support this occupation by allowing the United States to transfer soldiers and war materials through Shannon. It has also been revealed that planes the CIA used to carry prisoners to countries where they will be tortured have used Shannon and Baldonnel many times.

The majority of Irish people opposed the invasion of Iraq and our government's complicity in it. 150,000 of us marched to oppose the war but, as usual, Bertie ignored us. He told us that he knew best, that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and that the US government wouldn't

invade a country just to steal its oil and control the region. Again, as usual, he was on the side of big business.

On March the 18th there will protests



around the country to allow us to voice our opposition. It's important that those of us who oppose the occupation march but we also need to ask ourselves if it's the best way to make our voices heard and help the people of Iraq. It's no use calling on the government to do the right thing. It's clear that they're more interested in keeping the rich, at home and abroad, happy than in listening to the people they're supposed to represent.

Those of us who oppose the war should be realistic and concentrate our energies at the point where we can have most effect. In Ireland this means tackling our complicity in the war by stopping the US military from using our airports. In 2003 a series of direct actions took place in Shannon. They ranged from activists destroying a US warplane to others pulling down the security fence and runway occupations. This led to 3 out of 4 US military contractors pulling out of Shannon for a short period.

There is not much point in just marching and petitioning the movement. It is only through returning the focus to Shannon and building a strong and active movement against the state's complicity in the war that we can win. This won't be easy. It will be a long hard struggle and one in which we need to be willing to use different tactics. But it's a struggle that we need to embrace if we are serious about ending the occupation and helping the progressive and secular forces in Iraq.

John Flood

WSM Speaking Tour

The Workers Solidarity Movement has been running a national speaking tour since the start of the year.

Meetings have taken place in Derry, Dun Laoghaire and Limerick. Useful discussions have taken place at these meetings and they provided a focal point for anarchists to get together and begin organising.

By the end of the tour we hope to have contacted and met as many people as

possible, putting our ideas before people and starting an ongoing dialogue about where the anarchist movement needs to go next.

Areas targetted for meetings in the next six months or so are Waterford, Galway, Kilkenny and Belfast (where we will do joint meetings with Organise).. If you are interested in helping with these meetings or arranging one elsewhere please contact us.

James McBarron

Review: The Bolsheviks and Workers Control

How many times as the clock inches towards five thirty have you thought that you could do the bosses' job! Well not only have workers often thought this, they have occasionally even kicked the bosses out and given it a go.

The Bolsheviks and Workers Control is a detailed book that shows firstly how Russian workers took over and managed their workplaces, secondly how they wished to extend this control to the entire economy and thirdly how it was wrested from them by the Russian state. It is an essential read for anyone who thinks that Leninist parties have any relevance to creating a socialist society.

Factory committees sprung up before, during and after the revolution booting out managers and taking over enterprises. The committees quickly realised that co-ordination and integration of production was essential. The Resolution of Factory/Shop Commissions declares:

"The economic life of the country - agriculture, industry, commerce and transport must be subject to one unified plan, constructed so as to satisfy the individual and social requirements of the wide masses of the people".

In August 1917 the Second Conference of Factory Committees took this so seriously that they resolved to devote a quarter of their wages to support a **central Soviet of Factory Committees**. After the revolution they made attempts to do this with the **All Russian Council of Factory Committees** which the Bolsheviks stopped from meeting, believing instead in their vision of control by the State *'on the workers' behalf'*.

In December 1917 The Central Council of the Petrograd Factory Committees issued a *'Practical manual for the implementation of Workers Control'* which quite explicitly moves beyond stock-taking, and into **real control of production**, calling on each committee to set up control commissions for the various aspects of production. That same month the Bolshevik paper: **Isvestiya** published the *'General Instructions on Workers Control in Conformity with the Decree of November'*. It also talks of commissions, but says that the only role they should play in management is **making sure that the central governments directives are followed through**.

So after initial luke warm support for the committees the Bolsheviks quickly moved towards one man management under direct state rule from above. By April 1918 (six months after October), Lenin's article on *"The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government"* was published in *Isvestiya*. He claims that *"The irrefutable experience of history has shown that...the dictatorship of individual persons was very often the vehicle, the channel of the dictatorship of the revolutionary classes"* and *"Today the Revolution demands, in the interests of socialism, that the masses unquestioningly obey the single will of the leaders of the labour process."*

If you are interested in how the factory committee movement worked and how the Leninists quickly moved to absorb and smash them this book has all the detail you could possibly want.

Available from the WSM Bookservice for 8 euros. See www.wsm.ie for more details



Our Money?

Back in 1999 Farmleigh House was offered for sale, for £13 million. So the government, in the person of Martin Cullen, gave them £25 million. He then spent another £20 million doing up the house so that it could be used for state receptions and to serve as a luxurious hotel for visiting heads of state. In the six years since not one state reception has been held, and only two visiting big wigs have slept there. This must make it the most expensive B+B anywhere.

Their money?

US Vice President Dick Cheney's old firm, Halliburton, is doing very well out of the war in Iraq. It's KBR subsidiary pays \$5 to \$16 a day in wages, but bills US taxpayers between \$50 and \$80 a day for each worker. For example, an invoice from KBR subcontractor, Ranj Company, shows laundry workers are paid \$7 a day, but the military is billed between \$60 and \$70 a day for this work, a roughly ten-fold markup.

Loads a Money

US gas equipment group Harris Calorific reported a 47% rise in pre-tax profits at its Irish unit in Rathnew, Co. Wicklow in the weeks before it decided to close the plant and make more than 70 workers redundant.

This rise in profits followed a 25% increase in the previous period. The company is moving the entire operation to Poland because wage costs there are much lower than in Ireland.

Taxpayers Money?

On 7 December, Maya Evans, a 25 year old chef, was convicted of breaching Britain's new Serious Organised Crime and Police Act by reading aloud at London's Cenotaph the names of 97 British soldiers killed in Iraq. So serious was her crime that it required 14 policemen in two vans to arrest her. She was fined and given a criminal record for the rest of her life.

Offensive

Eighty-year-old John Catt served with the RAF in the Second World War. Last September, he was stopped by police in Brighton for wearing an "offensive" t-shirt, which suggested that Bush and Blair be tried for war crimes. He was arrested under the Terrorism Act and handcuffed, with his arms held behind his back. The official record of the arrest says the "purpose" of searching him was "terrorism" and the "grounds for intervention" were "carrying placard and T-shirt with anti-Blair info".

Changes in Bolivia

The victory of Evo Morales

The victory of Evo Morales in the presidential elections in Bolivia in December has underlined once more that across Latin America there is a demand for change. The first significant victory came back in 2002 when Lulu, the leader of the Brazilian Workers Party was elected to power after a long and arduous campaign that stretched back almost two decade. It is claimed that Lulu's victory and his pronouncements about making Brazil a fairer society sent 'shivers' through world stock markets.

Although different in origins and style, Hugo Chavez in Venezuela has had a similar impact on the world stage – praised by those seeking radical change; attacked by those connected with business and financial institutions. Chavez is former army officer and was first elected to power in 1998. Despite repeated efforts at destabilising his regime, including one almost successful coup attempt, he has remained in power. He is widely hailed among Venezuela's poor and in 2004 survived a rightwing inspired referendum aimed at driving him from office.

Evo Morales is of a similar ilk. His Movement To Socialism is an alliance of indigenous activists and peoples' movements whose declared aims are for the nationalisation of the natural resources of Bolivia and the setting up of a proper representative parliament. Although neither of these demands might appear to be radical, in terms of Bolivian society and history they are. Just over 100 identifiable families control the most of wealth and resources of Bolivia, which remains the poorest society in South America.

DISASTEROUS

The rise to power of Morales, Chavez and Lulu (among others) has come at the end of a long and sustained period of conservative rule in the Latin American

region. Brutal dictatorship, fixed elections and repression have been repeatedly used to stem any popular pressure for change. However since the early 90s and following the collapse of the Soviet Union, there has been a gradual and slow return to normality. Although open and fairer elections have been back in favour, all they have resulted in is the imposition of neo-liberal policies in the region. The disastrous impact of these policies – privatisations, cutbacks, and subsidies of the wealthy - together with the overwhelming and

for a legitimate parliament. So in a sense then Moralez may well have been elected 'to power' but he has in fact very little 'power'. He holds office on condition – and this condition is that he will not implement what he really stands for. As anarchists have repeatedly pointed out, it is one of pitfalls off electoral success. For radicals to stay in power they must renege on their programme.

TAKING

ADVICE

A different and worse example of the pitfalls of electoral politics comes from the situation in Brazil. Since Lulu came to power in 2002 the process of compromising to stay in power has accelerated at a rapid pace. Last year Lulu's Workers Party was implicated in a process of widespread corruption – paying parliament members for their votes to seal majorities in votes. Secret and

underhand deals are rife with Lulu himself 'taking the advice' of a number of economic advisors and abandoning the platform on which he was elected. Last year he implemented a series of neo-liberal polices that specifically hurt the poor. His radical sheen is well gone. Although 'the electoral road' is touted as a means for bring about change, it has disappointed repeatedly. More to the point it needs to be borne in mind that the electoral movement is not as such the movement. Rather they have capitalised on what is already happening across the region. Important grassroots movements have emerged which while diffuse in structures nevertheless are clear in their demands – change will have to come. As one Moralez supporter put it. "If Evo doesn't deliver, we will rebel again." In Bolivia as elsewhere it is these grassroots movement that hold the long-term key to the creation of a revolutionary movement.



persistant sense that nothing has really changed in the region is feeding this new upsurge in electorate support for what are perceived to be 'radical' left leaders. The recent victories then, in this sense, are important in terms of what they represent. Popular movement are recovering their confidence and the election successes reflect the fact that people want and demand change. But the biggest question of all remains – what can be achieved through electoral successes?

Bolivia is one case in point. Although Morales' victory has been widely hailed and celebrated, it is recognised and feared by many of his supporters that he won't 'dare' to push forward towards the nationalisation of Bolivia's wealth. Leave aside for a moment the question of whether nationalisation would be of any use to the workers of Bolivia. The problem that Morales faces it that to suggest nationalisation would be to 'provoke' the wealthy elite who will not tolerate handing over any of their money. Ditto with the demand

Cartoons and Caricatures

By now we are all familiar with the cartoons commissioned and published by the Danish magazine Jllands – Posten which aroused such anger in the Muslim world and in Muslim communities worldwide.

Published at a time when Denmark is in the process of a debate over immigration the reaction to the cartoons seemed to exemplify the so called ‘clash of Civilisations’ between Islam and the West. In the red corner: a European magazine standing in the tradition of the Enlightenment and defending the right to free speech. And in the blue corner: backward superstitious Muslims, the beheaders of hostages and the oppressors of women. As the debate spread things seemed to become even more polarised. Dick Cheney took the opportunity to remind us of the dangers of Islamo-fascism, European consulates and embassies were attacked in the Middle East and radical Islamists took to the streets of London calling for non believers to be executed.

However just as the cartoons simplified and obscured the reality of Muslim attitudes, the media coverage caricatured and simplified the debate. The real world was much less black and white than the media portrayal. Jllands-Posten was eventually revealed not to be a brave defier of censorship but a source of anti immigrant rhetoric, whose owner had campaigned for Muslims to be expelled from Denmark and who had, in 2003, refused

to publish cartoons depicting Christ on the grounds that they were offensive! The ‘defenders of free speech’ in Ireland – people like Kevin Myers and a collection of hacks from the Sunday Independent turned out to have no sense of either irony, history or their own hypocrisy. These same people were often the loudest and most strident supporters of the anti republican Section 31 censorship when it was



in force in Ireland. They are also the most vocal cheerleaders of the various wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and potentially Iran... curious eh?

On the other side it emerged that hardline Danish imams had toured the cartoons around the Muslim world for months, and even added their own! They were welcomed by the religious right and Muslim governments. Undemocratic states in the Middle East used and encouraged the protests in an attempt to legitimise their dictatorial power. Questions began to be asked about how demonstrators managed to set fire to embassies in countries like Syria where anti government protestors are regularly arrested,

tortured and ‘disappeared’. In a move which reminded us of ‘freedom fries’ the Iranian president declared that ‘Danish pastries’ were to be renamed ‘flowers of Mohammad’. Possibly he hoped that this shallow populist gesture would distract from the fact that his government was at that time engaged in a ferocious crackdown on striking bus drivers in Teheran. Setting up an illegal independent trade union and defying the paramilitary police oppression the struggle by the bus workers of Teheran shows that the Muslim world is not some homogenous block but that it does in fact contain a diversity of views.

Not all the protests were orchestrated or whipped up by the religious right or state tyrants. The cartoons were racist and offensive – they stereotyped Muslims (and especially Arabs) as suicide bombers and lunatics. In the context of the ‘war on terror’ and the debates in Europe over Islam and immigration it’s not surprising that a community under attack took offence to something which would have been better ignored.

However we should also be clear that religious ideas, like any others, are fair game for critique, criticism and attack. In Ireland we have fought and are still fighting against the religious right for basic freedoms such as divorce, birth control, the acceptance of homosexuality and the provision of abortion. These are things we demand, and it doesn’t matter whether or not they conflict with anyone’s religious beliefs.

Jack White

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Organise! Working Class Resistance

Class Struggle Anarchist Organisation

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www.organiseireland.org

LIBERTARIAN NETWORKS

Networks and collectives with a libertarian ethos in which anarchists are involved

Grassroots Dissent

<http://flag.blackened.net/infohub/grassroots>

Non-hierarchical Network of grassroots social justice activists formed as a merger between Dissent! and the Dublin Grassroots Network.

Indymedia Ireland

www.indymedia.ie

*Irish Branch of Global Media Collective
The place to find Irish campaign news.*

Barracka Books

Radical Book Store

61 Barrack Street, Cork City

barrackabooks@yahoo.ie

Cork Autonomous Zone

Social Space

61 Barrack St., Cork

corkcaz@yahoo.ie

ACTIVIST GROUPS

Activist groups fighting for social justice

Shell to Sea

www.shelltosea.com

Website of campaign to move Shell’s pipeline offshore from Co. Mayo

Alliance For Choice

Campaign for women’s freedom to choose

www.struggle.ws/ireland/allianceforchoice/index.html

BODY

Pro Choice Youth Activist Group

choice_ireland@hotmail.com

Louise: 086 329 3741

Residents Against Racism

Campaign against racism & deportations

Meets every Friday at 7pm in the Teachers Club, 36 Parnell Square in Dublin www.residentsagainstracism.org

EMAIL/WEB

irishanarchism@yahoogroups.com

Big, high-volume anarchist discussion list

ainriail@struggle.ws

Low-volume newslit from the WSM

Announcements, Reports, Articles

www.anarchism.ws/ireland.html

Index of Irish anarchist Internet resources

www.anarkismo.net

International Anarchist Website

RED AND BLACK

REVOLUTION 10



The current issue of our theoretical magazine features articles on Communism, Environmental Struggles, the Bin Tax, the Zapitistas and more. Available from the WSM.

Thinking About Anarchism State Authority

by Gregor Kerr



Don't we all feel safer now that Mary Harney has banned the sale of magic mushrooms!! In a decision taken in record-quick time, Harney and her government colleagues decided that they couldn't have us all going around sampling mind-altering fungi and maybe even enjoying them. More importantly the decision was made that we couldn't be trusted to decide for ourselves what was safe/unsafe for each of us to try. We need such decisions to be made for us because apparently we are incapable of deciding for ourselves.

And those that rule us would have it no other way. After all if they didn't manage to sell us the idea that we need their laws to keep us safe, their role as rulers would effectively be gone. Over 150 years ago, the French anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon wrote "To be governed is to be kept in sight, inspected, spied upon, directed, law-driven, numbered, enrolled, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, estimated, valued, censured, commanded... To be governed is to be at every operation, at every transaction, noted, registered, enrolled, taxed, stamped, measured, numbered, assessed, licensed, authorised, admonished, forbidden, reformed, corrected, punished..." 1

'Someone else'

What is quite amazing is the extent to which we have all submitted to this idea of needing 'someone else' to make decisions for us. If anyone has listened to recent media discussions about the increase in deaths on our roads, for example, it is impossible not to be struck by the fact that it seems the only solutions that either politicians or supposed experts can come up with are more gardai, increased penalty points etc. How about a truly radical idea?? People taking responsibility for their own actions - I won't drive my car after a couple

of pints, I won't drive over the speed limits because I might kill someone else or myself.

Instead of this the constant refrain is - we need more cops, we need stronger laws. Yet, if any of these commentators were asked directly, they would of course claim that they themselves are perfectly responsible. But there's always 'someone else' who needs to be controlled.

It's not surprising really that this is the case. After all from the time we are knee-high we are indoctrinated with the idea of the need for regulation and rules. We are led to believe that that amorphous body referred to as 'the State' is necessary for both our protection and our social development. But perhaps we should look at things from a different perspective - have you ever considered the fact that far from creating social order, the State is in fact one of the principal causes of social disorder and disharmony?

C o n t r a d i c t i o n

The State as we know it is based on a fundamental contradiction. On the one hand it is supposedly democratic, it appears to welcome and encourage popular participation. After all we get a chance at election time to have our say in how the state is run, we get to decide in favour of or against a particular set of policies which will be implemented over the coming period. Ironically, however, it is through this very process of giving us 'our say' that we actually sign away our right to have any real influence over what happens. What happens is that we abrogate our ability to directly participate in decision-making and we buy into the notion that 'someone else' - the State, our rulers ... - knows best. And once we buy into this decision we abdicate the idea of taking responsibility for our own actions. Thus the

reason why people don't drink and drive is the fear of getting caught rather than an awareness of the dangers involved. We apparently need a version of 'Big Brother' to keep us in check!!

Politicians always sell us the idea of course that they operate in the 'national interest' and in the 'common good'. But the fact is that governments always - no matter what their political make-up - protect the status quo. There is no 'national interest'. The State is there to protect the interests of those with money, power and privilege.

New Social Order

But of course it doesn't have to be so. Anarchism looks to get rid of the division between rulers and ruled, to establish a new social order in which the State will have no role and no power because we will live in a society of equals where each of us takes responsibility for our own actions. In the words of Russian anarchist Peter Kropotkin "Either the State for ever, crushing individual and local life, taking over in all fields of human activity, bringing with it its wars and its domestic struggles for power, its palace revolutions which only replace one tyrant by another, and inevitably at the end of this development there is ...death! Or the destruction of States, and new life starting again in thousands of centres on the principle of the lively initiative of the individual and groups and that of free agreement. The choice lies with you!" 2

1. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon: General Idea of the Revolution, p. 294
2. Quoted in Marshall, Peter 'Demanding The Impossible: A History of Anarchism' P. 623

Who We Are, What We're For..

Momentum is the word that you can associate with the anarchist movement for this year. 2006 started off with a visit by Noam Chomsky, perhaps the most famous living critic of US foreign policy. What many people don't realise is that Chomsky is very sympathetic to the ideas of anarchism, particularly the need to constantly challenge authority and hierarchy. It ties in neatly with the headline from the last edition of this paper 'Question all authority!'

Chomsky went further in his Amnesty International address in Dublin when he said "what anarchism teaches us is that all hierarchies and forms of authority must be challenged and if they are not justified, then they must be torn down". Chomsky took time out of his busy schedule to also address a special meeting for members and friends of the WSM.

The last couple of months have also seen WSM public meetings in Derry, Dun Laoghaire and Limerick. Waterford and Belfast are next, watch out for posters and local newspaper notices.

From there the WSM has gone on to organise, with the help of many friends, the first ever Anarchist Bookfair, which took place in the Liberties of Dublin in early March. This comprised more than a dozen information stalls, many booksellers, a day and half of radical films and videos, workshops, and meetings with speakers from home and abroad. The Liberties area also saw the first issue of The Libertarian, a newsletter produced by local WSM members.

To tie in with the film Jarhead, we helped to organise a public meeting for James Massey (an ex.-US marine and veteran of the present war in Iraq.) who now spends his time gathering support for the anti-war movement.

We will be marching against the occupation of Iraq and the use of Shannon airport to facilitate it, as part of the worldwide day of protest on March 18th.

So, we've been busy and the ideas of anarchism are spreading. Remember that the circled @ stands for anarchism being organised, the A inside the O. To help these ideas spread further, you have to seriously think about being part of an organised anarchist group. The movement is growing, help us to grow it more.



Riot In Dublin

Celtic Tiger: You reap what you sow

A small band of fringe nationalists decided to stop the Love Ulster parade. There is no question but that crowd of loyalists are sectarian bigots. During a protest against the release of republican prisoners as part of the Good Friday agreement, their leader, Willie Frazer, was asked about loyalist murder gang prisoners. "They should never have been locked up in the first place," he replied.

Republican Sinn Fein called for the march to be "opposed" and those who turned up took it on themselves to decide who could and who could not march. Let us be clear, this was not about preventing intimidation, this was not about defending an estate from thugs intending arson and violence. It was an attempt by a small group to dictate to everyone else. Simply finding something offensive is no good reason to ban it, that's the road to authoritarianism.

Hundreds of young men (and it was mostly young men) spilled onto O'Connell Street. Having stopped the loyalist march, they turned their attention to the gardai. Bricks, bottles and iron bars rained down. It's a wonder that nobody suffered a serious head injury.

Eight cars, two mopeds and two bicycles were burnt. About a dozen shop windows were smashed. Three shop workers in Westland Row were beaten by a mob after trying to stop people thieving alcohol. A week later they were still off work because of their injuries. RTE's Charlie Bird was also attacked.

There was nothing progressive in this (though it's extremely hard to get upset about a table being thrown through the PD's window!). The rioters had no goal; they were a mixed bag of the angry, the nationalist and the discontented. Indeed the bulk of the violence happened after most of the RSF members had left.

There are a lot of working class young men who are regularly harassed by Gardai because of where they live and how they dress. There are those who the Celtic Tiger did nothing for, the early school leavers, the unskilled. There are those who treated the riot like an adventure sport, a bit of excitement in an otherwise boring life. And there were those who saw a chance to loot.



It all adds up to a display of how some young people feel alienated and without any political direction. Surrounded by wealth and opportunity, they feel left out.

Unfortunately, however, it is very difficult to turn such destructive expressions of anger into constructive channels. While some of the most marginalised elements of the working class woke up on that Sunday morning with a new appreciation of their collective power, they still lack any constructive way of expressing this and until that avenue presents itself, it won't lead to any political force that can bring about lasting change.

Within hours, the state's politicians were queuing up to express their outrage and 'anger' at the events. But what is the point of reacting to anger with anger? What use is anger against people who don't give a fuck and who don't have anything to lose? At any

rate such expressions of anger totally miss the point. It is the policies implemented by successive governments that have destroyed communities and created a layer of disaffected youth.

There is a French anarchist saying that goes "he who sows misery, harvests anger". On Saturday February 25th 2006, we saw the first harvest of our Celtic Tiger and chances are that it won't be the last.

Rosspport Solidarity Camp Reopens

Rosspport Solidarity Camp is re-opening at the moment, in preparation for any attempt by Shell to recommence work, something that they couldn't do over winter, due to the fatal combination of rain and bog.

The camp was originally set up in June 2005, as a space for people to travel to Erris to play a direct role in the struggle. Having the camp is important, as the area has a low population, and so getting more people to the coalface of resistance is crucial. Although getting little corporate/state media coverage at the moment, the Shell to Sea campaign continues to widen and deepen its resilient blockade of Shell and the state. On March 12th, former prisoners Vincent McGrath and Micheál ó Seighin, were given the honour of being grand marshals of the San Francisco St.Patrick's Day parade.

In February prominent Shell to Sea campaigner and local school teacher Maura Harrington

was subjected to an attempt at intimidation, when her car was tailgated from the weekly Shell to Sea meeting, by a carload of young men, driving without lights, number plates or tax or insurance discs. After this car was cornered and the police called it transpired the driver was a security guard employed by Shell.

(Shell's main activity at the moment is in 'public relations', and they have hired Christy Loftus, formerly of The Western People newspaper for this sort of work. Shell have also hired John Carey, who retired last year as Chief Superintendent of the Mayo Garda Division, as an unspecified "advisor".)

While Rosspport may be remote and isolated, what is happening there isn't. A row of white crosses stand across from the main gate at the proposed refinery site in Ballinaboy, in stark silent reminder of Shell's crimes in Nigeria. Shell to Sea campaigners recently visited Ringaskiddy, Cork, home of a battle against a toxic

waste incineration project and many travelled to Dublin to support Irish Ferries workers opposing the untrammelled rule of big business.

In a Irish Times article Fianna Fail advisor Martin Manseragh, commenting on the battle against Shell, wrote: "Decisions on the exploitation of natural resources, and valid law and procedures to be followed by foreign companies, cannot be left to be determined by default by local agitation.." and that the government must: "redress the usurpation of its authority to deal with third parties outside the State.". That is our choice who will have the say, and make the decisions, ordinary working people, or IBEC's government.

More people are welcome to come to the camp and details of how you can help can be found on our website www.struggle.ws/rsc/ or by phoning Tracey at 087 6543425 or Micheal 086 3588890.

Terry Clancy.