

# WORKERS SOLIDARITY

*Irish narchist Paper*



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[www.struggle.ws/wsm.html](http://www.struggle.ws/wsm.html)

## A bosses Europe or an anarchist Europe?



### What EU bosses want

- Europe-wide privatisation, cutbacks and layoffs
- a Europe that exploits Africa and Asia for profit
- 'fortress Europe' with racist immigration controls
- patents and profits from medical drugs
- ever more cops, jails and surveillance to protect their wealth
- a Rapid Reaction Force to enforce corporate rule on the globe
- European nationalism v. the globe



### What anarchists want

- workers' self-management, expansion of public services
- solidarity with the peoples of Africa and Asia as part of an international revolution
- the free movement of all people without border controls
- free medical drugs for all who need them
- an end to inequality and the system that protects it
- an end to their militarisation, war and armies  
No war on Iraq!
- Global workers' solidarity

# Vote NO to Nice 2

# "Did you see what I did to those anarchist bastards"

On August 23<sup>rd</sup> 1927, two Italian-born anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were judicially murdered by the State of Massachusetts in the USA, having been framed for two murders they didn't commit.

Sacco and Vanzetti were committed anarchists who had been active in many workers' struggles. In 1916, Sacco was arrested for taking part in a demonstration in solidarity with workers on strike in Minnesota. In the same year he took part in a strike in a factory in Plymouth, Massachusetts. It was here that he met Bartolomeo Vanzetti, who was one of the principal organisers of that strike. Like most anarchists, the two were also active in their opposition to the First World War.

Severe poverty in the post-war years meant that many workers were dissatisfied with the status quo. The authorities were terrified that workers might follow the example of the Russian Revolution, and were doing everything in their power to portray communism and anarchism as 'un-American', and to frighten workers away from 'red' propaganda.

In April 1920, anarchist Andrea Salsedo was arrested and detained for 8 weeks. On the morning of May 3<sup>rd</sup>, he 'fell' to his death from the 14<sup>th</sup> floor window of a New York Dept. of Justice building. Sacco and Vanzetti, along with other comrades, immediately called a public meeting in Boston to protest. While out building support for this meeting they were arrested on suspicion of "dangerous radical activities". They soon found themselves charged with a payroll robbery which had taken place the previous April in which 2 security guards had been killed.

The case came to trial in June 1921, and lasted for seven weeks. The state's case against the two was almost non-existent. Twelve of Vanzetti's customers (he was working as a fish seller) testified that he was delivering fish to them at the time of the crime. An official of the Italian Consulate in Boston testified that Sacco had been seeing him about a passport at the time. Furthermore, somebody else confessed to the crime and said that neither Sacco nor Vanzetti had anything to do with it.

The judge in the case, Judge Webster Thayer, said of Vanzetti: "This man, although he may not have actually committed the crime attributed to him, is nevertheless morally culpable, because he is the enemy of our existing institutions." The foreman of the jury, a retired policeman, said in response to a friend of his who ventured the opinion that Sacco and Vanzetti might be innocent "Damn them. They ought to hang anyway." Having sen-

tenced the two men to death, the judge boasted to a friend "Did you see what I did to those anarchist bastards the other day..."

There was no doubt about the fact that Sacco and Vanzetti were on trial for their political beliefs and that the verdict when it came was a class verdict - the state was delivering a clear message to the US working class - steer well clear of anarchist thought or face the consequences.

Sacco and Vanzetti were to spend the next six years in prison as appeal after appeal was turned down. Finally, on August 23<sup>rd</sup> 1927, they were executed. News of the executions sent hundreds of thousands of protestors into the streets all across the world. The US embassy in Paris had to be surrounded by tanks to protect it from an angry crowd of protestors, a riot in London resulted in 40 injuries, the US Consulate in Geneva was surrounded by a 5,000 strong crowd, huge crowds wearing black armbands marched in Boston and New York.

Shortly before he was executed, Vanzetti said, "...The last moment belongs to us - that agony is our triumph!" It is in remembering the moment of their deaths, and in continuing to fight for their vision of a new, fair society that we honour these men.

To commemorate the executions and to renew the commitment to the ideals they fought for, anarchists in New York and elsewhere held events on 23<sup>rd</sup> August. As our own contribution to the commemoration of these two working class heroes, the WSM will host a talk and video showing on Friday September 20<sup>th</sup> at 8pm in the IFC, Temple Bar, Dublin.



Sacco and Vanzetti

## Have your say

Write a letter to us at WSM,  
PO Box 1528, Dublin 8.

## That's Capitalism



According to the latest UN Human development report more than 30,000 children die every day from preventable diseases, 113 million children are not receiving schooling, and there are 854 million illiterate adults. Meanwhile the richest 5% in the world have incomes 114 times greater than the poorest.

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The same UN Human Development shows the 26 countries having the highest level of poverty and the most unequal society in the industrialised world after the USA. This doesn't seem to bother the Dublin government who are cutting over €100 million from their budgets as the ESB, VHI, third level fees and accident & emergency charges are all increasing, and new road tolls are on the way. 800 new jobs in the health service will not be filled as the start of McCreevy's spending freeze. At the same time the richest 10% of Irish society is 11 times wealthier than the poorest 10%.

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23 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are poorer than they were in 1975, with 47% of the sub-Saharan population is living on \$1 a day - a figure unchanged since 1990

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One in two children in Northern Ireland are living in poverty or at risk of poverty, according to a report by the Save the Children charity. Nearly a third of children live in households whose only income comes from benefits and a further 18% of children live in households that claim Working Family Tax Credit. One in six children do not have a properly fitting pair of shoes, a warm coat and three meals a day. Some of the worst poverty is faced by Traveller families where children remain 10 times more likely to die before the age of 10 than a child from the settled community.

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Last year saw the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department ordered to pay a total of \$27 million compensation to 300,000 (not a misprint!) former prisoners. They had been detained beyond their release dates or wrongly jailed because of "erroneous" warrants. So far, over 30,000 people have filed claims.

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The new Southern Education Minister, Noel Dempsey, has increased the standard maintenance grant for students by a pathetic 5% - which does nothing about addressing the huge difference between the real cost of attending college and the amount received by students on the grant. Meanwhile he also raised the student registration fees by 70% from €396 to €670. This can be seen as the re-introduction of fees through the backdoor.

# Thinking about Anarchism Movement Nice and Nationalism

**The Nice referendum is one of those odd occasions where anarchists are recommending the same vote as individuals and organisations we find odious. For instance some of those calling for a No vote are making racist panic arguments saying a Yes vote will result in 7.5 million Eastern Europeans moving to Ireland! It's rather obvious that anarchists who oppose all border controls have no time for such tripe.**

But Nice also throws up more complex issues, in particular in relation to the new EU council voting system and the changes to Article 133 of the EU treaty. These will mean that the EU Council and Commission will be responsible for the negotiation of trade deals rather than the national governments of the EU.

The changes to Paragraph 4 of Article 133 says the "Council shall act by a qualified majority." This means that when an agreement is reached at the EU Council all member states must go along with it and cannot veto it. The 'qualified majority' referred to are the new, complex voting rules that will in effect allow the powerful countries of Italy, France, Germany and Britain (where most EU corporations have their headquarters) to have a much greater say in what decisions are made than the smaller ones.

This has of course got the nationalists all hot and bothered because it is a loss of 'national sovereignty' for Ireland. Irrespective of what decisions are made it appears they want them made by Irish politicians rather than European ones.

However anarchists do see these changes as a reason to oppose the Nice treaty. Not because they will reduce Irish sovereignty but we recognise that this new structure is to make it easier to impose the agenda of capitalist globalisation across the EU. But our answer to this is not a return to having Irish bosses making the decisions for us. Rather it is to insist that decisions on trade and services should be made by all the people of Europe and not by a select few, whether they meet on a national or international basis.

We recognise that this can only happen in a post-capitalist society - one extended not just throughout Europe but all over the globe. This is the only alternative to the false choice between European bosses and Irish bosses. In that context anarchists are internationalists.

But anarchists are more than internationalists. This label implies the continued existence of the nation state and co-ordination between such nation states. In reality though there are very few places on the globe where logical decision making areas will coincide with the current national boundaries.

In an anarchist society decisions will be made by all those they affect. In the case of a decision about a dam for instance it is obvious that this should involve all those on the rivers watershed (the area it drains)



## Getting involved

**Anarchism is a very simple idea - basically society should be organised in a non-hierarchical way, it should not be divided into order-givers and order-takers. We don't need bosses, politicians, bishops or anybody else to tell us how to live our lives. Anarchists look to a society which will be based on the idea of "from each according to ability, to each according to need".**

We want to bring about a society based on real grassroots democracy where power remains at local level and is organised upwards through workplace and community councils.

We do not want to become rulers nor do we want to seize power "on behalf of the working class". We have no interest in replacing one set of bosses with another. Instead we work for a free socialist society where everyone can have a direct say in making the decisions that will effect them.

and should not be limited by whatever national boundaries happen to now exist along that river. In Europe rivers like the Rhine and the Danube flow through several countries on the way to the sea.

Decisions on the prevention of diseases like foot and mouth on the other hand are obviously best made on the basis of areas that have some natural boundaries that limit movement into them. In Ireland for instance even unionist politicians recognised that the Irish Sea rather than the border was the sensible demarcation point during the last outbreak.

So anarchists are more than internationalists. We desire a global world where national boundaries are of as little relevance as parish boundaries today. We oppose all forms of nationalism that try and set the people of one country above the people of another. Decisions should be made by those they effect, that requires a multitude of decision making areas from your street or workplace right up to the entire population of the globe.

Andrew Flood

This society will only be brought about through revolution! There is an old anarchist slogan which says that if elections changed anything they would be illegal. The thinking behind it is that real democratic change cannot come from the top down but must be built from the bottom up. Instead of voting in elections and effectively giving someone else control of our lives, we stand for direct action and solidarity among and between workers.

The Workers Solidarity Movement has been campaigning against the Nice Treaty. Joining up with other libertarian and internationalist forces, we have been posing an anarchist Europe as the alternative to both the bosses' plans and the backward isolationism of the right wing nationalists around Justin Barrett and Anthony Coughlan.

Our members in SIPTU have been canvassing support for Des Derwin, who is taking on the bureaucracy in the election for a new union general secretary. Derwin is fighting on a platform of making the union more democratic and member controlled by changing the rules, and opposing social partnership with the employers and state. Hopefully, radicals in the union will make contact with each other, and lay the basis for a network committed to a fighting trade unionism that is under the direct control of the membership.

Members of the WSM are also active in the campaigns against the bin tax, and in the ongoing struggle against racism. We produce this paper, the magazine *Red & Black Revolution*, and the occasional *Anarchist News* bulletin. With our relatively small numbers there is a limit to what we can do. That's why we need people like you to get involved. If you like what you've in this paper, maybe you would be willing to take 10 or more copies to distribute among friends, workmates or neighbours. The more people who read about the ideas and the more people who get involved in struggle, the sooner we will reach our objective - a world free of poverty and exploitation. A world where freedom is a reality for all.

## NEWS FROM THE WSM VIA THE INTERNET

Our email list Ainriail distributes regular news updates and notices of events to subscribers. There are 4 - 8 emails a week. To join the list just email [ainriail-request@struggle.ws](mailto:ainriail-request@struggle.ws) with the subject subscribe

Our web page [www.struggle.ws/wsm](http://www.struggle.ws/wsm) includes a huge archive of articles about the history of anarchism and Irish struggles.

# Why does the US want war with Iraq?

**Saddam is certainly a nasty shit. His regime is brutal. He has used biological and chemical weapons against his own people. He allows no opposition, and uses murder and torture to remain in power. The thought that he might have nuclear weapons is a frightening one. Yet it is naive in the extreme to think the Bush administration is motivated by these issues alone.**

The most common reason for war, cited by both Democrat and Republican members of Congress is Iraq's attempts to build weapons of mass destruction and his violations of UN resolutions. The trouble is the same arguments could just as easily be applied to Israel, which possesses nuclear bombs now and ignores UN resolutions. Yet there are no plans to bomb Tel Aviv. Or how about Pakistan, which is run by a military dictator, has actually test detonated nuclear weapons and in recent months has been one half of the quite credible threat of a nuclear war (with India).

Algeria and Egypt are both countries in which serious human rights abuses have been reported. Yet the US isn't talking about invading either of these countries either. In the past the US was quite in favor of Saddam's dictatorship. They sold him arms throughout the Iran/Iraq war. During the Iran and Iraq war Saddam dropped gas on a village called Halabja. The US not only blocked UN resolutions condemning Saddam but issued reports blaming Iran for the attack. They kept silent as he carried out genocide on the Kurds in the 1980s. Given US history in Iraq it is stretching it to imagine that they suddenly have a problem with the use of chemical and biological warfare.

Which brings us to the question of motivation. Why is this war going to be fought? There doesn't seem to be a simple answer to this question. The Republican Party, US business interests and other countries in the world all seem to be split on the issue. Indeed only Bush's immediate administration and Blair seem to be in favour of war. Comment writers have even been wondering if this is a moral crusade?

However, like most other wars, this is about control of resources. Bush Jnr is the Oil Barons' president. Vice President Dick Cheney is the former head of an oil company called Halliburton Co. In 2001 the Washington Post reported that he signed contracts with Iraq worth 73 million dollars. Dick Cheney explained his opposition to Saddam by saying "He sits on top of 10 percent of the world's oil reserves. He has enormous wealth being

generated by that. And left to his own devices, it's the judgement of many of us that in the not too distant future he will acquire nuclear weapons". It's interesting to note that Cheney places oil above nuclear weapons in his list of concerns. US corporations have heavily invested in the Audi Arabian oil industry. That most of the September 11<sup>th</sup> bombers came from that country makes the US nervous about its dependency on the Saudi royal family.

Wars are also good for the economy, and



the US economy certainly could need some help at the moment. Although the stock market falls in the lead up to conflict, once the bombs start going down, the share prices start going up. According to the Sunday Times business correspondent Kathryn Cooper, American share prices rose by 36% during four recent wars. Oil companies also benefit. Iraq is the world's second largest producer of oil (after Saudi Arabia). An attack would disrupt its oil supplies. Other oil producer countries could then increase the price of their oil. Arms dealers also benefit, and also fund election campaigns. Something Bush JR knows well.

Yes Saddam has to go. But it is mistaken to think that if the US get rid of him Iraq will become a better place. After the 1991 Gulf War George Bush Snr called on the people of Iraq to overthrow Saddam. The US then stood back and watched as Saddam massacred those who tried. Collateral benefit is the idea that although the war is being fought for 'non-humanitarian' reasons such as oil, side effects such as the removal of Saddam can be positive. Any idea that there are 'collateral benefits' to US intervention have already been exposed as false by experience. As the Revolutionary Association of Women of Afghanistan have pointed out women still lead insecure fearful lives. The Northern Alliance replaced the Taliban, but nothing much has changed.

Aileen O'Carroll

## What can we do to stop this war in Ireland? Stop refuelling at Shannon

In the past most of Ireland's opposition to international events has been symbolic. We march up and down Dublin's O'Connell Street and we picket embassies. This time we have the opportunity to be more ambitious. Shannon Airport is being used to refuel US military planes. For the last year, with almost total silence from the government, several massive US Air Force Hercules KC-130 airplanes have been landing daily. As well as refuelling they have been practicing military maneuvers.

In December of last year, and August of this year, a group of about 70 people demonstrated at Shannon in order to highlight the presence of the US military. In September Eoin Dubsy painted peace slogans and signs on a Hercules war plane. As far as we in Ireland are concerned, the war against Iraq is being fought in Shannon. So it is to Shannon we must go to oppose it. The SWP controlled 'Irish Anti-War Movement' has provisionally called for a demonstration at Shannon on Saturday October the 19<sup>th</sup>. It is in all our interests that this demonstration is as effective as possible.



## Review: Cuban Anarchism - The History of a Movement

Frank Fernández first gives a detailed and well documented account of how libertarian ideas first took hold in Cuba. During the 1850s, mass Spanish immigration to Cuba brought with it new revolutionary ideas. These ideas interacted with the misery of the super-exploited Cuban workers, slaves and campesinos.

As early as 1857 anarchist ideas took root with the creation of workers' mutual aid associations, regional centres and secular schools. By the 1880s there were several explicitly anarchist workers associations and publications such as *El Productor*, a popular anarchist newspaper, which was published twice weekly by 1888. Towards the end of the decade several anarchist-organised strikes shook the Cuban tobacco industry.

The 1890's in Cuba saw the war for independence from Spain. Fernández describes the differences that existed within the anarchist movement over involvement in the war of independence. In 1892, however, a Cuban anarchist conference voted in support of the independence movement and despite differences of opinion many Cuban anarchists actively cooperated with the separatists.

After the war of independence class struggle continued in Cuba this time under the yoke of Yankee imperialism. Despite often severe repression anarchists continued fighting to build Cuba's militant labour movement and in the 1920s in particular anarchist books, periodicals and pamphlets proliferated. Although there was no specifically anarcho-syndicalist trade union, anarcho-syndicalist ideas predominated within the large trade union federations

such as the Workers' Federation of Havana (FOH) and the Confederación Nacional Obrera de Cuba (CNOC),

Anarchist influence declined after the 1930's when the PCC (the Cuban Communist Party) made deals first with the Machado government, then with Batista, which put the PCC in control of the trade union confederation, making it dependent on the government.

Fernández goes on to describe anarchist participation in the armed struggle against the Batista dictatorship and the repression of the anarchists after Fidel Castro - máximo líder - came to power. All opposition to the new state was eliminated; press, radio, television censored or suppressed. Leading anarcho-syndicalists were expelled from unions and many imprisoned, tortured, murdered. Left with few alternatives many Cuban anarchists went into exile.

The remainder of the book details the experience of the Cuban anarchists in exile, their various publications and their difficulties in relation to the international anarchist movement, which was initially often reluctant to oppose Castro's revolution.

A weakness in the book lies with its lack of a general analysis of the Cuban revolution, with Fernández analysis differing little to that of the US bourgeoisie. Nevertheless the book as a whole is well researched and informative and is a much needed source of information on the important role that anarchists played throughout the history of the Cuban workers movement.

Deirdre Hogan

Also available free online at <http://www.illegalvoices.org/apoc/books/cuban/front.html>

## Review: Libertarians against Nice website <http://more.at/stopnice>

As we face into the Nice treaty you may find yourself lost in the complexity of it all. The Treaty itself is almost impossible to understand unless you are a European law expert and the government summaries are fairly useless.

Fortunately Libertarians Against Nice have put up a web site that explains what a lot of it is about. Specific articles cover topics like Nice and Globalisation, Nice and Fortress Europe and Nice & militarisation. Alongside this and extensive selection of links provide further information on these areas from all over the web. Finally if you are very motivated there are links to the official online version of the Treaty on the EU site and other documents relevant to it.

The articles do a good job of explaining things the referendum commission left out last time. For instance it didn't mention the changes to Article 133 at all, the LAN site shows how these are fundamen-

tal to the agenda of the World Trade Organisation.

If the Nice treaty had been passed then Ireland would now be forced to impose sanctions on third world countries that refused to co-operate with the racist policies of Fortress Europe. This is because at the EU Seville summit a sufficient number of countries voted for such a proposal for it to be enforced under the new Nice voting rules. As these were not in place the proposal was vetoed.

The site also includes details of how to link up with libertarians campaigning against Nice in your area. PDF files of leaflets and posters are available for you to download, print out and locally distribute. All in all a good resource which will help you to convince your friends, work-mates and neighbours to vote No to Nice.

## Lindsay Tribunal : The Cuts That Killed

**The Lindsay Tribunal has finished its work. It found nobody in particular was responsible for 79 deaths. It was as though the mothers needing anti-D injections, haemophiliacs, and patients receiving transfusions just don't matter.**

Contaminated blood products infected at least 104 people with AIDS, at least 217 with Hepatitis C, and 69 people with both. So far 79 haemophiliacs have died.

This happened during the last round of Fianna Fail health cuts. A deliberate decision was made that it was acceptable to risk killing patients in order to save a few bob. Properly screened blood products were more expensive. So, the BSB didn't recall products which they know to be potentially deadly, and treated the victims with appalling callousness.

Professor Ian Temperley, Director of the National Haemophilia Treatment Centre from 1971-1995 wrote to the Blood Transfusion Supply Board: "*The board should understand that in the present period of financial stringency the hospitals could not be expected to meet a doubling of the cost of concentrates in 1989. Some balance will have to be struck between cost and the infection dangers associated with blood products*"

Judge Lindsay said she did not think it would be appropriate to send a copy of her report to the Director of Public Prosecutions. Of course if it had happened to patients in the Mater Private or the Blackrock Clinic it might have been a different story.



Joe King

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# Factory worker takes on SIPTU top brass

A radical shopfloor worker has put himself forward in the election for general secretary of Ireland's biggest union, SIPTU. Des Derwin, an assembly operative at the Mouldpro plastics factory in Dublin, is a long-time union activist and independent socialist. His two opponents, Noel Dowling and Joe O'Flynn, are senior full-time employees of the union who stand for continuing union 'partnership' with the bosses and the government.

The rule book gives the ordinary members so little control that anyone elected is free to do pretty much as they please regardless of promises made before the election. Derwin wants to break the dependency on the full-time officials. He is calling for shop stewards to be given more resources and time off to represent their members, for SIPTU officers to be paid workers' wages rather than executive salaries, and for the restoration of the right of ordinary members to elect the National Executive Council.

He hopes that his election campaign will start a debate about what sort of union we want. Do we want a pro-employer service supplied by highly paid professionals or do we want an organisation controlled by shopfloor workers and willing to fight for the best possible wages and conditions? Are we to be little more than consumers of a service or should we be in the driving seat?

Derwin puts his cards on the table in his election address, "a union should tell the employer - not the workers - what they have to accept".

**Workers Solidarity spoke to Des Derwin:**

**Why did you decide to stand?**

To provide an alternative voice. A voice for change in SIPTU. Both of the other candidates have the same policies as each other. Both have the same policies as the Union leadership. A vote for either is a vote for more of the same. They support social partnership. Neither of them objected to the abolition of the members' vote for the NEC.

**What sort of trade union would you like to see SIPTU become?**

A fighting and democratic trade union, exactly like it says on the tin. The main point of standing is to broadcast to the members the idea that there is a different type of trade unionism. That unions are there to defend jobs, pay, conditions and living standards against the ruthlessness of the rich and the market. Not to be partners of the rich and powerful. That unions are the members, not a well-heeled apparatus passing on a consensus

from tripartite committees. That it should not be natural, but shocking, to have the Taoiseach, fresh from closing hospitals, to reopen Liberty Hall.

**How do you think this can be achieved?**

Not by electing a different General Secretary. But that vote can be a focus for what will achieve it. For members, who want change, to organise to bring it about. To organise, even before that, to be able to act, or to assist those acting, even when the support of our leaders is missing. It won't be overnight. Not with disorganisation and disinterest on the shop floor and non-attendance at Branch meetings. Not with social partnership as the accepted norm.

Beginning with networks and bulletins and on to stronger link ups, a movement can take off. And take up, on the job, in the Branch and from the podium of conference, an agenda for change: free collective bargaining, solidarity and sympathetic action, campaigning on the social wage, open debate on major issues, changes in the Rules and the structures of the Union, election and accountability of officials.

The root will be, as it always was, strong Sections and Section Committees in the workplace. That agenda is not fully agreed, or even fully envisaged, even among all those supporting my candidacy. It doesn't have to be. There is enough common ground to take first steps - another has led off before me - and hammer out the agenda along the way. Nothing can be forced on people - especially by a lone General Secretary - because it will take a great many members acting in agreement to effect even the first real changes.

Your vote for me will add weight to an alternative voice for a fighting and democratic SIPTU. I'm not after a big union job. I'm standing for renewal and change in our union. For a turn to independence, fighting-form and control from below by the general membership. Your vote is only a start. It will take many members, organised and organising for it, to bring change.



*Another candidate demonstrates the currently approved SIPTU approach to the bosses*

Balloting starts on September 19th and continues through to October 9th. To get leaflets to hand out in your workplace, call 087-6229686 or email dderwin@gofree.indigo.ie

*Alan MacSimóin (SIPTU shop steward)*

## Events and contacts

### Dublin Open Meetings

Every month in Dublin we host a gathering of anarchists and other libertarian socialists to discuss a topic of interest over a pint. The meetings, for experienced activists and new comers alike, normally feature a local guest speaker with some expertise in the area, and are intended for thought provoking open discussion - not indoctrination! We hope to develop these meetings so they become an essential monthly meeting point. Newcomers welcome - just bring along an open mind. The meetings are in The Teachers Club, 36 Parnell Square.

### October the 14<sup>th</sup> - Immigration and Fortress Europe

With the second vote on the Nice treaty a look at Fortress Europe and the growth of racism in Europe

### November the 11<sup>th</sup> - Green Primitivism

The destruction capitalism is causing to the environment have led some to reject the very idea of progress and argue for a return to primitive society. We look at their ideas.

### Other events

#### September 22nd - Reclaim the Streets

Meet up at 2.30 sharp at St. Stephens Green

#### Friday, October 4th - Half day strike

National half-day strike to demand three weeks state redundancy pay per year of service. Join your local trade union rally at 2pm. Support the Peerless Rugs workers occupying their factory since July 2001 to demand decent redundancy pay.

#### October the 19<sup>th</sup> - Anti war demo at Shannon Airport

October the 26-27<sup>th</sup> - Grassroots Gathering, 1-5 Donegal Lane, Belfast

### Contact the WSM

Workers Solidarity Movement, PO Box 1528, Dublin 8 or  
E-mail wsm\_ireland@yahoo.com,  
cork\_wsm@yahoo.com  
Phone/SMS 087-7939931  
On the web - <http://struggle.ws/wsm>

# Dunboyne Sacking - Union Failed To Act

**At the end of July, the principal teacher of Gaelscoil Thulach na nOg in Dunboyne, Co. Meath was sacked by the school's patron body, An Foras Patrúnachta [\*] after a dispute about the teaching of religion. The sacking was a victory for bigotry and intolerance and a defeat for democracy, diversity and - most worryingly of all - the concept of trade union collective action. 'An injury to one' was not taken on as 'an injury to all' and the position of all teachers is weaker as a result.**

Gaelscoil Thulach na nOg was established as an 'inter-denominational' school a number of years ago and Tomás O Dulaing was appointed as its first principal. 'Inter-denominational' - in the context of Irish primary education - means that there are children from the two main religions - Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland, taught side by side. When the school was established, the question of how to deal with the teaching of religious doctrine or truths was not clarified. The principal, teachers, parents and Board of Management - with the agreement of the patron body - set about a long consultative process aimed at formulating a policy acceptable to all.

At the conclusion of this process, a policy was drawn up and agreed by all involved in the consultations. This policy stated that all matters common to both religions would be taught during normal school hours to all pupils, but that matters of 'truth' (ie matters accepted as truth by only one religious denomination such as First Holy Communion for Roman Catholics) would be taught outside of school hours.

However when this policy was submitted to the patron body for their approval, they insisted that such an approach was not acceptable and that all religion should be taught during school hours. What this would in effect mean would be that the non-Catholic pupils would be made to sit in the classroom while matters particular to the Catholic doctrine were taught, thus showing up in the most obvious way possible to the majority that these children were in some way 'different'.

## Democracy

As an anarchist I obviously have very strong views on the proper place for religion in education and elsewhere - outside the door to put it politely. The issues at stake in this case were not however a refusal to teach religion, in fact all teachers expressed a willingness to do so. What was at stake was a straight question of democracy - were this patron body to be allowed to overturn a decision arrived at after long consultation and agreed by all the school community - parents, teachers and Board of Management?

The first result of the patron's decision was a shift in the balance of power on the management board, with a majority backing the patron's stance. O Dulaing as principal however stood by the democratically-arrived-at policy and wrote a letter to the parents outlining his stance. It was ultimately for writing this letter that he was sacked, with the patron claiming that his sacking had nothing to do with religion but was purely an industrial relations matter.

Despite retaining at all times the support of all the teachers and 80% of the parents in the school, O Dulaing's suspension in April was followed - after a series of so-called appeals that looked to the outside observer to be mere window dressing - by his dismissal. It was ultimately the failure of his union, the INTO (Irish National Teachers Organisation), to treat the matter as 'an industrial relations matter' that allowed the dismissal to happen. This despite the fact that this year's INTO annual congress had given unanimous backing to O Dulaing.

When the sacking took place, INTO general secretary John Carr responded by describing it as 'disproportionate' and 'unreasonable' and live on RTE News demonstrated just how seriously the INTO leadership was taking the case when he announced that it would be discussed as a matter of urgency by the Central Executive Committee - three weeks later!!

## What Should Have Been Done??

Words of regret after the sacking, even meetings, pickets or rallies which might be organised (at the time of writing - over a month later - just one public meeting has been called) are all well and good but the fact remains that had effective industrial action been taken the sacking would not have taken place. In short if the INTO leadership had fought the issue on an industrial relations/political level rather than on a legal/'keep your head down' one, O Dulaing would still be principal of the school.

At the very least, the following should have happened:

- A conference/meeting of all teachers working in schools under the patronage of An Foras Patrúnachta should have been called. This meeting was asked for by the teachers in the school, and was supported by motions passed at several INTO branches. A motion at this meeting calling for industrial action in the event of the dismissal going ahead would have been passed and would have been a strong bargaining tool in showing the patron that they would be met with collective action in the event of them attempting to take on a union member.
- The Central Executive Committee should not have waited until the dismissal to discuss what to do about it. A plan of action for such an eventuality should have been outlined as soon as O Dulaing was initially suspended in April. The patron body should have been left in no doubt as to the chain of reaction which would result from an attempted

dismissal This could have involved - as well as strike action in all schools under the patronage of the Foras - industrial action in all schools in the local union branch spreading to involve neighbouring branches on a rolling basis Furthermore, it should have been made clear that the teaching of religion in all schools would become a major issue. A threat that all teachers would withdraw from the teaching of religion would have sent shockwaves through the religious establishment and would have led to pressure being brought to bear on An Foras Patrúnachta to back down.

This dismissal raises many questions for teachers about the role of religion in Irish primary education. Even further it raises serious issues for INTO members about the failure of the union to defend its members from bullying and intimidation by the unaccountable 'owners' of the schools in which we work.

*Gregor Kerr*

Member Dublin City North Branch Committee INTO  
(writing in personal capacity)

\* Primary schools are managed by Boards of Management which are answerable to patron bodies. In the case of denominational schools (ie the vast majority of all primary schools) the patron is the local bishop. The patron body for multid denominational/non-denominational schools is an organisation called 'Educate Together' while about 40 gaelscoils (schools in which teaching is done through the Irish language) are under the patronage of An Foras Patrúnachta. A couple of these are multid denominational and 8 of them are 'inter-denominational'.

## 'Libertarians against Nice' launched

At the start of September anarchists and other libertarian socialists met in Dublin to form 'Libertarians against Nice'. LAN is a network of groups and individuals across Ireland campaigning against the Nice treaty from a libertarian perspective. We are making opposition to capitalist globalisation, Fortress Europe, militarism and the expansion of police powers the basis of our campaign. We also intend to put forward a positive view of a libertarian Europe as an alternative to the bosses' Europe proposed in the Nice treaty.

All the Irish anarchist organisations are involved in LAN as well as a large number of individuals from other campaign groups. LAN is setting up local groups all over the country to campaign for a No vote in the referendum. The founding meeting also agreed to produce at least 50,000 leaflets and hundreds of posters.

We would strongly encourage all our readers to get involved in LAN. Write to us and we will send you material or contact LAN at [contactLAN@yahoogroups.com](mailto:contactLAN@yahoogroups.com), phone 087 7501473. You can also download posters and leaflets from the LAN web site at <http://more.at/stopnice>

# BEEN HERE – WON THAT The anti-bin tax battles

As we go to press the City Council has commenced their next step in the war against the people of Dublin by issuing 4 summonses to members of the campaign in Finglas. These people are due to appear in court on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September in the old Richmond Hospital on North Brunswick Street.

The anti-bin tax campaign, is of course, supporting the defendants with legal representation as well as a sizable demonstration outside the courthouse starting at 10.00am. In the run up to this demonstration against the council's new tactics of dragging people in front of the courts we also had a successful all Dublin activists meeting on the Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> building for the demonstration and working towards a conference in the month of November.

According to the council's own figures less than 50% of people paid any part of their bill last year. With the growing success of non-payment only around 20% have paid something so far this year. This is a good indication that the Dublin Anti-Bin Tax Campaign has been successful in getting the message out to people that the only way this unjust tax is going to be beaten is by mass non-payment. Through membership drives in many localities the campaign has been able to get more people involved, and build up our legal defence fund for the court battles ahead.

The Government are on a huge cut-back drive. Just as I write this they've decided to slash €38 million from the budget allocated for education. The council's drive to make waste collection in this city a profitable venture is tied in with this policy of making people pay twice for services. It's vitally important that we

stop them in their march towards getting more money for us and giving us less and less in return.

With Government implementing cuts there is little chance of them paying up the €19 million that they already owe the city. The Government do not pay any rates on any of the offices they occupy, over 35% of office space in the city. Instead they implement cuts and they get the council to do their dirty work and chase us for a double tax.

In every war you move from one battle to the next. We are winning the battle for non-payment and are going to drive up those non-payment figures. We are now going to enter into the legal arena and we will defend our members against this unjust double tax. The City Council is entering a battle that South Dublin Council lost previously with the water charges. History is on our side.

## Dermot Sreenan

Secretary, Dublin City Anti-Bin Tax Campaign (personal capacity)  
<http://www.StopTheBinTax.com>  
Campaign Hotline: 087-6277606



## Reclaiming the planet - building a movement in Ireland

Over the last few years the libertarian/anarchist movement in Ireland has started to grow significantly. Beyond the number of new organisations there are also far more people choosing to become active on a libertarian basis. The popularity of Reclaim the Streets is one demonstration of this.

Their press release for September 22<sup>nd</sup> described how RTS events are also "*demonstrations of our desire to have a say in how our city and our environment is run, demonstrations of an alternative vision of how public space should be used, demonstrations of ordinary peoples' ability to organise their own celebrations, based on co-operation and mutual aid instead of competition and greed. Our demonstrations are celebrations of the range of visions of our world that are present in our society. We do not shout towards the deaf ears of politicians, instead we aim to empower people and give them a sense of their own potential for creativity and organisation.*"

There are lots of other groups in Ireland that are organising along similar lines, "*to empower people and give them a sense of their own potential for creativity and organisation*". As we grow it is important that we continue to build on the links between the different organisations and people involved in the movement. Last year included two successful events aimed at doing just that, the Grassroots Gatherings held in Dublin (November 2001) and Cork (March 2002). These brought 70 or 80 people together into a couple of days of workshops, parties and action.

In October the Grassroots Gathering moves north of the border to Belfast. It will be held Oct 26-27 in Giros (Belfast Youth and Community Group hall), at 1/5 Donegal Lane, Belfast. This should be the biggest gathering to date, if you want to network with other libertarian activists and exchange experiences and laughs, make sure you get along.

More information, write to Grassroots Gathering c/o PO Box 505, Belfast, BT12 6BQ, email [GGcontact@yahoo.com](mailto:GGcontact@yahoo.com)

More info

<http://grassrootsgathering.freesevers.com>