

# WORKERS SOLIDARITY



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*Irish* **A** *narchist Paper*

# Stop refuelling at Shannon warport



*The aircraft pictured (HC-130P reg# 64-14852) was not only "spotted" but had anti war slogans painted on it by a protester at Shannon Airport.*

**Despite the supposed neutrality of Southern Ireland the Irish government has been involving us more and more in the imperialist adventures of the US military. Shannon airport has become a key refuelling facility for US war planes en route between the US and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.**

US war planes have also been allowed to use Shannon as a training base. During the 1991 Gulf War there were lots of B52 bombers seen at Shannon, en route to raining down death on Iraq from 30,000 feet.

We don't know exactly what is being ferried through Shannon as Customs do not inspect military planes. It may well be that the prisoners taken during the Afghan war and held in appalling conditions at Guantanamo Bay were ferried through Ireland. We don't know what sorts of weapons are being carried on these planes, although a common visitor is the C-130 Hercules which is used to drop the 15,000 'daisy cutter' bomb.

We do know that the Irish government is lying about the use of Shannon. At the time of the Afghan war they claimed that the US troops flying through Shannon were returning home from bases in Germany. Yet protesters at Shannon witnessed hundreds of marines in Desert camouflage gear. We now that

at one point last year a "cargo aircraft landed at Shannon after a report of "smoke in the cabin". When 15 emergency vehicles arrived they were met by armed US Military personnel". We don't know what that plane was carrying or why armed US military personnel were required to keep emergency crews away.

The little we do know is due to the diligent work of a small number of anti-war activists, in particular Tim Hourigan. So we know that planes using Shannon have included C-130 Hercules, F-16s, Galaxy C-5 transporters and the like. We do know that the state security services are doing all in their power to prevent such monitoring, observers have been repeatedly ordered to leave the airport.

Tim reports one such incident from 31 Oct 2002 "two of the war monitors at Shannon today came face to face with a group of US military personnel in the arrivals hall at Shannon airport.... One monitor asked a simple question and both were ordered out of the terminal, at the behest of an anonymous special agent. Two inspectors, two Garda and several security personnel made sure we left the premises."

The time has come to move beyond talking about the militarisation of southern Ireland and to act against it. Inside you will find reports of the actions that have already taken place.

More information on Shannon inside

# International News

On the morning of August 31st this year Earth First Amsterdam launched their "greenwash". Radical environmentalists of GroenFront! as a courtesy service, used paint bombs to 'greenwash' outlets of a dozen corporations in Amsterdam. GroenFront! is certain these transnational corporations will appreciate the gesture; they surely need some help, as their own 'voluntary action' on behalf of sustainable development hasn't done the job very well.

According to GroenFront!: "Companies greenwash themselves when they make a minor effort in the name of sustainability to improve their image, not just to improve sales but also to relieve pressure from a critical civil society. With a new and improved green image, obscure corporate influence at, for example, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg), can be increased. That way, binding regulations can be avoided in favour of 'voluntary action' or profitable market mechanisms such as CO2-trading."

"We are most amused that corporate lobby groups such as the BASD [Business Action for Sustainable Development] are copying from the environmental and anti-globalisation movements. We found it quite hilarious when we noticed their slogan was 'people, planet, profit'. Indeed, it's been obvious for centuries that both planet and people need to be exploited to make a decent profit," said GroenFront! greenwasher 'Anton'. (information from [www.ainfos.ca](http://www.ainfos.ca))

On October 23rd Haggai Matar, an Israeli refusnik was sentenced today to 14 days at Military Prison No. 4, for refusing to be



drafted.

In his statement Haggi says

"My refusal to enlist is inevitable. The oppression known by the peoples of this region during the Age of the Empires, the torment of the slaves and the Indians in North America, the Algerian War of Independence and Apartheid in South Africa - all these precedents have made my refusal inevitable. My grandfather's actions in the Second World War; in his fight against Nazi Fascism, and his belief in humanism - these too lead to my refusal. At home I learnt of oppression and justice. At the face of such evil as one may find here and now, there is no other way.

"On this significant day of my life, accompanied by my supportive family and friends, I wish to acknowledge my companions, the unsung heroes of our struggle: the Palestinian who endures the occupation without

turning to violence against the Israeli civilian population, in spite of his lack of hope for a decent life; the Palestinian citizen of Israel, who keeps striving for co-existence despite day-to-day humiliations; the youth who avoids serving the occupation, her upbringing notwithstanding; the international peace activist, who physically defends Palestinians in the Occupied Territories; and my friend, a girl who was raised in a right-wing family, fell in love with an Arab and was consequently driven out of her home."

While in prison, when forced to salute State and Army - I shall, in my mind and heart, be saluting all my brave friends, to whom I cannot equal, because of my identity; all those whose sacrifice is so much greater than mine - for peace, against the occupation."



Brazilian ranchers truly believe in the "free" market - by which they mean that labour should not be paid for. So far this year, 1,149 people have been freed from slavery. Between 1995 and 2002, more than 4,500 rural workers were freed from slavery.

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THE EU spends the equivalent of US\$2.20 on agricultural subsidies each and every day for each and every cow in Europe. Meanwhile 1.5 billion people exist on US\$1.00 or less per day.

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The US government has given a private company the OK to start commercialising the moon. The TransOribal Corporation of California is expecting money to start rolling in within two years. When were we asked if we wanted to give the US government rights to the moon???

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And you thought house prices had gone crazy here... In the English town of Sidford a former fish shop has been converted into a 'house' that measures 15ft x 10ft. It went on the market for €93,800. It has one room, with a tiny kitchenette and shower extension. Upstairs is a bedroom just four feet high at its tallest point.

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According to the Mainstream Media Project, Bread for the World Institute, and the 2001 United Nations Development Report the world's poorest nations, where 800 million are hungry and 40 million are infected with HIV, could solve their basic problems of food, clean water and health care with only 4% of the combined wealth of the 225 richest people on the planet.

## Review: Berlusconi's Mousetrap

**In July 2001 over a quarter of a million people gathered to protest against the G8 in Genoa. The Italian state responded to these demonstrations with violent repression. Eighteen thousand cops were drafted into the city; they beat and gassed thousands of people off the streets, arrested hundreds and shot one young Italian man in the head.**

Berlusconi's Mousetrap is a feature length documentary based on footage shot by Irish Indymedia and some film culled from the International Indymedia archive. It is obvious watching the documentary that considerable effort has gone into the selection and editing of the footage as well as the sourcing and translation of Italian material for the film. The result is an intelligent, complex and accomplished documentary that undoubtedly captures the spirit and atmosphere of a city where a political carnival degenerated into a police riot.

The film documents the police brutality in gruelling detail. It is with this extraordinary footage that Berlusconi's Mousetrap really comes into it's own as a compelling piece of filmmaking. In one almost nightmarish sequence the film is slowed down, showing the police repeatedly pummel and kick people, sweating from exertion, while the voiceover narrates the testimony of an Irishman who was attacked by the police and then arrested.

Berlusconi's Mousetrap isn't just a straightforward account of what happened in Genoa. It poses the question - were the events in Genoa part of a trap; a series of events engineered to divide and demoralize the anti-capitalist movement? The film suggests that the political decisions that shaped the course of events in Genoa are shrouded in mystery and a lot of time is devoted to vignettes and stories that validate the idea that what happened on streets of Genoa was part of a grand and secret conspiracy.

It is not that the Italian state is incapable of conspiracy and intrigue. It is simply that in this case the "conspiracy" is an open secret. After all, well before Genoa anti-capitalist protestors had been batoned in Seattle and Prague and shot at in Gothenburg and police forces and governments had begun, quite publicly, cooperating and pooling information in order to neutralize and contain the growing anti-capitalist movement.

Berlusconi's Mousetrap pays a great deal of attention to the role that the Black Bloc played in Genoa. The Black Bloc is depicted as an inexplicably destructive

horde, a tiny minority who were infiltrated, given free rein to go on the rampage and used by the state to break up the movement. We certainly have to be able to rethink and criticise the strategies and methods we use but Berlusconi's Mousetrap doesn't really ask why these people chose to engage in the actions they did or what alternatives we have. The film comes close to representing the Black Bloc in much the same way as the mainstream media does. This crude and banal stereotype of the "sinister and violent" Black Bloc serves only to help criminalise the movement as a whole that is often portrayed as a mindless, traveling rent-a-mob.

These criticisms aside Berlusconi's Mousetrap is a well made and astute documentary that tells an important story and proves once again the relevance of the Indymedia project and reminds us that "our weapons are imagination and unpredictability- the things they don't have".

Wu Ming

Producer: Irish Independent Media Centre  
 Photography: IMC Ireland and IMC Genoa  
 Editors: Eamonn Crudden, Joe Carolan, Leah Doherty. Director: Eamonn Crudden  
 No Copyright  
 Available from Irish Film Centre (Dublin) bookshop or contact [ecrudden@hotmail.com](mailto:ecrudden@hotmail.com)

Note: This is a cut down version of a much longer article which can be found in the online version of the paper at <http://struggle.ws/ws/2002.html>

*Power concedes nothing without a demand.  
 It never has, and it never will.  
 If there is no struggle, there is no progress.  
 Those who profess to favour freedom, and yet deprecate agitation are men who want crops without plowing the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its waters.*  
 Frederick Douglass, former slave and anti-racist campaigner

The Vincent de Paul charity is paying for medical care to ensure that poor people who are extremely ill do not die on waiting lists. In one case an elderly woman with gangrene in both feet was refused admission to a south Dublin hospital as there were no available public beds. When the local SVP paid for private treatment she was admitted immediately.

# Become a supporter of this paper



**The Workers Solidarity Movement worked with a number of other organisations and individuals as part of Libertarians Against Nice. LAN produced 50,000 leaflets and around 400 posters but it also tried hard to get the libertarian arguments against Nice covered in the media. Over the three-week campaign twelve press releases were sent out to every national media outlet in Ireland and almost every regional one as well.**

Unfortunately the media already had its mind made up on Nice. It had its mind made up in three ways. One - it was for a yes vote, newspapers like the Irish Times and the Irish Independent were giving over twice as much space to arguments for a Yes vote for much of the campaign\*. Two - They thought the only issues worth discussing were enlargement, enlargement, enlargement and a sprinkling of neutrality and sovereignty. The issues LAN and others were trying to raise like corporate globalisation (Article 133), militarisation and fortress Europe were either ignored or given minimum coverage right at the end of the campaign. Three - they decided that the No side was best represented by Justin Barrett. Of course the purpose of all this was revealed when Barrett was shown to have links with neo-fascist groups in Germany, a shock horror story the media has been told for years.

Of course anarchists can hardly claim to be surprised by media bias. Understanding, as we do, that the media is almost exclusively owned and controlled by either the state or the very rich we can hardly expect it to give us a fair hearing on any consistent basis. Which is why anarchist groups publish papers like Workers Solidarity, to try and get our side of what is happening in this corrupt society out to as many people as possible.

The WSM is a small organisation which puts most of its resources into publishing and distributing this paper. Over the last couple of years many other activists have been helping us out by taking 10, 20 or 50 of each issue to distribute locally. This means we have been able to print 6,000 of each issue of the paper.

But the Nice referendum campaign shows what a drop in the ocean this is when it comes to combating a concerted campaign by the mainstream media. In this country, as in all others, almost all the major media outlets, newspapers, radio and TV are owned or controlled by wealthy individuals,

corporations or the government. To combat this anarchists need to look ahead to a time when we have national daily circulation of our own newspaper as well as radio and even TV stations.

We are a long, long way from that point. But given the resources of the anarchist movement at the moment we could still greatly improve our current circulation. With that in mind the last WSM national conference decided to ask all the other anarchists and libertarians in Ireland to help us out.

We are asking people to commit to donating 5 or 10 Euro a month towards the cost of printing this paper and to take at least 50 of each issue to distribute. We don't just want your money and time though; we also want your input to make the paper better and to expand the range of stories we can cover. So anyone who becomes supporter of 'Workers Solidarity' will also be asked to attend an annual planning meeting and to elect two delegates onto our editorial group. If you have email you can ask to be added to the WS production email list where you can comment on articles submitted for publication and suggest topics for articles.

Over the next year we hope that at least a couple of dozen people will become supporters of this paper. In that case we will be able to expand production to 8 issues a year each with a print run of 8,000. This will still be tiny in comparison with the national media but will represent a doubling of the total number of copies printed and distributed each year. In turn we would hope some of the thousands of people who will get Workers Solidarity as a result will also choose to become supporters and so over the years we can build a circulation of tens or even hundreds of thousands. Help us take the first step, fill in the form below and become a supporter today.

\*<http://www.indymedia.ie/cgi-bin/newswire.cgi?id=13173>

Note - if you are outside Ireland please download and distribute the PDF version from [struggle.ws/wsm/pdf.html](http://struggle.ws/wsm/pdf.html)

I'd like to become a supporter of the Workers Solidarity paper,  
 Please send me 50/ \_\_\_ copies of the next issue of the paper to distribute. I enclose my first months donation towards costs of 5/10/\_\_\_ Euro. (Send to WSM, PO Box 1528, Dublin 8, Ireland)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
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# Workers Self-management in Argentina

Over 20 years of IMF loans, structural adjustment plans and “free-market reforms”, involving the privatisation of practically all public services, has left Argentina - once one of the richest country's in the world - with an economy in utter ruins. Over half of the countries population now live below the poverty line and unemployment has sky-rocketed leaving over one in five people jobless.

In December last year, as the government responded to the worsening economic crises with vicious cuts in public spending and the expropriation of a substantial part of the capital of hundreds of thousands small and medium savers, popular unrest which had been growing for several years exploded onto the streets of Argentina. The president had declared a state of emergency when, soon after a general strike involving 7 million workers, hungry people began looting shops and supermarkets so they could feed their families. All constitutional rights were suspended and meetings of more than three people banned. Argentineans had had enough and in Buenos Aires alone, over a million people voiced their anger and disgust at the discredited political elite by defying the state of emergency and taking to the streets.

Despite the lack of mass unified actions since then, the mass movement is in no way over and a report by the Interior Ministry holds that some 13,582 protests, road blockades and similar political actions have been staged so far this year (1). As well as protesting, however, people have - largely through necessity - started to take matters into their own hands and to organise together to try make real changes to improve their situation.

## Neighbourhood assemblies

Even before the events of December in some neighbourhoods of Buenos Aires local people had begun to meet on street corners to share their unease about the deteriorating economic and institutional situation and to discuss effective forms of protest. After the December protests these neighbourhood assemblies quickly multiplied and by February alone there was over 50 such assemblies meeting in different neighbourhoods throughout Buenos Aires (2). An inter-neighbourhood assembly was soon created to co-ordinate the proposals and report back on the work of the local assemblies. This mass inter-neighbourhood assembly meets once a week and has an average of 3000 local co-ordinators from all the city's neighbourhoods participating in it. The local assemblies, which are autonomous, rotate the task of co-ordinating and organising the inter-neighbourhood ones.

The local assemblies are organised non-hierarchically and are open to almost everyone. People get a chance to discuss the

problems they are facing and to organise effective ways of dealing with them. For example, in one neighbourhood, the assembly organised pickets to prevent the authorities from closing down a baker who could not afford to pay his rent.(3)

In a move that is a direct challenge to capitalist property the assemblies have also started to occupy abandoned commercial premises, reusing them with a social function, such as turning them into neighbourhood social centres which provide a permanent presence and meeting space.(4)

More general questions on the economic



and political system are also discussed at the assemblies and proposals such as “The people must govern through its assemblies” are brought back to the inter-neighbourhood assembly. Through these grassroots assemblies the idea of direct democracy, of mass direct intervention in public decision-making, has gained legitimacy amongst wide sectors of the population.

## Occupied Factories

However the most direct challenge to capitalism is the occupation of factories by workers. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of October last year, the workers of the Zanón ceramics factory in Neuquén, one of Latin America's largest ceramics producers, occupied their factory and have kept it running ever since. The bosses had stopped production, claiming the factory was no longer profitable and that they could no longer pay the workers. In similar circumstances in Buenos Aires, the female workers of the Brukman textile factory occupied their workplace and have been running their plant successfully for the last 10 months.

The textile workers managed to get rid of all wage arrears and to get the same pay they used to get under the bosses. Likewise the workers in Zanón have managed to keep their pay at the same level as before despite the fact that they sell the tiles

at 60% of the previous price. They have even hired, with equal pay, unemployed people coming from the picketers (unemployed workers) movement in the region and are planning to set up a Technical School to train young people and create more jobs.

The workers became acquainted with the whole production process, set up departments for running production and marketing, and in Zanón organised a network of vendors who sell the tiles in the city. Both factories are operated on the principle of grassroots democracy with decisions been made at general assemblies of workers, and shop stewards and co-ordinators relying on grassroots' mandate.

By October 1<sup>st</sup> this year, the workers of the occupied factories, had already published five issues of their own paper “Nuestra Lucha” (Our Struggle/Fight) with the motto “An injury to one is an injury to all” and “take over and run production in every single closed company”. They have already convened two National meetings of occupied factories (see picture), the last of which saw the participation, among others, of a delegation elected from the Jun'n Clinic from Córdoba province, which has been in operation without the bosses since last June 13. 40 neighbourhood assemblies

were also involved in this meeting and there is now an attempt to set up a co-ordinating body to build permanent links with the neighbourhood assemblies. The workers of the occupied factories are also raising the need for a National Congress convened by the assemblies, the picketers and the occupied factories.(5)

By restarting production in the occupied factories, the workers have shown up the parasitic nature of the ruling class and have set an example to the exploited class that there is an alternative way out. This shows, once again, that when we finally overthrow the market economy of capitalism we will have little difficulty in taking control of our workplaces and our lives.

Deirdre Hogan

(1) Some reflexions on the revolutionary days of December, By Manolo Romano and Emilio Albamonte Oct 1,2002  
(2) Some comments on neighbourhood assemblies. By The Comrades of the José Ingenieros Popular Library, Buenos Aires, 22/02/2002

(3) Que Se Vayan Todos: Argentina's Popular Rebellion, 15th Feb. 2002

(4) Que Se Vayan Todos: Argentina's Popular Rebellion (2), 2 July, 2002

(5) Some reflexions on the revolutionary days of December, By Manolo Romano and Emilio Albamonte Oct 1,2002



# Shannon - Direct Action against the War – Activists on the runway!

Mass direct action always grabs attention, energising those involved and provoking those who observe or hear of it to think about the reasons for it. On October 12th a big protest at Shannon airport against the landing and refueling of American war planes finally provoked some media attention. Though there had been many protests at Shannon this was the biggest yet.

Throughout the broad movement against the US war drive there had been a consistent demand that the Shannon facility to US warplanes be ended and that this should be a major target of the movement itself. The Irish Anti War Movement eventually responded to the pressure and organised a march there. Hundreds attended with buses from Galway, Cork and Dublin and people travelling from as far afield as Sligo and Derry.

An attempt to have a mass democratic meeting at the start to discuss tactics, as had happened at the previous protest, was prevented by Socialist Workers Party stewards instructing marchers onto the road. Bad feeling resulted but everyone marched on to the airport. A vain attempt was made to enter the terminal building by charging the only door the Security had left open, which was jammed with dozens of Gardai. After this calmed down a bit we were into the speeches. A die in was held (where people lie down on the ground in silence in a scene reminiscent of those pictures of the by-product of war) a minute's silence and there was lots of silly arguments between the TDs, MEPs, etc. present and the senior Garda.

In the meantime a group of us interested in militant direct action of some sort met on the edge of the demo. Having been prevented from putting our ideas before the rest of the demonstrators to create a clear block for those interested in direct action we felt we had no choice but to act with those we could muster as we met them. An action was decided on. On the way out we would detach ourselves from the march and shake the wire fence guarding the airport hangars, runways and other buildings. Hopefully more people would join in and we would give a dramatic finish to the days events which some felt were after becoming rather sterile.

However, once the fence was shaken, it collapsed (this we knew was a possibility and would open up more possibilities). Loads of people rushed forward to join in and as one woman took the initiative and ran onto the grass suddenly people started streaming through. With hundreds now on the runway margin the gardai brought up horses, dogs, fire tenders (with hoses pointed at the sitting, singing protestors), garda vans and squad cars. 10 people were arrested. There were road blockings and sit-downs to demand their release. Protesters gathered outside

Shannon Garda Station until the 10 were released. The protest made the news locally and nationally.

Instead of pleading with the government to not allow the US to use Shannon, people had acted directly to show there would be a price to pay and to inspire others to realise that with numbers we could make it impossible for the government to continue this action. The means that will stop the US use of Shannon will be direct action. Direct Action is when people collectively act to achieve their objectives by their own hands, it does not consist of appealing to some higher authority. The first step in Shannon was to protest and gather information, the second step is to demonstrate the feasibility of mass action by showing the weakness



*Protesters celebrate breaching the perimeter fence at Shannon*

of the facility when faced with big numbers, the third is to succeed in mobilising enough like-minded people to simply physically stop US warplanes using the airport. Thousands of peaceful protesters simply surrounding US warplanes on the runways at Shannon would make it very clear just how hard it could become for them to use the airport, it would also send out a huge rallying cry to the world.

*James McBarron*

## Stopping the war

Polls show most people in Ireland oppose the war, and refuelling at Shannon, yet the government continue to provide support for the US and British war drive. This is yet another demonstration of how meaningless parliamentary democracy is. Unless we are talking of marches of tens or hundreds of thousands we won't frighten the government into a change of policy. If the Iraq war is like other recent imperialist ones - where the actual fighting happens over a period of weeks rather than years - then its unlikely we will see tens of thousands mobilised. There is one way we can stop the war - this is mass direct action.

While a march of 5,000 or even 10,000 in Dublin won't effect government policy, similar numbers tearing down the fence in Shannon and taking over the entire airport would. With those sort of numbers we could physically stop Shannon being used and physically dismantle any war planes we caught on the ground. The government would then have to choose between militarising the airport and arresting hundreds or asking the US to take its war planes elsewhere.

This would have an important direct impact on the war as it's clear that considerable war supplies and troops are moving through Shannon. But in Europe it

would also have a massive political impact in encouraging the use of the same methods elsewhere. If even half the 300,000 who marched in London started closing down British war bases then Britain would effectively be taken out of the war.

But it's also not a question of counter posing direct action to mobilising the largest numbers we can. Instead we need to look at how the two can help each other - the media attention received after the last Shannon direct action will hopefully encourage people to go on the Dublin demonstrations. Hopefully the Dublin demonstrations will be used to encourage as many people as possible to head to Shannon to help shut down the airport.

Of course the tactics used also have more general implications for the future. We want to see people take power into their own hands rather than relying on a few good men in the Dáil. A victory on refuelling as a result of a Dáil vote would be a step forward but would have a limited long term impact. A victory on the basis of thousands of people stopping the use of Shannon themselves would transform politics in Ireland.

*Joe Black*

## Review: Anarchism and Anarchist Communism

by Peter Kropotkin (Freedom Press)

*Anarchism and Anarchist Communism* were first published separately in 1910 and 1887 respectively, the first in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the latter as a pair of articles in the paper *The Nineteenth Century*. They have since been republished numerous times; they are certainly classic texts on the philosophy and structure of anarchism.

The opening pages of *Anarchism* dispel the myths of society without government being chaos - "harmony in such a society [is] obtained not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority; but by free agreements concluded between the various groups, territorial and professional, freely constituted for satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a civilised being." That organisation of society in such a way is obviously more fair and equitable than the current system of land and wealth monopolisation by the capitalists, and the tyranny of the main support of that system, i.e., the State. Such an idea is not a Utopia, contends Kropotkin - no, indeed it is derived from the analysis of tendencies already beginning to emerge, such as the growth of 'free initiative' and independence in all spheres of human action.

With regard to the actuality of the idea of Anarchism, Kropotkin warns against the infusion of even more power into the state in time of change, as would be the case with a turning to 'state socialism'. In times of accelerated development, i.e. revolutionary times, we must take advantage - "not for increasing and widening the powers of the State, but for reducing them, through the organisation in every township or commune of

*local groups of producers and consumers, as also the regional, and eventually the international, federations of these groups."*

Half of *Anarchism* is devoted to sketching an outline of the progression of anarchist thought, from the earliest in the shape of Zeno (Greek, 270 BC) through the early Christians and as far as those toward his own time such as Proudhon, Stirner and Bakunin. Some of this includes critique, especially of the extreme individualism of those such as Stirner.

*Anarchist Communism* is a far more detailed examination of the inadequacies and inequalities of capitalism versus the infinitely preferable and fair system of anarchism. It is divided into two parts, the first being critical in format and concluding that, "The means of production and of satisfaction of all needs of society, having been created by the common efforts of all, must be at the disposal of all."

The second part forms a call for the end of the wage system, to free communism, that is of the anti-authoritarian variety. Kropotkin devotes much time to giving examples of how much free association had already come into being, without interference from government and therefore a free communism is certainly a natural and likely progression for society. Further to these he gives a basic account of how anarchist self-governance occurs, through means of delegates as opposed to representatives and rulers.

This is one of the most excellent introductions to Anarchism, putting paid to the usual objections to the system, synonymous as it has become, wrongly, with disorganisation and chaos.

## Review: Refueling Peace

<http://refuelingpeace.org>

Refueling Peace is one of the many anti-war groups that has sprung up over the last year. They have defined themselves around a very specific purpose, to "monitor and stop US military flights refuelling in Ireland". The information gathering aspect of this is proving essential in moving the Shannon refuelling issue to the centre of the Irish anti-war movements.

The web site starts with an "invitation to anyone who would like to join a direct action campaign to end Ireland's participation in Bush's so-called "war on terrorism". It includes an oddly appropriate quote from the arch reactionary Edmund Burke that "Nobody made a greater mistake than s/he who did nothing because s/he could only do a little."

This sets the general tone, for as well as providing a lot of useful information on the warplanes using Shannon, it provides a 'Rough guide to spotting military use of Shannon airport'. This is intended to help

anyone take part in the monitoring activity at Shannon and helps you spot the apparently civilian planes chartered to transport troops as well as identify the more obvious military ones. Given the persistent rumours that warplanes are also landing at Knock airport this guide would be useful to anyone in the Mayo area able to put in a few hours observing Knock.

Many of the reports listed are the page are actually on Irish Indymedia which is useful as it means you can read the comments other people have made on them. On the downside, at the time of reviewing, the site was missing links to the various anti-war movements in Ireland. It could also do with some sort of chronological list of military planes spotted at Shannon. But these quibbles aside this site is a 'must visit' for anyone opposing the war in Ireland.

Andrew Flood

## Libertarians Against Nice: Requiem for a Dream

**Tw**as a cold day in September when a motley crew assembled in Dublin's Teachers' Club - their mission to establish an Anarchist campaign against Nice. The founding meeting drew approximately 40 people from all over the Island. Fierce competition took place for the various coordinator positions - not. Many a name - some deranged, some just downright silly - were tossed about until the ghost of John McGuffin appeared & at gunpoint forced us to choose Libertarians Against Nice

Even this name haunted us; "journalists" in the News of World mistook it for Libertines against Nice. Sit down comedians referred to Librarians against Nice. But despite this asperity we forged ahead.

Action guaranteed, yes indeed; LAN fought the campaign on many fronts. From Limerick to Louth, Kinsale to Kildare, Dundalk to Donegal the battle raged. Even in Dublin we put up a fight. Some dodgy moments one dark night in the Liberties I got lost and feared my canvasser would eat me (he closely resembled Chewbacca).

50,000 (count 'em) leaflets were distributed, hundreds of posters of various types went up. There was also the student LAN leaflet which took our fight to the ivory towers of academia. Thirteen press releases issued but didn't get the coverage they deserved.

The No message the media liked to cover was that of Justin Barret; when Dustin's attendance at a Neo-Nazi Rally was revealed they tried to tar all the No campaigns with the fascist links smear. Like the other No groups we were up against the vested media interests.

We picketed the IBEC pro-Nice conference, pointing out their anti-worker attitudes and opposition to any increase in the minimum wage. This at least got us TV coverage, not from those with the public service remit though. We had to rely on the freebooters of TV3.

So, we lost. Could we have won? I don't know, the forces ranged against us were so great: all the establishment parties, IBEC, ICTU, various Churches, the Media, the Dustin Trojan Horse. But ours was a fight different from the other campaigns.

There was no National Committee, no Chairperson, as secretary I circulated information, not orders. The Media Co-ordinator issued Press Releases & arranged interviews rather than building up his own profile.

Regional Co-ordinators carried out their work without the need of a Puppet-master in Dublin.

That's the way to do it!

Pat C



## Anti-war demonstrations

December 7<sup>th</sup> - Anti-war march in Dublin called by 'Irish Anti War Movement'. Assembles 14.00 Central Bank

December 8<sup>th</sup> - Direct Action Anti-war demonstration at Shannon Airport called by Belfast Grassroots Gathering. Assemble at the main gates of Shannon Airport at 14.00. As we go to press coach hire is being worked out, contact us for more information.

Contact the WSM

Workers Solidarity Movement, PO Box 1528, Dublin 8 or E-mail [wsm\\_ireland@yahoo.com](mailto:wsm_ireland@yahoo.com), [cork\\_wsm@yahoo.com](mailto:cork_wsm@yahoo.com)

Phone/SMS **087-7939931**

On the web - <http://struggle.ws/wsm>

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Send 10 Euro to WSM, PO Box 1528, Dublin 8 and we will send you the next 9 *Workers Solidaritys* and the next 2 issues of our magazine *Red & Black Revolution*

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**One of the issues raised by the recently published Flood report is the level of influence the wealthy have in a representative democracy. The word 'democracy' is now such a holy word that any organization which can convince people of its democratic credentials is perceived as legitimate.**

Just about every state in the world claims to be a democracy irrespective of actual fact; cast your mind back to the old German *Democratic Republic*. So it is with the Irish State. Its democratic credentials stem from its five yearly elections for parliament. However, there's nary a hint of democracy in the workplace, in the community, or in the security apparatus, to name three of the more glaring omissions.

As anarchists we propose that it would be better to live in a society organised on a directly democratic basis. Briefly, this where all decisions are taken by those who are affected by them (e.g. by the workers of each workplace), and if it is necessary to delegate then the delegates must follow their mandate and be replaceable by a vote.

One of the difficulties we have in persuading people of the advantages of direct democracy, even interesting them in the issue, is their commitment to the view that the Irish State is in fact a proper democracy. If we already live in a democratic society then there's little point in struggling to establish a ...ehh... democratic society. Their cup is already full. Thinking about the Flood Report is one way to knock the cup over.

In it are detailed the corrupt payments that one Ray Burke, former Fianna Fail minister and sometime planning consultant, received from assorted Irish businessmen. In return he used his public offices to further the interest of his paymasters. This is unsurprising, wealthy capitalists don't part with large sums of money for nothing.

Where the corruption is harder to detect is in the legal contributions made to political parties. They're not giving money for nothing now either, but as specific favours are not overtly sought it can appear as if the donation is an unconditional one.

Rather than exchange money for explicit favours which, after all, is too blatant even for this docile population, business and politicians have evolved an altogether safer system. Business' payback comes in the maintenance of a social order which is favourable to private enterprise. No political party in receipt of thousands of pounds from Denis

O'Brien, Michael Smurfit *et al* is going to increase corporation tax to 70%. The beauty of this system is that it's entirely legal, indeed applauded, when in fact it amounts to legalised bribery.

The Flood Report will, by itself, change nothing, except, perhaps, to induce more caution to the thicker element of the ruling class, but it does provide one useful service:\* it makes it clear that the wealthy have a dominant influence in affairs of state.

Anarchists claim that this must always be so. A State is a product of a class society, i.e. one where there is a ruling class and a working class. A state structure at its core consists of a hierarchical line of command, encompassing at a minimum a civil service, police, judiciary, and which seeks to direct and regulate the behaviour of the rest of society. In every society where a State exists there is a dominant class which uses the State apparatus to preserve its privileged position. The State through its laws legitimises the exploitation of working people (e.g. restricting strikes, permitting profiteering) and through its security apparatus resists attempts to alter it fundamentally (e.g. injunction pickets, arresting strikers).

The point anarchists derive is that the more even the distribution of wealth then the healthier the democracy. It follows that the abolition of wealth differences is a requirement for a complete democracy. The rationale is that while different classes exist - the bosses and workers - these classes will have divergent interests; the rich to maintain their wealth and power and the rest who want to get some of that riches. Without the incentive to maximise profit and hence put one over on others we can combine to take decisions in a disinterested and unselfish fashion. The anarchist goal is to abolish the division of society into classes. Sharing the wealth of society equally is central to towards achieving this.

James O'Brian

\* Apart from keeping the lawyers above the breadline; the minimum a barrister at the Flood Tribunal earns is 1500 euro *per day*.

## 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 visit

<http://struggle.ws/mailman/listinfo/ainriail>

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.

# Clerical rapists and the Irish state

**Raping children is not a serious crime. Well, that seems to be the attitude of the Irish state. With thousands of cases of reported child abuse by clerics, and an admission by the Catholic Church all the way up to Cardinal Connell, that they refused to report abusers to the gardai, there has been remarkably little action taken against them.**

There have been no raids on the Archbishop's palace in search of the withheld complaints against priests. There have been no arrests of priests and bishops who have publicly admitted helping accused clerics to avoid prosecution. Given all that we now know about the organised cover-up of what happened in Catholic institutions, churches and hospitals it is fair to say that if any other organised group were guilty of the same offences there would be charges brought of "conspiracy to pervert the course of justice".

The only excuse put forward by the bishops is that they "did not understand" the seriousness of raping children! These are the same guys who, with great certainty, condemned multi-denominational education in the 1970s, who opposed the legalisation of contraception and divorce, who call abortion "murder". But when it came to destroying the childhood of young children we are expected to believe that they didn't realise it was a particularly bad thing! Bollocks.

Of course the state can hardly claim to be neutral. The majority of hospitals and the vast majority of schools are owned by the Catholic Church. Yet the state (with our tax money) pays the wages and pays 85% of the building costs. The Church authorities are then given the power to hire and fire nurses and teachers we pay for.

The government even gives the main churches money to promote their religion. Back in 1998 (March 25<sup>th</sup>) the Supreme Court dismissed an application by the Campaign to Separate Church and State to prevent the Minister for Education paying chaplains in community schools. So, we have the absurd situation where people of minority religions and of no religion at all see their tax money used to pay priests. It's just a little reminiscent of the tithing system of Penal Law days whereby Catholics and Presbyterians were forced to pay 10% of their income to the Anglican clergy.

Churches should have the right to worship their gods as they see fit, to organise their own affairs as they see fit. They should have the same rights as any other voluntary group but with no special privileges. Anarchists are not out to stop anyone practicing their religion, but we are determined to end the 'special position' of the churches (supposedly abolished in the 1972 referendum). Anarchists will continue to defend the weak and vulnerable, and will continue campaigning to break the power of the bishops.

Joe King



## SIPTU election changes nothing

The counting is over, SIPTU has a new General Secretary. Joe O'Flynn (the current regional secretary for the south west) has been voted into the post. Yet another bureaucrat – more of the same.

O'Flynn defeated Noel Dowling (the same Noel Dowling who described himself as a "socialist" but supported management during the recent pilots' strike at Dublin Airport) by just over five thousand votes. O'Flynn got 57,592 votes compared to Dowling's 52,293.

Radical left wing candidate and factory worker Des Derwin got 7,512 votes. Unlike the other two candidates, Des had sod all access to the media. He had to take his annual holidays in order to campaign and had to finance his leaflets through a credit union loan.

Des had stood in the election to raise the issues of increasing democracy in the union, opposing 'social partnership' deals with the state and employers, and supporting workers who want to take on their bosses. Des also sought to emphasise that the general secretary is supposed to implement the decisions of the union conference rather than independently make new policies (at least that's the theory!).

As he said "This is not about getting Des Derwin elected. It is about the best showing for a different, a changed and forceful, SIPTU, with far greater member input. I am standing on a platform of change, revitalisation and the return of our Union to independence, fighting-form and control from below by the general membership".

The big lesson from this contest is how weak the opposition in SIPTU is. 6.7% is not a good vote! There is no opposition network, simply a number of individuals who are fairly isolated from each other.

The one good thing we can take from all this is that those 7,512 votes came as a result of hard work by Des and no more than about a dozen others.

We know a fair few 'dissidents' in our union - but the work of bringing them together to change the structures and policies is still ahead of us.

Alan MacSimoin (SIPTU member)

## Grassroots Gathering Mark III – Another Great Success

**The weekend of the 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> of October saw over 120 anarchists and other libertarian activists converge on Belfast in a place called Giro's, which is a spacious social centre that is home to the Belfast Youth and Community Group (BYCG). The centre proved to be the perfect surroundings for the gathering, with its café, office space, library and hall making it entirely conducive to political and social interaction, i.e. eating together, getting drunk and shouting about politics.**

But aside from that, many concrete plans and ideas emerged from the many workshops during the two days, including the formation of a grassroots network against the war, based on regional structures, the possible staging of Reclaim The Streets Belfast, and the suggestion to hold the next People's Global Action conference in Ireland. In fact the only problem that seemed to occur was that of two or more interesting workshops coinciding and the sheer lack of time to attend everything.

A special word of thanks has to go out to the Belfast crew for all their hard work and the organisation of this, the third Grassroots Gathering. It was a roaring success thanks to their hospitality and meticulous attention to detail!

The next Grassroots Gathering will take place in Limerick on Patrick's Day weekend in 2003. In the meantime, stay tuned for details on local actions and come to Shannon Warport to protest on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December!

Cliona

For more information on the Grassroots Gathering, log onto <http://grassrootsgathering.freeservers.com/>