

WORKERS SOLIDARITY

Number 87 - August 2005

Twenty One Years of Irish Anarchist News

<http://www.struggle.ws/wsm>



Anti-Shell demos reach Scotland during the recent G8 protests

The jailing of 5 Rosspoint men for refusing to allow Shell to install a potentially lethal pipeline has suddenly focussed attention on the whole project. But it has done more than highlight safety issues. It has highlighted the cosy relationship between business and the Irish State.

Shell received a lucrative deal from the government in the late 1990s, minimum tax and no royalties to the state. Given that few jobs will be created in Mayo, it's hard to see what benefit there is for local people.

It has demonstrated the inherent bias of the courts – the courts will throw an

ordinary working person in prison without a second thought, while the likes of Ben Dunne and Charlie Haughey can bribe and lie to their hearts' content and still sleep in their millionaire beds.

And it has made crystal clear that the only thing that can oppose the strength of the State and the corporations is people power. Ever since the jailing, pickets of the Shell site in Co. Mayo have meant that they are unable to do any meaningful work there. This delay will cost them hundreds of thousands of euro. Moreover, pickets of Shell and Statoil stations have sprung up around country, greatly impacting on the companies' profits.

The demands of the Rosspoint residents and the Shell to Sea Campaign are simple: the men should be freed and Shell must move their dangerous operations offshore. It's a realisable demand, especially if the massive mobilisations we've seen in Mayo continue to escalate.

The more pickets and disruption caused, the less profit there is for Shell and so the more willing they will be to see sense. It won't be easy, especially as Shell have the forces of the State on their side, but people power has won before. It can do it again.

by James O'Brien



News and Opinion from Irish Anarchists



Dangerous Men Loose In Dublin

Garda Brutality: Business As Usual

Do you recognise these five names – Martin Anderson, Thomas Rattigan, James McDowell, Martin Leonard, Patrick McDermott?

All of these men were named in the Morris Tribunal report as being responsible for an investigation which was “prejudiced, tendentious and utterly negligent in the highest degree”. Their so-called investigation into the death of Donegal man Richie Barron has turned out to be a cesspool of all that is rotten and corrupt about our police force; harassment, intimidation and attempts to frame the McBrearty family – you’ll have read about it elsewhere so there’s no need to go in to the details here. Their punishment – a transfer to Dublin! What an insult to the people of both Donegal and Dublin.

What about John McGinley or Joe Shelley – have you heard of them? They were both senior officers criticised in the Morris report who were punished by ...being allowed to retire on full pension!

Noel Conroy? He’s the current Garda Commissioner who on 10th May in his submission to the Morris Tribunal claimed that the investigation into Richie Barron’s death was carried out “in an efficient and thorough manner” (This is the same investigation which Justice Morris called “shocking” and “scandalous”). Furthermore Conroy was head of the cops’ “Crime and Security Division” from 1992 to 1994 at a time when, according to the first Morris report “...the direction of Crime and Security was not such as to inspire confidence.”

You’ve heard of Michael McDowell? As Attorney General he did his level best to ensure that the Morris Tribunal was never established. As Minister for Justice he totally ignored the recommendations of the first Morris report.

The stench of corruption from the cops is overwhelming and goes right to the very top. As well as the gross dishonesty and rottenness which has been exposed in Donegal and which everyone now knows about, there are also several other high-profile cases which show that this dishonesty is extremely widespread

- 14-year-old Brian Rossiter died in garda custody in Clonmel Co Tipperary almost 3 years ago. The response of Garda authorities, Noel Conroy as Garda Commissioner and Michael McDowell as Minister for Justice was reminiscent of the response years earlier to the Donegal situation – a response characterised by delay, denial and cover-up. Only now, grudgingly, is McDowell establishing an inquiry into what happened to Brian Rossiter.



- In June of this year, a 20-year-old man from Dublin’s inner city, Terence Wheelock, spent over 2 weeks in a coma in the Mater hospital after receiving injuries while in garda custody in Store Street. No explanation of how he received his injuries has yet been given.

- In May 2002, cops openly battered participants at a Reclaim the Streets Party on Dublin’s Dame Street. When a number of cops were charged as a result, their colleagues rallied around in the manner of the three monkeys – See no Evil, Hear no Evil, Say No Evil. The constant refrain from garda witnesses at the trials was ‘I saw nuthin’.

- In September 2000, a constituent of current Environment Minister, Dick Roche complained to him that he had been beaten by gardai, and showed him the bruises to prove it. Roche made a statement in support of his constituent. However the senior garda appointed to investigate the complaint on behalf of the Garda Complaints Board deemed Roche’s statement not worthy of inclusion in the relevant file. If senior cops can decide to ignore the statements of politicians, how much more can they decide to ignore complaints and statements made by ordinary working class people.

Indeed, there were 1,232 complaints made to the Garda Síochána Complaints Board in 2004, which represents an increase of nearly 5% on the 2003 figure of 1,175. And, as we all know, many people don’t bother making complaints because we are all too well aware that it is usually a waste of time as the cops end up investigating themselves.

Garda brutality is all too common and is encountered on a regular basis, especially by working-class youths. Garda corruption is nothing new and even though the Dail has now passed Michael McDowell’s Garda Bill,

the Gardai will continue to be unaccountable to ordinary people.

Corruption among the cops is not just a case of a ‘few rotten apples’. The entire orchard is infected. Ultimately, the Garda Síochána exists to protect the private property and wealth of big business, to uphold the status quo. It might take ages for the cops to respond if your house is burgled but they’ll turn up fairly quickly if you put a picket on your workplace or blockade a bin truck.

It’s because they exist to protect the status quo that they know they can get away with almost anything with the blessing of their political paymasters.

by Shauna Maguire

Slaving your life away just so you can make ends meet; having no say in the major decisions that affect your life; criminal politicians and businessmen plundering the country. Try to do something about it and they’ll lock you up. Yes,



Money for Bertie’s make-up

Bertie Ahern is spending more money than the average industrial wage on make-up, and it’s all at the taxpayers’ expense. Ahern has spent a staggering €167,000 on looking good since becoming Taoiseach. Figures from his department reveal he is spending €550 a week on his appearance. Taxpayers’ money spent on Ahern’s appearance could have:

Hired four extra nurses to alleviate overcrowding in A&E departments.

Housed eight homeless people in hostels.

Paid for nursing home care six elderly people for a year.

Money for Bankers

The Bank of Ireland has disclosed that it gave .3 million to its former Chief Executive, Mike Soden, who resigned suddenly last year. Soden was also given a pension top up of €400,000 plus €269,000 for working until his abrupt departure.

The report also shows that the current Chief Executive, Brian Goggin, was paid a total of €1.9 million last year. At the same time the company is seeking to make even more profit from fewer staff, which will result in the loss of 2,100 jobs.

No money for starving children

This year, nearly 11 million children will die before they reach the age of 5. That’s one child every five seconds. For more than half of them, the main cause of death will be illnesses linked

INTO Branch Opposes Tactics Of Deportation Cops

People throughout the country were shocked at the inhumanity of Michael McDowell's deportation policy when before Easter this year a plane-load of Nigerians were ripped from the communities in which they had been living for the last number of years and thrown out of the country. In particular the case of Leaving Cert. student, Kunle Elukanlo, struck a chord with large sections of the public.

Kunle's fellow-students were not content to simply allow this to happen to their classmate and friend. By organising themselves and by taking their protests to the streets they forced the Minister for Justice into an about-turn and Kunle had to be returned to Ireland.

Equally shocking for many people were the stories – from Athlone, Monaghan and Kerry - of immigration cops entering schools in an aggressive manner looking for children who they wished to deport. It shocked teachers and parents alike to think that this could happen.

All parents like to think that their children are safe when they send them to school, and that they are going to return home safely. Imagine the horror for young children seeing their classmates being wrenched from among them. Imagine the horror for those children who are removed from their school in this manner.

At the annual congress of the Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO), these actions by the gardai were roundly condemned by the outgoing president, Austin Corcoran, who called for schools to become safe places for all children – to be given the status of embassies. This would mean that cops would not be entitled to come in to schools looking for people they want to deport.

Now the Dublin City North Branch of the INTO has passed a motion endorsing this call and it is hoped that more branches within the union will take up this issue and that by next year's annual congress a campaign will be launched in the union to make this a reality.

The full text of the motion passed is:
Dublin City North INTO

1. Condemns the actions of immigration authorities who earlier this year entered

schools seeking children for deportation.

2. Endorses the statement by outgoing INTO president Austin Corcoran at Congress 2005 that "Parents should have an assurance that when their children are sent to school they will not be abducted from their place of learning by the state."

3. Further endorses the call of Austin Corcoran for schools to be given the status of embassies and calls on the CEC and all sections of the INTO to campaign to make this a reality.

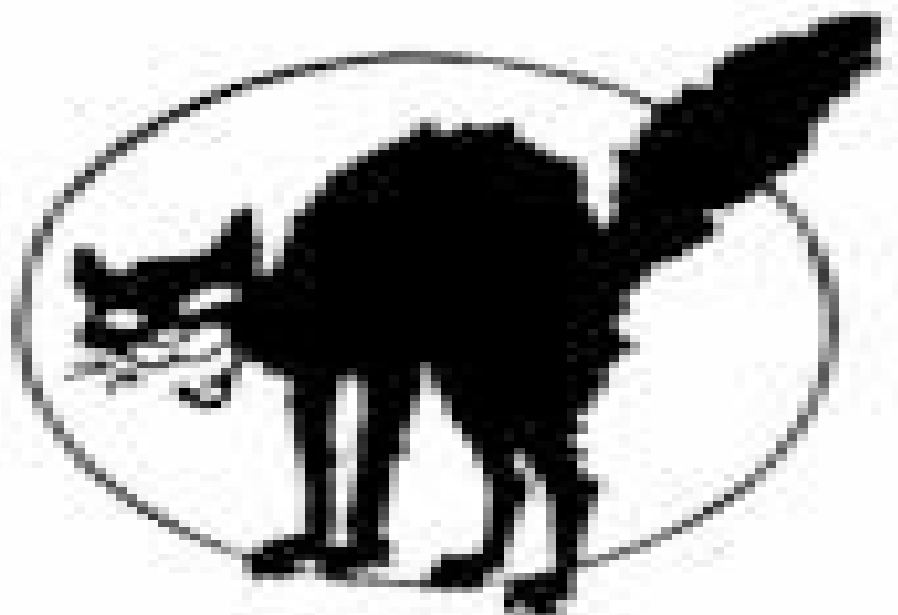
4. Agrees to circulate this motion to all branches of the INTO seeking their support on this issue.

Similar motions being passed by parents'



organisations and committees would help strengthen the call so if you are a member of a parents' association, or if you know someone who is, maybe you too could take on this issue.

by Gregor Kerr



The G8, Live 8, and Africa

Taking Hypocrisy to New Levels

There is always a temptation to welcome any well intentioned efforts to make the world a better place and those who concentrate on criticising others' efforts to improve the world can find themselves being easily dismissed as cynics and knockers.

Thus, although large numbers of people probably found the idea of a movement against poverty and for social justice being fronted by some of the richest people on earth (Bono and Bill Gates to name two) to be a little bit odd, most people acknowledged that they were 'at least doing something' and thus should be supported.

However, it is important to ask ourselves what they were actually calling for and whether that was a good thing in itself.

One of the stated aims of Live 8 and Make Poverty History was to raise consciousness about Africa. That's all very well, but what consciousness is being raised? There is hardly a person in the world who doesn't realise that Africa is poor. Beyond the simple message of Africa's poverty - not too useful in itself - the message of the mobilisation seems to have been that the G8 leaders, i.e. the leaders of the USA, UK, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, Canada, and Russia, might be persuaded to help Africa by forgiving its debt. Unfortunately, this message is so deceptive and wrong-headed that rather than raising consciousness it only serves to reinforce delusions about how the world works.

The Reality of the G8

The G8 leaders are far from being people who spend their days worrying about how to raise Africa from poverty. In reality, they spend their working lives actively ensuring that Africa remains poor and they do so quite consciously. Historically, the rich nations colonised Africa and set up imperial administrations precisely to ensure a steady flow of wealth from Africa to the West. Since the end of direct colonisation, little has changed in reality. The rich nations still regularly intervene militarily to prop up their favoured military dictatorships and to ensure their economic interests remain secure.

Western governments were directly responsible for the brutal and corrupt reigns of such monsters as Mobutu, Moi, Taylor and many, more brutal dictators. All the historical evidence suggests that they are quite happy to cause vast amounts of suffering to secure their economic interests and there is no evidence that their policies have any other aim at all.



Military Intervention

While today they are less quick to use military force (although they still do - Liberia and Cote D'Ivoire have both been 'invaded' by Western troops in the last 3 years) this is only because they don't have to. The Third world debt crisis of the 1980s left most African countries massively indebted to the international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Many of these debts were originally loaned by Western banks to African dictators (mostly hand-picked by Western governments) so that they could brutalise their populations and ensure the continuing flow of wealth and natural resources from Africa to the West. International finance being what it is, African states have to pay hefty interest rates and today most of them have repaid far more than they were ever loaned yet still owe several times more.

This debt has been used as a very powerful stick by the Western nations. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s they imposed Structural Adjustment Programs on African countries which were having difficulty in repaying their loans. These programs were designed to ensure that countries where the population was starving were able to repay the interest on their debts to Western banks - "macro-economic stability" in economic jargon. They essentially forced African countries to cut back on social spending, fire large numbers of public employees and divert more of their money into repayment. As a result, most African countries give much more money to Western banks than they spend on health or education.

Debt Relief

But surely, despite their shameful past, forgiving the debt would at least be a start in the right direction? This might be the case if

the G8 were actually considering forgiving debt, but in reality their debt relief program is little more than the discredited structural adjustment dressed up as charity. Only a small number of countries qualify for the debt relief program (currently 18 in Africa) and they are chosen basically for their loyalty to Western capitalism. The debt relief also has a number of 'conditionalities' attached which demand "the elimination of impediments to private investment, both domestic and foreign."

This is another way of saying that they demand an end to such things as free water services, free public education and health care as all of these things are clearly an impediment to private investment. So basically, governments that are loyal to the G8 will be forgiven their debts as long as they promise to stop spending money on the poor - hardly a very good plan for dealing with poverty. When it comes down to it, debt relief is just another macro-economic stability measure. Debts to banks that were never going to be repaid will be repaid by Western taxpayers and African governments will be prevented from running up such debts in the future by ensuring they are not tempted to spend money on the poor. Good for the banks, bad for everybody else.

Live 8 and Charity

At the end of the day, the Live 8 and MPH campaigns are part of the problem rather than the solution. They built up a myth about debt and the role of the rich nations in it. For Bob and Bono, this was down to a mix of political naivety and out of control egos. For the charities and NGOs involved it was simply a very effective PR tool and a nice little earner, so although many of them probably knew how wrong headed the whole thing was, they weren't going to rock the boat and scupper the best chance to fundraise of the decade.

It was left to the small number of radicals, anarchists and socialists to point out that the emperor had no clothes. A bunch of aging rock stars hanging out with politicians is not going to change the world, especially when the politicians are the same people who spend their working lives ensuring that Africa stays poor. At the end of the day, any movement against African poverty in the west will be no more than a means of rich and hypocritical people appeasing their guilt unless it addresses this obvious problem. To help people in Africa, a bit of charity is not the first step. The first step is to stop kicking them.

by Chekov Feeney

CONTACTS

ANARCHIST GROUPS

Workers Solidarity Movement
Platformist Anarchist Organisation
Publishes *this paper*
PO box 1528, Dublin 8, Ireland
www.struggle.ws/wsm
wsm_ireland@yahoo.com corkwsm@eircom.net

Organise! Working Class Resistance
Class Struggle Anarchist Organisation
Publishes "Working Class Resistance"
PO Box 505, Belfast, BT12 6BQ
www.organiseireland.org

LIBERTARIAN NETWORKS

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

Grassroots Network
<http://flag.blackened.net/infohub/grassroots>
Non-hierarchical Direct-Action Network
Network of grassroots social justice activists with groups in Dublin, Cork & Galway.

Indymedia Ireland
www.indymedia.ie
Irish Branch of Global Media Collective
The place to find Irish campaign news.

Barracka Books
Radical Book Store
61 Barrack Street, Cork City
barrackabooks@yahoo.ie

Cork Autonomous Zone
Social Space
61 Barracka St., Cork
corkcaz@yahoo.ie

Red Ink Infoshop
Anarchist / Radical Book & Zine Store
4 Upper Fownes St. Temple Bar, Dublin 2

ACTIVIST GROUPS

Activist groups fighting for social justice

Shell to Sea
www.shelltosea.com
Website of campaign to move Shell's pipeline offshore from Co. Mayo

Alliance For Choice
Campaign for womens freedom to choose
www.struggle.ws/ireland/allianceforchoice/index.html

Residents Against Racism

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

EMAIL/WEB

irishanarchism@yahoogroups.com
Big, high-volume anarchist discussion list

ainriail@struggle.ws

Announcements, Reports, Articles

www.anarchism.ws/ireland.html
Index of Irish anarchist Internet resources

www.anarkismo.net
International Anarchist Website

Cork Autonomous Zone



Found: CAZ and Barracka Books Share Premises

Finding a space for the Cork Autonomous Zone (CAZ) required an epic search. It took no less than 18 months, involved a few heart breaking setbacks, and was finally resolved by the idea of sharing a space with an upstart, Barracka Books.

The CAZ started running early in 2002. It hosted campaigning groups, facilitated art, music etc. It was formerly located in a small lane off Camden Quay before deciding to move. Noisy neighbours made the space unsuitable to continue but also the building would be knocked, making way for apartments.

The Cork Grassroots Network took on the CAZ search. Since settling into the current space, an independent committee has formed to keep the CAZ running, delegates from each group that use the CAZ are asked to participate. Most nights are booked and some Sundays with various campaigning meetings, life drawing, pagan gatherings, and workshops.

Barracka Books is a workers' co-op. Currently four people are working together, no bosses, decisions made together and profits are shared according to time spent working. The stock is varied, anything from cookery to children's books, new and second hand. There is a strong Irish interest section and notable radical books section. It also facilitates flyers, leaflets, zines and there's a notice-board in the corridor.

The location is 61 Barrack St, on the ground floor. The shop operates from 10am to 6.30pm, Monday to Saturday. On those days, CAZ usage begins from 7pm onwards. On Sunday it can be booked for a full day.

The two entities are separate and must liaise with one another on common decisions. Work still needs to happen on the space, making it more disability accessible and to facilitate two meetings at once, etc. New groups are welcome but should get in contact with the CAZ committee to book. See our *Contacts* Section for details on how to get in touch.

by Jennifer

Irish Ferries Fly The Jolly Roger

The story of Salvacion Orge, the Filipino hair-dresser who was paid €1 an hour by Irish Ferries through a sub-contractor was shocking in itself but actually served to draw away attention from a larger dispute and scandal.

Ferries and its workers are currently in dispute over the bosses' plan to 'outsource' its workforce. This dispute has gone to the Labour Court, where it was ruled that Irish Ferries couldn't contract out officers' jobs to exploitation (sorry, 'employment') agencies. The contracting-out of officers' jobs had previously taken place, so the verdict was a victory of sorts. However the company took it that it was okay to outsource jobs such as those merchant sailors or deck staff not lucky enough to be officers.

Siptu members on the crew had taken a vote for strike action on June 7th, but this has been forestalled by Siptu bureaucrats and Irish Ferries management agreeing to conduct a 'comprehensive review of operations encompassing the Irish Sea and the Continental Corridor' on June 16th. This review will take six weeks to complete, and one of the conditions attached is that 'no further action of any form' will happen for the duration, and neither 'will there be any further media statements for the duration of the assessment process'.

Mind you, this is just the latest phase in a struggle that has usually occurred away from the gaze of the "fifth estate". The maritime workforce was the first globalised workforce, and the passenger ferries are the latest front in this struggle. These ferries were usually crewed locally, but recent changes to international labour law allow Irish Ferries and their likes to cast their net far and wide for the cheapest crew they can get.

Agencies like CF Sharp Crew (which was Salvacion's employer by the way) have been used by shipping companies for decades as a device to drive down sailors' pay, and to take the blame or legal responsibility for horror stories like Salvacion's. They operate in countries where labour laws are so unfair and so weakly applied that they facilitate this robbery from labour by ruthless profit-seekers.

Most merchant mariners come from relatively poor countries, where compared to on-shore jobs working at sea is well-paid. There is no job security however, and wages and conditions at sea for workers have worsened significantly over the last 30 years. Not only do these brave men and women support families they rarely see, but there's a whole range of parasites living off their labour. International maritime law allows 'flag of convenience' registration which means that ships can be crewed by the cheapest workforce available to the bosses. Their greed is such that they'll search the world over for the unfortunate bunch of workers who'll put up with dangerous work conditions for low wages.

Salvacion Orge's case had a happy ending. Because of her refusal to be ripped-off and the support of her fellow workers she received a €25,000 severance pay-off and tickets home to her family in the Philippines. But it is worth reflecting on these things: Salvacion or her two Filipino co-workers did not get to keep their jobs; the legal structure of the exploitation planned by Irish Ferries will be refined and strengthened, not weakened. by losing in the Salvacion Orge case; and that Irish Ferries, and shipping bosses everywhere, are not giving up on trying to contract-out their way to greater profits!

by Ray Hanrahan

Thinking about Anarchism

by Dermot Sreenan
& James O'Brien

Social Revolution



Anarchists often talk of the 'Social Revolution' as the event which will destroy hierarchical and exploitative institutions, thus opening the way to living our lives according to our desires.

It'll be a time when freedom will be more than a word used in advertising campaigns, where justice shall be true, when economic equality shall exist, and where democracy will be direct - i.e. people who are affected by those decisions shall be the ones making them in the first place. Anarchists talk about the social revolution because we recognise that there will be a time when we will have to make a definitive break with what has gone before.

For the social revolution to succeed anarchist ideas need to win the battle for the hearts and minds of working people before the morning of the day itself dawns. These ideas, in a nutshell, are the principles of freedom and equality, and no repression. The revolution will be a moment when people, their confidence built up by smaller actions, finally seize power over society, and then construct a new society where no one ever gets into a position of power again.

Means to Ends

What comes after a revolution is very much dependent on how that change is carried out. People often refer to the means being justified by the ends, but really the means determine the end. Society will be changed by the majority of people destroying the state system and replacing it with directly democratic workers' and neighbourhood councils. While this can be difficult to envisage given the present widespread apathy, anarchists are confident that involvement in the struggle itself transforms people just as it transforms society.

If, instead, we leave it up to a group of leaders to take control of a revolution, you can be sure that they will install themselves as the new elite even if they start off with the best of intentions. The road to hell is paved with such good intentions, Ceausescu's Romania was founded on them, and it ended up looking like hell by the time justice caught up with him.

There are two types of factors which, although linked, can be useful to consider separately: the objective and the subjective. The objective ones are the ones that we have little control over, like the weather, the economy, whether or not we go to war with another country, minor details like that.

The subjective factors, such as the ideas we hold, like the idea that working people can collectively effect change, are the ones that we have some control over. At certain moments in time, the two have conspired to get people into a position where they push against the existing system with all their might until it ceases to function. Spain in 1936 is such an example of one of those moments when large amounts of Industry and Agriculture were collectivised voluntarily, and where people tried to build a new way of life on the ashes of the old.

Revolutionary Defence

Spain showed that the ruling class, facing their extinction as a class, will fight desperately to regain their power. This means, unfortunately, that armed defence of the revolution will probably be necessary. If we don't organise for its defence, we will be condemning not only ourselves to slavery, but also the generations that follow. For libertarians, the military aspect of the revolution must be no different than any other: it should be voluntary and organised democratically, with elected and recallable officers who receive the same privileges as everyone.

Workers' Councils

And the workers' militia must be under the control of the workers. In general, anarchists see Workers' and Neighbourhood Councils as the means by which the people will organise their daily life during and after the revolution. From producing goods and services to organising street cleaning and community protection, anarchists advocate direct administration of all [public] aspects of life. We envisage that these Councils will federate with each other, first locally, then nationally, and then across the globe.

Rather than electing professional leaders to decide our fate, it is essential that people have a say in making decisions that affect them. Having an equal say in how things are run will not only help prevent the re-emergence of a controlling elite, it will ensure more commitment to the new society. As will the inherent justice of anarchist-communism - where people give according to ability and receive according to need.

But to get to the anarchist society, we have to pass through the gateway of social revolution: we have to rise up and get rid of the monster that's been created, where terrorists, war criminals, and gangsters in suits decide whether they are going to let people live or die. That can't be done for us. We have to do it ourselves.

Book Review: Graham Purchase's Anarchism & Environmental Survival

The blurb assures us that this will be “one of the most controversial environmental books of the 1990s”. This seems to me to overstate the case and I doubt that it was! This book is no more nor less than a simple updating of the case for anarchist communism implemented in an ecologically friendly way as stated by anarchist geographers Kropotkin and Reclus all those years ago.

Purchase argues for the use of science and technology but in an extensive and ecologically sensitive fashion by a bio-regionally organised libertarian society. He has many ideas in common with social economist Murray Bookchin though he, rightly I think, blasts Bookchin's latter day dismissal of class struggle.

The book sort of falls between the polemical and academic stools. It's too short and under referenced to be truly academic yet lacks the bite and poetry of good polemic.

That said there are some new and fairly fascinating ideas here. One that grabbed me almost immediately was a chapter on micro livestock, including miniature versions of all the conventional animals we in the West are familiar with (cows, sheep, goats etc) as well as rodents and poultry (e.g. hens and ducks).

Instead of intensive cropping or grazing he proposes mixing some crops and animals.



Such a scheme would be easy to extend to city plots with hens, ducks or the likes. Animals could be introduced which ignore the crops but root out weeds and insects and fertilise the land on a continuous basis. Even more surprisingly this view actually leads him to reject vegetarianism in and off itself as a solution to intensive/factory farming. Although he acknowledges ethical and scientific reasons for it in the end he favours some continued use of animals in the fashion above.

He is also very good on the wide spread anarchist identification with women's rights going way, way back to the eighteenth century and Mary Wollstonecraft.

He tackles the idea of population reduction straight on, quoting *Food First* (Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins): “the idea that there is not enough food to go round simply does not hold up” He argues that the massively unequal access to resources and land under capitalism are the key causes of global poverty. He puts the argument very well at the end of chapter 5: “To blame an abstract biological notion of natural increase for over populating the world – when it is quite obviously caused by statism, patriarchy, and capitalism - suggest that a starving Somali refugee is as much to blame for starvation as a fat businessman or grossly over paid Western bank official.”

So generally a statement of anarchist principals that I would agree with but lacking in detailed well referenced examples. So, for example, he manages to make cursory references to potentially fascinating areas like anarchism and chaos theory but never really develops them. But still a good read for some one very new to the basic rational anarchist ideas first expressed by the likes of Kropotkin and Reclus.

by Conor McLoughlin

Anarchism & Environmental Survival is available at 13 euro from the WSM book-service .

Man Deported Because of Garda Brutality Cover-Up

In the early hours of May 19th Michael Alabi was deported by the Irish State. Michael was resident of a hostel in Lower Gardiner street and was part of a group of Nigerian men who decided to go on hunger strike to protest against the department of Justice's draconian immigration policies.

Michael and others were instructed by officers from the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) to sign on twice daily in their hostel, leaving them under virtual house arrest. The action taken by the GNIB prevented the men from visiting their wives and children.

The asylum seekers bravely persevered in their fight to gain rights that had unjustly been taken away from them. Michael was one of the last to come off hunger strike and due to the pressure the GNIB eventually granted

their request to sign on once a day.

But because of the increasingly racist attitudes within the immigration system their success was short lived. On the 18th Michael was, as usual, signing on with Guards from the GNIB. His friends noticed Guards taken him into an empty room and heard loud screams coming from inside the door. When Michael reappeared his face and hands were covered in blood. He was then taken to Clover Hill prison for deportation.

When Residents Against Racism (RAR) heard of the incident they contacted Clover Hill prison to confirm he was there and get a visitation order. At 5.30am, however, Michael was deported on a scheduled flight back to Nigeria.

The Justice Department and Garda immigration officers are obviously cooperating in this vicious

assault on Michael. When RAR contacted Refugee Legal Services they confirmed Michael's appeal for asylum had not been refused and that it was an illegal deportation and insisted he be returned.

It's not the first and won't be the last time this will occur. Just days after McDowell's racist outburst of claiming all asylum seekers are bogus, Michael Alabi was illegally deported by McDowell and his henchmen in this blatant cover up. Asylum seekers flee from persecution to seek protection from the Irish state not to be brutally attacked by it.





Turkish Workers Victory!

The striking Gama workers got back the part of their wages which had been stolen by their employer and hidden in a Dutch bank; and at the end of May they voted to accept terms relating to overtime. A big bullying multinational construction firm had manners put on it.

The 80 workers who stayed in Ireland to carry on the strike got €8,000 for each year they worked (and a proportion for part years), along with severance pay of €2,500. This gives some idea of the massive unpaid overtime these workers were forced to do, more so when this money only covers about 30% of what they should have received.

Along with the stolen wages recovered from the Netherlands, a worker with three years service went home with over €65,000 – a big sum here and a huge sum in Turkey. Although 200 of their colleagues returned to Turkey earlier in May with their share of the €40 million stolen wages hidden in Finansbank, 80 others fought on to get their overtime pay. The bravery and determination of these workers, who had been getting just €200 a week, shows what is possible.

It contrasts most favourably with the behaviour of some of our unions. Union officials seemed happy enough to collect subscriptions by way of deduction from weekly pay cheques but not to give any service to the workers. Some of the workers were not even aware they were union members.

Why did it take a Socialist Party county councillor borrowing a hard hat and sneaking onto a site to uncover the Gama scandal? What were union officials like SIPTU's construction branch secretary, Eric Fleming, doing for the last three years? Why is the Dublin executive of SIPTU not allowed to see the results of the union's own investigation? If workers don't speak English – hire translators. It's pretty simple! Get stewards elected, organise people (as opposed to just getting them to sign a form in a language they don't understand).



The Gama workers showed that they didn't lack willingness to fight their thieving bosses. It was the union officials – so used to the cosy deals of 'partnership' and the restrictions of the 1991 Industrial Relations Act – who were found wanting. Migrant workers from poorer countries can be used to lower wages. But if our unions make a serious effort to recruit and help them fight for equal pay and better conditions, they won't be used to lower pay levels but rather to strengthen our hand in future struggles.

by Joe King

Anarchism And The WSM

The Workers Solidarity Movement is Ireland's longest running libertarian socialist organisation, having been in existence for over 20 years. As well as producing propaganda we also engage in day-to-day activity, for example we helped in setting up the "Dublin Grassroots Network" which went on to organise the Mayday Protest of 2004 against "Fortress Europe".

The EU Protests, like all struggles we are involved in, highlighted the vision we believe should take precedence – a participatory democratic society with equal opportunity for all, workplaces owned and managed by those who work in them, producing for people's need rather than for shareholders' profit.

Recently, members of the WSM have been agitating with the Dissent network in Scotland against the G8. We're also involved on a more local basis, from the "stand up for your rights campaign" aimed at unionising unorganised workers, anti-racism, and trade union struggles.

Our goal is a society that values co-operation over competition – we see no need for the continuous strife, hunger and poverty that dogs our society – many of these social ills are caused not by laziness, shortages or inefficiencies as governments or business leaders might have you believe, but by the unrestrained greed, corruption and undemocratic structures of businesses and governments themselves! We need to

challenge these sources of hierarchical authority and bring the power back to where it belongs.... with the people! Our goal is simple, serious and achievable. We need working people like you to help it become a reality. Its not about following a party line, or voting a few gombeen men into power, it's just you and your fellow

