

WORKERS SOLIDARITY

Number 89. Nov- Dec 2005

Twenty Two Years of Anarchist News

www.struggle.ws/wsm



WHY ARE THEY STILL RUNNING OUR SCHOOLS?

It's taken decades for the mask of evil to finally be fully exposed. The report by the inquiry into child sexual abuse by pervert priests in the Ferns diocese has at last exposed the suffering endured by huge numbers for people. Now all across the country the truth is finally being told.

One of the principal reasons why priests were able to get away with their rape and abuse of children for so long was because the state abdicated its responsibility to protect children. This is most obvious in relation to control of education. Again and again in the Ferns report it emerges that priests were able to

use their position on management authorities of primary schools to gain access to the children they abused. For example, in Monageer Fr. James Grennan abused 10 young girls during confirmation classes. Local gardai 'lost' the investigation files and this evil predator was allowed to continue to abuse children. And he was able to use his position as chair of the management board of the local primary school to gain access to his victims.

Up to 95% of primary schools in the 26-Counties are directly under the control of the Catholic church. This means that the local bishop is the patron and has an effective veto over membership

of the management board. In the vast majority of cases, it means that the local parish priest is chairperson of the Board of Management. But the Ferns report and other evidence has proven that the Catholic church as an institution cannot be trusted with our children. Not alone have large numbers of priests been guilty of abusing children but also the institution of the church – the bishops and other priests – rallied around and protected the evil perverts in their midst.

For the sake of our children's safety, it's time to tell them to get out of our schools.

by Sean Maguire.



NEWSPAPER OF ANARCHISTS IN IRELAND



More Sectarian Shite

The recent spate of sectarian attacks in villages in Antrim and elsewhere are obviously not a reaction to the IRA as there is no longer anything resembling a war going on.

In fact they are a product of the sectarianism deeply embedded in northern society. They're a product of hundreds of years of cynical use of same to maintain the privilege and position of the ruling class.

Once you let the genie out of the bottle it is not so easy to put it back in. The genie of course still has its uses. The recent riots on the Shankill Road and other areas of serious social deprivation in the poorest protestant areas of the north were ostensibly about the right to hold marches in sensitive areas. People in these areas have good reason to riot but over issues that affect them and their Catholic working class fellow citizens as well.

If the riots had been over unemployment, social deprivation or state repression then the ruling class might well be worried. Fortunately for the state and capital the riots were over the right to hold a sectarian march in front of Catholics. The genuine anger and alienation in these areas is again manipulated in a self defeating sectarian direction. Burning out your Catholic neighbours or fighting the army and police for the right to parade in front of them does nothing to advance the best interests of Protestant workers no more than recent firebombings by the IRA splinter groups help improve the conditions of Catholic working class.

The message that needs to be sent out is that yes the protestant working class are getting a raw deal, but the answer is not to ally yourself with the people and the ideas that have delivered this raw deal. The British state is dispensing with the LVF, UVF and UDA as they are no longer of use to the state. Sectarianism still is though, and it is the enemy of the working class whatever our background. Each power block in the north is now built on an entirely communal basis. Each negotiates with the British and Irish states and each other for its share of power and spoils. The working class loses over and over again. It is in this difficult context that anarchists argue for class politics and workers unity.

James McBarron.

RED AND BLACK REVOLUTION #10



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

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,



Everybody In?

The British government has decided that Orange Order halls will no longer have to pay rates, because they are a resource "for all of the community". What next? A grant to Ian Paisley for furthering religious tolerance? Belfast City Council voted £100,000 to July 11th loyalist bonfires - one of which, in Westland, had an effigy mocking the suicides of Catholic men in nearby Ardoyne.

Council Junket

Taxpayers will have to pay the bill for the 85 councillors who went off to Germany for a meeting of the Confederation of European Councillors. Despite the name, the meeting was only for councillors from Ireland. So, why did they have to go to Berlin? Why did they need a swanky hotel with a casino, solarium, gym, sauna, and minibars in the rooms? Why did they have to spend €100,000 on this junket?

Blood money.

The German chemical firm Degussa has profited twice from the Holocaust. First when they supplied Zyklon B gas for the death camps. Secondly when they won the contract to provide protective coating for the new Berlin Holocaust Memorial.

Land of the Free?

How could Sheriff Carson Smith threaten to sack one of his staff for living with her boyfriend in the 'land of the free'? Because unmarried people living together is illegal in North Carolina. The 1805 law has been used 36 times since 1977, with at least 7 convictions.

Work to live?

1.39 billion people on the world work but are still unable to lift themselves and their families above the US\$2 a day poverty line. Among them, 550 million cannot even lift themselves and their families above the extreme US\$1 threshold. This means that 58.7% of the developing world's workers are earning less than US\$2 a day and that 23.3% are currently living on less than US\$1 a day.

Meanwhile...

Philip Green owns 2,000 shops, including Top Shop, Dorothy Perkins, Burton, and Miss Selfridge. This year he awarded himself a whopping £1.77 billion pay cheque. Now he can buy himself more toys like his Gulfstream jet and his solid gold Monopoly set, which cost £370,000.

Who We Are, What We're For..

Anarchism is a word that scares off a lot of people. But when you get past that first impression it simply is a political movement which believes that working people can organise society in a fair and equal way. This isn't some fancy, never-to-be-achieved utopia. In our day to day lives it means having access to decent health care and education for us and our children; for safe streets, and for free time to enjoy as we like.

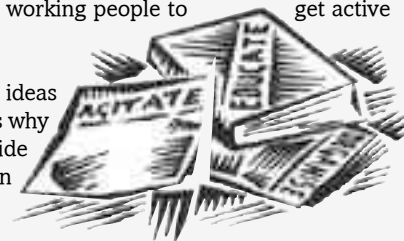
But this clearly isn't the case at the moment. Instead a powerful elite cream off huge amounts of the wealth that is created by working people. And if they are using it to build a fifth or sixth mansion – like Tony O'Reilly – then that wealth, for example, obviously isn't available to a working family to get their own home.

For anarchists, there is no reason why a tiny handful of super-rich cream off so much wealth. After all, that wealth is created by working people; by teachers and nurses, by builders and street cleaners; by us all working together. The fact that it is widely accepted that a few people are entitled to be way richer than everyone else is the great con of our times.

Although a fair society is the starting point for a free society, for anarchists it is not enough. Freedom is an essential part of our humanity. To be free it's necessary that each person has an opportunity to take part in decisions that affect them. In the workplace or the community this means that working people gather together and decide what's to be done instead of leaving it up to the politicians or bosses. We think that better decisions will be made when the whole community is involved. When it's left up to a few at the top they always start making decisions that benefit themselves or their paymasters.

Creating a free society is the task of working class people. The time is past when a political elite could be trusted to do this. It failed in Russia, Cuba and everywhere else. It will always fail. So the only option left is for ordinary working people to get active and make that change for themselves and by themselves.

The Workers Solidarity Movement is made up of working people and it exists to promote the ideas and practice of anarchism within the working class – not to be become a substitute for it. That is why we try to bring anarchist ideas to where people are. In practice this means being involved in a wide range of campaigns and publishing this paper to further anarchist ideas. We hope you'll join us in the struggle for a better world.



Swedish and Finnish Commuters Take Direct Action for Free Public Transport

In Stockholm, Gothenburg and Helsinki commuters are taking the initiative in the fight for decent, free public transportation. Buses, trams, commuter trains and subways are necessary for workers to get around in society. A campaign, planka.nu, has been set up in Sweden and Finland calling for free public transportation. Here Oisín Mac Giollaíomáir interviews Anna from the planka.nu campaign.

How did planka.nu start?

It started as a small campaign initiated by the SUF (Syndicalist Youth Federation) group in Stockholm after an increase in fare prices. We made posters and flyers and arranged mass protests in the subway. We also started "P-kassan" - the freeriding insurance. You pay a small amount to join the insurance fund after which if you get caught freeriding your fine is paid.

How is this campaign run and structured?

In the campaign we practice direct democracy in meetings, there is no committee where anyone has more power than anyone else.

What has been the reaction

of the media and the state?

The reactions have been stronger than we expected, freeriding seems to be a very controversial method of engaging in politics. Maybe because it's so simple, everybody does it at least sometimes. I think that planka.nu focuses on this common phenomenon and that really scared the politicians. Some of the media loved us and at the same time other media refused to publish the website address www.planka.nu or even mention the word "planka". All the local planka.nu groups - Stockholm, Gothenburg, Östergötland and Helsinki have been reported to the police but freeriding isn't illegal so nothings happened.

Where do you see this going in both the short term and the long term?

So far we've been successful in bringing this issue from the bottom of the list of political problems. For years it wasn't even considered political and nobody wanted to talk about the relationship between social welfare, income and the ability to travel between city and suburbs, to work and to school etc. We're aiming for free public transport and we're still a far way from it. We've yet to

see what we're going to do about it next.

What is the role of the SUF in this campaign? What advice if any would you have for others who are campaigning around the issues of public transport?

The only thing left over from the time when planka.nu was an SUF initiative are the anarcho-syndicalist values. SUF has no role in the campaign. The most important advice is definitely don't underestimate the media, don't be afraid of using it, and remember: You can do it! United we stand strong.



Bad things happen

Tales from the front line in Iraq

James Massey is a tall well built man, aged 34. At the age of 19 he joined the US Marines. In Iraq he saw his first combat. He has left the army and has written an account of his experiences entitled "Kill, Kill, Kill". He visited Dublin to give evidence at the trial of the Pitstop Ploughshares and during this time Dermot Screenan interviewed him.

WS: What was the moment of realisation for you? When you knew that you were in a situation which was wrong.

JM: I call it becoming indifferent. I became indifferent to the Marine Corps when I was on recruiting duties, because I was having first hand knowledge of economic conscripts. In America we have no free health care, no retirement system. You can barely feed yourself on our social security system, the jobs in factories have gone overseas to China, South America, Mexico, so young men and women are going into the military for economic reasons. They are going in for health care or retirement benefits.

WS: What was the turning point for you in a combat situation?

JM: It was when we started killing innocent civilians. We killed over thirty of them in a three month time period when I was there, in a clear violation of the Geneva conventions. It started to happen around April 2003. We had already been in Iraq for a little over a month.

WS: Can you take me through one of those situations?

JM: A red Kia car, came speeding towards our checkpoint. We were given intelligence, basically that the average Iraqi was a terrorist so we were given 'carte blanche' to shoot first and ask questions later. This particular day the Kia sped towards our checkpoint, we gave a hand signal telling the vehicle to stop. The vehicle did not stop. We discharged our weapons into the vehicle; there were four occupants, total, three were hit. The driver was unscathed.

We immediately went over to the vehicle, started pulling documents out, searched the vehicle for weapons, ya'know anything that could link them to any type of terrorist activity. Meanwhile the driver of the vehicle was going around asking my marines why were they shot, they weren't terrorists, they were speaking plain English, they were dressed in western

clothes, they looked like college students.

Ultimately what happened was the driver confronted me and he said 'Why did you kill my brother?' And that is when I found out that one of the occupants was the driver's brother. So that was when I opened my eyes and realised what we were doing and what the consequences. And not only was I feeling guilty but other members of my platoon were feeling just as guilty.



WS: Was there any questioning of these orders or was there a feeling that this was coming from the top down?

JM: What happened is once you instill fear into a marine and you tell him that insurgents and terrorists are loading down police cars and ambulances with explosives and sending them at Marine Corps checkpoints, then that sort of thing escalates. At that point when you have that fear it's easier to pull the trigger.

And when you have intelligence reports like that, that are painted, ya'know it leads to bad situations, it actually escalates the violence. When the incidences happened, the Marine Corps said they were going to conduct investigations, and I later found out that they quickly ruled them out as insurgents. So, ya'know, early on I felt like there was a cover up.

WS: Is there any questioning / discussions going on with the troops like 'what the hell are we doing over here?'

JM: You know when you are in combat the only thing that you think about is about keeping the marine to your left and to your right alive, keeping yourself alive, you don't have time to think about politics. You're constantly tired, you're going out on patrol, you just don't have time. Generally what you do is try and make it home. 365 days that you're over there, you expect the American people or the American Government to answer the questions of why you're there. Ultimately when you are there, your mind is on the mission.

WS: After being in the army for so long and experiencing this war, what kind of person are you now after this, what's taken up your life since you are no longer a military man?

JM: It's been a difficult road. I mean I continue to ask questions, that's why I'm here. To expose the violations of the Geneva conventions that I saw, to expose them to the Irish population. To allow them to make up their minds on what they feel are war crimes or a fog of war. Ya'know it's so easy to just say things are collateral damage or a fog of war, where it effects the overall mission is your version of collateral damage or your version of fog of war, is as ultimately impacting the Iraqi people or is possibly escalating violence, that's what happened.

If you read a passage in the Koran, there is a passage in the Koran that states - when your enemies come to you, you treat them with dignity - so the Iraqis were giving us the benefit of the doubt. They were expecting massive amounts of humanitarian aid, humanitarian support which we did not provide. With that the Iraqis are saying 'What are you doing here? What are you doing in my country?' So they make up their own minds, they say well they went to the oil fields first; before they came to us and asked us how we were going. So obviously they care more about the oil. ... I feel like the Iraqis will continue to fight till we're gone, or till they feel they've been vindicated for the deaths that have happened.

How do you tell a 25 year old man who's just witnessed his brother being murdered at a checkpoint; how do you tell this young man not to become an insurgent? That is the question. I'd like to ask that to George Bush.

Irish Ferries: Time to break the law

The dispute at Irish Ferries is about greedy bosses, very greedy bosses who want to replace their staff with modern day galley slaves.

Eamonn Rothwell, Managing Director of Irish Ferries, plans to get rid of 543 workers and replace them with migrants on €5.50 per hour. Rothwell earned €87,000 last year. That's €38.00 an hour. But there is no talk about replacing him with a yellow pack boss from Eastern Europe!

Our so-called 'social partners', government and IBEC are not complaining about his wages. Yet again it is ordinary workers who are being screwed to boost the profits of big business.

Bertie Ahern pretended to be sympathetic when he

said that the company was engaging in "sharp practice". This is just empty guff designed to stop vote losses. The truth is that Bertie Ahern and his government support what Irish Ferries are doing.



Tom Parlon said that new employees of Irish Ferries would be better off than they would be in their own country because they would be getting €3.50 an hour and their board and

lodging!

This government has encouraged migrant workers to come to Ireland not just because there is a labour shortage but also so that business can underpay and use them to drive down wage levels. We have no argument with fellow workers from abroad, we simply want everyone to get the union rate for the job.

SIPTU cannot sort this out with court cases nor with appeals to the government. A strike to shut down Irish Ferries would give Rothwell and his pals something to think about. A commitment by trade unionists in the ports of Ireland, Britain and France to refuse to handle its ships would quickly bring a halt to their gallop.

Our unions have the power to shut down Irish Ferries until they agree to employ all of their staff on trade union rates of pay. However, doing this would bring our unions into conflict with the law. The Industrial Relations Act makes solidarity action unlawful.

This is a big step to take but the choice is simple: break the law or allow the bosses to break our unions. If we let Irish Ferries get away with it, other bosses will, naturally, copy them. Many more jobs will be in danger.

On the other hand, if our unions give Irish Ferries management a bloody nose, other bosses will learn a lesson and back off.

*by Alan MacSimion.
Siptu member.*

Available from the WSM Bookservice.

<p>A small selection of pamphlets available from the WSM. Because of high postage costs orders are only accepted from Ireland.</p>	<p>their role in organising the anti-fascist militias, the Stalinist sabotage of the revolution, why Franco won. 1.90</p>	<p>1.00</p>
<p>Total the cost of the books you want and add about 20% for postage. Include payment by Cash, Cheque or Postal Order (payable to WSM Bookservice). Send your order to WSM Bookservice, P.O. Box 1528, Dublin 8. Any queries email wsmbooks@eircom.net</p>	<p>THE ORGANISATIONAL PLATFORM OF THE LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISTS The classic 1926 text by five veterans putting forward their opinion why the anarchists failed in the Russian revolution, and the organisational methods needed in the future. 1.90</p>	<p>CHOMSKY ON ANARCHISM Noam Chomsky's interview with Irish anarchists on 'Anarchism, Marxism and hope for the future?', alongside his 'Notes on Anarchism?'. 1.90</p>
<p>WINNING THE WATER WAR How the water charges were defeated. How the movement grew from tiny meetings to a mass campaign of non-payment which forced the government to abolish this double tax. 0.20</p>	<p>CAPITALISM WON'T FALL BY ITSELF! Looks at methods of anarchist organisation. 1.90</p>	<p>SISTERS IN ARMS The role played by anarchist women in the Spanish Revolution. 1.50</p>
<p>PARIS 68 A detailed eyewitness account of the Paris revolt, first published in 1968 1.50</p>	<p>TRADE UNIONS AND REVOLUTION Why we need to work for anarchism inside the trade unions, the struggle to take power away from the full-time officials and return it to the membership. 1.00</p>	<p>STALIN DIDN'T FALL FROM THE MOON! A collection of articles from Workers Solidarity on the Russian revolutions and its destruction at the hands of Lenin & Trotsky's Bolshevik Party. 2.25</p>
<p>THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR: ANARCHISM IN ACTION Why the war started, the workers' response, the role of the anarchists, was a revolution possible, the anarchist contribution in industry and on the land,</p>	<p>SEX, CLASS AND WOMENS OPPRESSION* An anarchist look at women's oppression, the 'family values' offensive, continuing inequality at work, anti-prostitution laws, and the struggle for abortion rights in Ireland.</p>	<p>PARLIAMENT OR DEMOCRACY? The author shows, with detailed research and examples from recent history, how parliaments evolved from bring councils of advisors to the rich and powerful to representing and running society exclusively in their interests. A century of 'parliamentary socialism' has failed as the rich get richer at the expense of the poor. Examines the anarchist alternative. 2.50</p>

Pushers Out!

The inside story of Dublin's anti-drugs movement.

"Pushers Out: The inside story of Dublin's anti-drugs movement" by Andre Lyder.

Review by Aoifer Fisher

Walk five minutes from O'Connell St, Dublin's main thoroughfare, or five minutes from Christ Church Cathedral, an important tourist attraction, and you will find yourself in a very different world from that depicted in the tourist brochures. *Pushers Out* tells the story of how people living in the North Inner City and the South Inner City (and later the suburbs, and some small towns) organised to save their communities from heroin. Not relying on the state to solve their problems, they started to organise themselves. One such working class organisation is Coalition of Communities Against Drugs (COCAD).

Andre Lyder, the author, lived in the south of the city. A member of a small socialist party and interested in community politics, he joined the anti-drug group COCAD in 1992, and soon became a committee member. His account of the Dublin anti-drug movement doesn't pretend to be objective and is all the better for it. He describes the complexity and tensions within both of the campaigns, and while I would not agree with all his conclusions he has done a great service in dealing with many difficult issues in a clear and frank manner.

Concerned parents

There were two campaigns against drug use in Dublin. The first known as the 'Concerned Parents against Drugs' began in 1983. It was superseded in many parts of Dublin in 1996 by COCAD.

The Irish ruling class showed utter contempt for the poor inner city areas of Dublin. Charles Haughey, the corrupt Taoiseach famously bought shirts worth five grand each and stole cobblestones from Dublin streets to pave the drive at his home. Meanwhile areas of the city were suffering over 80% unemployment. An epidemic was ravaging certain parts of the city, destroying lives, families and communities and the ruling elite were happy to ignore it. Lyder argues these areas always had a tradition of using alcohol as an escape from grinding poverty, such that the way was paved for heroin.

The campaigns began with meetings in local area called by residents concerned about the open dealing of heroin and all that came with that – hallways and greens were littered with dirty syringes, and those who overdosed lay where they fell.

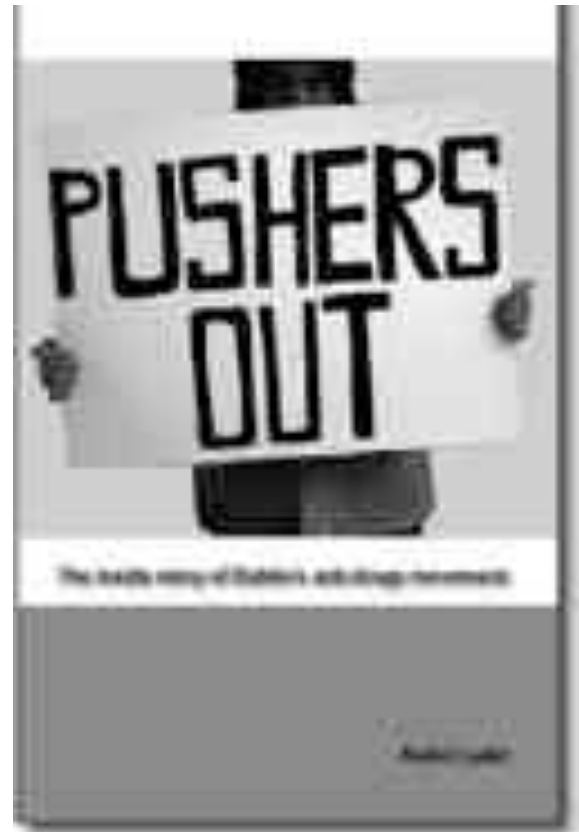
People power.

A spectrum of strategies were adopted by the Concerned Parents and COCAD to deal with the problem; mass meetings would march to a suspected dealers house and tell him or her to get out of the area. Meetings would forcefully evict suspected dealers, making a line of people to remove the furniture so that no one person could be charged with any offence. Smaller groups of people (often from other areas to limit the possibility of revenge attacks) would call to the houses of suspected dealers and tell them they would have to leave. Posters with the photographs and addresses of dealers would be posted around the area locally. The communities would mount permanent vigil at the entry to their estates, preventing any suspected dealer or addict from outside the area from entry. These pickets were manned day and night and became a permanent fix-

ture of inner city street life.

Violence

Lyder also addresses two of the most contentious features of the anti-drug campaigns, namely the extent to which the IRA was involved and the extent to which physical violence was an aspect



of the campaigns.

Heroin is big business, and those standing in the way of that business can be putting themselves in considerable danger. Des Whelan, an anti drug activist was stabbed to death as was the fourteen year old son of another activist, others were shot at but survived. Lyder argued that while there were Sinn Fein members in the campaign, sometimes in prominent positions, they did not (as the media argued) control it or use it as a front. Their presence did, however, allow the anti-drugs activists to imply that they were under the protection of the IRA, and it seems, in the very early days they were.

However he also suggests that while officially the IRA were not involved, IRA volunteers on the ground, unofficially and at times against the command of the IRA, were involved in killings and attempted killings of drug dealers. In addition he describes a campaign that operated in parallel to COCAD (and was never discussed at COCAD meetings). Known as the 'military campaign' this was made up of groups of men who had access to weapons and were willing to respond, like with like, to attacks made by drug dealers. If a drug dealer parked a fancy car in an estate, it would more than likely be burnt out.

Few people would have problems with this, however Lyder also outlines the complications that arise when you have small groups

acting independently of a mass campaign. In one instance a local man cynically used his association with the campaign to pressurise a businessman from involvement in a local taxi company. The businessman lost his money and once he departed the local man took over control of the company himself. Lyder argues that such out and out corruption was exceptional. A much more difficult case to deal with is the death in May 1996, at the hands of anti-drugs activists, of heroin user and small time dealer Josie Dwyer.

Josie Dwyer died from a blow to his spleen following an encounter with drugs activists on the evening of May the fourteenth. Lyder attended an anti-drugs meeting on the night and describes the chaos that ensued, as a proposed mass march on a drugs dealers home, fractured into small groups of people confronting suspected dealers. After his death, the media reported that Dwyer had been the victim of a frenzied attack that included the use of iron bars and lump hammers. Lyder argues that in court the coroner did not find this to be the case. Josie Dwyer was a sick man his spleen was abnormally enlarged, Lyder argues that the blow that killed Josie Dwyer would not have been fatal to a healthy person.

Thus he describes Josie Dwyer's death as 'tragic, if unintentional' but his sympathy remains squarely with the activists who were subsequently tried and with those who were convicted. While I understand his perspective, I have difficulty with this, and no doubt for this he would consider me a liberal. However, to put it bluntly if the strategy you adopt includes beating up junkies with aids, it shouldn't be a surprise if one of them dies. It is inevitable. In addition a criticism made frequently about the Concerned Parents (and less so with COCAD) was that in reality there is little distinction between being a junkie and a small time dealer and the Josie Dwyer case seems to provide evidence of this. Nobody argues that Josie Dwyer was a main player in Dublin Drugs cartels.

The police were always highly hostile to the anti-drugs campaigners, many of whom faced serious intimidation; they were stopped in the street, they were brought in for questioning, their houses were raided, they were beaten. It was widely suspected that some police were very close to major dealers. It is not mentioned in the book, but there were rumours that heroin appeared on the streets in police evidence bags. Lyder argues that with Josie Dwyer's death the police went into overdrive. They were determined to break the anti-drugs campaign by incarcerating as many activists as possible. Thirteen were eventually arrested of which six were convicted and given twenty-month sentences. It has often been said that the Josie Dwyer's death caused the anti-drugs

campaign to fracture; Lyder argues that this was only true in the South Inner City.

Concerned communities

1996 was also to see an explosion of anti-drug campaigns though out the city, this time mostly organised under the COCAD banner. The vigil began with renewed vigour and there were a number of large anti-drugs marches in the centre of Dublin. The political climate, changed slightly, with the defeat of ruling party Fianna Fail and the election of a coalition government that included the Labour Party and Democratic Left. This was the era of social partnership and Lyder is particularly scathing about the incorporation of community resistance by 'professional' community workers. Neglect now has a benign face.

The end of the book details the turn towards electoralism and the winding down of the campaign. Strangely, to my anarchist eyes anyway, no link is made between the two processes.

Conclusions

What was the end result? Lyder argues that the anti-drugs campaign stabilised the extent of heroin users in the city, they moved drugs up the agenda, secured funding for treatment services, youth facilities and led to a growth of local pride and sense of community. The drug problem wasn't 'solved' but it was contained (and in this respect, Lyder is critical of government responses which rely on methadone maintenance rather than support for detoxification and rehabilitation).

There is an entire history of the city in this book, a history that without it would remain mostly hidden. Indeed one of the most interesting aspects of the campaigns is mentioned just as a brief aside 'women were the backbone of the campaign, overwhelming filling the meetings and marches'. Interestingly he also adds, that despite this women were rarely members of the executive committees.

He touches on many other issues in the book-the media attacks, the farcical reality of the district courts and the various approaches to rehabilitation. The story told here is far from simple, the dilemmas faced difficult. This is a book that raises as many questions as it answers, indeed it highlights that many of these questions that don't have easy answers. Yet as these are questions that continue to be important to those of us who hope to build a better world, Lyder has done us a great service in documenting an important moment of in working class history, a moment when the people of Dublin organised themselves and took back control of their communities.

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

Affiliated with *International Libertarian Solidarity*

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 Dissent

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

Non-hierarchical Network of grassroots

social justice activists formed as a

merger between Dissent! and the Dublin

Grassroots Network.

Indymedia Ireland

www.indymedia.ie

Irish Branch of Global Media Collective

The place to find Irish campaign news.

Barracka Books

Radical Book Store

61 Barrack Street, Cork City

barrackabooks@yahoo.ie

Cork Autonomous Zone

Social Space

61 Barrack St., Cork

corkcaz@yahoo.ie

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 women's freedom to choose

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

Residents Against Racism

Campaign against racism & deportations

Meets every Friday at 7pm in the Teachers

Club, 36 Parnell Square in Dublin

www.residentsagainstracism.org

EMAIL/WEB

irishanarchism@yahoogroups.com

Big, high-volume anarchist discussion list

ainriail@struggle.ws

Low-volume newsletter from the WSM

Announcements, Reports, Articles

www.anarchism.ws/ireland.html

Index of Irish anarchist Internet resources

www.anarkismo.net

International Anarchist Website

Elections in Haiti - What about Democracy?

The 30th of September marked a new anniversary of the first coup against Aristide in Haiti. That day, activists in 47 cities around the world, held an international day of solidarity with Haitian people who, once again, are suffering from the effects of a coup and a bloody occupation under the command of the UN. In Dublin, we were visited by a Haitian activist, Obed Alexis, who gave a conference and we participated in the picket organised by the Latin American Solidarity Centre, joining this international protest. We showed Haitian people that they are not on their own and that there are plenty of hands ready to help them in their struggle against the occupation and Latortue's dictatorship.

The demands behind the protest were simple: respect for Haitian people's sovereignty, release of all political prisoners and the immediate retirement of UN troops from Haiti, which have backed the elite and have worsened repression. It's worth mentioning that most of the armies involved in this UN mission, like the Nepalese, Pakistani, Peruvian, Chilean, Moroccan, etc. have serious records of Human Rights violations and still, are supposed to be guardians of democratic values in Haiti.

Now, with the date of the Haitian presidential elections approaching (mid December), we're told this is a concrete way for Haitian people to exercise their right to sovereignty and to express their will. Without getting into the argument of the banality of "democratic" elections, we can wonder how this will can be expressed as Haitian society is crushed under the weight of rampant violence promoted by the death squad of the ruling classes, by the brutality of its police and the occupational forces, and when prominent militants of the most popular political party –Fanmi Lavalas– are imprisoned, dead or exiled. These are the reasons why popular organisations have called to a boycott of the elections and why the people are reluctant to believe that any democratic progress could be achieved with them. That was reflected in the low turnout to inscriptions in the first months of the process; this trend only changed when, in order to force people to participate in a blatantly irregular process, the de facto government introduced a new ID card that will be given only to voters. After the elections, this will be a compulsory document for Haitian citizens.

This elections will be a milestone in the occupation; it's the necessary illusion of democracy in a world dominated by multinationals in a deeply undemocratic way. It's the way the ruling class have to sanctify the coup and its violent aftermath. It's the way they have to show the world that Haiti is back to normal –with 10,000 citizens less. It's the way the elites validate themselves in power as a result of popular will, instead of a bloody coup. The US and France, with its firm grip in the region are quite interested in this process running smoothly: The

elections will cost U\$60 million, 90% coming from the EU and the US. After all it's good investment; the sweat shops will keep going on at low cost, the markets will keep wide-open, there'll be more control of the flow of cocaine and immigrants into the US, and the prospect of



a reliable ally in the region is always welcome.

The candidates are a motley bunch of 34 businessmen and thugs, quite representative of the worse of Haitian history of oppression. And Aristide's party is torn between those who call for active resistance and boycott, and the bourgeois sectors that are trying to accommodate to the new situation and presented their own candidates: ex-president Preval and Bazin, former prime minister of the dictator Cedras!

The elections can't be expected to solve Haiti's deep problems, but have highlighted a number of issues for the international movement: the inconsistency of a strategy that brings together in equality of terms the popular and bourgeois sectors of society and the new "democratic" face of imperialism, that globally is imposing its will through elections, showing the true face of capitalist democracy. Not much is left for Haitian people, but the need to go back to its popular roots, to its tradition of "popular democracy" from below and to draw from there an anti-capitalist program to overcome the source of Haiti's problems: the sharp class division between the rich and the dispossessed. Without addressing that issue, the danger of new coups will prevail, and any democratic dream will only remain as an illusion.

2 Years In Jail For Criticising Islam

Text of a letter received by the WSM from the Workers Communist Party Of Iraq..

Dear Comrades

The Islamic state of Afghanistan has sentenced Ali Mohaqeq Nasab, executive manager of Women's Right journal to two years imprisonment for criticising Islam. This is an outrageous trial, an outright violation of freedom of speech and women's rights.

The people of Afghanistan have been victimized and terrorised by political Islam

for over two decades. The fall of the Taliban brought some hope to women and to freedom loving people - that atrocities committed daily by these religious thugs would stop, that people would enjoy freedom and that women could throw down their veils and participate in social life.

This hope was soon shattered by the plans of the US and the West to help bring another Islamic-tribal government into power. The formation of a new Islamic state, with the tribal constitution assembly, was opposed by libertarian and progressive organizations. Objections were dismissed, and atrocities,

violation of women's rights, kidnapping and raping of women and young girls, violation of human rights, and basic civil liberties continued.

This sentence must be condemned by all women's rights activists, freedom loving people, humanitarian organisations and secularists. We should fight against political Islam in any corner of the world. We stopped Sharia courts in Canada; we should topple the Islamic states in the Middle East.

Azar Majedi

Chair of Organisation for Women's Liberation