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WORKERS SOLIDARITY

Twenty three years of Irish Anarchist News

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Greens Show True Colours



For the first time in their history, the Irish Green party is in government. The deal that they struck with Fianna Fail has been criticised in many quarters as a “sell-out” – and with some justification, since the Greens have changed sides on the issue of Shannon airport’s use by the US military, the conflict between Shell and the residents of Rosspport and the decision to route the M3 motorway through the lucratively re-zoned lands of Fianna Fail supporters, who happen to live near Tara. On these, and other issues, the Greens switched, overnight, from a position of opposition, to jobs in a government that is implementing them - with force when necessary.

But, it can’t be ignored that many of the cries of sell-out are coming from members of Fine

Gael and Labour, whose politics are virtually indistinguishable from those of Fianna Fail – parties who would be praising the Greens for their “immaturity” if they had agreed the same deal with them. The Green decision also wasn’t a case of an undemocratic leadership being dazzled by the power and prestige of government and doing a deal to get themselves ministries and Mercs against the wishes of their members - the deal was endorsed by 86% of their voting membership.

In reality, rather than being a sell-out, the Green entry into government, where they will inevitably be used as a green “mud-guard” by Fianna Fail, is quite consistent with the party’s politics. Although the media never tires of mocking the wacky left-wing environmental-

ism and campaigning zeal of the Greens, that is simply a stereotype which long ago ceased to be remotely accurate. Although the Greens started in the environmental and pacifist protest movements of the 1970’s, their politics steadily drifted towards working within the system. This meant accepting the broad outlines of our social, political and economic system and limiting their ambitions to achieving reforms that could be accommodated without major changes.

The Greens have had to drop huge areas of their policy which would have been deemed “business unfriendly”. Now, with a couple of ministries and coalition partners who will immediately veto any proposals which harm ‘competitivity’, they will be limited to imposing environmentally-linked consumer taxes

and offering subsidies for eco-friendly home-upgrades, that are realistically available only to the affluent. This sort of consumer environmentalism is entirely acceptable to both capitalism and the parties of the right.

The trouble is that capitalism depends on a profit-driven economy. It’s always more expensive to produce things in an environmentally friendly manner. It is a system that is based upon inequality – most people don’t have enough time or money to make meaningful consumer choices. Such solutions are bound to fail but the obvious solution of applying environmental regulation and taxation to production is political suicide in a capitalist ‘democracy’. By adapting to the logic of the system, the Greens have become fully integrated into it.

Inside Is Chavez a Revolutionary? | Pro-choice Activism | Anarchist Bookfair & More

NEWSPAPER OF ANARCHISTS IN IRELAND

Irish Political Policing Continues



Left: PSNI members arrest anti-war protesters Right: Gardai tackle Shell2Sea protesters

Recent arrests of protestors, both north and south of the border, has shown that political policing is alive and well within our society.

Four anti-war protestors were attacked and arrested by the PSNI while protesting warmonger Tony Blair's visit to Stormont. Three of them now face a series of charges for voicing their opposition to Blair's visit.

In Rosspport the state has been waging a war of attrition against the local community with the gardai acting as hired thugs for Shell. Five protestors who engaged in a peaceful "lock-on" had their medical team attacked and removed from the scene and were then deprived of their water and blankets until the fire brigade arrived. The five were arrested and are due to face trial on July 11th.

Another Rosspport resident, John Monaghan, is facing continuing harassment

from the Gardai, having been arrested twice in recent months on ridiculously trumped up charges of assaulting gardai. The reality is that the gardai see in John a strong militant voice for the Shell-to-Sea campaign and wish to silence him.

Back up North we have seen the arrest and threatened extradition of Roisin McAliskey, daughter of Free-Derry veteran Bernadette McAliskey, for her alleged involvement in bombing a British army base in Germany over ten years ago. The arrest, interestingly, came just days after her mother Bernadette spoke at an Eirigi (a left wing breakaway from Sinn Fein) republican commemoration in Dublin.

This is, of course, just standard practice, whenever people organise themselves and begin to demand social justice or to question the way society is run they may be met by the states first line of defence, the police.

We have repeatedly seen in Ireland the role the police and our class-based justice system take in defending the interests of the ruling class, with the jailing of 'Coalition of Communities Against Drugs' activists, anti-bin tax organisers and more recently the harassment of the Wheelock family who are campaigning for an enquiry into an extremely suspicious death in garda custody.

Police harassment, of course, is not just reserved for political activists, many young working class men and women suffer harassment from gardai. But it is when we organise ourselves to improve conditions at work or in our communities that the lines are drawn. If it is felt we are getting too militant the police may be used against us, showing their primary role as defenders of the ruling class.

Brian Whelan

Dare To Win

The Building and Wood Workers' International reported, earlier this summer, the end of a strike of more than 7,000 workers against CAC – the largest forestry and pulp producing company in Chile.

The Chilean Timber Workers Union won a raise in wages of 12% for the highest earners and a 52% rise for the lowest earners. All other demands had been met prior to the strike, which was called in response to the company's offer of a 5% raise.

In Ireland, 20 years of 'social partnership' deals have left us with a wage rise that is below the inflation rate, in reality a pay cut. The lesson seems to be: if you fight you may not always win, but if you never fight you will never win.

#Informacje i artykuły w języku polskim
dostępne na stronie [#](http://www.wsm.ie/polska)

Anarchism On The Web

Among the many sites blocked in China is the Workers Solidarity Movement's.

Such is the fear that the mighty proletarian anarchist movement of Ireland strikes into the hearts of despots everywhere, that the Chinese government have blocked our site, retreated under the kitchen table and are now crying for their mummies.

You can check if your favourite site is blocked at:
www.greatfirewallofchina.org

Give Bertie a headache, find out more about anarchism at www.wsm.ie

For news of anarchist activity and events in Ireland, anyone can subscribe to the low volume Ainriail email list by sending a mail to: ainriail-request@struggle.ws

How It All Began; The Stonewall Riots

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Pride Celebrations have recently been seen all over the world, as a celebration of sexual diversity. It's worth remembering the history of Pride celebrations, of their origin in a homophobic and repressive culture, and their challenge to a world that refused to recognise sexual freedom. In this article, Paul McAndrews discusses the origins of Pride as a moment when the queer community in New York stood up and fought to be proud of their sexualities.

The Stonewall riots were a series of violent conflicts between New York City police officers and groups of lesbian, gay, bi and transgender people that began during the early morning of June 28, 1969, and lasted several days. It was a watershed for the worldwide gay rights movement, because it was the first time queer people had forcibly resisted the police. At the time, gay bars were illegal, the only queer bars were underground and Mafia-run. Violent police raids were common. People got prosecuted even for cross-dressing.

Extract from the "The Village Voice, July 3, 1969 "Gay Power Comes to Sheridan Square" Sheridan Square this weekend looked like something from a William Burroughs novel as the sudden specter of "gay power" erected its brazen head and spat out a fairy tale the likes of which the area has never seen.

"The forces of faggotry, spurred by a Friday night raid on one of the city's largest, most popular and longest lived gay bars, the Stonewall Inn, rallied Saturday night in an unprecedented protest against the raid and continued Sunday night to assert presence, possibility, and pride until

the early hours of Monday morning. The result was a kind of liberation, as the gay brigade emerged from the bars, back rooms, and bedrooms of the village and became street people."

The police raided the Stonewall Inn for the second time in a week just before midnight on the Friday. As the patrons trapped inside were released one by one, a crowd started to gather on the street. Cheers would go up as favorites would emerge from the door, strike a pose, and swish by the detective.

When the paddywagon arrived the mood of the crowd changed. Three drag queens were loaded inside, along with the bartender and doorman, to a chorus of catcalls and boos from the crowd. People were shouting to push the paddywagon over, but it drove away before anything could happen.

A transgender woman, Sylvia Rivera threw a bottle at a police officer who had attacked her with his truncheon. The next person to come out was a dyke, and she put up a struggle - the scene became explosive. Beer cans and bottles were thrown at the windows, and coins were thrown at the police. One of the protestors was dragged inside the Stonewall by three of the police.

The crowd erupted into cobblestone and bottle heaving. An uprooted parking meter was used as a battering ram on the Stonewall door and a burning litter bin was thrown inside. The police inside turned a firehose on the crowd. 13 people were arrested and four police officers, as well as an undetermined number of protesters, were injured. It is known, however,



that at least two rioters were severely beaten by the police.

On Saturday, the windows the Stonewall were boarded up and painted with queer liberation slogans like "We are Open," "Support Gay Power - C'mon in, girls." Hostile press coverage was also pinned to the boards. That night the crowds of protestors returned and were led in "gay power" cheers by a group of gay cheerleaders. "We are the Stonewall girls/ We wear our hair in curls/ We have no underwear/ We show our pubic hairs!". There was sustained hand-holding, kissing, and posing which had appeared only fleetingly on the street before.

Soon the crowd got restless. "Let's go down the street and see what's happening girls," someone yelled. They did and were confronted by the Tactical Patrol Force, (originally set up to stop anti-Vietnam war protests). However, the TPF failed to break up the crowd, who sprayed them with rocks and other projectiles. The third day of rioting fell five days after the raid on the Stonewall Inn. On that Wednesday, 1,000 people congregated at the bar and again took the cops on in the streets.

By the end of July, the radical, libertarian left-wing Gay Liberation Front (GLF) was formed in New York and by the end of the year the GLF could be seen in cities and universities

around the US. It sought links with the Black Panthers, the Womens Liberation movement and anti-war organisations. Similar organisations were soon created around the world including Canada, France, Britain, Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand.

The following year, in commemoration of the Stonewall Riots, the GLF organized a march from Greenwich Village to Central Park. Between 5,000 and 10,000 men and women attended the march.

Queer Pride celebrations began as commemorations of the Stonewall Riots.

A reward for (someone else's) hard work

A recent WSM public meeting in Dublin about anarchism saw something a bit different; members of Fine Gael turning up to defend capitalism. We were told it's a great system and the rich are simply enjoying the rewards of hard work.

This was news to those of us who work very hard in cleaning, catering and similar jobs for little more than minimum wage. I dare say it will also be news to billionaires like Denis O'Brien and Tony O'Reilly. As one person pointed out, O'Brien has never laid a single phone cable in his life nor has O'Reilly ever operated a printing press.

We were also told that anyone with a bit of energy can rise from poverty to become unbelievably wealthy. The example we were given was Lakshmi Mittal, Britain's richest man.

Mittal, whose family's wealth is valued

at £19 billion, runs the world's biggest steel firm. He has a £70m mansion in central London. How did he get this sort of cash?

One source of his profits is his mining company in Kazakhstan, which he has owned since 1996. Last September a gas explosion killed 41 in the Lenina mine. Two years earlier an explosion in the neighbouring Shakhhtinskaya mine claimed the lives of 13.

"We are being treated by Mittal's people as little more than slave labour," said Sergei, a Lenina miner, in an interview with The Sunday Times. "Conditions are far worse than they were in Soviet times. The danger is so high that when I go to work I often feel I'm on a suicide mission.

"I lost eight close colleagues in the [2006] explosion. Since then nothing has been

done to improve safety. We are all just waiting for the next accident to happen. It's so tough here that many are leaving to work in mines in Siberia."

Other Mittal miners said that some of the machinery and equipment dated back to the 1970s. "Absolutely nothing has changed since the explosion," said Yuri, another Lenina miner.

Ventilation pipes are made of a rubber fabric that often tears and which miners stitch up by hand with metal wire. Unlike in the West, Mittal's Kazakh miners still use shovels for some work and are made to drag 260lb steel beams to shore up the mineshafts.

Yet the guys from Fine Gael would have us idolise parasites like Mittal.

Joe King



Above: WSM members carry a banner in solidarity with the Wheelock Campaign for an independent investigation into Terence Wheelock's death in Store Street Garda Station
For more information check www.wsm.ie or www.indymedia.ie

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..



Workers at Aer Lingus are being told to accept worsening conditions and low pay rises. This does not apply to the man who does the telling, chief executive Dermot Mannion. Last year he was paid a massive €982,000.

While its staff are restricted to this year's 'Towards 2016' pay increase of 2%, the bosses at drinks firm C&C had no problem bumping up their own pay. Development director James Muldowney saw his jump from €452,000 to €568,000. Finance director Brendan Dwan upped his to €705,000 and chief executive Maurice Pratt added €200,000, bringing his pay packet to €1,400,000.

The Health Service Executive has handed back €87.7 million to the government. This was cash which was given for building new health facilities but never spent. At the same time the HSE have refused to give the National Maternity Hospital the money to employ a few more cleaners.

Disney has made a lot of money over the years from that strange substance known as 'Disney Magic'. But don't be fooled. At the end of the day, they are just another fat corporation with a heart of ice. Recently in California they have lodged objections to a residential development near its Disneyland fun park in Anaheim. The development was to have a set proportion of its housing stock aside for 'low income' families. But Disney, has lodged objections and charged a high-powered legal team to fight its corner.

Workers who pick tomatoes for McDonalds in Florida have not had a significant pay rise in 30 years. The company says it can't afford to pay even one cent more per pound of tomatoes picked. Yet, this year, McDonalds managed to find the money to give over \$15 million in bonuses to their CEO and two other top bosses.

So, what well-known industry does this refer to? "It is our philosophy that well-managed companies in this sphere of business will continue to experience considerable capital appreciation during good and bad markets. We consider these industries to be nearly recession proof." The promo piece is taken from a brochure by Mutuals of Dallas, a stocks and bonds firm. And the industry, of course, is none other than military manufacturing!

Thinking About Anarchism: Property Is Theft



Everybody knows what property is, property is something that we own, but why is this such a major issue for anarchists and the left as a whole? You see when most people think about property it's not such a big deal because what most people don't realise is that there are two kinds of property, there is personal property and private property.

So then what is the difference then between personal property and private property? To put it simply on one hand you have your personal property, something that you own as a person something that you use in your day-to-day life, for example your house your CD collection and your car would all be considered to be part of your personal property, and I think we can all agree that there isn't anything wrong with having a home of your own to live in, or a collection of CD's that you like to listen to, or a car to take you from A to B when ever you so choose to go.

Now on the other hand you have what we call private property, which is entirely different from personal property, because from this kind of property an individual or a group of people can obtain profit. Basically private property is the factories, offices, warehouses and any other number of places a person can work, the tools that they use from the computer in the office to the machinery on the factory floor. All of the things that the majority of us (the workers) use to produce everything we have today. You may be wondering why all of the things I've mentioned are considered "private" property; the means of producing wealth are considered private property because they are owned and controlled by a very small number of people, known as capitalists.

Now you may be saying 'So what if they own everything, they pay us for the work that we do, everybody is happy'. Well what if I was to tell you that while you were out swapping your days work for a wage you were really being conned and robbed by your boss. How do you get the short end of the stick? For arguments sake lets just say you work in a toy factory assembling toys. The boss buys in the toy parts; lets just say the total cost for one toy is €1 and you can assemble



ten toys in an hour, and for this you get paid €10 an hour. The boss then takes the finished toys and sells them for say €50 each. So now the boss has just sold all the toys you made in that hour for €500, now the boss has to pay for the materials and your wages, so when you take them away he is left with a profit of €480 an hour.

But hang on a second you did all the work, why does he get €480 an hour while you only get €10. Well because in capitalism the small minority who have control of all the private property can do this everyday, they are robbing all of us each and everyday. So every time you hear about some company's profits going up remember the just robbed them from you. Hence the famous anarchist slogan "Property is theft".

I should probably just mention one more thing

on private property, and I suppose this relates particularly to social services like transport & health, the media and even to our basic needs as humans such as water, food, and shelter. When one person or a small number of people have control over these, they're not only ensuring they're own access to these things but they're also - and most importantly - denying access to others. We can see this everywhere, just look at the hospitals, if you don't have enough money you won't be treated in the Blackrock clinic, even if all the beds were empty you're not getting in. I don't know about you but I'm tired of being robbed of what I've worked so hard to create, and I don't want to be left for dead because I've been robbed of so much money that I can't afford a hospital bed. So I'll leave you with that thought, and maybe someday we'll stand up and change it together.

Remi Boncoeur

Anarchism and the WSM

The Southern general election saw six parties make it to the Dail. Five of them were open to coalition with any of the others, the PDs being willing to share power with anyone except Sinn Fein. They all looked for votes on the basis that they would be better managers of the present system.

It was all about what variety of capitalism you wanted. You could have selfish with the PDs, greedy with Fianna Fail, a little bit caring with Labour, a bit ecological with the Greens, a more polite version of the PDs with Fine Gael, or most of the above plus Irish unity with Sinn Fein.

Nobody was arguing for anything radically different. As Vincent Browne put it "The reason 'left' politics is now out of fashion is be-

cause there is almost nobody campaigning for them".

Anarchists don't run for the Dail because we want to end the division between rulers and ruled rather than become rulers ourselves. That doesn't mean that we are not political. We do have a goal, one that is radically different, one that requires the replacement of capitalism by something much better.

We stand for a society where production is organised to meet human needs and desires rather than to generate profit for a few. We hold that there should be no limits on human liberty other than respect for the liberty of others. We believe in democracy, in direct democracy. This means everyone being able to have a say in making the decisions that will effect them.

The Workers Solidarity Movement is an organisation of working class anarchists who have come together to maximise the impact of anarchist ideas. Pooling the resources of many people allows us to distribute 6,000 copies of this paper every two months, and 1,000 copies of our twice yearly magazine, Red & Black Revolution. It allows us to discuss the best ways to advance working class interests, and prioritise particular activities rather than be so widely dispersed as to have little effect.

Every additional person who joins adds a little bit more to what we can achieve.

To find out more you can write to the WSM, P.O. Box 1528, Dublin 8; or email wsm_ireland@yahoo.com; or check out www.wsm.ie



The Women's Strike That Won Paid Holidays

In 1941 a bill was brought before the Dail which would make trade unions pay for licences to negotiate on behalf of their members. Without a licence workers and their unions could be sued by employers for loss of profits if they went on strike.

This blatant attempt at extorting money from unions was not taken well. The Dublin Trades' Council, representing 60,000 workers, called the bill 'a partisan attack on the working classes'. The Irish Women Workers Union urged opposition to the bill and on June 4th 100 shop stewards endorsed their union's stand.

In August the Bill was passed. A prominent barrister, Seán MacBride was approached by the IWWU to voice opinion to the President that the bill be referred to the Supreme Court to 'test its constitutionality'. This was rejected by the President,

who had then signed the bill, bringing it into law. The bill was now part of history, carved into the statute books. That law is still in force today.

By October it looked as if the battle was lost. Union after trade union gave in and paid for licenses to negotiate on behalf of their members. The IWWU paid out £4,200, around two-thirds of its annual income. They paid greatly for the right to represent the needs of poorly paid women workers. If the government thought they had knocked the fight out of the unions they were in for a surprise.

By 1943, the IWWU served notice that every firm employing members of the union would have to agree to a minimum standard for wages, holidays and working conditions. A demand for paid holiday leave was particularly opposed by the employers.

In 1945, the laundry

workers, worn out by all the overtime done during the war, voted for strike action to be taken. The Federated Union of Employers (known as IBEC today) dug their heels in.

The women took to the picket line and made their voices heard. More importantly, they hit the bosses where it hurts most - in their pockets. Working class organisations lined up on the side of the strikers, the ruling class backed their own side. Not only government and employers came to the aid of the laundry owners, the Catholic bishops rowed in as well.

The striking women were horrified to learn that institutions (those run by Catholic nuns) were taking on contracts previously held by commercial laundries. There was a fear that the strike would lead nowhere if this scabbing continued and the work was still being done. However they stuck with their

union and stayed on strike.

With solidarity from many other unions and vast support from the general public, the day of victory was in the air by October. The FUE backed down and indicated a willingness to reconsider their position. Letters of praise and of thanks poured in to the IWWU head office. On October 30th, an agreement was enacted between the FUE and the IWWU. It laid down that 'all women workers employed in laundries operated by members of the Federation shall receive a fortnight's holidays, with pay, in the year 1946'.

Another step was taken for women's rights, through solidarity, direct action and a refusal to back down. The laundresses won a historic struggle, and we all enjoy the benefits of that struggle today.

Aoife Kavanagh

An Post Staff To Be Dumped?

An Post workers have been on the receiving end of a series of substantial blows which have held down pay rates and undermined rights with regard to status. The late 1970's and early 1980's saw strikes and protests by the workers to improve conditions, but recent years have seen management back on the offensive.

The latest attack comes in the shape of "deregulation", just another word for privatisation. If it isn't stopped it's going to impact on all of us for the worse.

Why is deregulation so bad? Firstly, you need to understand how the postal system works. Letter post is separated into two categories: commercial and domestic. In the first category is all the business post, including bills (Gas, ESB, Phone, etc.). In the second are private letters and postcards.

When the multinationals come into the market place after deregulation, they will immediately go for the commercial post, and the rest will be left for An Post to sort out.

So with a loss of volume of this extent, the first thing that will happen will be that management will look for a serious reduction in the number of staff. What we could be looking at is as many as three out of every four workers losing their jobs. Then, the new corporation can use the network of An Post to build their business. No questions asked. You do not have to be clairvoyant to see where this is going, and the disastrous effects it would have on the less profitable



rural mail.

At the moment all mail is treated on an equal basis, as it should be. Under deregulation it is almost inevitable that the cost of private postage would increase, as there will be greater costs involved in moving smaller volumes of post to and from less populated parts of the country. And there would be no profits from commercial mail to subsidise ordinary post.

The EU Commission has ruled that deregulation is to start 18 months from now, and it will be taking place across all 27 EU countries.

At the moment there is large level of co-operation between the various postal trade unions

and some sympathetic MEP's are attempting to derail the juggernaut of deregulation. We expect the conflict to escalate in the forthcoming months, with further stoppages and protests. At the end of the day, while support from MEPs is welcome, it will be our own willingness to fight to defend our jobs that will be the decisive factor.

Privatisation has never been a success for people generally or for the workers involved. It's not really meant to, it's about providing yet another opportunity for the rich to get richer and that's why it keeps coming back onto the agenda

Pat Garrett

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http://organiseireland.blogspot.com/

Revolutionary Anarcha-Feminist Group
Anarchist Women
P.O. Box 10785, Dublin 1
www.ragdublin.org

Libertarian Networks
Networks and collectives with a libertarian ethos in which anarchists are involved
Indymedia Ireland
Irish Branch of Global Media Collective
The place to find Irish campaign news.
www.indymedia.ie

Barracka Books
Radical Book Store
61 Barrack Street, Cork City

Cork Autonomous Zone
Social Space
61 Barrack St., Cork
centraladmnzone@gmail.com

Seomra Spraoi
Dublin Social Centre
www.seomraspraoi.blogspot.com

Activist groups fighting for social justice
Shell to Sea
Website of campaign to move Shell's pipeline offshore from Co. Mayo
www.shellseoa.com
Alliance For Choice
Network of campaigners abortion rights

theallianceforchoice@eircom.net

Choice Ireland
Pro-choice action group
choiceireland@gmail.com

Residents Against Racism
Campaign against racism & deportations
Meets every Friday at 7pm in the Teachers Club, 36 Parnell Square in Dublin
www.residentsagainstracism.org

Revolt Video
Video Activist Collective
revoltvideo.blogspot.com
Anti-War Ireland

Democratic anti-war organisation
with branches in Belfast, Cogh, Cork,
Dublin and members elsewhere.
www.antwarireland.org

Justice for Terence Wheelock
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The Spring issue of the WSM magazine: Articles on sex work, the meaning of 'direct action', Rossport, anarchists and the elections, a history of the Grassroots Gatherings, and more. Send €2.00 for a copy



A Magazine Of Libertarian Communism