

WORKERS SOLIDARITY

July / August 2011

Twenty-Seven Years of Irish Anarchist News

Household & Water Tax Can't Pay, Won't Pay

The government has made it clear that it is determined to press ahead with its attempts to impose not one but two new taxes on us. Minister for the Environment Phil Hogan is preparing to bring plans to government for a household tax, probably starting at €100 per year, from 1st January. This tax will be added to by a water tax, expected to be introduced within the next couple of years.

Gregor Kerr

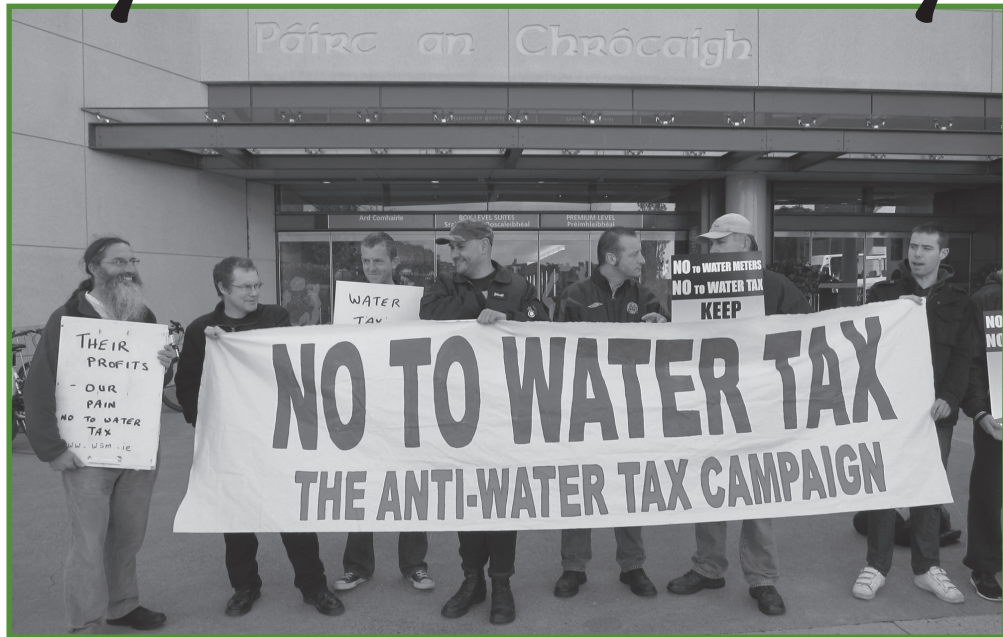
Both these taxes are simply another attempt by government to raid the pockets of ordinary workers and families to pay for the financial crisis. Already we've suffered pay cuts, increased taxes, social welfare cuts, the imposition of the Universal Social Charge and massive cuts social services such as education and health that we depend upon.

Meanwhile the wealthy continue to coin it. In 2009 the number of people in Ireland with investable assets over \$1 million increased by 10% to 18,100. The number of people with investable assets over \$30 million increased by 18 to 181. Figures released by the Central Bank in May showed that there is currently about €120 billion held in hard currency and bank deposits in the Irish economy. The problem, of course, is that this wealth is held by a tiny number of hands and the government, just like its predecessor, is unwilling to make the wealthy pay their share of tax.

Instead they continue to come up with ways of taking money from us. They see us as the soft touch. There is no justifiable economic reason for imposing a new tax on us. The wealthy can and should be made to pay, we have already taken far more than our 'share' of the 'pain'.

Power

But the government can only impose these taxes on us if we let them. Most of the taxes we are forced to pay is taken from our pay packets



before we receive them or are imposed on the goods and services we have to buy. But household and water taxes will require us to write a cheque or make a payment via our credit cards. That gives us a lot of power as it means that we can simply refuse to pay, which is what each of us, as an individual, has to do. Simply we have to say NO, they've taken enough from us, and we're not going to pay any more.

But while step one in defeating this tax is each of us making the individual decision not to pay, these taxes can only be defeated by collective action. Just as we did during the last attempt to impose water taxes in the 1990s, we need to organise in our communities and build strong campaigning groups.

Community campaigns

Non-payment campaigns can be built in every single community. The first task faced will be to talk to and encourage all members of the community to join the non-payment campaign. Then we need to organise to support and en-

courage each other, and to defend each other when the government attempts to attack us through legal or political action. This will require the active participation of as many people as possible. Politicians, community leaders or trade union leaders cannot do it for us. The strongest campaigns will be those that involve large numbers of 'ordinary' people.

That means people like you. You don't need to have any previous experience of organising campaigns to get involved, you just need to have a willingness to work alongside your neighbours and friends to take the simple steps of helping to build a campaign in your area. A No To Water Tax Campaign has already been established and will be building in every community over the coming months. Members of the Workers Solidarity Movement will be active in helping to establish this campaign. We hope that you too will get involved. Please get in touch and we will support or help in any way we can to help build a local campaign in your area.



Education

Minister for Education
Backs Down in Face of
Threatened Protest



Spanish Revolution

75th Anniversary takes
place in July. We look
back on some glorious
achievements.



The Gardaí

No Rules OK when
it comes to policing
protests

The Coming Attacks

After the hyperbole of the election campaign, we have started to realise that rumours of a new day in Irish politics were greatly exaggerated. Somewhat deflated, we now sink back into the same old crisis. While the limited exposures of the Moriarty tribunal have shown us how politics works for the rich, we are about to learn exactly how it works for the rest of us.

Dara Mac Aoidh

The new Government is as burdened by debt as the old, equally bound by the bailout and its conditions. There will be more taxes and more cuts to services; less and less money for the bulk of the population. Labour and union leaders collude, looking for 'efficiencies' in the public sector. A cut by any other name still wounds as deep.

If the union leadership won't fight the cuts and taxes, and they have shown no signs that they will, then there's no existing organisations that can take on the Government and force them to change course. Although the ideal option would be for a radical wing of the union movement to gain enough influence to bring their organisations into a confrontational position and mobilise the membership into active resistance, the current state of play makes this seem unlikely. There are Left activists working in the unions and there is some coordination in places, but there is nothing that is capable of overturning the obstacles within them of undemocratic structures and an entrenched leadership. Where there is democracy there is hope, but the unions cannot be relied upon to lead resistance to austerity.

In the absence of any positions of significant strength, the Left should seek a place to start building from. The coming imposition of local taxes, either as water charges or property taxes, gives ample opportunity for this, as there are no entrenched organisational structures to control and misdirect opposition. Instead, Left activists have the opportunity to build afresh, using the experiences of the previous Bin and Water Tax campaigns to plan an effective short and medium term strategy.

Looking at these community struggles,

there is a common lesson; the base of a strong campaign is in participatory local groups. It is ongoing mass involvement that gives people the confidence and the willingness to take the actions needed to win. The same was true in the British Poll Tax struggle in the early 1990's, which was successful due to the combination of strong, democratic local groups and a clear strategy of non-payment. The specific form of resistance that should be favoured will depend on how the tax is to be imposed, but mass action should be the priority for both effectiveness and future prospects.

The other element is of moral legitimacy. Fine Gael and Labour will justify their attacks through the handy excuse of the Finanna Fail 'heritage' and claim that water taxes are an 'environmental measure'. This is a thin excuse for a nasty and unfair tax, but it's not going to be challenged strongly in the mainstream press. The Left does have the advantage here of 5 United Left Alliance TDs to kick up a fuss and command coverage, but the major outlets will do their best to mock, discredit and outnumber them. Therefore, anti-tax campaigns should also focus on building up involvement in local media projects as part of a broader policy of developing an alternative media sphere to undermine the dominance of state and corporate outlets.

Ultimately, the natural home for a progressive movement is in unions. As the Water, Bin and Poll Tax campaigns all show, serious Left involvement in community campaigning can help stave off attacks, but the dissipation of energies after their conclusion should be a warning sign. Any gains in organisation from these struggles needs to contribute to building a radical and democratic presence in the unions.

The new Government, like the last, is tied to the concerns of the European Central Bank. It would be foolish to think that an effective opposition to this destructive drive can be conjured out of thin air, just because it is sorely needed. Those in search of a better alternative should focus on developing the organisations and movements that can push such an agenda. Focused campaigns against local taxes can be a part of this process, they won't be enough, but they can start the process of building an opposition strong enough to matter.

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Revolutionary Anarcha-Feminist Group (RAG)

PO BOX 10785, Dublin 1.
<http://ragdublin.blogspot.com/>

Indymedia Ireland

Alternative user-generated Irish news.
<http://www.indymedia.ie>

Seomra Spraoi

Dublin Social Centre
10 Belvedere Court, Dublin 1.
<http://www.seomraspraoi.org>

Solidarity Books

Cork Radical Bookshop & Meeting Space
43 Douglas Street, Cork.
solidaritybooks@gmail.com

Just Books

Belfast Radical Bookshop
13-15 Clarence Street, Belfast.
justbooks@rocketmail.com

Shell to Sea

Campaign to move Shell's gas pipeline offshore from Co. Mayo.
<http://www.shelltosea.com>

Hands Off the People of Iran

Anti-imperialist network for solidarity with Iranian trade unionists & the women's rights movement.
<http://www.hopoi.org>

Choice Ireland

Abortion rights action group
choiceireland@gmail.com
<http://www.choiceireland.org>

Residents Against Racism

Opposing racism and deportations.
24 hour helpline: 087 666 2060

Cork Palestine Link

Part of the Free Gaza Movement that is sending a convoy of aid to Gaza.
palestinecork@gmail.com
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Irish Palestine Solidarity Campaign

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Minister for Education Backs Down in Face of Threatened Protest

Minister for Education Ruairi Quinn backed down in mid-June on his threat to amend Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act, which would have had the effect of allowing unqualified personnel to continue to work as teachers in primary school classrooms. The Minister made his decision less than 48 hours before a protest organised by members of the Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO) was due to be held.



Gregor Kerr

Just three weeks prior to that, Minister Quinn had announced that he was intending to proceed with the amendment, despite the fact that there are currently thousands of unemployed qualified teachers, which would have meant that hundreds of unqualified 'teachers' would have remained in our classrooms. The Irish Independent (<http://www.independent.ie/national-news/how-unqualified-are-taking-teachers-jobs-2628691.html>) revealed in April what many INTO members were already well aware of when it highlighted that "400 people with no teaching qualifications worked for at least 50 days in primary schools in the current school year" and "half of the country's 3,200 primary schools employed an unqualified person for up to a week in the September-February period".

This situation has arisen because of the failure of government to establish supply panels of qualified teachers to cover for short-term absences. When the previous government announced, in November last, its intention to amend Section 30 Mr. Quinn

described their decision as "completely ludicrous". Now, with his feet barely warm under the cabinet table, Mr. Quinn was intending to proceed with this 'ludicrous' proposal.

His announcement was greeted with outrage by INTO members. Members in Dublin began to organise against it. Labour Party TDs were contacted and left in no doubt about the strength of feeling and plans for a protest to be held at the Dail on Wednesday 15th June were announced.

It was an issue that united all members of the INTO, from newly qualified teachers to principals and the protest was expected to attract several hundred people. But on the Tuesday morning it was confirmed on the INTO website (<http://www.into.ie/ROI/NewsEvents/LatestNews/Title,19813,en.php>) that "the Department of Education and Science has confirmed to the INTO that the Minister for Education and Science, Ruairi Quinn TD, will be implementing Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act in full".

In a statement, District 14 Committee of the INTO, which had been the main driving force behind the pro-

test, welcomed the decision as "a victory for both common sense and the strength of trade unionism." Pat Crowe, District 14 Secretary, said that "this decision has come about because members of the INTO organised and campaigned against Minister Quinn's attempts to amend Section 30. It is clear that the Minister responded both to the genuine anger expressed by union members against his announcement two weeks ago, and to the constructive suggestions of INTO members as to how the education service could be enhanced to everyone's benefit. It shows that when union members come together, stand united and present clear alternatives, we can achieve things. There are many challenges facing us as union members at the present time. If we bring the same unity of purpose to other fights, we can achieve further successes."



International Anarchist website with news & discussion from all five continents.

The Gardai & “Facilitating Protest”

About 250 people took part in the Eirígí-organised march on the banquet for the British Queen staged in Dublin castle on May 18th last. WSM members joined the demonstration but Gardai intercepted the person transporting our flags and banner to the protest, leaving us somewhat invisible. This was part of a pattern of suppression of visible protest that occurred throughout the visit of the British Queen, despite Garda claims that they would “facilitate protest” in advance of the visit. It turns out the unnamed Garda source quoted by the Irish Examiner in advance of the visit, who claimed “reasonable protest will be allowed - a peaceful protest - but up to a point”, had about as much value as unnamed Garda sources making vague statements ever do. This was despite Eirígí making major efforts to ensure their protests remained peaceful. Before the march, at least two of the speakers stated that anyone not willing to be peaceful should leave the demonstration. Stewards removed a couple of people they judged to have become too rowdy.

Andrew Flood

However, far from facilitating such peaceful protest, the reality was that Gardai tore down posters, removed stickers, confiscated banners, flags and leaflets at every opportunity, before and during the royal visit. Apart from the WSM losing a banner and four flags, Eirígí lost two banners and a stack of posters on the same day in the ongoing campaign of Garda intimidation. One of the confiscated Eirígí banners that the Gardai deemed offensive actually read: “Fund Communities not Royal Visits.” Activists challenged Gardai ripping down posters in the Marrowbone Lane area of the city



by not only producing the Dublin City Council permission but also actually getting a council official to come down from the nearby office and tell the Garda they were permitted, but without success.

On the evening of the Eirigi protest, a WSM photographer was ordered not to take pictures by the leader of group of helmet-equipped Garda descending from a bus at the side of the demonstration. Earlier in the week Gardai had been videoed violently knocking local women to the ground in Summerhill in Dublin 1 before arresting them, apparently simply for verbally protesting the level of force they were using in arresting protesters they had chased into the area. Elsewhere, Gardai told a woman who hung a protest banner from her flat in Dublin South West that they would kick her door in if she did not remove it.

Virtually no civil rights voices dared protest the repressive policing operation, and the Garda operation on May 18th included, we think for the first time, the importation of the controversial “kettling” tactic from the London

police, whereby a section of a crowd is surrounded by police and not allowed leave for hours. A second smaller demonstration organised by the 32 Country Sovereignty Movement in the same area was “kettled” after some fireworks were let off. Media reports indicated that Garda also drew batons and there were at least eight arrests. However the eight were subsequently released without charge despite being held overnight.

One would expect the liberal end of the legal establishment to not only protest such abuse of police powers but to actively send legal observers to demonstrations where such abuse is likely. In Ireland this almost never happens, allowing Gardai to operate with considerable impunity. The confidence shown by Gardai in abusing their powers over the period of the royal visit suggests they have been assured by their superiors that they need not fear repercussions provided they don’t go ‘too far’, a pattern familiar to those living in Rosspoint in Mayo in recent years.

Thinking About Anarchism: Anarchism & Internationalism

The euro zone crisis, and the mainstream opinion formers' response to it, raises the question of nationalistic understandings of the way the world works, and how these understandings frame our perception of where our interests lie.

Stephanie MacNulty

Commentators and politicians insist on explanations of the crisis wracking the Greek state that are rooted in perceived national characteristics; in this view the Greeks - all Greeks, rich and poor - are exuberant, colourful, corrupt, inept, inefficient etc. and therefore to blame for "their own" crisis. The same, often racist, stereotypes are applied to the millions of Greeks protesting against their political and economic elites and the austerity measures, which, just as in Ireland, are the means by which working class people are being made to pay for "their" political elite's fuck-ups. While the protesters are right in clearly identifying the culprits as being the rich elites in Greece and in the world of finance, the Greek government is using a nationalist frame to try to get them to go along with the austerity; "we all have to tighten our belts, we are all in this together, for the good of the nation".

The same process is used in Ireland, with nationalism being invoked ("we are all in this together") and, from

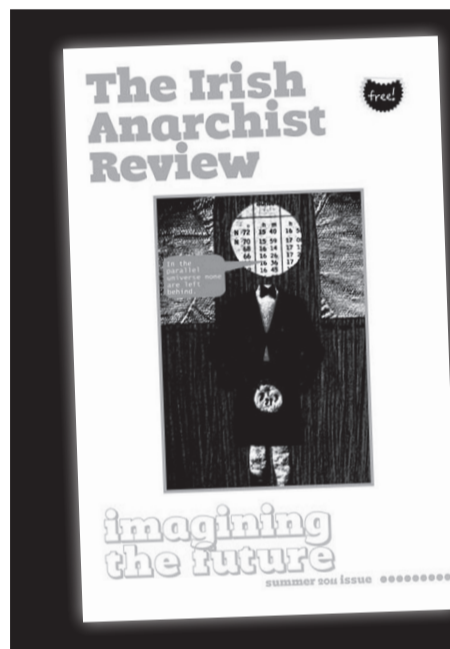
abroad, national stereotypes are similarly being used to tar the Irish working class ("lazy, inefficient, corrupt, overpaid, incompetent, greedy") with the same brush as the gombeen political class. This is part of a concerted effort to make it take the blame and shoulder the burden for the screw-ups of the Golden Circle and international finance capital.

In this way, capitalism uses nationalism to marshal the working class to go along with the wishes of national elites and accept austerity and other measures. At the same time capitalism uses nationalism to actively discourage the working class in Ireland from identifying with their working-class sisters and brothers in Greece, Portugal or Spain.

An anarchist worldview rejects nationalism as an ideology that is ultimately rooted in authoritarianism and bigotry, recognising that it is an ideology that came into its own with the flourishing of the capitalist state. Anarchism, which upholds the value of solidarity among the working class, instead advocates internationalism to break down ideologically-imposed national divisions in order to reveal the real divisions which our rulers are constantly trying to mask; the division between rich and poor, between capital-owners and workers, between the international financial elites and the rest of us.

As ordinary people we must struggle to break from the nationalist framework that opinion-formers propagate. We must see that our interest is really the same as the interest of the working class internationally. We must find ways of expressing solidarity with our Greek sisters and brothers, of standing beside our Spanish sisters and broth-

ers, and so on. The capitalist rulers of the world know their interests lie in working with each other more than with the workers they keep in line with nationalism. It's time that we did the same and recognised that our fundamental interests are defined by the fact that we are workers, not Irish or Spanish or Greek or Nigerian or Colombian. It's time we saw ourselves for what we are; the international working class.



Irish Anarchist Review

The Workers Solidarity Movement is very pleased to announce the third issue of *The Irish Anarchist Review*. This magazine is dedicated to understanding the contemporary political, economic and social situation that confronts us, and finding ways to advance alternatives.

Contact us with your postal address if you would like to receive a copy or download a PDF from:
<http://www.wsm.ie/sites/default/files/IAR3-web.pdf>

solidaritybooks



43 Douglas St., Cork

Solidarity Books is a radical bookshop in Cork open for the 18 months. It has a wide selection of books on anarchism, socialism and Irish history. It also holds regular radical film nights and is a meeting space for progressive groups in the city. It is run by WSM.

Anarchism & the WSM

As the new government backtracks on their election promises in record time (no surprises there), the problems facing workers, the unemployed and students continue to mount. While the visit of Queen Elizabeth may be seen as a distraction from these more important issues, the WSM nevertheless attended protests against her visit, including the banquet in Dublin castle, whose attendees epitomised the privileged minority who hold the power and wealth in this country. As detailed elsewhere, we mobilised in both Dublin and Cork against the visit. Check out <http://www.wsm.ie/c/cork-protests-british-queens> for a more in-depth look at events in the south.

Away from these events, we remained active in relation to more bread-and-butter issues. We were present at a picket of a water metering conference held in Croke Park, the first step in the process of imposing water charges and privatising the water supply (see <http://www.wsm.ie/c/anti-water-tax-campaign-protest-croke-park>). Our members also attended the "Party Against The Pipe" weekend in Erris in Co. Mayo (see <http://www.wsm.ie/c/hundreds-gather-erris-party-against-pipe>). Others have been active in organising the "Real Democracy" protests held in Dublin, Cork and Spain, inspired by and showing solidarity with similar, larger demonstrations and square occupations across Spain and Greece (see <http://www.wsm.ie/c/real-democracy-now-assemblies-ireland-jun19>).



www.wsm.ie/c/real-democracy-now-assemblies-ireland-jun19.

Our annual Anarchist Bookfair passed off successfully (see article opposite), while we also hosted the latest in our "Rethinking Revolution" series with a public talk on the Land League in late June.

Our members attended the Independent Workers Union (IWU) May Day celebrations in Dublin and Cork, with our Cork branch organising follow up talks in our Solidarity Books venue and a fund-raising "Chaos Cabaret" (jointly with the IWU) in the city. We also attended the Cork Pride march and organised a public talk to co-

incide with that event. Again in Solidarity Books, our series of Spring Talks continued, along with a weekly vegan café and board game and film nights, while a reading group night has just commenced, kicking off with a look at Marx's "Das Kapital". Continuing the theme, we also participated in a public debate with the Socialist Party titled "Marxism Vs. Anarchism".

Within the WSM, we held our twice-yearly National Conference in our new office in Seomra Spraoi in Dublin. Motions discussed and passed covered areas such as the nature of the current crisis in Ireland, internal organising, and amendments to our position papers and administration procedures. However, whatever improvements we make to our organisation, nothing helps like increased numbers so, if you like what you are reading, then please contact us!

For further information on the above and other breaking news, check out www.wsm.ie

www.anarchistblackcat.org



A friendly and respectful online discussion board for anarchists of all stripes and those just interested in seeing what anarchists think.

The Spanish Revolution: A New World in their Hearts

The 19th of July marked the 75th anniversary of the beginning of the Spanish Revolution. For a brief time, capitalism and the State were replaced by solidarity, mutual aid and respect for others. Workers and peasants, who were deeply influenced by anarchist ideas, ran society collectively and gained control over their lives, industry and land. A central part of the revolution was the struggle against a fascist attempt to take over Spain. We remember both the magnificent triumphs and tragedies of the Spanish revolution and attempt to learn from our comrades' mistakes.

Jack White

Anarchist and syndicalist ideas had deep roots among Spanish peasants and workers. In 1911, a massive revolutionary trade union federation, the CNT (National Confederation of Labour) was formed. It had two aims; first, to fight the bosses with mass action in the daily struggle and, second, to make an anarchist revolution by organising the workers and the poor to seize back the land, factories and mines.

The CNT led many militant and successful struggles against the bosses and the government. By 1936 it was the biggest union in Spain, with nearly two million members. But the CNT was always democratic and, despite its giant size, never had more than one paid official.

The Anarchists did not restrict themselves to the workplace. They also organised an anarchist political group to work within the unions (the FAI) and organised rent boycotts in poor areas. The CNT itself included working peasants, farm workers and the unemployed. It even organised workers' schools!

In July 1936, fascists led by General Franco, and backed by the rich and the Church,



tried to seize power in Spain. The elected government (the Popular Front coalition of left-wing parties) was unable and unwilling to deal with the fascists. It even tried to strike a deal with the fascists by appointing a right-winger as Prime Minister. Why? Because they would rather compromise with the right wing and protect their wealth and power than arm the workers and the poor for self-defence.

Fortunately, the workers and the peasants did not wait around for the government to act. The CNT declared a general strike and organised armed resistance to the attempted take-over. Other unions and left wing groups followed the CNT's lead.

In this way the people were able to stop the fascists in two-thirds of Spain. It soon became apparent to these workers and peasants that this was not just a war against fascists, but the beginning of a revolution! Anarchist influence was everywhere, workers' militias were set up independently from the State, workers seized control of their workplaces and peasants seized the land.

There were many triumphs of the revolution, although we are only able to consider

a few of the Spanish workers' and peasants' victories here. These included the general take over of the land and factories.

Small peasants and farm workers faced extremely harsh conditions in Spain. Starvation and repression were a part of their daily lives and, as a result, anarchism was particularly strong in the countryside. During the revolution, as many as 7 million peasants and farm workers set up voluntary collectives in the anti-fascist regions. After landowners fled, a village assembly was held. If a decision to collectivise was taken, all the land, tools and animals were pooled together for the use of the entire collective. Teams were formed to look after the various areas of work, while a committee was elected to co-ordinate the overall running of the collective. Each collective had regular general meetings in which all members participated. Individuals who did not want to join the collectives were not forced to. They were given enough land to farm on, but were forbidden to hire labourers to work this land. Most "individualists" eventually joined the collectives when they saw how successful they were.

Anarchism inspired massive transformations in industry. Workers seized control over their workplaces, and directly controlled production by themselves and for the benefit of the Spanish workers and peasants. The tram system in Barcelona provided a shining example of just how much better things can be done under direct workers' control. On July 24th 1936, the tram crews got together and decided to run the whole system themselves. Within five days, 700 trams were in service instead of the usual 600. Wages were equalised and working conditions improved, with free medical care provided for workers.

Everyone benefited from the trams being under workers' control. Fares were reduced and an extra 50 million passengers were transported. Surplus income was used to

improve transport services and produce weapons for defence of the revolution. With the capitalist profit motive gone, safety became much more important and the number of accidents were reduced.

In the early stages of the revolution, the armed forces of the state had effectively collapsed. In their place, the trade unions and left-wing organisations set about organising the armed workers and peasants into militias. Overall, there were 150,000 volunteers willing to fight where they were needed. The vast majority were members of the CNT. All officers were elected by the rank-and-file and had no special privileges.

The revolution showed that workers, peasants and the poor could create a new world without bosses or a government. It showed that anarchist ideas and methods (such as building revolutionary unions) could work. Yet despite all this, the revolution was defeated. By 1939, the fascists had won the civil war and crushed the working-class and peasants with a brutal dictatorship.

Why did this happen? The revolution was defeated partly because of the strength of the fascists. They were backed by the rich, fascist Italy and Nazi Germany.

The CNT also made mistakes. It aimed for maximum anti-fascist unity and joined the Popular Front alliance, which included political parties from government and pro-capitalist forces. This required the CNT to make many compromises in its revolutionary programme. It also gave the Popular Front government an opportunity to undermine and destroy the anarchist collectives and the workers militias, with the Communist Party playing a leading role in these attacks at the behest of Stalinist Russia.

Nevertheless, anarchists had proved that ideas, which look good in the pages of theory books, look even better on the canvas of life.

Review: Dublin Anarchist Bookfair 2011

Wind and rain, a city in lockdown due to the upcoming royal visit and the best efforts of An Garda Síochána (who, despite the WSM gaining the correct permit to advertise the event on lamp-posts around Dublin, removed approximately 100 of our posters), the sixth annual Dublin Anarchist Bookfair continued the trend set by its predecessors in being one of the largest annual events on the calendar of Dublin's Left.

Ciaran O'Muireadhaigh

While numbers were down slightly on last year, approximately 700 people passed through the front doors of Liberty Hall to play their part in a day of talk, discussion and celebration of not just anarchist ideas, but those of the broader left too.

Throughout the day, hundreds, if not thousands of books changed hands. This



years Bookfair had the largest number of stalls yet (26), with the Bookfair committee receiving a couple of last minute requests for space that we couldn't turn down. Stalls varied from PM Press to AK Press and children's literature to one selling patches of various figureheads from the history of Socialism.

One stall, sadly for all concerned, was missing; that of Bob Miller and Sally Hyman of the Manchester Anarchist Federation. They have been almost ever-present at the last few Bookfairs, but we were worried to hear that Bob had taken ill and couldn't come over. He has since passed away, a great loss to Sally and their friends and the anarchist movement as a whole. He was an absolute gentleman and a pleasure to converse with; he will be greatly missed.

Attendance at the various talks held on the day was arguably up on previous years. Conor McCabe's talk on the "Sins of our Fathers" was one of the highlights of the day, attracting 60 or so people despite being early in the bill. The "Peripheral Visions" talk, where anarchists from Portugal, Ireland, Greece & Spain discussed alternatives to Frankfurt/ECB-rule and the bailout blues drew over 80 people in a meeting where to say "standing room only" would be an under-exaggeration. The quality of political discussion at these meetings was among the best we've seen in recent

years and were it not for strict charring, discussions could have continued for hours.

Other highlights of the day included José Antonio Gutiérrez Danton's reflections on the ongoing Arab Spring, which again packed out the meeting room, Gabriel Kuhn's "Soccer versus the State" talk, where he went through the political side of what is seen by many as a non-political sport, and a discussion between Andrew Flood and Wayne Price on "Anarchism & Socialism." Audio from the "Arab Spring" and "Soccer versus the State" meetings are available at <http://www.wsm.ie/anarchism/audio> and we hope to have recordings of the other meetings available soon.

The day, as always, passed off in high spirits, with plenty of bargains as well as new friends made. The socialising afterwards took place in O'Byrne's of North King Street, where local heroes Krossphader and Dr. Groove took to the decks in celebration of a great day had by all. Roll on the Anarchist Bookfair 2012!