

# WORKERS SOLIDARITY

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Twenty Two Years of Anarchist News

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## A New World In Our Hearts

Anyone who remembers their Leaving Cert history will know about the Spanish Civil War which was sparked off in July 1936 with an attempted military coup against the liberal / left wing government of the day. What you might not be aware of is the 'Spanish Revolution' – the activities and massive change which occurred in the parts of the country which were not controlled by the fascists.

Anarchism was well developed among the working class in Spain and when the generals and their allies rose up it was the workers who first resisted them. As the left called on people to stay at home and support the government the anarchists came out on the streets, called a general strike and took up arms.

Where the workers trusted in the government they were defeated by the army, who soon began to round up and execute radicals and

trade unionists.

However in areas where the anarchists and the workers' movement were strong and obtained weapons they defeated the army and the fascists. In these anarchist strongholds they formed columns to take the fight to the rest of the country.

The front lines of the Revolution weren't just the places where the workers and the fascists clashed. The newly risen people spread the fight into all aspects of their lives. Factories and rural land were collectivised, workplaces were taken over and run democratically by the people who worked there. Mansions and grand buildings were turned into centres for workers' organisations. Luxury restaurants become popular dining rooms and some churches even became warehouses. The revolution came from the bottom up and the fight wasn't just against fascism – it was for a better world for everyone.

After a period of heroic struggle the Revolution was beaten by a combination of attacks from international fascism and sabotage from Stalin's Russia. The anarchists and workers suffered fierce repression under the Franco regime which lasted until the 1970's. However it wasn't a wasted effort. The Spanish revolution shows us that fundamental change is possible without having to resort to dictatorial methods.

We can build on the lessons of Spain and bring about a new revolution – and next time we won't be beaten! As Durruti, the anarchist military commander, said: "We are going to inherit the earth; there is not the slightest doubt about that. The bourgeoisie might blast and ruin its own world before it leaves the stage of history. We carry a new world here, in our hearts. That world is growing this minute."



NEWSPAPER OF ANARCHISTS IN IRELAND





## Jury Frees Anti-War Saboteurs

Five peace activists have been acquitted of all charges in relation to their disarming of a US navy plane at Shannon airport in February 2003.

The five, calling themselves the Pitstop Ploughshares, used axes and lump hammers to inflict over \$2.5m worth of damage in what they described as a "non-violent ploughshares action". In June they received a unanimous acquittal by using Section 6 of the Criminal Damage Act 1991 which allows for a "lawful excuse" where the damage is caused "in order to protect another or property belonging to another." They say they were acting in defence of civilian life in Iraq, the local infrastructure, the lives of US soldiers and of Irish people who may become targets of a terrorist attack as a result of Irish complicity in the war.

Two previous trials were aborted due to incompetent judges, one of whom failed to mention his close ties to G W Bush. Their acquittal comes as a blow to the Irish government's complicity in the US led war on Iraq and provides an inspiration to others who wish to act against imperialist forces using Ireland's airports. Throughout their three trials anti-war activ-

ists came from across the globe to support them and vigils were held outside the court each day. US veteran of combat in Iraq Jimmy Massey; Denis Halliday, an Irishman who had been Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations and head of the "Oil for Food" programme and Martin Sheen, who plays the

Because of the religious convictions of the group they set up a shrine outside the hangar with images of dead Iraqi children, video evidence of US abuse in Iraq and copies of the bible and Koran. "Pitstop of Death" was painted across the side of the hangar, Ciaran says this was done to honour the dead and name the airport for what it is.



Some members of the group have now left the country to continue their lives while others intend to stay and continue to push for the end of the US military use of Shannon through mass non-violent direct action. The army, along with over 40 garda, have been recently

US president in TV's West Wing all visited Ireland to show their support for the group.

Ciaran O'Reilly, a member of the group, has been involved in similar actions around the globe, having spent over 18 months in a US prison for disarming a B52 bomber during the first gulf war. He emphasises that it was a "non-violent direct action" and strongly denies claims that they overpowered a garda to access the plane. The court upheld their claims that the garda had been asleep and the group invited him to join their action and had helped calm his worries that he would lose his job.

deployed to Shannon following remarks from Ciaran O'Reilly calling on the government to enforce our "neutrality" and suggesting that if they don't then he will call on people to shut the airport down themselves.

The ploughshares action shows the power that people have to make a difference when they choose to act. A recent action in which nine people occupied and sabotaged the offices of the Derry-based weapons manufacturer Raytheon shows that the spirit of direct action against militarism continues to grow.

*Brian Whelan*

## Tough At The Top - Politicians' Holidays

I wonder am I alone in thinking, when presented with a collective picture of career politicians smiling on the steps of the Dail, that the elected members of that house might have difficulty finding their arse with both hands. It is little wonder that the grinning gombeens are smiling like a cats after a bowl of cream.

The facts around what our politicians get paid and what they do for that money is a reason for them to grin and us to grimace.

This year alone, and it's not over yet, there have been four, that's right four pay rises, bringing the basic salary of a TD who has been sitting on their arse for 10 years in the Dail up to €96,560. On top of this you can add the 'special allowances and expenses', whatever they are for.

I would guess that this means they can charge for all their trips up and down to Dublin so that they can keep in touch with the people who voted for them. What we have to be asking ourselves is when did we get four pay rises in a single year? I think I speak for most for our read-

ers when I say never. Of course if your name is Bertie Ahern, or one of his cronies in the cabinet, then you got six pay rises in 2006. (I do not think him a regular reader of this publication). His highness Ahern now earns over a quarter of a million euros a year, before he collects his expenses. Pay for the sitters in the Dail has gone up by €50,000 in the last six years.

Hands up who likes a holiday. Sure we all do, I hear you say, as I see a sea of hands out there. We do, but none more so than our elected representatives. There is nothing quite like a 13/14 week break in the middle of the year to chill out and take your mind off things.

Listen to what Liz O'Donnell likes to get up to on her holidays. "You can laugh and cry and talk about old times - that's what I like - drinking wine and staying up all night roaring laughing. Oh, and dancing in the moonlight. I like my dancing - that's part of my holidays, too". Well, Liz can dance all summer long in France because there is nothing happening on the shop floor of parliamentary politics.

The latest bullshit emanating from the spin doctors is that there are a lot of committee meetings during the summer. No boys - the facts would indicate that of the 14 existing committees none met more than six times during the summer. Tough work those meetings during this hot summer, I hope the rooms were air conditioned.

So, our politicians get to have the summer off, all of them are on at least three times the average industrial wage, and for that they appear to do little except claim expenses and work towards getting re-elected. It is staggering for two reasons, one is that they can get away with it, and secondly that we let them.

When you are getting up at seven o'clock in the morning to go to work, be comforted by the thought that Liz O'Donnell has been up all night dancing in the moonlight swigging out of a bottle of wine, somewhere in France.

*Dermot Sreenan*



## CONTACTS

### ANARCHIST GROUPS

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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

#### Anarchist Youth

Anarchist Organisation

Ph: 0879184604  
www.anarchistyouth.org  
anarchistyouth@riseup.net

### LIBERTARIAN NETWORKS

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

#### Grassroots Dissent

http://flag.blackened.net/infocenter/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

### 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/alliancefor-choice/index.html

#### BODY

Pro Choice Youth Activist Group  
choice\_ireland@hotmail.com  
Louise: 086 329 3741

#### 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

#### Seomra Spraoi

Dublin Social Centre  
www.seomraspraoi.blogspot.com

### 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

# The New Middle East Justice and Democracy At Work

## The 'war on terror'

These are of course two of the main objectives of the Bush administration's endless 'war on terror'. Unsurprisingly, the US government did everything in its power to ensure that Israel was allowed to pursue these objectives unhindered. Members of the Bush administration made meaningless noises about providing humanitarian assistance to the Lebanese and reaffirmed their commitment in principle to a Palestinian state. However, the worth of such commitments can be judged by the fact, reported in the Times (5) that the US sold Israel US\$120 million worth of jet fuel to assist in the bombing campaign against Lebanon, and agreed to a request by the Is-

## The growth of Islamism

The only thing that is certain about this new Middle East is that Israel's actions will strengthen and encourage the growth of the radical Islamist ideology that they claim they are seeking to eradicate. Historical experience in Ireland and further afield, and common sense, tells us that bombing civilians will only feed the anger and determination of those fighting against Israel and - short of genocide - Israel will not defeat Hamas or Hizbollah through a strategy that consists solely of military force.

On the contrary, the tenacious and well organised defence of southern Lebanon has increased the prestige of Hizbollah immeasurably right across the Middle East. Similarly, punishing Palestinians for electing Hamas will yield nothing but a greater determination to stand by that organisation.

## Towards a just and democratic Middle East?

Israel and the US have unleashed a whirlwind of violence in pursuit of their aims. The resistance to this project has come largely from groups inspired by the ideas of radical Islam and thus 'the war on terror' has become a self-fulfilling prophecy, bolstering exactly what it claims to

be against. This is a tragedy for the Middle East not solely because of the appalling destruction of human life in the here and now but also because it makes a genuinely democratic just and free Middle East in the near future much less likely.

While radical Islam has given strength, unity and focus to the resistance, such backward political ideologies have no interest in developing a project of solidarity capable of overcoming the ethnic and religious divisions in the region. It is only with such a project focussed on overcoming the enormous disparities of wealth and power in the region that a force will emerge that is capable of confronting and beating US imperialism once and for all.

Hamas and Hizbollah, who have shown scant regard for the lives of civilians, have been openly anti-Semitic and subscribe to a reactionary social programme are not that force. Hizbollah looks to the authoritarian religious dictatorship in Iran - with its anti-trade union, anti-woman, anti-gay, anti-alcohol laws - as a model.

On the other hand it is abundantly clear that the Israeli politicians who are working hand in hand with the hawks of the US government and who thrive on racism, paranoia and militarism offer no sort of future to their own citizens or the region as a whole.

For Irish people concerned with events in the Middle East there is a need to actively support those groups who are inspired by a vision of freedom and solidarity and are struggling for justice for all. It also means redoubling our efforts on our own doorstep to stop the US military's use of Shannon and to continue highlighting and confronting those companies that benefit from the militarism and imperialism like Raytheon in Derry and firms such as Cement Roadstone who are profiting from building the apartheid-style 'separation wall' in Palestine

Dec McCarthy

Please see the online version for a table of all references. [www.wsm.ie](http://www.wsm.ie)

Marwa is a ten year old refugee from the village of Marwaheen in the south of Lebanon. Following an Israeli ultimatum Marwa's family decided to flee. While driving away from the village the Israeli military fired on the pick up truck they were travelling in. Marwa recalls "The wind carried me far away, I woke up on the nearby rocks. Next to me, Mama and Mirna were sleeping. I went to them to wake them up but the plane saw me and came towards me so I ran away. My brother Wissam was hit in his leg and he could not reach me, he was hiding behind a rock and when the ambulance came he was waving to them to stop. Mirna was sleeping the whole time". Marwa was sent to hospital for treatment for her burns and wounds. Her sister Mirna, 12, her brother Hadi, 5, and her mother Zahra, 51, were all killed (1)

## State terror against civilians

This is only one of thousands of stories of loss from the Lebanon, where the Israeli offensive has resulted in the deaths of over 1,000 civilians, the wholesale destruction of vital infrastructure and the exodus of nearly a million refugees. Over the same period, although this was not as widely reported, the Israeli military continued its attacks on the Occupied Territories.

Thousands of shells were fired into the Gaza strip and there were numerous military incursions into the West Bank. Half of the 163 victims of these attacks were civilians (2). Just as in Lebanon, the military targeted the roads as well as the water and power stations. This has had a disastrous impact on an already desperately impoverished region. It prompted the chief representative of the UN aid agencies in Palestine to warn that, as a consequence of Israel's attacks, Gaza was on the verge of a humanitarian crisis (3).

Although shocking, Israel's actions in Lebanon and the Occupied Territories are not that surprising. Collective punishment and overwhelming military force targeting civilian populations, in direct contravention of international law and the Geneva conventions, is a well established Israeli military tactic.

The Israeli government has attempted to justify their assaults on Gaza and the Lebanon by arguing that it was acting in self-defence. However, it is important to note that the kidnapping and killing of Israeli soldiers by Hizbollah in July was only one of hundreds of attacks carried out by both Lebanese and Israelis since 2000 along the border that separates the two countries (4). Also, while the kidnapping of an Israeli in Gaza by a faction of Hamas was undoubtedly a provocative act this needs to be understood in the context of an ongoing conflict where the assassination, abduction and imprisonment without trial of Palestinian activists by the Israelis is a regular occurrence.

Furthermore, the sheer scale of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the massive disparity in the numbers of Israeli casualties compared to Palestinian and Lebanese casualties suggests that Israel has other strategic aims than self-defence. The Israeli state is intent on punishing the people of Palestine and Lebanon for voting for and supporting Hamas and Hizbollah, and is clearly attempting to weaken the influence of Syria and Iran in Lebanon and the Middle East as a whole.



raeli government to speed up the shipment of high tech weaponry (6).

Tony Blair, despite a well rehearsed show of emotion and the odd lip tremor while discussing the crisis, proved anxious as ever to play his bit part in these bloody imperial dramas by allowing US military shipments bound for Israel to pass through the UK (7). While the US has always backed Israel, this clear fusing of Israeli militarism with the broader US attempt to ensure control over the region and its precious oil resources has profound implications both for the Middle East and the world.

## The 'new Middle East'?

So, clearly the US has not exhausted its zeal for grand plans realised through the use of massive military power despite the complete unravelling of civil society in Iraq. On the contrary, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice managed to muster enough optimism to discern something positive from events in the Middle East remarking "What we're seeing here, in a sense, is the growing -- the birth pangs of a new Middle East" (8). In truth it is impossible to tell exactly what type of Middle East will emerge from the US backed Israeli offensives but there is scant evidence of something positive or even novel emerging from this mess.

In fact, Rice's new Middle East is depressingly and wearily familiar to anyone with even a cursory knowledge of the history of imperialist interventions in the region. Just like those British and French colonialists who sat over maps a century ago redrawing boundaries across the Middle East, the US, the UK and the Israelis imagine they can shape a sub-continent regardless of the needs or desires of the majority of the people who live there.

This project for the 'new' Middle East means the same old imperial arrogance and disregard for life. It involves peddling the same old lies that acts of barbarism will somehow have a 'civilising' influence and bolster democracy and freedom. Ultimately this shimmering vision of a new Middle East relies on brutal stupidity and the mistaken belief that bombs dropped on the heads of the innocent through the bright, clean air amounts to a justifiable political strategy.



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



# Spinning Democracy PR and our Political Leaders

The Irish government's explicit support for Shell's proposed development in Rosspoint, against the demands and wishes of a large proportion of the locally affected community, exemplifies not only the highly organised and funded public relation strategy that Shell and its partners have used. It also highlights the massive democratic deficit in this country. In a broader sense corporate Public Relations, and its close links to government, is perhaps one of the most potent factors in curtailing meaningful democracy.

PR companies hired to 'troubleshoot' pesky communities with bribe and slur tactics that Cromwell would be proud of. They also use their closely forged links with privately owned mass media and political 'leaders' to mount strategic campaigns to influence the direction of policies which affect us all, for the benefit of their clients. By their very nature the practices of PR companies, in eroding what little democracy we have, is one of the least examined and understood issues today.

The only time we get to have any input into the structures of 'democracy' in this country, is a five minute spell in the voting booth once every few years. However, the captains of industry (the folks who make their money from our work) have unparalleled access to our elected representatives. Across all sectors, corporate PR, working for big business, lobby governments for their gain, and our collective detriment.

Whether it's pushing for public/private partnerships, introducing competition into our health system (read profiting from the sick) or putting the spin on laying off workers, corporate PR will do the (shite)talking for you. This isn't about conspiracy though. It's just the way things our done in today's democracy. PR consultants offer businesses access to Ministers in return for cash. It might be couched in more subtle terms on their websites but that's what it amounts to.

One of the largest Irish PR consultancies is MRPA Kinman. They offer unrivalled "communications with the political and regulatory system", as well as crisis management for "industrial accidents, closures / redundancies and community relations issues". In reality they will make sure your business proposals get to the top of the pile, and discussed over dinner, and if some of your pesky workers have fallen, been crushed, or simply just cost too much MRPA Kinman will make sure that the smell of roses doesn't fade at all. They will also file stories to the media spinning against local communities should the need arise.

It's pretty interesting to look at who the head honchos are. The Managing Director is Ray Gordon, who for five years was a spokesperson for the Progressive Democrat's. Another director, Stephen O'Byrnes, was policy director of the PD's. This company works for many large pharma-chemical giants and as such tries to in-

fluence public health policy.

One wonders what influence the company's director Brian Geoghegan brings to bear considering he is married PD leader and Tanaiste Mary Harney, our dearly loved minister for health. Formerly head of the employers' outfit, IBEC, Brian, like the other folks mentioned, use their close 'connections' with current Ministers to skew government policies in favour of their clients.

This is but one example of how PR companies have more input into policy development than most of us put together. They are also complicit in attempting to stamp out the legitimate and much needed public resistance to the commodification of democracy. It is vital for activists, concerned communities, and all those that value the idea and realisation in practice, of real democracy, to understand the role that corporate PR plays in misrepresenting truths to the public at large, whilst simultaneously distorting decision making processes by having unparalleled access to our 'elected representatives'.

Check out <http://www.thecornerhouse.org.uk/item.shtml?x=51961> for more reading on corporate PR strategies against communities in struggle.

Mark Malone

## Review: The GAMA Strike DVD

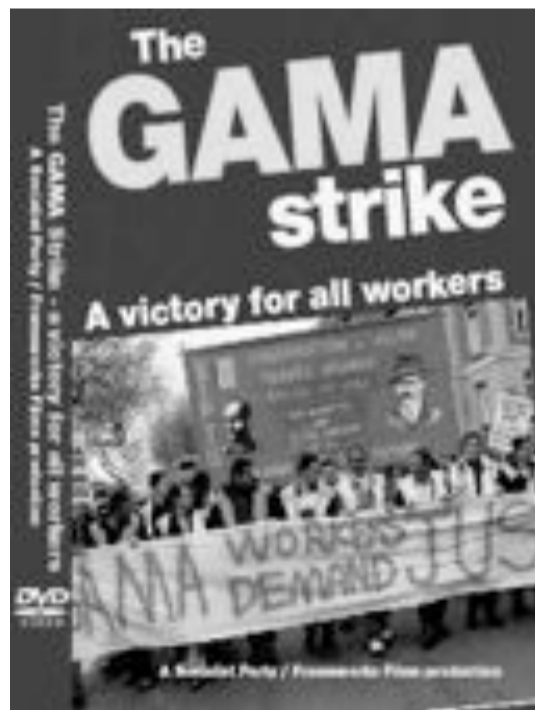
*The Gama Strike: A victory for all workers DVD available by post for €10.00 or £7.00 from the Socialist Party, 141 Thomas Street, Dublin 8 or Socialist Party, 13 Lombard Street, Belfast, BT1 1RB*

For almost a year Turkish workers at the multinational construction company Gama waged a struggle to secure trade union rates of pay, improved working conditions and to reclaim wages which had been siphoned from their pay packets and placed in foreign bank accounts opened in their names but without their knowledge. A co-production by the Socialist Party and Frameworks Films, "The Gama Strike: A victory for all workers" is an attempt to document and highlight the exploitation and subsequent struggle faced by the Turkish workers.

Following a trade delegation to Turkey in 1998 headed by Mary Harney, GAMA arrived in Ireland, enticed by tax breaks, and quickly earned itself a reputation for delivering its projects on-time and under budget. It wasn't until 2004 when Socialist Party cllr. Mick Murphy made direct contact with Turkish workers that it was revealed through handwritten payslips that employees were being paid as little as €2.20 an hour (well below the legal minimum rate of pay within the construction industry of €12.96) combined with 80+ hour working weeks. Further investigations by the SP found the discrepancies in wages between what GAMA was paying and the legal rate were being transferred into Dutch Finasbank accounts without the workers knowledge.

Employees formed the Turkish Workers Action

Group and its strike committee initiated a strike which was to last for 54 days. During the protracted strike, the DVD highlights GAMA failed attempts to break the will of the workers by using scab non-union contractors, starving, intimidating and threatening the workers into submission.



Eventually the issue was resolved following a Labour Court recommendation but what resulted was a mere industrial relations settlement rather than justice in any real sense of the word. Despite GAMA's shenanigans, it has never admitted

any liability or been prosecuted for its actions. Meanwhile the report from the Labour Inspector has never been published due to a High Court injunction.

The obvious danger which any documentary produced by a political organisation faces is that it can easily veer into becoming a piece of propaganda seeking to help an organisation make political capital out of a situation. Credit must be giving to the SP for avoiding this pitfall by its calling for greater grassroots trade union activity rather than stressing the need for a "mass workers party".

Workers themselves felt that official trade union activity was too limited with union members continuing to work at GAMA sites in Ennis and Tynagh and supplies continuing to be delivered to sites. As Joe Higgins states, "If the trade union officialdom is too slow in moving, migrant workers and Irish workers cannot afford to wait, but should organise themselves for action on the immediate issues of exploitation."

Clocking in at 73 minutes this DVD is a thorough and interesting account of the struggle incorporating interviews with the workers themselves and successfully highlighting the dark underbelly of the Celtic Tiger without over-emphasising the role of the Socialist Party at the expense of grassroots trade unionism or self activity.

Gaz Barrett

### A Bigger Slice For Domino's Staff

The threat of strike action at Domino's Pizzas in Naas saw SIPTU members secure substantial pay increases. A ban on overtime showed management that the workers were serious, when they voted to strike the bosses caved in and conceded a pay increase of 15% over 27 months. The union also won improved holiday and service leave arrangements.

According to the union's Kildare/Leixlip Assistant Branch Organiser, Frank Jones, "The dispute was over management's refusal to apply the same increases to warehouse and production

workers as were paid to drivers. Management had also failed to give a commitment that they will apply the terms of any future national wage agreements to our 14 members".

The plant in Naas produces and distributes pizza bases to all the Domino's outlets throughout Ireland.

### Slaves May Not Leave Their Masters

The number of soldiers absconding from the British Army has trebled since the invasion of Iraq. The high profile case of RAF officer Malcolm Kendall-Smith, who has been jailed

for refusing to return to Iraq to fight what he regarded as an illegal war, is an indication of the discontent within the armed forces.

With hardly a mention in the press, the British parliament passed, with very few votes against, a new Armed Services Act, under which soldiers who desert the armed forces because they refuse to serve in a foreign military occupation could now face life imprisonment.

The aim is clearly to deter soldiers from following their conscience, whether by going absent without leave or by refusing to participate in invasions.

*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.*



### BERTIE'S FAILING MEMORY

In April Judge Alan Mahon, of the Flood/Mahon tribunal on corruption, found it "extraordinary" that land speculator Tim Collins could not remember his profit from the sale of the Boyne Park. The Boyne site was bought for €3.4 million and then sold, just weeks later, to the Office of Public Works for €9.4 million.

Collins claims that he had no knowledge that the state would buy the land, let alone at that massively inflated price, and that he "never discussed it with the Taoiseach". Bertie, in turn, has described Collins as "a local person" and "someone I know outside of politics".

In fact Collins has been a Fianna Fail activist in Bertie's constituency since the 1970s, a government appointee to the board of Enterprise Ireland (at Bertie's insistence according to Mary Harney), and a trustee of Bertie's own constituency headquarters.

### GREEDY BANKERS

Bank of Ireland reported pre-tax profits of €1.6 billion for the year to the end of March, an increase of 31% on the previous year. When the effects of sell-offs and restructuring costs are taken out, profits are up 16% to just under €1.4 billion.

So what was the Bank's reward for their staff? A wage increase of 16%? Not likely. Chief executive Brian Goggin declared that defined benefit pension schemes (which guarantee an income based on your final salary) were "a thing of the past". New employees will now get a smaller pension after years of making big profits for their bosses.

### GREEDY HYPOCRITE

Brian Goggin received a total remuneration (his pay, plus bonus plus pension contribution) of over €2.5m for the year 2005/2006, a 31% increase on the €1.9m he received the previous year. This included a pension payment worth €168,000 into his (definitely not "a thing of the past") defined benefit scheme.

### DON'T FEED THE HUNGRY

A new trend across the USA: Santa Monica.. Dallas.. Tampa.. Las Vegas.. Orlando.. Feeding the homeless in city centre parks is now a crime. Businesses don't like poor people hanging around, and politicians have rushed to do their bidding. The anarchist Food Not Bombs network has vowed to continue feeding the destitute, despite members being arrested and threatened with \$1,000 dollar fines and jail sentences of six months.



## Anarchism and the WSM

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 over 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.

Among our activities over the summer was a day of discussions about the role of women in revolutionary politics. About 60 women and men debated the experience of women in movements as diverse as the 1916 Rising and the 1930's Spanish anarchist 'Free Women' organisation.

Jointly with anarchist gig organisers, Porco Dio, the WSM organised a fundraiser for the Israeli group 'Anarchists Against the Wall'. A young anarchist had been shot by

Israeli forces during a protest against the construction of the so-called 'Separation Fence' in Palestine. Matan Cohen, 17, was seriously wounded when he was shot in the face with a rubber bullet by Israeli Border Police at Bil'in, in the occupied West Bank. Thanks to Emcee Lynx (from the USA), plus Disfunktional, Project 77 and the WSM's own DJ Krossphader.

Another fundraiser was by the WSM's May 1st branch in Dublin. A pub quiz took in €346.60 for the three anti-war protesters who were fined following a demonstration outside the Irish Air Corps HQ at Baldonnell.

The August bank holiday weekend saw WSM members from Derry, Cork and Dublin travel to Mayo for a gathering at the Rosspoint Solidarity Camp, to express solidarity with the local community in their fight against Shell and share ideas about strengthening the campaign to make the multinational giant build their refinery offshore.

During the Israeli attack on the Lebanese people we took part in demonstrations against the slaughter and destruction. Unlike some of the left, we see no need to take sides between the racist Israeli state and Islamic religious authoritarians.

Neither is any friend of working people and liberty. As Alan MacSimoin of the WSM said at an earlier protest against the visit to Dublin of the British HMS Ocean warship, "Let us also begin taking concrete initiatives to assist the progressive, secular and trade union forces who oppose both the occupation and the terrorism of the anti-woman and anti-freedom religious bigots".

Anarchism is still a small force in Ireland, but a start has been made. If you want to find out more, get in touch with us.

## Thinking About Anarchism Anti Imperialism

by Chekov Feeney



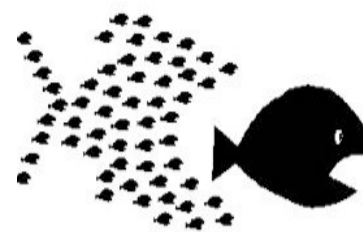
Imperialism, in its most basic form involves wealthy and powerful governments using their military power to invade poorer parts of the world in order to impose their control upon them. There isn't the space to go into all aspects of imperialism here, so I'm concentrating on the military form.

In modern times, imperial invaders always claim that their invasions are for the good of the people who they are invading. They claim that they want to bring civilisation, democracy or freedom to the natives. In reality, the imperialist ruling class simply want to extend their power by bringing more of the world under their control and often their motives are as simple as a desire to get their hands on the natural resources of the place that they are invading.

Despite their claims to have lofty motives, imperialist invasions are almost always followed by bloody and brutal campaigns of subjugation against the natives. From the conquest of Africa in the late 19th century, to the conquest of the Middle East today, the rhetoric about freedom and democracy quickly evaporates leaving nothing but bloody slaughter and oppression backed up by military might.

Anarchists believe that people should be in control of their own lives and should have a say in how the resources in the places where they live are used. Therefore, anarchists are opposed to imperialism and they are not alone in this. Almost nobody likes it when a powerful group invades the place where they live,

steals all the resources and orders them to do as they are told and, inevitably, they organise themselves to oppose the imperialists. Since imperialists use force of arms to control the countries which they invade, this generally means that



the natives will need to physically oppose them. They aren't going to leave just because they're unpopular, after all.

Thus, anarchists support people's right to fight against imperial invasions. If somebody has decided to control you with violence, you have no choice but to overcome this violence or else remain a slave. This is why anarchists call themselves anti-imperialists.

However, unfortunately, anarchists are currently a small minority in the world. Nationalism has been the most powerful political ideology in modern times. When people fight against imperialist control, they also generally fight for some version of nationalist alternative.

Anarchists are opposed to nationalism. We do not think that people can be neatly divided up into areas where the populations have a shared culture, history and heritage. The world is much messier than that and cultures and identities are fluid

and intermingled. What's more, nationalist movements normally simply try to replace the foreign imperialist control with control by a local ruling class, who might be just as bad - or even worse - than the imperialist rulers. Therefore, while we support anti-imperialist struggles, we always strive to argue against nationalist politics within them. Instead we seek to promote the most progressive, libertarian and socialist strands so that, if we can defeat the imperialists' control, we won't just be replacing them with new masters.

In practice, this is a difficult position to realise since conflicts are, by their very nature, polarising. During struggles against imperialism, it is very common for people to claim that "you're either with us or against us". So, in Iraq at the moment, both George Bush and Osama Bin Laden claim that you have to choose one side or the other. You either support the imperial invaders of the US/UK armies or you support the Islamic resistance. However, the real world is always more complex than this. There are currently many groups in Iraq, and around the world, who reject this choice. In Iraq there are many groups - workers' unions, women's groups and others who promote civil liberties and democracy that are opposed to the occupation and opposed to Islamic fundamentalism. Rather than accepting the binary choice of Bush and Bin Laden, we choose to support these forces, to offer them whatever assistance we can in their fight against the occupation and against the fundamentalists.

# The Importance of Spain

Today a social revolution that took place seventy years ago is remembered by libertarian socialists as an example of how our ideas can work. The Spanish revolution came closer to realising the possibilities of a free stateless society on a huge scale than any other revolution in history. It was a very successful attempt by workers to re-construct society along new revolutionary lines. The only other revolution as widely known, the Russian one, ended in much bloodshed of innocent workers when the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, installed a one-party state at the expense of the elected workers' councils ("soviets").

The importance of the Spanish revolution to anarchists and socialists today is that it is an example of workers' self-management and collectivisation which was largely a success. Many factories, both agrarian and urban, were taken over by the workers and successfully run without the need for any hierarchical system. This workers' self management meant practicing the ideal of "from each according to ability, to each according to need". In some small village collectives money was even done away with and everything was held in common by the people.

We have little to no freedom in our daily lives and work, we must work to support ourselves and our families in a system that insists we subsidise a class of parasitic employers. And yet if we were to do away with the bosses, the managers, the

middlemen and all of those who do not do useful work but merely grow fat off our sweat, we would only have to work half the hours we do now and still be able to support ourselves and each other.

We have it ingrained into us that there is a need for bosses, that we need someone to watch over us and necessary work and yet takes a major cut? We are told by all



of those with power that we need them, but they can never quite seem to explain why.

With the Spanish revolution and the idea that there is not a need for bosses comes the more recent example of Argentina's occupied factories. Following the massive collapse of their economy in the early 21st century and with their livelihoods threatened by bosses shutting down the factories, the workers decided they had had enough. They re-opened the factories and began producing again, only this time without a boss.

There are many success stories like the

Zanon tile factory where all workers are equal and after fighting legal battles to keep the production going they were allowed to keep their workers controlled workplace. If we cannot work right without the bosses then how come they managed it?

For the couple of years that the libertarian revolution in Spain held out it maintained its federalised system of control by the workers. The end of this period did not come about because of any internal flaw. It had to be physically overthrown. It required the military victory of Franco, backed by Italian and German fascists, and the forced exile, imprisonment and murder of thousands of anarchists, socialists and their sympathisers.

The whole period is a working example that it can be done, that those who do the real work can thrive without bosses. We have it ingrained into us that those at the top are the most important and that they are something that we will have to face each and every day for the rest of our lives, so we'd better get used to it!

But imagine breaking free, imagine working with your workmates for the benefit of all rather than just a small minority of owners, imagine getting equal access to the wealth of society. Imagine that and take the idea of a libertarian, collectivised system that sustains all equally to work with you on Monday.

Julia Doherty

## WSM Supports Direct Action Against RAYTHEON

On Wednesday August 9th anti-war protesters in Derry stormed into the local plant of US missile manufacturer Raytheon. They were protesting against the use of Raytheon technology by the Israelis and used by them for their attacks in Lebanon.

After eight hours in occupation of the plant nine protesters were arrested by the PSNI and were charged with "Unlawful Assembly" and "Aggravated Burglary" when they appeared in court the next morning. Raytheon is claiming that £250,000 worth of damage was done.

A WSM statement expressed support for "the actions of the anti-war protesters who occupied and sabotaged American arms manufactur-

er Raytheon's Derry offices. This is the latest in a long line of anti-war direct actions on this island ranging from sabotage of the weapons of war to blockading and invading the airports which facilitate imperialist armies.

"We support direct action as a valid tactic in attacking the war industry and hope that this Raytheon action serves as an inspiration to others, both nationally and internationally. We believe direct action can and must be used to shut down Shannon warport.

We call for all charges against these protestors to be dropped and call on all anti-war groups to stand in solidarity with their acts."

