

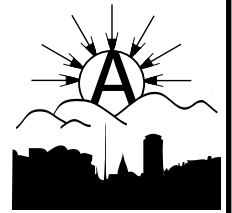
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WORKERS

Twenty Four years of Irish Anarchist News

# SOLIDARITY

Number 106 November-December 2008



# District Policing Partnerships

## A talking shop?



The 'most democratic, accountable police service in the world'?

Despite its retention of a heavy arsenal of lethal weapons including Tasers, and a litany of repressive anti-terror legislation including Diplock Courts, Hugh Orde, current Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland often refers to the force as the 'most democratic, accountable police service in the world'. This from the same Chief Constable who has recently unsuccessfully attempted to block the release of vital documents to the Pearse Jordon Inquest. Pearse, an unarmed IRA volunteer, was gunned down by the RUC on the Falls Road in 1992.

Meanwhile a new MI5 headquarters has been built to direct and gather intelligence in the interests of 'national security' meaning the interests of the rich and powerful - such is the nature of political policing under the state.

District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) were set up by the Policing Board in conjunction with local councils in early 2003 to provide "accountable and effective" policing.

### Propaganda blitz

Despite a massive propaganda blitz waged by the PSNI, establishment parties and the

mainstream media it seems that not everyone is buying into the spin surrounding DPPs. According to the latest major public survey conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency in February, fewer than one in seven people believed DPPs were doing a good job.

These statistics are an illustration of DPPs being merely a 'talking shop' with no legislative authority. Rather than real ownership and empowerment, input by local residents in DPPs is limited to making 'suggestions' as a 'spectator', reinforcing our sense of dependency.

*(continued overleaf)*

**ANARCHIST NEWS AND ANALYSIS**

At the same time, the District Policing Commander continues to have the power to refuse to answer any questions during a public meeting on the wide scope of 'national security' - which basically translates into British ruling class interests. How many imperialist wars of plunder or recent curtailments of long-standing civil liberties, including internment without trial, have been justified in the interests of 'national security'?

#### Anti social crime

A stronger, more militant and confident working class will be able to, and must,

take on responsibility for tackling anti-social crime in its own communities as part of a wider independent movement, because the police won't do it and are complicit due to the very nature of capitalism and the state. No amount of token reforms, 'sexy' makeover, and government from Dublin, Stormont or London can disguise the repressive nature of policing in working-class communities.

We should not succumb to populist quick-fix calls for 'zero-tolerance', or 'more police on the streets', providing the green light for an intensification in

police brutality, and evidently failing to address the underlying root causes of crime such as poverty, despair, poor housing.

We must demonstrate through our actions and methods that only by collectively organising, and practicing solidarity where we live and work as a class can we begin to tackle and remove the scourge of 'anti-social crime' and the real crime of capitalism.

*Sean Matthews*

# Stormont continues to crumble under its own contradictions!

**The Stormont administration is at a critical juncture, with the Executive not having met in several months. It seems an eternity since Paisley and McGuinness chuckled their way through meetings and joint events.**

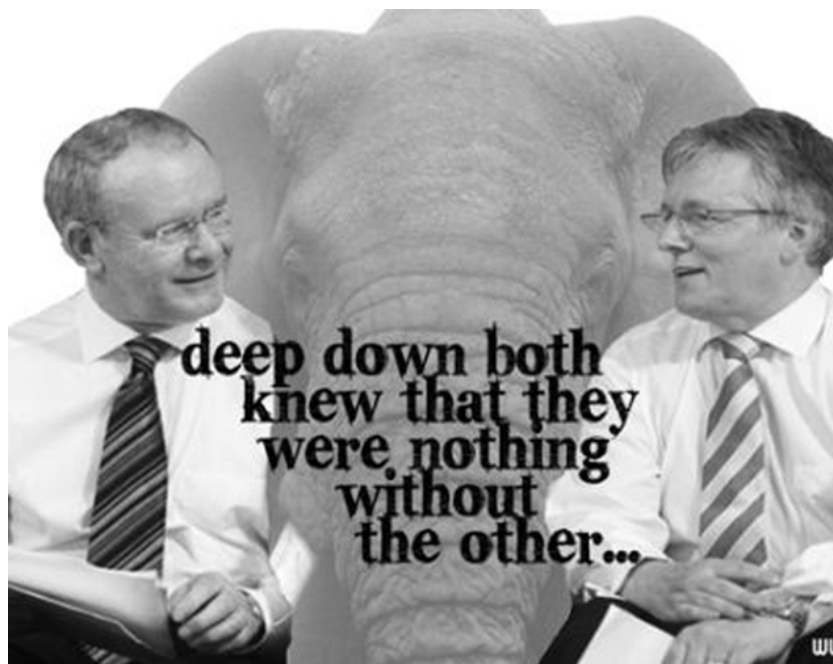
Yet much of that public display of togetherness has little substance when it comes to real and beneficial change for working people or in dealing with the issues which have now re-surfaced and are the cause for the recent financial instability.

The Executive, having been set up on the basis of institutionalised sectarianism and 'parity of esteem,' is now seeing that very sectarianism causing chaos in the corridors of Stormont. While the DUP and Sinn Féin squabble over issues ranging from policing and justice through to the Maze Prison, working people are suffering in their daily lives on bread and butter issues.

The credit crunch and the global instability in the financial markets are an additional worry to the hardship that many people are already facing. The rise in house repossessions is going hand in hand with the rise of fuel, electricity and food bills. The increase in numbers of citizens in debt corresponds with more falling into poverty and despair, and as prices continue to go up, wages are going down in real terms.

The administration's neo-liberal priorities were set out from the beginning, to meet the needs of business e.g. water charges and the privatisation of water supply. Such is the priority of all governments.

Many of us have lived through the recent conflict and the hardship and despair that came with it. Now we have a so-called peace process, but the gap between ourselves and the rich continues to grow.



This situation has seen radio and TV shows inundated with working people who are angry and appalled at the squabbling and the lack of delivery on the issues that are affecting their every day lives. Many are calling for action to be taken to end the squabbling while others are calling for marches and protests to get government moving and working for the interests of its citizens.

Yet this anger needs to be channelled and mobilised on the issues of real concern at the moment, against the lack of social housing, against the low wage economy and against the poverty resulting from privatisation and the rest of the neo-liberal agenda.

It is through acting together as the working class that we can fight back against the neo-liberal agenda inherent in the Stormont administration, and build a future for all. The WSM will be playing its part. Will you?

*Davy Carlin*



# NI Women sold out by Labour on equal access to abortion



The hopes of women living in Northern Ireland for the extension of the 1967 Abortion Act were dashed when an amendment to extend the act brought before Westminster on 22<sup>nd</sup> October was not debated because of a procedural motion put by Harriet Harman, leader of the House of Commons and the Minister for Women and supported by many New Labour 'feminist' MPs.

Harman claimed that, were the vote to go ahead, the House of Lords might reduce the current time limit for abortions despite that fact that voting records show that the Lords has never reversed a House of Commons decision on the issue. Moreover in recent years, the Lords have voted for progressive positions eight times on embryo and abortion issues. The government was happy to allow debates which could have cut the time limit on abortion as low as 12 weeks, but amendments which could have finally got rid of the requirement for two doctors' permission to get an abortion, and extend abortion rights to the North of Ireland were apparently too risky to consider.

Alliance for Choice NI, a group campaigning for the extension of the abortion act, giving women in NI parity of access to abortion with women in the rest of the UK has voiced its determination to maintain the struggle for equal

abortion rights for women living in NI.

*"We have not gone away, you know! In a matter of a few weeks we built a vibrant campaign. We have been delighted by the level of support that we have received from the many women (and men) who have: attended our meetings, participated in street events, lobbied MPs, contacted us with supportive messages through the website and all those who have become involved in many other ways.*

*The opinion polls (such as the one from the Fpa showing that only 20% of people in NI supported the current legal prohibition on abortion), the many discussions in which we have all participated and the coverage in the media have all moved on markedly from previous occasions when the subject of abortion rights has been raised here.*

*The main Stormont parties should take note that whatever bluster they may come up with in Westminster about their unanimity on the subject of abortion - their policies do not represent the interests of the women of Northern Ireland."*

*Eve Campbell*

**For more information on Alliance for Choice see <http://allianceforchoiceni.org/>**

## Contacts

### ANARCHIST ORGANISATIONS

**Workers Solidarity Movement**  
PO Box 1528, Dublin 8.  
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[cork@wsm.ie](mailto:cork@wsm.ie)  
[belfast@wsm.ie](mailto:belfast@wsm.ie)

### Revolutionary Anarcha-Feminist Group (RAG)

P.O. Box 10785, Dublin 1  
<http://ragdublin.blogspot.com/>

### Organise!

PO Box 505, Belfast, BT12 6BQ  
<http://organiseireland.blogspot.com>

### LIBERTARIAN NETWORKS

#### 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>

#### Galway Social Space

24 Middle Street, Galway  
<http://www.galwayspace.org/>

#### Revolt Video

Radical video collective  
<http://revoltvideo.blogspot.com>

### CAMPAIGNING GROUPS

#### Shell to Sea

Campaign to move Shell's gas pipeline offshore from Co. Mayo  
[www.shelltosea.com](http://www.shelltosea.com)

#### Hands Off the People of Iran

Anti-imperialist network for solidarity with Iranian trade unions and the women's rights movement.  
[www.hopoi.org](http://www.hopoi.org)

#### Choice Ireland

Abortion rights action group  
[choiceireland@gmail.com](mailto:choiceireland@gmail.com)

#### Alliance for Choice (NI)

<http://allianceforchoiceni.org>

#### Residents Against Racism

Opposing racism & deportations  
24-hour helpline: 087-666 2060

#### Anarchist Black Cross (Belfast)

Assists class war prisoners worldwide  
[www.myspace.com/belfastabc](http://www.myspace.com/belfastabc)

# Thinking about Anarchism



## Get out of that relationship!



**“At the heart of the matter is the fact that capitalism is a social system. It is a way that people have dealings with each other in their everyday lives.”**

The financial markets have taken a hammering. Speculators (that's a rich person's word for 'gambler') lost incredible sums of borrowed cash in bets on everything from mortgage values to the possible price of wheat in 2011. Banks who lent out far more money than they actually had needed governments to step in with billions to bail them out. In some countries the state took them over.

Unfortunately, capitalism is not collapsing. Nothing massively unexpected has happened. If the 'econ-

omists' who turned up on every news programme this autumn really didn't know there was going to be a crash at some stage they should think of changing jobs.

Capitalism is definitely going into a slump. Production is slowing down, employment is falling, investment is drying up, wages are starting to fall behind inflation, less is being bought. We didn't know exactly when the boom would end, we don't know exactly how deep this slump will be – but we do know the boom/slump cycle is, and al-

ways has been, an integral part of that system.

Even if capitalism suffered a massive worldwide crash of such a magnitude that production almost ceased entirely (and there is no sign of that), it would not, in itself, mean the end of that particular system.

At the heart of the matter is the fact that capitalism is a social system. It is a way that people have dealings with each other in their everyday lives. There have been other systems in the past, like barbarism, slavery and feudalism. Nothing need be fixed for all time.

Today we live under capitalism, where the means of production and distribution are owned by a small ruling class, the capitalists. The driving reason for this class's existence is to make a profit. Wage or salary earners, with our dependants, are the great majority of the population and make up the working class.

That is the dominant social relationship. The majority are used to make profit for a small minority. Unfortunately, most people are not yet thinking about ending this particular relationship, and no social system simply fades away because it's unfair or just hugely inefficient. A social system gets kicked off the stage of history when it is physically overthrown and replaced by a different one.

Some would have us believe that capitalism can be gradually abolished through 'public ownership' or nationalisation. This odd idea possibly has its roots in the mistaken idea that either 'old Labour' or the Stalinist dictatorships represented some sort of socialism.

The relationship between workers and a state employer, like in the health service, does not differ in any significant way from the relationship between workers and private bosses. From the beginning of capitalism governments have tried to solve certain of the system's problems through nationalisation, more accurately called state capitalism.

It does not change the essential structure of the capitalist system, of workers and bosses having different and opposed interests. Changing a social system is not about changing the people at the top, it's about changing the relationship between people. So, state capitalism is in no sense a step towards socialism.

What then are we to replace the present set-up with? How about a system where production is organised to meet people's needs, where it would be regarded as insanity to have building workers idle while others go without adequate housing, where the idea of paying farmers not to grow food while hunger is still a daily reality in much of the world would be seen as immoral. This can only work when the means of producing and distributing wealth are owned in common, by all of society. That's the meaning of socialism.

How about a system that takes socialism and freedom to be of equal value? One where people can do as they wish so long as they don't interfere with freedom of others? One where you can have a direct say in making the decisions that will effect you? One where control is in the hands of the majority through democratic assemblies and councils? That's anarchism.

Joe King

## *That's Capitalism!*

Recession is just another word when you are rich. Google bosses, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, have just spent €17.6 million on a 60-seater Boeing jet for their “personal use”. Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen splashed out €140 million to buy the world’s eighth largest yacht. It comes with two helicopters, two submarines, eight smaller boats, a basketball court, swimming pool, a crew of 60 and running costs of about €15 million a year.

The Beacon Hospitals group plans to build a 170-bed for-profit hospital in the grounds of the public Beaumont Hospital. It won’t deal with A&E, and any difficult cases will be diverted to the public hospital next door. The state has agreed to this, and to pay at least 30% of Beacon’s building costs. But we are told there is no cash for better public facilities.

Most people in Swaziland live on less than 60c a day. That didn’t stop King Mawati III spending €8.86m on a fleet of BMWs to mark “40 years of independence”.

Fannie May and Freddie Mac chief executives, Richard Syron and Daniel Mudd, pocketed a \$24 million pay-off. How much would they have got if they had turned a profit instead of losing \$14 billion in the last year?

Michael Fingleton, chief executive of the Irish Nationwide Building Society, is “concerned” about wage rises going higher than inflation. Of course this “concern” didn’t extend to his 27% rise from €1.8 million to €2.3 million a year.

Mary Harney and Brendan Drumm are the two people most responsible for our hospitals. They claim they have been sparing no effort to give us an excellent service. Why then do they both have private health insurance? When RTE’s Marian Finucane asked them if they had enough confidence in the public health-care system to let their private insurance lapse, both refused to answer.

Over nine million children died before reaching their fifth birthday last year. Most died as a result of poverty related illnesses. The mortality rate in Western Europe is 6 in every 1,000; in the worst case, Sierra Leone, it is 262 of out every thousand.

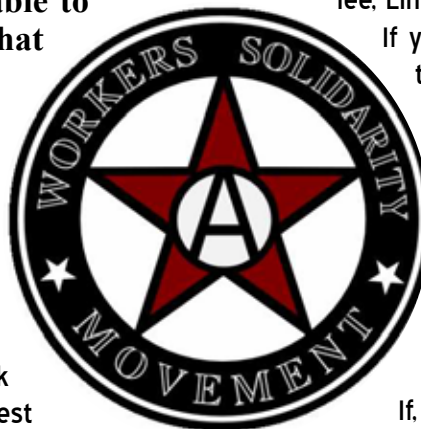
While PAYE taxpayers see our money used to bail out the banks, it’s nice to know that it’s having some effect. Bank of Ireland’s Brian Goggins gets €6.75 million in pay and benefits, and Anglo Irish Bank boss David Drumm gets €5.59 million a year. Anglo Irish finance chief William McAteer also picked up €6.4 million for his ‘expertise’.

Other poverty stricken victims of the recession include Irish Ferries’ slave-driver Eamon Rothwell (€7.03 million), IAWS chief Owen Killian (€10.15 million), Elan CEO Kelly Martin (€6.87 million), Smurfit’s Gary McCann (€6.16 million), and Cement Roadstone’s Liam O’Mahoney (€11.8 million). That’s just what they declared as last year’s income.

# Anarchism and the WSM

**The WSM stands 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 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.**

We are 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 10,000 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. The next issue of Red and Black Revolution is due out in the coming weeks.



Over the next six months, the WSM will be organizing a series of public talks on the recent financial collapse and the libertarian socialist alternative. We’ve already published extensive analysis of the origin and role of the financial system which are well worth a read. Check out our website for the full articles. We aim to host meetings, in Tralee, Limerick, Galway, Belfast, Dublin and Cork.

If you would like to help out in organising these meetings or are interested in organising one in your area, please get in touch via email at [national@wsm.ie](mailto:national@wsm.ie).

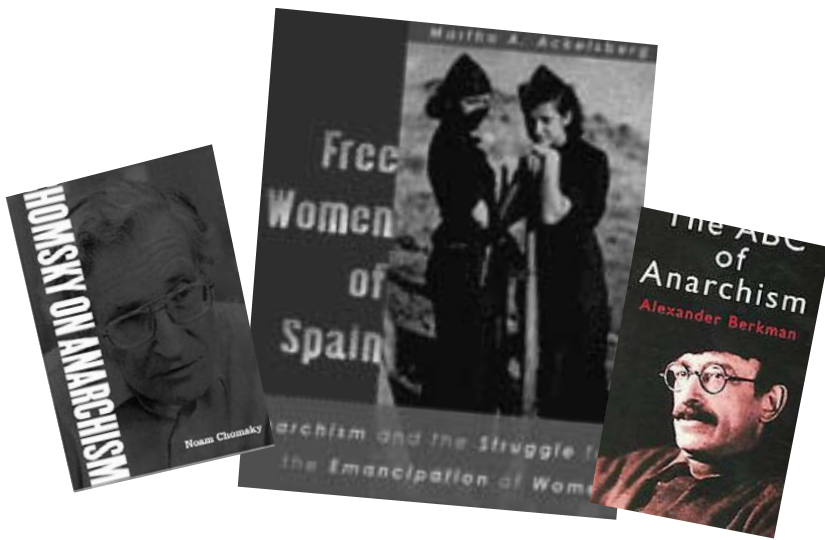
If you think the world needs to be built on a saner and more just economic basis, then consider getting organised in your trade union, residents’ association, women’s group etc.

If, like us, you think that a just world requires the replacement of capitalism by a libertarian socialist approach, then consider getting involved in the WSM; replacing capitalism is going take a lot of people getting very organised.





# Mail Order Anarchism



Alexander Berkman

## THE ABC OF ANARCHISM

The book that answers the questions you always wanted to ask: Is anarchism violent? Can we live without government? How can an anarchist society be organised? Who can change society? Is a revolution necessary?

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Noam Chomsky

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We all know what Chomsky is against. His scathing analysis of everything that's wrong with our society reaches more and more people every day. His brilliant critiques of — among other things — capitalism, imperialism, domestic repression and government propaganda, have become mini-publishing industries in themselves.

But, in this flood of publishing and republishing, very little ever gets said about what exactly Chomsky stands for, his own personal politics, his vision of the future. Not, that is, until 'Chomsky on Anar-

chism', a ground-breaking new book that shows a different side of this best-selling author: the anarchist principles that have guided him since he was a teenager.

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Daniel Guerin

## ANARCHISM

An excellent introduction to anarchism covering topics as diverse as the State, democracy, trade unions, how will public services be managed after the revolution; and a look at anarchism in Italy, Russia and Spain. Introduction by Noam Chomsky.

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## THE ANARCHIST FAQ, no.6

More of those Frequently Asked Questions, this time looking at what anarchists do. So, if you have questions about voting, syndicalism, co-operatives, direct action, child rearing, trade unions, violence, social revolution, and more. Get this book.

€7.75 / £5.25

Martha Ackleburg

## FREE WOMEN OF SPAIN

Cowards don't make history; and the women of Mujeres Libres (Free Women) were no cowards. Courageous enough to create revolutionary change in their daily lives, they mobilised over 20,000 women into an organised network during the Spanish Revolution to strive for community, education, and equality for women and the emancipation of all.

Militants in the anarcho-syndicalist CNT union, Mujeres Libres struggled both against fascism, the state, and reaction; and the sometimes less than supportive attitudes and concerns of some of their male comrades. Martha Ackelsberg writes a comprehensive study of Mujeres Libres, intertwining interviews with the women themselves and analysis connecting them with modern feminist movements.

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Philip S Foner

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# What's happening in Bolivia?

**Big Business doesn't like what's happening in South America. The election of reforming governments in Peru and Ecuador might have been a bearable irritant but that Chavez guy in Venezuela has really got up their noses. In Bolivia sections of the local ruling class got so riled up that they tried to overthrow President Morales in September. The US ruling class, in collusion with local bosses, is trying to destabilise political and economic reforms. As they see it, too much is going to workers and peasants, and not enough into their own coffers.**

It certainly isn't socialism, the working class is not in control nor is an economy based on need rather than profit being created. But there has been some real redistribution of wealth to the poor.

In the past, when people tried to tackle the power of the elites they were met with military coups, torture and death squads. The White House and their fellow free marketeers have never had any problem throwing parliamentary democracy and human rights out the window whenever their profits were threatened. The fact that Morales and his 'Movement Towards Socialism' won 67.4% of the national vote in a referendum as recently as August 10th is no protection.

## Limited land reform

The limited land reform programme gave a good example. Since Morales came to power, 500,000 hectares of land have been taken from large landowners and returned to poor peasants and co-operatives. The two million poorest peasants live on just five million hectares.

At the other end of the social scale, one hundred families own a colossal twenty-five million hectares. Those parasites were never going to accept the proposal to limit land ownership to between 5,000 and 10,000 hectares. From their base in the 'Half Moon' provinces, they set about trying to overthrow the government. It is just one of their targets, they also want to destroy trade unions and peasant movements, and undo the improvements of recent years.

On September 8<sup>th</sup>, a coup was attempted in Santa Cruz by large landowners, ranchers and drug traffickers. Government buildings were taken over and roadblocks set up to cut off the city. The local airport was seized, with access only possible through checkpoints controlled by right-wing militias. The extreme right UJC marched, in military uniform, through the poorest shantytowns, where most people support Morales. This followed the murder of 30 peasants in Pando, all of whom were Morales supporters.



The government sent in the army and the country was taken to the brink of civil war. The US ambassador was expelled for "actively backing" the right-wing forces. Not being supported by the rest of the ruling class or any significant section of the army, the coup plotters backed down, having been promised 'negotiations' with the government.

## The lessons of Chile

Drawing on their own bitter experience of the Pinochet coup, the anarchists of the Chilean Libertarian Communist Organisation have cautioned "there is no possibility of dialogue with the putschists: it would simply enable the bourgeoisie and imperialism to align their forces to make the decisive blow, which would lead the Bolivian popular movement into butchery of untold proportions. That is why it is so urgent to take forceful measures against the paramilitary groups operating in the "Half Moon" and against any coup-inclined, middle- and high-ranking officers in Bolivian Armed Forces".

The negotiations may result in a temporary stand off but this won't last long. New battles are certain as long as the opposition of interests between the majority of the population and the elite remains unresolved. This could take the form of an attempted coup by dissident sections of the military, in conjunction with the right-wing-led provinces of the 'half moon' and a lockout by employers.

The overwhelming support for Morales reflects an optimism that big change is possible. Unfortunately the MAS are seeking to channel this into creating a 'capitalism with a human face' rather than a socialist revolution. The vice-President, Alvaro García Linaera, has called it "Andean capitalism" and a "necessary stage".

MAS has already begun to come into conflict with some of the unions, especially the miners. The call for a guaranteed state funded pension at 55 (life expectancy in Bolivia is only 62) was rejected by the government as "unviable". When some workers called strikes and protests to demand these reforms, they were attacked by the government as "agents of the right-wing".

The sad lesson of Chile is that those who make only half a revolution dig their own graves. The ruling class will not passively surrender its power and wealth, never in all of human history has that happened. Nor will it be fooled into doing so if we move slowly.

The anarchist movement in Bolivia is saying that the power of the right has to be dismantled. That means dismantling capitalism and replacing it with a worker controlled economy geared towards satisfying human needs, where the people exercise direct control through their own democratic assemblies and councils.

*Alan MacSimoin*

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