

SOLIDARITY

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Twenty Years of Irish Anarchist News

<http://www.struggle.ws/wsm>

Dubya Gets a New Pet in Ireland



*Good Boy Bonzo.
Go get those
god-dang pinkos*

Democracy Where Are You?

Both the media and the state are incapable of telling the truth about May Day 2004. A witch-hunt is being conducted by the state, ably assisted by the media. We are supposed to have the right to peacefully protest. Indeed, it is this right that distinguishes democracy from dictatorship. It was due to the fact that we have such a right that over a 100,000 people took to the streets to display their opposition to the war. The May 2004 protests are no different.

In this 'democratic' world it is the pursuit of profit that is put before all else, where dignitaries and leaders zip around our city making decisions over fine wines, decisions that affect us but ones in which we have no say.

The government's street party was cancelled but no reason was given, later it transpired from an 'anonymous source in the cabinet' that it was because of those pesky protestors. Who was being secretive now? Really what the authorities hate more than anything is protests, and what's more, a protest that focuses attention on their agenda. Europe is about keeping certain people out, and also about bulldozing a clear pathway for the privatisation of our services.

When the Mercedes cavalcades no longer cut through town there will be certain truths that remain. McDowell will still be pursuing his racist policy of forced deportations. The council will still be increasing your bin-tax bill for next year, while in the north they are continuing to introduce water-charges. The cops who battered people in Mayday two years ago will still not have been tried. The Warmonger

George Bush will be coming to visit Ireland in June to thank us for opening Shannon up as a petrol station for his warplanes carting death to Iraq. Our imbecile, Bertie, will be there grinning like a favoured pet, representing both Europe and Ireland. Bush is over to thank his friends, Irish and European, who have helped him in his effort to steal the resources of Iraq, install a puppet regime there, liberating that country by invading it, and killing all who resist the imperialist army.

When the EU circus leaves, we start concentrating on the visit of the world's no. 1 terrorist, George W. Bush. Let's all make sure he knows how we feel about him when the leader of the 'free' world lands. This world won't be free for a while yet, and there will be many more protests before we get to real democracy, and real freedom. The leaders better get used to protest.

Irish Anarchist News and Analysis Inside

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Vote NO to Racist Referendum



The government has called for a referendum on the 11th of June to decide whether or not to restrict citizenship rights for children born in Ireland.

Currently any child born in Ireland is automatically an Irish citizen. This automatic right to citizenship for children born in Ireland was inserted into the Constitution as part of the Belfast Agreement in 1998 and is in line with citizenship rights in such coun-

tries as the US, Canada and New Zealand.

McDowell, our minister for injustice, has called the referendum - at very short notice - for the very same day as the local government and European Parliament elections. This allows the Irish government to conveniently deflect the current anger of the population at, for example, the crises in our health service and the appalling housing situation. The government is trying to create a smokescreen to cover up their own failures by rushing through a referendum to attack Irish children's rights.

McDowell, has been caught several times blatantly lying and creating scare stories about immigration. He has spoken of "citizenship tourism", of "massive inflows" of non-nationals to the maternity hospitals, of the situation "snowballing out of control", and of the Masters of the Dublin hospitals "pleading" with him to change the laws on citizen-

ship. A document published by his Department based the case for a referendum solely on the thesis that there is a growing problem of non-national births in Ireland. All of this is untrue however and McDowell has since had to change his story.

The real problems in maternity services are the result of years of government cutbacks and closures. The Masters of the hospitals themselves have accused McDowell of ex-

aggeration, and the figures bear them out. Take the Coombe Hospital, for example. The increase in non-national births last year was just 2 per cent. As with the other Dublin hospitals, a major portion of its 20 per cent of foreign mothers were living and working in Ireland entirely legally, with many from Britain and other EU countries, and the US. The minister now tells us that "I'm not pinning my hat on the issue of statistics from maternity hospitals."

This referendum would bring Ireland's citizenship laws in line with those in other EU countries and is another step in the creation of Fortress Europe - a Europe which successive agreements, treaties and 'action plans' have turned into a deadly fortress which has already caused thousands of deaths of refugees and asylum seekers and has criminalised and marginalised those immigrants within the EU who, whether fleeing war, persecution or poverty, are trying to build a new life here.

The Campaign Against the Racist Referendum has been set up counter racist lies peddled by the government and to fight for a No vote in this referendum which attempts to take away the rights of a group of Irish children. If you want to get involved come to the weekly campaign meetings which are held in the Teachers Club, Parnell Square at 3pm on Saturdays or contact campaign members at:

Campaign Against the Racist Referendum, c/o 12A Brunswick Place, Dublin 2, 087 6662060 or 087 7974622, againsttheracistreferendum@eircom.net

Government Still Pissing on the Poor

There are still 80 tenants of Dublin City Council who have no indoor toilet. The government won't give the Council funding to convert these few homes so they can have an indoor loo. Yet there is no problem giving huge wedges of cash to the horse racing set or for wining and dining millionaire heads of state in Farmleigh House. And they wonder why some of us get angry!

Future Politician: Young, Ambitious and Thick

The Union of Students in Ireland has been the launching pad for many a political career, from Fianna Fail's Gerard Collins to Labour's Pat Rabbitte.

One of the new crop, Education Officer Heledd Fychan, was pretty blatant in her disrespect for any notion of accountability. "Last night you heard hustings candidates, myself included, making empty promises..." She should go far.



Buckley's a Rich Banker

Michael Buckley, chief executive of AIB saw a 48% increase in his pay last year. He now gets a massive €1,230,000 a year. Over at Cement Roadstone, chief executive Liam O'Mahony got a €170,000 rise, bringing his pay to €1,630,000 a year. These are the same people who are always moaning about "excessive wage costs"!

Rich, Greedy and Willing to Exploit

The one hundred richest people in Ireland have a combined fortune of €23 billion. This is equivalent to one fifth of the 26 counties' Gross Domestic Product. The ten richest are each sitting on an average fortune of €800 million, a worker earning the average industrial wage would have to bank his or her

entire €27,000 salary every year for 30,000 years to amass the same wealth. Among those super-rich are Sir Tony O'Reilly (fortune estimated at €1.3billion), JP McManus (€790 million), Dunnes Stores boss Margaret Heffernan (€490 million) and Ryanair's Michael O'Leary (€470 million).

These one hundred tycoons just got richer. They increased their collective wealth by 19.6% last year to over 28 Billion Euro. It is good to contrast that with the dispute in An Post where the workers are being 'locked out' of their work for asking for an agreed pay-rise which the bosses now refuse to give them.

Keep Ireland Tidy: Deport McDowell

Our current Minister for Injustice, Michael McDowell, will no doubt have been horrified to learn that his surname means "son of the black foreigner". We at the WSM would dearly like to see him deported, preferably to Rockall for the rest of his days, so that he cannot draft up any more racist referendums.

Haiti and US Terrorism

by Paddy Rua

The USA's outrageous occupation of Iraq is in serious trouble. It has cost the lives of at least 15,000 Iraqis, 600 US soldiers and enriched companies such as Dick Cheney's Halliburton Co. to the tune of \$16.8 million thanks to "God Oil". Not content with this, the Bush administration felt it was time to make a new move in its aggressive international policy. The new victim is a small Caribbean country, which shares the same island as the Dominican Republic: Haiti.



Like a police thriller, the victim "wasn't unknown" to the Washington butchers. Murderers tend to go back to the scene of their crimes. Haiti has long suffered from Uncle Sam's interventions. Born through slaves' revolts against their French masters, Haiti was the first black republic in the world -1804 - and for that has paid a high price.

Despised by all other countries of the world, it suffered from economic sanctions by the USA, the UK and France, the main colonist countries of the time and monopolists of international trade. Haiti was "forgiven" only in exchange for huge "compensation" payments to France. Slaves learned the high price of Liberty. Thus, the Republic was born carrying the burdens of the legacy of slavery, wrecked by war, and damaged in its possibilities of independent development by the debt it contracted to pay France.

This condemned Haiti to little improvement from its previous state: once known as the Pearl of the Antilles, it kept providing coffee, sugar and tobacco to the Western world, after the new elite, mercenaries of the old masters, learned to provide the conditions for the reproduction of this extraordinarily cheap labour.

During a political crisis (1915), the USA decided to intervene to keep its control and its business safe. To keep high profit rates, they introduced forced labour. Rebellions occurred, and the US fled Haiti in 1934, leaving behind a deadly legacy and securing its rule over the Caribbean. Always keeping an eye on the region, they were aware of the atrocities of Dominican dictator Trujillo, who executed 15,000 Haitians (1937), and

of the Haitian dictator Francois Duvalier, known as "Papa Doc", whose dictatorship (1957-1971) cost the lives of 60,000 Haitians.

The USA not only was tolerant of them, but was supportive. These dictators ensured the maintenance of the US's profits, sweatshops, plantations and of their political influence. They were part of the US led anti-communist crusade that in the 1980s alone cost 280,000 people's lives in Latin America and the Caribbean. They supported the Duvaliers dictatorship for 30 years, until "Baby Doc", F. Duvalier's son (1971-1986), had to flee the country amid riots, after looting the State's coffers. He was never taken to international courts, where he might say too much about his former employers in the White House.

In 1990 Haiti had its first democratic elections. The winner, a leftist priest, Aristide, talked about education for the people and of prioritising health over external debt. The USA thought this was too radical. Bush Sr. financed a coup seven months after the elections, leading to a new dictatorship and more bloodshed. Aristide was exiled to the USA, where he was indoctrinated in the catechism of neoliberalism. After he learned his lesson (Priorities: World Bank & IMF before the poor), he was returned to power in 1994. He was not going to alter Haiti's order: 80% under the poverty line, and 60% unemployed.

With this record, could we seriously believe in a Humanitarian Intervention of the USA? We get even more suspicious, know-

ing that the February rebellion that ousted Aristide (not much of a white dove himself anymore, but never supported by the Republicans in Washington), was financed, armed and trained by the CIA in the Dominican Republic. Behind the coup are Haiti's elite, the US, and former Duvalierists responsible for human rights' violations. Their first measure was union-busting, deepening the already-too-deep neoliberal policies, and reforming the army, loyal to USA, disbanded by Aristide to prevent new coups.

What lies behind the coup? Certainly, US Republicans were not fond of Aristide's populism; also, they disliked his demands that France pay back the "compensation" made a century ago. They distrusted Aristide, because despite all sorts of concessions made to the IMF, he wasn't neoliberal enough when it came to privatisations. But most of all, the Bush administration needed to secure complete control over the region before the elections, as Haiti gives a stable base from where to intervene in Cuba, Venezuela, Panama, ...

Once again, the Haitian people are victims of multinationals and imperialist states' "superior" interests. But their unity has delivered them from their masters in the past, and great courage is appearing in the grassroots' daily resistance against the occupation forces and the new government. Haiti's fate lies in the ability of their own people to build a new society in which there is space for everyone, except for those who've exploited and oppressed them for ages.

An interview with Mrs Ellen Mongan, a Traveller with seven children

Ireland's 'Traditional' Racism Remains

It's 2004 and close to 1,000 Traveller families are still living on the roadside without access to basic facilities-water, sanitation or electricity. Official accommodation is often overcrowded, poorly maintained and situated in wholly unsuitable locations, beside rubbish dumps or dangerous, busy main roads with no pedestrian access.

In 2002, the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill was enacted which changed trespass from a civil to a criminal offence. Camping on private or public ground can result in a 3,000 euro fine, confiscation of property and/or one month in jail. Between 2002 and 2003, 88 evictions of Travellers took place under this legislation. Travellers are being criminalised because of the consistent failure of the Government to provide both permanent and transient halting sites.

Mrs. Ellen Mongan, a Traveller woman with seven children, lives in St Margaret's Halting Site, Ballymun.

How long have you been living here on this site?

I'm back on this site now about twelve months. I'd been living here originally and then we moved and were living on the side of the road for a couple of years with no facilities or anything. We were down around the country and then out around Swords.

How many families are there altogether on this site?

There's about 62 or 63 families. One side of the site is more packed than where we are. The site was only designed for one family per bay-there's only one toilet and one shower unit. There's 30 bays and 62 families. This is because of the new (Anti) Trespass Law-people are on top of one another. The (Anti) Trespassing Law affected me you see - that's why I had to move back in here.

That was out in Swords at the back of the airport. There's an official site and an unofficial site. There was a couple of other families there. Aer Rianta owned the land and the Council only rented that land. Now there's talk of building a new runway and Aer Rianta threatened me. I wasn't served with notice to go but I would have been because I was illegally parked.

We were all told we would be evicted and I didn't wait to be evicted because they tow your caravan to the pound and you'd have to pay for every day that it'd be there. It was very bad that time. There were no toilets. There was no water. There was no electricity or anything out there. That was where my daughter Lena got knocked down and her leg was broken-the traffic is very bad



Detail from a photo by Derek Spiers (1985)

out by the airport. That was when my sister took me in-she said she'd let me in here to double up with her.

What are the facilities like here on the site?

Each bay has its own shower unit and toilet and a little utility room. Each family wouldn't have that - you could have more than 12 or 13 people using the one toilet and shower. I think the site is overcrowded now because of that law.

When you're on a site like this the Council say you are being accommodated but you're not - it's the same as you letting me stay with you for a while.

Do you think that Travellers in Ballymun are going to benefit from the regeneration of Ballymun?

I think it'll change things - you don't know for the better or for the worse. Everyone on the site won't get a house. Only 20 of the 60 families are going to get houses.

Have you as a Traveller woman suffered racism and discrimination in Ireland?

Y'know when you go into shops you can hear the security bell being pressed. Then they get the people to walk after you. I remember one time a good few years ago we were staying down in Cavan. I went into a shop to buy two dresses for the little ones. I was standing at the checkout when the manager came running and just literally dragged

me out of the shop. "Don't you know you're barred from this shop?" he said to me. I was never in the shop before in my life. I was heavily pregnant at the time. It was very embarrassing, frightening as well.

It's the same ringing up and booking for weddings. If they know you're a Traveller they won't let you. Discrimination is worse now than when I was younger. Maybe that's because people are more aware of it now, I don't know. I remember years ago going to school in the country and I was treated the same as everyone else, but when I had my children they were marginalised in school. They used to have a Traveller's class that went slower than the mainstream class.

Did you travel much when you were growing up?

Only after I got married. I'd been living in a house since I was about 12. I was the oldest of 18 children and before my father and mother settled down I remember living in the tents and the wagons.

Do you think the travelling days are over?

Oh yeah-they are. They're gone. Too much hassle with the Law. Anyone with children are trying to get them a bit of education by staying in the one place. It seems to be the only way forward now. Probably in time to come the younger people won't know what it was like to travel except to go on a holiday. It's sad. Their culture is being taken away from them.

We Are Everywhere

***We Are Everywhere* is a collection of articles, photos and interviews about the past decade of global anti-capitalist resistance. What marks this book out is that all the contributors are activists and this lends the anthology a sense of immediacy and infectious optimism.**

by Ellen Walsh

There are 55 pieces by contributors from all over the world. Amongst the glorious Babel of voices are stories of land occupations in Brazil, eco-activism in India, the emancipation of imprisoned asylum seekers in Australia and actions against the privatisation of water in Bolivia. There are tales from the Zapatista heartland in Mexico, the unemployed movement in Argentina and solidarity volunteers in Palestine and a plethora of other accounts of anti-capitalist activity including two pieces written by Irish anarchists. The picture that emerges from the book is a large, multilayered and complex movement for global justice made up of a web of interconnected struggles. Importantly, the Utopian ambitions and fierce hope of the movement is balanced by a firm emphasis on practical solidarity and direct action.

The book is primarily an activist history of the anti-capitalist movement and reading through it you realize that the movement has had a measure of success. The anthology begins in 1994, when the end of history had been confidently announced in the boardrooms of multinationals and in the corridors of power. There was, they said, no reality or dream but the market and there was no other god but profit.

It is clear that over the past decade of anti-capitalist activity has done much to undermine and challenge this neo-liberal orthodoxy. The leading capitalist institutions such as the G8, the EU, the IMF and the World Bank, secretive and unaccount-

able conclaves of the elite, are now firmly in the public spotlight and can only meet if they are protected by thousands of cops. The plans that these elites concoct at such meetings are now being fought against by a dynamic and global resistance movement. The book's greatest strength is that it manages to capture the spirit of this movement and chart how the ancient struggle for equality and freedom has given birth to a new radical, transnational consciousness.

The editors have arranged the materials in the book thematically to reflect what they believe are the most important characteristics of the anti-capitalist movement. It is striking to what extent these themes have been borrowed and developed from anarchist ideas. They highlight the participative and non-hierarchical way that anti-capitalist groups and networks organise themselves, their respect for individual freedom and creativity, their dislike of dogma and established political parties and their desire to build power amongst people rather than seizing it from the state.

All of these are typical concerns of anarchist politics and the tens of thousands of nameless anarchists who have involved themselves with the global justice movement should be lauded for ensuring that libertarian ideas have played such an important part in shaping the movement.

WAE is a well-produced, engaging and persuasive account of the development of the anti-capitalist movement. What it isn't, and didn't set out to be, is a systematic analysis of modern capitalism. The collection doesn't devote much time to analysis or strategy and there is practically nothing explaining the nature of the neo-liberal project. The book is confidently optimistic and celebratory and for that it is worthwhile but perhaps more material on the limitations of the anti-capitalist movement could have been included. There is very little about the movement's weaknesses and failures and there is no sustained examination of the differences between those struggling in the global north and those struggling in the global south.

Nonetheless, WAE is an intelligent and impassioned account of ten years of struggle - the victories, the repression, the passion, the frivolity and above all the hope that inspires the anti-capitalist movement. It reminds us that while they make plans we have the ability to make history.



EVENTS & CONTACTS

ANARCHIST GROUPS

Workers Solidarity Movement

Platformist Anarchist Organisation

Publishes *this paper*
PO box 1528, Dublin 8, Ireland
<http://www.struggle.ws/wsm.html>
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Organise! Working Class Resistance

Class Struggle Anarchist Organisation

Publishes "*Working Class Resistance*"
PO Box 505, Belfast, BT12 6BQ
organiseireland@yahoo.ie

Cork Anarchist Group

Anarchists Active in Cork

Publish "*The Cork Anarchist Conspiracy*"
corkanarchists@yahoo.com

Anarchist Prisoner Support

Anarchists Supporting our Prisoners

<http://www.anarchistsps.org>
aps@anarchistsps.org

LIBERTARIAN NETWORKS

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

Maggie Collective

Direct Action / Squatting Collective
iwannaspace@wildmail.com

Grassroots Network

Non-hierarchical Direct-Action Network
Network of grassroots activists with groups in Dublin, Cork & Galway.
Organising Mayday anti-EU protests
<http://www.geocities.com/eufortress>

Indymedia Ireland

Irish Branch of Global Media Collective
Open Publishing web site where everyone has a voice. The place to find Irish campaign news. Also publishes "*Printflare*"
<http://www.indymedia.ie>

Alliance For Choice

Campaign for women's freedom to choose
<http://struggle.ws/ireland/allianceforchoice/index.html>

EVENTS

7.30pm Thursday 20th May, Teachers Club, 36 Parnell Square. WSM open meeting: Anarchism in Canada Speaker from NEFAC Montreal

EMAIL/WEB

irishanarchism@yahoogroups.com
Big, high-volume anarchist discussion list

ainriail@struggle.ws
Low-volume newsletter from the WSM

<http://www.anarchomedia.cjb.net/>
Anarchist media website

<http://anarchism.ws/ireland.html>
Index of Irish anarchist Internet resources.

We Are Everywhere
Edited by Notes from Nowhere
Verso, October 2003, 520 pages, 150 photos, Price: 13 euro
For more details go to
<http://www.weareeverywhere.org>

We Don't Want Your Vote

by Aoife Fisher

Most, if not all, of the left wing political parties in Ireland are standing candidates in the up-coming local elections. Members of the Workers Solidarity Movement will not be joining them. We won't be coming to a doorstep near you asking for your vote.

This doesn't mean we have decided to hang our hats up, we aren't giving up on political change. Rather it is because we are committed to political change that we are refusing to partake in the local elections, for the elections have very little to do with political power.

What's the point

In Ireland, local authorities have very little to do with running the city. Our cities are run by city managers. Council committees do not make executive decisions, but, instead, tend to give advice to the manager and acquaint themselves with the manager's decisions and actions. However as an article on local government reports 'the council has hardly any information channels of its own, and depends heavily on the information it receives from the manager'.

If the local authorities decide to act against the wishes of the manager, he (or she) can

get the Minister of the Environment to dissolve them. Local authorities have no right to dismiss the manager if they are unhappy with the decisions that he or she is making. When it was announced recently that political posters would be removed from public places, the citizens of Dublin had no way of overturning the decision. It is not surprising therefore that the Dublin City Council in a cynical move appears to put issues of public cleanliness over issues of public democracy.

Furthermore many important decisions about the running of our cities are made either by central government or by un-elected quangos. Fianna Fail appoints the board of Temple Bar, so although it is an area in the centre of the capital, the citizens of that capital have practically no input into what is done with the space.

Power and corruption

The one area in which the power of local councilors has been evident is in the allocation of planning permission. As has been seen in the planning tribunals, it's also an area that stinks with corruption. The interests of developers appear to be what drives planning permissions. Housing estates are built with no public transport connections, no shops or public services. Shopping centers are built outside the city and are inaccessible to those



of us with out a car. The city is shaped to serve commercial interests and the people who have to live, work, shop and socialise have no way of challenging this development. Through public inquires we can ask what happened, but we can't change the decisions that have been made.

In Ireland we have local government, government by local civil servants, but no local democracy.

It could be different. At the moment we elect local councilors to positions where they have little power, what power they have they are free to use in what ever way they like. If they lie to us, we have no way of re-calling them from their office. This type of democracy (known as representative democracy) is open to abuse. For example, during the bin tax campaigns when on the doorsteps the politicians promised to fight the charges, but when in the council chamber voted to re-install them.

Our City

We believe in another type of democracy, direct democracy. This is where local assemblies meet to discuss and decide on issues that affect them. On issues of common concern to the wider community, these assemblies first discuss and come to a position of their own. Then they can federate with other areas by choosing delegates whose role is to co-ordinate with other delegates from other communities. At local city or county meetings delegates carry the wishes of their communities on the particular topic under discussion (whether that be traffic management, the building of playgrounds or organising waste collection). If they fail to carry out the wishes of the communities, the community has the power to replace them immediately. If the issues are unresolved the delegates can go back to the local assemblies for further consideration and the process repeated until a suitable solution reached.

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Affiliated to International Libertarian Solidarity (ILS/SIL) <http://www.ils-sil.org>

Workers Solidarity is a bi-monthly publication of the Workers Solidarity Movement. The WSM is an anarchist organisation based on the same principles of direct democracy that we want to see applied in the future society that we are striving to create. Each person has a say, and vote, on the decisions that are made by the organisation. We have discussions and debates so that when we come to make a decision, as much as possible, we are coming from an informed viewpoint.

No positions of power exist in the organisation, each administrative position is held only for a certain amount of time, and all positions are recallable. We don't run in elections, we believe that rather than giving politicians the power to make decisions over our heads, people have to act for themselves. Being part of the WSM is a step towards being empowered, and taking charge of your own destiny. If you want to be part of the struggle for a new life, against the empty unfulfilling world of rampant capitalism, then find out more about the WSM, and become part of the future revolution, today.

Subscribe to *Workers Solidarity* and our magazine *Red and Black Revolution*, which is produced annually and contains longer and more detailed articles.

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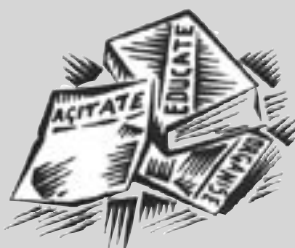
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We also distribute information over the Internet. Our website (see above) includes a huge archive of articles about the history of anarchism and Irish struggles.



Building the Anti-War Movement from Below

At the end of the year the organisation called the Irish Anti War Movement went through an internal crisis as some of those involved tried to democratise it. When the Socialist Workers Party who controlled the IAWM responded by arranging the expulsion of some of its opponents from the committee most of the independent groups reacted by disaffiliating from the IAWM.

The war however goes on and in June George Bush visits Ireland. The question now is what sort of broad anti-war movement can be built that is genuinely inclusive and democratic? The first steps have already been taken with a number of meetings leading to the launch of Ireland Against War which has provisionally scheduled its first conference for May 15th.

It is probably safe to assume that this conference will not repeat the most obvious mistake of the IAWM, that is to allow a single party de facto control of the organisation. However this is not the only requirement of building a inclusive and democratic campaign. These are the other issues we believe need to be addressed.

1. Respect for diversity within the coalition and the broader movement. We have seen how the SWP in the IAWM attempted with some success to marginalise and under-

mine those who took direct action against the war. It is unlikely that this particular group would be marginalised in the new campaign but a good general principle would be to recognise that different groups favour different tactics and at public events ensure that the speakers represent the range of tactics and analysis that exist within the campaign rather than just the majority opinion.

2. Led by activists and not parties. The only influence that political parties should have within the campaign is that they can win by arguing their ideas. There should be no automatic seats on decision making structures for the representatives of political parties (although observers should be invited).

3. Genuine local groups - in order to boost their voting strength at national IAWM meetings the SWP pretended that its local branches were in fact anti-war groups or in some cases seems to have invented groups where none had been active for months. Groups that have a delegate at decision making meetings should have had a publicly advertised meeting no more than two weeks before such a meeting and should have had some form of public activity in their area within the previous 6 weeks. The simplest way to ensure this had happened would be to insist that such events be advertised on the campaign website at least 3 days before they occur.

4. Decision making - decisions should be made on the basis of mandated and recallable delegates from active groups within the campaign. A national meeting of such delegates should take place every two to three months to decide on the direction of the campaign with motions for this meeting being discussed locally in advance so that delegates can be mandated.

5. Officers - some people would have to put in work between such meetings to ensure such decisions are implemented and communicated, issue press releases etc. But they should not decide the direction of the campaign, this should be the function of delegate meetings. Obviously they will need to make minor decisions on a day to day basis and from time to time emergency decisions but as far as possible these should be within the mandates laid down by the delegates meetings. In addition both officers and delegates ought to be rotated regularly in order to guard against a few figures assuming de facto control.

These are some of the key organisational elements that we think are needed for an inclusive and democratic campaign. There are very obviously many questions of politics and tactics as well but lack of space prevents us going into them here. For more on these and anarchist ideas on organisation see *Red and Black Revolution* no 7 or on the web at: <http://struggle.ws/wsm>

by Andrew Flood

Thinking about Anarchism



State Terrorism

Terrorism is one of the favourite pejoratives of our society. I don't wish to dwell on the old cliché that "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" which seems pretty self-evident. Lets just accept the term for now and use the most inclusive and most obvious definition- that terrorism is the use of violence with the object of striking fear and horror into a population to achieve political objectives. So it seems reasonable to classify the murderous attack on ordinary people in Madrid on March 10th as an act of terrorism and that is precisely what we should call it.

We are all familiar with this form of terrorism-the nihilistic and desperate act of the suicide bomber, arsonist or assassin. We are rarely asked to consider the actions of various governments as terrorism. But if we examine history and look at current events in the world we are confronted by a multitude of examples of state terrorism.

If the past century teaches us anything at all it that the various competing states and empires of the world do not recognise any limit to the amount of torture, cruelty, fear and destruction they are willing to inflict on their own or other state's populations. The history of the modern state is bound up with the history of the calculated use of terror through political repression and war. The most obvious and extreme examples of this are the

Nazi death camps and the Soviet gulags but what should we call the massacre of hundreds of thousands of civilians in the bombing of Dresden, Coventry, Hiroshima and Nagasaki except terrorism? The pointless slaughter of millions of conscripts and civilians in wars from Flanders field to Vietnam has always involved state terrorism by whatever means the state deems necessary and at whatever cost they think ordinary people should pay.

Contemporary events in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, and more recently and specifically in Falluja show that the phenomenon of the systematic use of state terror against civilian populations by "civilised" states is flourishing. Through the blizzard of falsification and lies we can just about discern the true state of things in Iraq-the electricity and sewage systems have been bombed and the civilian population is terrorised and kept in bondage.

If we accept the definition of terrorism as being use of large-scale violence on a population, we can go one step further and include the whole bloody history of colonisation, slavery and empire as state terrorism. For example in 1876 and 1899 in India the country was swept by massive famines. The immediate cause was natural but it was the reaction of the British State, which led to the real harvest of death. As in Ireland in 1845 their reaction

was to extol the virtues of Laissez-faire capitalism. This led to spiralling prices and increasing grain exports while millions died.

The whole modern "Third World" has its origins in the massive famines that swept Africa at the turn of the century. Far from doing anything to help, the British, Portuguese, German, Belgian and French governments saw an opportunity. They calmly stood back while two of the four horsemen of the apocalypse, namely starvation and disease, struck down millions.

As anarchists we believe that state terrorism is a direct consequence of the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the few. One of the primary functions of the state is to defend the status quo and that is why powerful states spend so much on the machinery of war and death. Any state will resort to terrorising its own people or other nations if it feels the interests of the elite are threatened. As we have seen with the prisoners in Guantanamo Bay a powerful state like the US will even dress up brutality as their moral right if needs be. It is not enough that such elites can determine the way we live and even the way we should die- they have also asserted their right to a monopoly over violence and a monopoly on the right to moralise about violence.

So terrorism can come in many forms but the question remains, which is more vicious - a small group with masks or bombs or an armed, wealthy state bent on the destruction and colonisation of another?

by Conor McLoughlin

The Pay-Rise is in the Post

Dishonest newsroom bosses spent a couple of weeks in March and April telling us about the “strike” in An Post. They knew better but preferred to lie. There was no strike by workers, but there were hundreds of workers suspended in what was effectively a lock-out by management.

by Joe King

It all began a few months ago when a dilapidated sorting office and terrible working conditions led to a one-day stoppage in Tuam, Co. Galway. After the stoppage workers engaged in a work to rule when management refused to authorise overtime to deal with the backlog.

In Drogheda, post boxes were sealed by the company in an attempt to deal with a two day backlog after workers refused to cover for those on holiday in a dispute about overtime arrangements.

An Post management (appointed by the Minister for Communications) are so incapable and inefficient that they were able to turn a projected loss of €1 million into €40 million within just a few months. All they seem to be good at is losing money, barking orders and bullying staff.

Being rightly pissed off over the non-payment of their promised 3%, not to mention the ongoing threat of up to 1,300 job losses, Communications Workers Union members voted 89.7% for a strike to get the rise. The CWU executive committee served two week's notice, giving An Post plenty of time to sort matters out. As we go to press the CWU has still not used its strike mandate.



Management's response was the introduction of unilateral changes without negotiation with the union or the agreement of the staff. This led to 520 workers being suspended for refusing to work those changes.

The bosses want to demoralise the workforce, making it easier to cut jobs and ultimately sell off the postal service, complete with a “tamed” workforce.

Postal workers need to show they won't take this lying down. Otherwise it will look as if nobody will stand up for themselves and we will see our services being sold off to fat cats like Tony O'Reilly and Michael O'Leary.

Workers shouldn't rely too much on the CWU head office. General Secretary, Con Scanlon, earns €250,000 per year as a director of Eircom Ltd., Eircom Esot Trustee Ltd., Eircom Fundings (Holdings) Ltd. and Valentia Telecommunications. And that's on top of his CWU wage!

Con has certainly long forgotten what it's like to be an ordinary worker. A delivery person earns an average of €354.12 per week.

Common sense tells us that struggles are best managed by the people who will be most affected by their outcome. Fighting for reasonable working conditions is

tied up with fighting for more democracy and militancy in our unions. To be effective we need rank and file control, which means hearing all the arguments and taking the important decisions at meetings of post men and women.

Abortion Rights Still Denied

In 1861, abortion was made a criminal offence in Ireland. One hundred and forty three years later the Irish government continues to deny women their right to choice. Between January 1980 and December 2002, over 105,000 Irish women terminated a pregnancy in the UK. These figures exclude Irish women that did not leave Irish addresses and those that are now travelling to mainland Europe because of the Euro and cheap flights from here to cities such as Brussels.

The Irish government denies the option of abortion to victims of rape, to women who have suffered incest or sexual abuse, and to women whose life or health is at risk from continuing with the pregnancy. In fact, the Republic of Ireland has one of the most draconian abortion laws in Europe. At present abortion may only be performed where continuation of the pregnancy poses a 'real and substantial' risk to a pregnant woman's life. In reality a woman must be dying be-

fore a life saving abortion can be performed. Information about abortion services in the UK is restricted in Ireland. Under the 1995 Information Act, information about abortion clinics is only legally available through face-to-face counselling sessions. Ireland is completely out of sync with the rest of the EU. Only Portugal, and with the expansion of the EU on May 1st, Poland and Malta have similar restrictive abortion laws.

Alliance For Choice is a diverse group of pro-choice activists that are campaigning for free, safe and legal abortion services in Ireland. The choice to have an abortion is a difficult and emotional decision for any woman to make. We believe that Irish women should be free to make this decision without the intrusion of the Irish State and Catholic Church. Since the formation of Alliance of Choice we have engaged in a wide range of pro-choice activities. This year to mark International Women's Day we publicly broke the 1995 Information Act in Dublin and in Cork. This Act makes it illegal for a doctor to 'refer' a patient to abortion services abroad,

or make an appointment with an abortion clinic on behalf of a pregnant woman, even if her health is at risk. The Act has serious implications for the protection of women's welfare when they are faced with a crisis pregnancy. In conjunction with the Cork Women's Right to Choose Group we will be organising a series of pro-choice actions at the EU Health Ministers Meeting in Cork City in early May. If you would like to get involved you can contact Alliance For Choice at allianceforchoice@eircom.net or visit our website at <http://www.struggle.ws/ireland/allianceforchoice>. For information about the Cork Women's Right to Choose Group e-mail cwrcg@yahoo.ie

If you are in a crisis pregnancy situation and would like information about all the options available to you - parenting, fostering, adoption and abortion contact the IFFA on 1850 49 50 51 or visit the website: <http://www.ifpa.ie>

If you would like information about clinics in the UK and Europe a website has been set up by Irish pro-choice activists at <http://struggle.ws/ireland/choice>

by Níav Keating