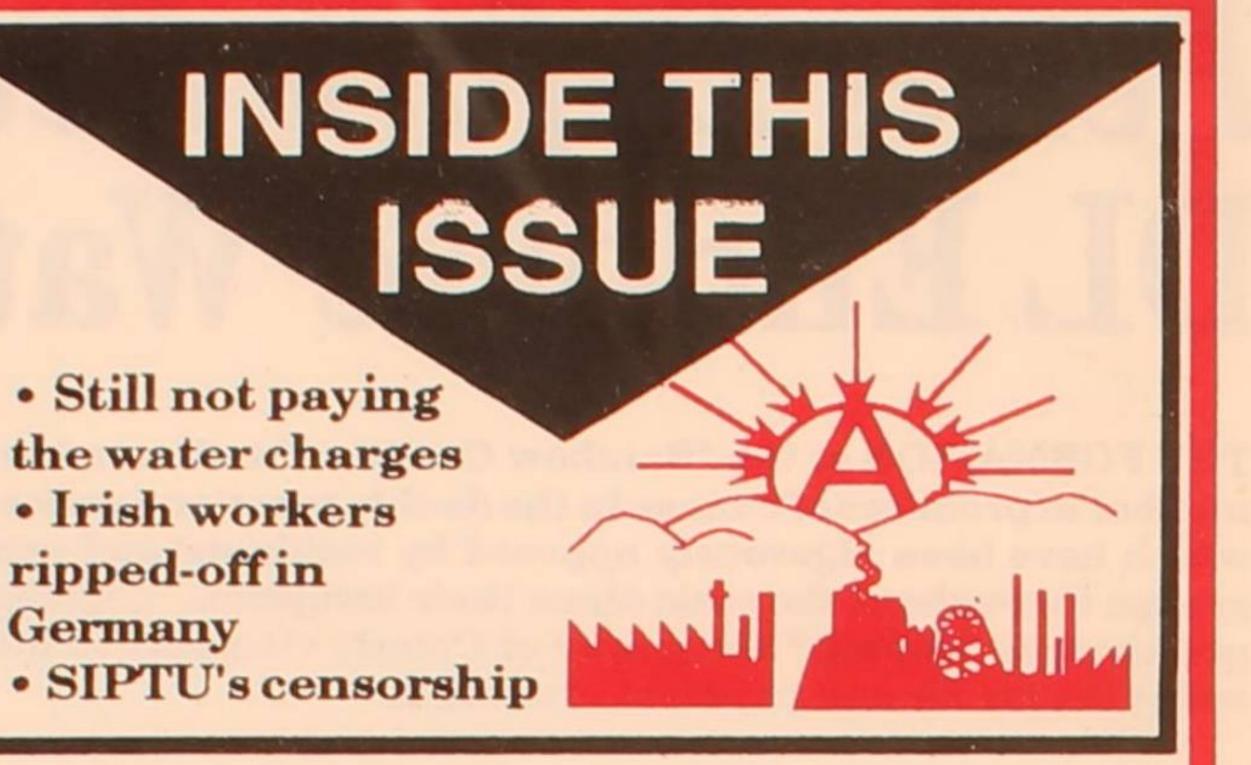
IRISH ANARCHIST PAPER

NUMBER 45



Government schemes to hammer unemployed

COMMUNITY Employment Schemes (CE) were introduced by the Government last year and have replaced all the other schemes, such as S.E.S. CE is better than the previous schemes in some ways - you can keep your secondary benefits, your rent allowance, medical card and fuel allowance. It is much better for lone parents with young children because a special child-minding allowance was introduced. However, apart from these improvements it is still a 'scheme', with all the problems associated with that.

to put up with.

the dole is very little because the £79 a emigrated or died. week for a single person is taxed. If a couple are on welfare and one is on a No jobs but lots of work scheme, they only make about £10-£15 These figures are hardly surprising. There training, most provide very little.

Taken in and tossed out again

project, even though they have the recently when the issue was last debated. experience. When their year on CE is work.

There are over 39,000 people on CE work schemes is to get the long-term throughout the 26 counties. The unemployed back into the workforce, give the right to join the trade union scheme is only open to people over 21 them some skills and restore their of their choice. who are on the live register of unem- confidence so that they can then go out and ployed or are lone parents. There are get a job. The reality is very different. A now no schemes that take the 18-21 survey conducted by the Dublin Inner City age group, a strange omission when we Partnership and the Scheme Workers think of all that is said about youth Alliance this year found that very few unemployment. However they are scheme graduates actually got jobs, only has shown any great interest in probably the lucky ones when we about 17% according to F.A.S. itself. Of organising scheme workers. consider what people on schemes have the rest, 5% became self-employed and Working in schemes is here to 23% extended their schemes while the stay for the foreseeable future so Firstly, the extra money above remaining 55% had became unemployed,

a week more. CE is a work scheme, not simply are not enough jobs out there even a training scheme, although lots of though there is plenty of work to be done. community groups try to use it for This is the basic contradiction that these training. There is a £200 per worker schemes are showing up all the time. They thousands, of people have now allowance for training and an extra exploit peoples' desire to be working, been on several schemes and have £100 each for personal development. especially in the community sector where done several F.A.S. courses as A minority of schemes provide good so much socially useful work needs to be

Even though schemes are supposed to be approved by trade unions The community sector is using CE in a so that they are not replacing "real jobs", big way to run all kinds of projects and in practise that is exactly what they are services. Many of these projects are doing, especially in the local authorities. very worthwhile in themselves such as Maintenance of parks and community resource centres, drugs projects, facilities such as swimming pools is many end up working on them. community development schemes, almost all done on CE now. The situation youth groups and so on. The problem has reached such a stage of acceptance is that all of this work is being done on that the unions in Dublin Corporation, short-term schemes where the who are still holding out against the use of workers are being exploited and have CE, found themselves the subject of very little chance of getting work in the vicious abuse by councillors of all parties

over a new group of scheme workers is the legal rights and entitlements which thousands of people off welfare in one go, as taken on and have to be trained in the part-time workers have. There is no has happened in the States. entitlement to maternity leave on CE, for The official purpose of these example, and no holiday pay. The Scheme the Connolly Unemployed Centre in Dublin

Workers Alliance is demanding that scheme workers' conditions be improved. The demands they

*Proper certified on-the-job

*Higher rates of pay, £100-*Full-time places in bigger

*All legal rights and entitlements of part-time workers.

*All scheme workers to have

Unionising the schemes

This last point is very important. Although this issue has been raised within the unions for the past five years, none of the unions it is essential that the unions get their act together and organise these workers to fight for better wages and conditions.

The real reason for the growth in work schemes is the Government's need to keep down the numbers on the live register of unemployed. Hundreds, if not well. Most of them are still

unemployed at the end of all that. Lots of schemes have third level graduates working on them. There is often competition to get a place. They have become a major part of peoples' experience of low paid work. In fact schemes really are no more than state organised low-paid exploitative work. It is an indication of peoples' desperation that so

Work schemes are the forerunner of workfare, a system where you have to work for your dole. This is the logical outcome of the schemes. At a time when there are major attacks on welfare in the USA and Britain it would be logical to expect the same to happen here sooner or later. The massive rate of unemployment here makes CE workers are denied many of it a bit harder to just go out and cut

Some community groups such as



are now arguing that because CE is realistically the Government's only job creation strategy, that full-time permanent jobs should be created where a scheme has proved to be successful. Not only should this be the case but full-time permanent jobs should be created everywhere socially useful work is being done on schemes.

Work schemes like CE need to be taken seriously. Organising campaigns around wages and conditions is necessary. The involvement of the unions is important. Up to now they have washed their hands of these workers. 39,000 part-time workers should be mobilised, not ignored. Apparently another new scheme is in the pipeline. The chances are that it will take us another step closer to workfare. Watch this space!

Patricia McCarthy

IRISH ANARCHIST PAPER

- Anarchists and
- religion ...and more



IN 1992, the Supreme Court ruled that, in some circumstances, women were allowed to have an abortion in Ireland. Yet over 4,000 women a year still have to travel to England for an abortion. Again in 1992, we voted to allow freedom of information about abortion, yet the Dáil passes laws that are extremely restrictive and intrusive, in defiance of our wishes. Where is our freedom?

The Workers Solidarity Movement has always supported a woman's right to control her own body, and have campaigned for this right as part of the pro-choice movement. We believe that control over one's fertility is an essential part of individual freedom.

Personal freedom is expressed in other ways - in asserting your sexuality, heterosexual, bisexual, lesbian, gay, whatever it may be - in asserting your culture, when, like that of the Travellers, it is ghettoised and stigmatised. The freedom to be your own person, and take pride in yourself, is often lacking in our society.

Equality

But freedom must have its limits. Freedom to have sex industrialists, self-serving politicians, or the benevolent' doesn't mean freedom to rape - the freedom of one must dictatorship of the party. Power cannot be used against us be balanced by the equal freedom of all. Nowhere is this if we keep it in our own hands, and use it to create a society balance more obviously lacking than in economics. based, not on the freedom to exploit others, nor on a forced Capitalism is based on the freedom to acquire as much equality that destroys individuality, but on real freedom, money as possible, but where there is wealth there is also real socialism, real anarchism.

poverty. The fortunes of the Smurfits, the Goodmans, the Bransons, are balanced by the millions that go to bed hungry each night, the millions more that die every year as a direct result of poverty.

> Even in Ireland, part of the industrialised, developed West, with the highest rate of economic growth in the European Union, there is poverty. How many people sleep rough on the streets of our cities, how many barely scrape by from week to week, how many thousands are unemployed? Too many.

Anarchism

Anarchism offers a way forward. Society organised from below, not from the top down by obscenely rich

THE DUBLIN GOVERNMENT has finally agreed to pay outstanding social welfare money owed to 70,000 married women. An average £3,900 is to be paid to each woman, 75% to be paid in August & December with the remainder over the following eighteen months. A European Community directive ordered that discrimination in social welfare be ended by December 1984. Up to then unemployed married women got almost £5 less than men and their benefit ran out out three months earlier. Married women were also completely barred from claiming Unemployment Assistance.

£5 COULD BE YOURS

If you need help contact the Womens Dole Campaign at 01-762518 or 01-962965.

•Form printed in Workers Solidarity back in

1985 to help women register their claims

retrospectively when the legislation is eventually passed.

Fight for your rights, don't let the politicians cheat you.

ABOUR EXCHANGE ...

The Womens Dole Campaign was set up to approved loans to Mexico of \$47.8 billion oppose this inequality. More recently last February. 'Married Women for Equality' and the Free Legal Advice Centres carried on the organised against Chase Bank. In Dublin

fight. More than a decade later the governmentsaysit is going to pay Under the terms of an EEC directive on equality you are entitled to almost £5 extra a week and to keep on claiming for three more months. The Dublin [Imagine if you government was supposed to give you this from December 22nd, but has not passed the legislation yet. Under EEC law you are entitled to the full rate and tried to put off We suggest you fill out the form and hand it in when you next sign on at your paying the rent dole office. Doing this will give you the possibility of claiming the extra money over 10 years!]

Mexican protest

The saga of the Zapatistastook a new turn when a major international bank called on the Mexican government to wipe out the

rebels before any more loans are given. "The government will need to eliminate Murder in Chechnya the Zapatistas to demonstrate their effective In January Workers Solidarity Movement control of the national territory and of members also responded to calls to protest security policy". This was the advice of against the assault on Chechnya, when Chase Manhattan Bank on January 13th. they got together with other socialists and

depend on the International Monetary Dublin's Orwell Road. About 25 braved Fund and international bank loans, are the rain to leave the Russian government's continually being dictated to about their representatives in no doubt about the way public spending policies. But it is rare to their invasion of Chechnya and bombing find such clear evidence about the control attacks on civilians are viewed here. that is exerted.

ment had launched an offensive against "military targets" were being hit. the EZLN rebels. It failed. Allit'achieved' Reporters in Grozny described and filmed was a massive devaluation of the peso, massive civilian fatalities. Aletter handed meaning a lower standard of living for the in to the ambassador accused the Russian working class and the poor.

suspects were being tortured. Amnesty solidarity with the Russian army International reported that it had conscripts who are refusing to fight and "documented widespread human rights are deserting from the army. violations in the context of this conflict, including summary execution of prison- Chechen government (a collection of ers, extensive use of torture, and gangstersevery bit as bad as Yeltsin's lot). 'disappearances' perpetrated by the Our support goes to the ordinary people Mexican army". Despite this widespread who have a burning desire to be free of use of torture, the Group of Seven (G7) occupation forces, poverty and the horrors most powerful countries in the world of war.

All over the world protests were

branch in that haven for tax evaders, the Financial Services Centre. The local WSM organised an ad-hoc 'Stop the Torture Mexico Committee' to provide a I am entitled to the full rate of benefit for the full term and have been since December 22nd, 1984 under the terms of the EEC directive on Equality of neutral banner under which a protest could be organised. A lunchtime picket was placed on Chase and staff were leafletted about their employers support for repression.

HATCH NUMBER.

Countries, such as Mexico, which placed a picket on the Russian embassy in

The Moscow regime's lies had Within two weeks the govern- been exposed when they claimed only army of "indiscriminate slaughter of the News came from Mexico that civilian population" and expressed our

We give no support to the former

How Much Do You Earn?

THE LATEST figures for how much people earn in the 26 counties are for 1993 and were released by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions in March. Average male industrial earnings were £306 for 42.8 hours (£7.15 per hour), while women's wages lag behind with £182 for 37.6 hours (£4.84 per hour).

Part-time workers in North sacked by Tories

TEMPORARY STAFF working for the Department of Employment throughout the six counties are being thrown out of their jobs. A leaked circular, publicised by Labour MP Richard Burden, tells personnel managers to end workers' contracts just before they qualify for their employment rights.

The document, entitled Dept. of Employment ES Personnel Notice 5/95, states "all new temporary appointments in the Employment Service will be limited to 51 weeks to avoid workers qualifying for full employment rights". The document, which was never intended to be made public, goes on to say "if it is not checked, we might later find that the individual has already worked for up to two years and might now be in the position of having enough service to qualify for a wide range of employment rights".

The Tories obsession with denying people job security means they will sack good, proven staffrather than allow them basic legal rights. Hurrah for free enterprise!

THAT'S CAPITALISM

358 billionaires in the world have a net worth of \$760 billion, equal to the wealth of 45% of the world's population. The 200 largest multinational corporations control over 25% of the planet's economic activity. Meanwhile, according to the international Labour Organisation, 30% of the planet's workforce - 820 million people - are either underemployed or unemployed.

Bernie Cahill, executive chairperson of Aer Lingus, presided over joblosses and wage freezes in the national airline. He hammered his message home; nobody should expect a steady job or a reasonable wage. Of course such rules don't apply to him. As well as his Aer Lingus job, he is the chairman of Larry Goodman's massive Irish Food Processors and has gone for the hatrick by also being chairman of Greencore, the state sugar company.

Right in the centre of the "free world" state labour inspectors reported earlier this year that they had found over 2,000 sweatshops in New York City. Mostly exploiting non-English speaking and illegal immigrant workers, the average pay was £1.67 per hour for a 12 hour day. No overtime is paid, underage plans to add to the just 20 inspectors employed to investigate, nor to increase the maximum fines of £1,000 (first offence)/£2,000 (subsequent offences) for employing 'off-the-books' workers in these near slavery conditions.

Children in Dublin's Inner City have to wait up to six years for some dental treatments, according to the Inner City Teachers Group. They revealed that one 12 year old found by the school dental service to need braces was told limited to the 3% PCW increase. that there is a six year waiting list and that he would be 18 before he gets them. The teachers group complained that there are also six year waiting lists for children needing treatment for cleft palates.

The School of the Americas (SOA) is the unlikely name given to a military training academy set up by the US

government in 1946 to "promote democracy in the Americas". Since that time 'graduates' from the academy have played brutal havoc with the human rights of people throughout south and central America. One example deserves mention. The UN sponsored Truth Commission, which looked into atrocities carried out in El Salvador during the civil war there, found:

· Romero assassination: two of the three officers cited as being ringleaders were graduates of SOA

· El Mozote massacre of Salvadoran civilians: of twelve officers cited, ten were from the SOA

· Massacre of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter: of 27 officers cited, 19 were from the SOA

Allied Irish Bank gave its five executive directors a 35% pay increase. Each of themearned an average of £626,000 last year. These are the people who refused to pay bank staff their 6.5% claim three years ago and tried to break their union, the Irish Bank Officials Association.

Raoul Cedras, formerly of Haiti, has moved to a beach home in Panama courtesy of the US government. The former dictator will have his rent paid labour is common. Fire exits are often by them for the next year. After that padlocked and sprinkler systems Cedras will have to fend for himself. But unmaintained. The authorities have no to make things easy, the US government is freeing the assets he stole and siphoned off to the USA during his period of power in Haiti. Who says crime

No recession for the directors of Cement Roadstone, which has recorded a pretax profit of £116 million (up 52%). Last year they were paid an average £532,664 each, an increase of almost 48%. Of course none of their staff got rises like that. The people who do the work were



The Censorship of Abortion Information Act, 1995

IN THE AUTUMN of 1992, the people of Ireland voted to legalise abortion information. More than two years later, the government has finally passed an Act to 'regulate' this information. Ray Cunningham examines

Even though a clear majority (60%) voted in favour of abortion information, the legal position on the distribution of this information remained confused. Counselling services and information groups, fearful of being taken to court, erred on the side of caution when it came to abortion, and so the news that a Bill was being introduced was welcomed in many quarters. At last, the threat of injunction would be lifted. As the Bill was published, however, it became clear that it was more restrictive than many could have imagined.

Conditions

Some of the conditions were expected, and had been part of Brendan Howlin's widely leaked draft Bill in 1994. Bans on the advertising of abortion services, and the distribution of unsolicited information (eg., through posters and leaflets) were however, goes much further.

women with these clinics. This means received very little coverage.

that important medical information may not be directly passed on from the doctor right-wing Catholics. It was pointed out to the clinic, with possibly dangerous that, outside of Dublin, there are very few consequences. This intrusion into the pregnancy counselling services, but this is doctor/patient relationship is backed up to be remedied. With the only counselling with Gardas powers of search and seizure requirement in the Bill being that and criminal penalties for breaking the abortion is not advocated, funding is likely law (previously, only a civil injunction to be approved for Cura, a Catholic anticould be used) in case any doctor is foolish abortion counselling service, to train their enough to think that the health and counsellors and provide a national welfare of his/her patients is more service. At least they have plenty of important than Des Hanafin's Catholic practice in not advocating abortion!

The reasoning behind this legislative doublethink is very simple - there aren't

WOMENS INFORMATION NETWORK

for non-directive pregnancy counselling on all the options. including abortion:

phone 01-679 4700.

predictable: Though often covered by other any votes in abortion. Politicians know laws, like the Litter Act, no political party that, apart from the relatively small groups wants to be seen as 'soft' on abortion, and at opposite ends of the pro-choice/antithese bans gave them some cover from the abortion spectrum, few people regard it as course, the fact that in 1992, people voted anti-abortion groups. The Noonan Bill, an important issue. Generally, all that is required is that they be seen to be neutral, Doctors will be allowed to give and they will be praised for their stateswomen the addresses and phone numbers manlike qualities. In reality, they are far of clinics in Britain, in the context of from neutral. The very publication of this counselling, but they will not be able make Bill was seen as a boost for the progressive an appointment or other arrangement for agenda, but its draconian measures

Noonan is set to further appease

Democracy?

Noonan shouldn't be singled out, though. All politicians have become very skilled at not dealing with things. Not dealing with divorce, not dealing with contraception, not dealing, in fact, with anything that might offend those fabled 'grassroots'. It has reached the point where Maire Geogehan-Quinn is praised for her "courage" in legalising homosexuality five years after the European Court ordered it! The wait for abortion in Ireland will be even longer, at least if we wait passively for the government to do anything. Since the 1992 Supreme Court

ruling in the 'X' case that, in certain circumstances, abortion was legal in Ireland, the political parties have been praying desperately that everyone will just forget about it because they know that, on that issue at least, they can't please everybody-either abortion is legal, in whatever circumstances, or it isn't there is no middle ground to find. Of against rolling back the Supreme Court judgement, and said that the threat of suicide was sufficient grounds to have an abortion, gives us more than an inkling as to the wishes of the people. Having a government that respected the wishes of the people, though, is too crazy a thought to be taken seriously.

Strike victory store

AT A TIME of increasing attacks on workers' rights and conditions throughout both the public and private sectors, it is refreshing to report a victory for a group of workers who had the guts to stand up to their boss's intimidatory tactics. On Friday February 17th, following a 3-week strike in defence of a colleague who had been unfairly dismissed, eight MANDATE (shop & bar workers trade union) members at Knightingales store in Dublin's ILAC Centre returned to work victorious.

With management refusing to even talk to the union at the outset of the strike, the workers faced an uphill battle. However their determination and the tremendous solidarity shown by other shopworkers in the city centre and by the general public forced the re-instatement of the sacked worker. In addition management was forced to concede union recognition and to recognise that issues such as working hours, conditions and low pay need to be addressed.

These workers have shown the way in which unscrupulous bosses must be tackled. In the coming weeks and months as they follow up this victory with negotiations to improve their working conditions, they will need the full backing of their union and of fellow

The strike at Knightingales has served yet again to highlight the deplorable wages and conditions endured by thousands of workers employed in the services sector. Trade union leaders would be better employed backing their members in a vigorous fight against such exploitation instead of stitching up workers through "rationalisation" plans, redundancy deals, national programmes and the like - all of which are designed to break union organisation and increase exploitation.

The Workers Solidarity Movement wish to extend hearty congratulations to the Knightingales



· Workers Solidarity Movement on the march for abortion information and a womans right to choose

Irish building workers ripped-off in Germany

THOUSANDS OF IRISH building workers have gone to work in Germany over the last few years. proceeds, German contractors are increasingly turning to foreign workers. They want foreign workers because they are cheaper, unorganised and easier to push around. Some are beginning to fight back.

Spanish building workers at the 'Bonum-Immobilien' near Berlin worked before striking on August 3rd of last year. These workers were employed by Levant,

Sturm. The workers signed contracts with Levant for DM26 per hour (skilled German building workers average DM65 As European integration per hour), which then sold their services for DM40 per hour and kept the difference. Agencies such as this do not pay social insurance or taxes, claiming

that the customer was dissatisfied with the work. The Spanish builders were left with just enough money to pay for their for several weeks without getting paid digs. Such disputes are becoming more

The Portuguese firm SOMEC got a Dutch temporary employment agency, a contract for the Friedrichstadtwhich rented them to contractor Wolfgang Passagan in Berlin's city centre. 200

Some people are doing all right

Bosses Get

- Highest Growth Rate
- Highest Productivity

- Workers Get Shortest Holidays
 - Second Longest Working Hours and

encourages a bully.

Thanks, you're fired!

by 11.2%.

employments.

employers.

Cut hours, not jobs

• Highest Long Term Unemployment

Yet we are told that we must

After all the sacrifices, all the

keep making sacrifices to become more

"competitive". We are expected to put up

with wage restraint, redundancies,

de-skilling, and worsening conditions. The

more we give the bosses the more they

demand. Showing weakness only

years of wage restraint/no-strike deals

(PNR, PESP, PCW), all the "rationalisa-

be happy. Ireland has the fastest growing

economy in Europe, productivity shot up

by a massive 50% between 1987 and 1993.

Ireland broke all previous EU records

closures, threats and management

Silverlea, Sunbeam, TEAM, Dunnes

Stores and a multitude of other

of work for more than one year (the official

definition of long term unemployment),

Ireland has condemned a higher

proportion of its workers to a poverty line

existence than any of the other 23

countries in the OECD. At the same time

the economy is doing very well for most

In Ireland we work an average 53 hours

longer in a year than the EC average.

Even if only those extra hours worked by

With 50% of the unemployed out

when industrial output in 1994 increased

ions", all the cutbacks, the bosses should

IRISH WORKERS enjoy fewer holidays than anyone else in the European Union, work longer hours than workers anywhere else apart from Britain, and suffer the highest rate of long term unemployment in the countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development (OECD).

Annual Working Hours

Belgium 1,692.26

	-,
Italy	1,744.05
Denmark	1,746.00
Germany	1,746.80
Luxemburg	1,770.62
France	1,774.59
Netherlands	1,792.70
Spain	1,802.64
Greece	1,822.50
Portugal	1,858.50
Ireland	1,866.48
Britain 1,987.72	

Source: Eurostat 1/95, Working Time in

that the workers are "self-employed". The strike ended when the company paid a portion of the back wages. It refused to pay the balance on the grounds

Portuguese worked twelve

hours a day, six days a week.

SOMEC has 12,000

Portuguese workers on sites

in Germany. They get

DM2500 for a six day week

which includes many hours

overtime. A worker with a

German passport would get

twenty of these workers went

on hunger strike in Leipzig

In September,

container. They worked a six day week,

fifteen hours a day, for DM20 per hour.

Last July, Italian workers blocked a crane

in Pankow to demand payment of their

wages. Three months later, two more

cranes were blocked by English workers

demanding payment of their wages.

up to DM6,000.

There are more than 6,000 Irish and English building workers in Berlin at the moment. Many were hired through Dutch agencies. Workers often are not paid, as subcontractors disappear with their pay packets. The workers thought they would be earning good money but backsliding and stop the job where bosses find they have to work 60 or 70 hours a are ripping people off. week to get it.

both the employer who hires workers, and Workers Newsletter

"It's an emergency Doc ... They need the

drill right away

because they had not been paid. They the workers who have to pay part of their lived in miserable conditions, three to a hourly wage as commission. Many agencies are not registered and operate illegally or just refuse to pay wages, leaving workers to survive on their own

> Many workers end up living out of their cars or the so-called "cockroach" hotels. Every month between 100 and 200 Irish and British workers turn up at their consulates without money or a return ticket home. This is what the "free market" means, the bosses are free to do whatever they can get away with. The way to stop them is organisation, joining a trade union and creating building workers' committees to stop the unions

The employment agencies charge Sources: Industrial Worker and Building

the 200,000 industrial employees were distributed among the unemployed there would be 10,600,000 additional work hours available each year. At the average 1,813 hours worked in the EU this would mean almost 6,000 new jobs.

Irish workers produce all the country's wealth. We should seek to win further reductions in the working week, without any loss of pay. Ultimately, however, we will be stuck with the contradiction of a rich economy but a poor workforce until we get rid of the present system and set about reorganising society in the interests of the great majority. Anything less than that combination of socialism, freedom and workers' control (what we call anarchism) will leave our living standards at the mercy of employers and state bureaucrats. The reality of capitalism is the best argument for its abolition.

Joe King

And what about the workers? In payment 600 Northern Bank staff in the six counties we got nothing unless you count yet more are to have their pay cut by up to £5,000 a year. The IBOA has described the cuts as aggression like has happened at "outrageous at a time when the bank is showing such strong profitability"

Total Annual & Public Holidays

Comonu	40 days
Germany	40 days
Belgium	38.5 days
Spain	38 days
Luxemburg	37 days
France	36.5 days
Greece	35 days
Denmark	35 days
Portugal	35 days
Italy	33.5 days
Netherlands	32.5 days
Britain	31 days
Ireland	29 days

Source: Dept. of Enterprise & Employment, Holiday Legislation Discussion Document

THE FACTS... AND NOTHING BUT THE FACTS

In 1960 the richest 20% of the world's population owned 30% of the wealth, today they own 60%. The annual income of the bottom 50% of the world's population totals £815 billion. That is exactly equal to the amount spent each year on arms, 86% of which are supplied by Britain, the USA, France, Germany and Russia.

Frank Wallace takes a look at the state's continuing reliance on charities to provide essential services

Handouts or Rights?

IRELAND IS ONE of the thirty richest countries in the world. At the same time, 20% of the population live below the poverty line. The Combat Poverty Agency says that "disparities are widening and will continue to do so in the years ahead". Yet, instead of providing money to deal adequately with the problems of poverty, for example; drug addiction, homelessness and unemployment, the State gives tax amnesties to the rich, and puts up over £200 million for Larry Goodman.

The material desires of most people - for example a job and a good standard of living, are not provided for. We have no 'right' to these things. We are given a welfare system which does not provide a basic minimum for a decent lifestyle, and we have to turn to charities to fill in the

Charities

AW WE

providing these services itself.

The ordinary citizen volunteers

month, amounting to roughly £246 Ireland.

the time and money. Most adults in

million donated each year. And people

carers, looking after people who are

severely sick and helpless, but who are not

given hospital beds. A typical carer is a

housewife looking after one of her

relatives, "in many cases, on call 24 hours

The work that carers have to do in Ireland,

with a high physical and emotional

burden, highlights one problem of leaving

individuals with large responsibilities

there are other problems. The voluntary

the voluntary sector responsible for doing services.

But aside from leaving

Insecurity and Competition

a day, 7 days a week".

vital social work.

devote large amounts of time as well.

And the gap between what people need and what they get is big. There are over 3,700 charities in Ireland, trying to deal with just about every disadvantaged sector in society; from Health and Education to Travellers, women, and children. They all do essential and valuable work. But they are only necessary because the state is not

and money. If that time and money is not forthcoming, then the charity folds.

Competition is also a problem that charities have to deal with. People have only so much to give, so charities have to compete with each other for

National Lottery

• Parernts and friends appealing outside the Labour Party conference for necessary

facilities instead of heartless cutbacks

Take carers, for example. still too soon to determine what long term

less money to Women's Aid or less money

to the Irish Red Cross. Why should any of

Since the introduction of the National Lottery, donations to charities have

sector is by its nature insecure. It is reliant on volunteers to put in the time

Even voluntary services which receive State donations are not safe. The "Rape Crisis Centre" in Dublin, has nearly collapsed on several occasions due to lack of government funds.

decreased. And the National Lottery,

protests. The local SIPTU are asking for a detailed statement of who

will have the right which gives nearly £100 million to various any inquiry into causes, has recently expressed fears that staff or student the new British Lottery will take away behaviour, whereit Ireland give to charity more than once a some of its customers in Northern is not directly

But, as the

According to the National Carer's effect the UK games will have on our sales". Association, there are roughly 100,000 Loss of customers means less money to the charities which are dependent on its This has direct results. The National Lottery gives one third of its takings to the Department of Health and Welfare. It could mean fewer hospital beds,

Full-time staffget a pension equal

Summer 1995 Workers Solidarity Page 5

grant for Libraries, we are expected to be grateful instead of regarding it as a right.

Is this the way the state should treat our disadvantaged? Money should be spent on eliminating poverty and providing decent jobs for all. The reliance on the voluntary sector to provide essential services should be eliminated. We deserve rights not charity.

Capitalism, with its "free market" and division of society into exploiters and exploited, can not guarantee such 'rights'. A combination of charity and campaigning for more funding, at the expense of the rich, can bring some small but very real improvements in the lives of the poor.

The elimination of poverty, however, requires the replacement of the present system by one where production is organised to satisfy the needs of the many instead of the profit lust of the few. Then mutual aid will do away with the need for charity.

TRINITY COLLEGE SIPTU

a service. The service is not guaranteed, it

could end due to lack of funds, lack of

support, or it could be out competed by

When we say that organisations such as

the Irish Wheelchair Association or St

Vincent de Paul have a voluntary status,

it is another way of saying that we do not

have the guaranteed right for such

services to exist. We should be lucky that

they exist. When the National Lottery

gives money for hospital building or a

another, equally deserving cause.

Rights not Charity

Spy cameras, worthless pensions and censorship

BIG BROTHER

SPY CAMERAS and pensions that give you no money were on the agenda when the SIPTU members in Trinity College met for their annual general meeting in March. The college management want to installeight'security'cameras on the campus, with a possible 24 more to be added in future.

Security guards fear that jobs will be replaced by electronic surveillance. Management denials are not believed given that six vacancies have been left unfilled. Just 23 staff are expected to cover the city centre campus around the clock. An additional fear is that staff could be spied upon, as could student

to monitor the cameras, who will have access to the recordings, and on what terms. They are looking for formal guarantees that the recordings can not be used in concerned with a To quote John Hynes, the crime. Chairman of the National Lottery, "It is

union newsletter says, "even with a

lot of written guarantees and procedures in place, there is no getting away from the uncomfortable reality that the cameras would mean that 'big brother' is watching

Pension ..less than a pittance

these causes suffer at the whim of the to two thirds of salary. Part-time staffget planned for 1997. Oppositionists within consumer? The only way to avoid it is by nothing. A claim for the same pension the union should start identifying the worst guaranteeing the right to funding for these rights in proportion to the hours worked rules and begin encouraging their has been on the table for years. branches to discuss what rules we want in Anditis 'rights' which is the crux Management, in keeping with government what is supposed to be our union. of the whole problem with charities. The policy, want to 'co-ordinate' pensions. This existence of a charity to provide a service, means that the value of the social welfare means that it is not a 'right' to receive such old age pension is subtracted from the

workplace pension. For part-time staff this will mean getting absolutely zero from Trinity after a lifetime of work as a cleaner, secretary or catering assistant.

A one-day warning strike for part-time pension rights last year was well supported, not only by SIPTU but also by other unions and even some nonunion staff. If proper pensions are not granted the mood is for a serious fight.

No debate without permission A motion to the meeting condemning the Industrial Relations Act and calling for a campaign to repeal it was proposed by the local union President, Jim Larragy, and seconded by WSM member Alan

> MacSimóin. While expressing his agreement with the spirit of the motion, Education branch president Jack McGinley quoted rule 62 of SIPTU which prevents a local section from even discussing an issue not directly related to their workplace unless they ask permission first! The meeting was then asked to vote on whether to vote on the motion. Amidst a lot of confusion the meeting narrowly voted to obey the rule book's censorship.

When SIPTU was formed through a merger of the ITGWU and the FWUI we were stitched up when we were given a ready made rule book that members had no input into. The only choice we had was to accept it in its entirety or to reject it, which would have made it impossible for the union to function or even legally exist.

A rules revision conference is

SIPTU member, TCD



Putting the record straight on Ireland's famine, 1845-49 Why 1,000,000 died

The Famine was not just Government incompetence or the greed of a few landlords. Andrew Blackmore explores what happens when you have a system that puts profits for the few above all else.

THE CONDITIONS for Irish peasants leading up to the famine accentuated what was to be the worst disaster in Europe in the 19th century. Before the famine struck nearly half of rural families lived in windowless, mud cabins of one wanted. room. They were the lucky ones.

The unemployed roamed the country, begging and sleeping in ditches.

population of 8 million, land was scarce, and many families had to survive on half an acre of land. They could only do this by growing potatoes to feed them through the winter

months. When potato blight (a type of fungus) struck in 1845, mass starvation was inevitable. Families who relied on the potato to keep them alive were left with

nothing. Even those who grew grain or sell the food in order to pay the rent, or eat the food and be evicted.

As the years went on, the blight continued. Millions lost everything, their homes, their few possessions, and

of course, their lives. The rich too had to tighten continued as before in a lively fashion. everything else. With the exception of a few notable cases, the rich felt their only obligation was to make a donation to charity. After that they were free to hunt and party, as they always had done. Lord complained that what had made him people. poorly was not the famine but too much

make valuable cash through the export of foodstuffs such as grain, as well as wool and flax. All through the famine they were exporting food that could have kept people alive. John Mitchell (who published the United Irishman) claimed that for every ship that came to Ireland with food, there were six ships

As far as landlords were concerned they had the right to do so. The right of the rich few to sell food to the highest bidder, came before the needs of the majority for food for survival. And the right of the rich to collect rent came before the right to housing. The British government supported that 'right' by bringing in the 'Coercion Act' enabling it to declare martial law, and a curfew between sunset and sunrise wherever they

The 'Coercion Act' and other previously existing laws were used to evict tenants who

could not pay rent. The soldiers and constabulary were used to protect food for export from the

In order to avoid mass revolt the government set up public works schemes. Impoverished peasants were asked to build roads that went from nowhere nowhere, for such low wages that they could hardly buy enough food to live

Sir Charles Trevelyan (right) was the administrator of government relief. A on. Even this good mid-Victorian, sure of his 'values', his great concern was that work was not the industry and self-reliance of available for many people dying of hunger should not be people. sapped by free food hand-outs. example, in Mayo in Limited relief was given for such work 1846, 400,000 as road repairing. Afterwards people applied for Trevelyan believed that he had erred 13,000 jobs.

on the side of mercy and that "too Along with much" was done for the starving such a pathetic response, the government pushed

much of the responbarley were faced with a stark choice; sibility to feed the poor onto the shoulders of charities. Soup kitchens were set up, by religious groups and charities throughout Ireland. In some cases the soup was so watery that doctors would advise people not to drink

Even if the charities had been their belts. But not as much. In 1847, able to feed everyone that was not the while the famine reached a peak of point. The right of people to food and the death and despair, the Dublin 'season' right to life should have come before

The famine caused roughly 1,000,000 deaths and 1,500,000 emigrants. In the aftermath, the population of Ireland was to halve to 4,000,000. It is an example of a terrible Bessborough, the Lord Lieutenant of tragedy, but one that is inevitable only Ireland, who died in that year when the profit motive comes before

TODAY IT IS just another bank holiday. Not many people know why May Day became International Workers Day and why we should still celebrate it. One more piece of our history which has been hidden from us.

It all began over a century ago when the indeterminate number. American Federation of Labour adopted an historic resolution which asserted that "eight hours shall constitute a legal day's labour from and after May 1st, 1886".

In the months prior to this date workers in their thousands were drawn into the struggle for the shorter day. Skilled and unskilled, black and white, men and women, native and immigrant were all becoming involved.

Chicago

In Chicago alone 400,000 were out on strike. A newspaper of that city reported that "no smoke curled up from the tall chimneys of the factories and mills, and things had assumed a Sabbath-like present from the beginning of the appearance". This was the main centre of meeting, concluded that "nothing looked the agitation, and here the anarchists were in the forefront of the labour movement. It was to no small extent due to their activities that Chicago became an outstanding trade union centre and made the biggest contribution to the eight-hour

When on May 1st 1886, the eight hour strikes convulsed that city, one half people remained in the square. Suddenly of the workforce at the McCormick a police column of 180 men, headed by Harvester Co. came out. Two days later a Bonfield, moved in and ordered the people mass meeting was held by 6,000 members to disperse immediately. Fielden of the 'lumber shovers' union who had also come out. The meeting was held only a block from the McCormick plant and was Bomb joined by some 500 of the strikers from At this moment a bomb was thrown into

The workers listened to a speech

Outraged by the brutal assaults he had witnessed, Spies went to the office of the Arbeiter-Zeitung (a daily anarchist newspaper for German immigrant workers) and composed a circular calling on the workers of Chicago to attend a protest meeting the following night.

The protest meeting took place in the Haymarket Square and was addressed by Spies and two other anarchists active in the trade union movement, Albert Parsons and Samuel Fielden.

The police attack

Throughout the speeches the crowd was orderly. Mayor Carter Harrison, who was likely to happen to require police interference". He advised police captain John Bonfield of this and suggested that the large force of police reservists waiting at the station house be sent home.

It was close to ten in the evening when Fielden was closing the meeting. It was raining heavily and only about 200 protested "we are peaceable".

the ranks of the police. It killed one, fatally wounded six more and injured about

The last statement of Albert Parsons

"The anarchists are the advance guard in the impending social revolution. They have discovered the cause of the world-wide discontent which is felt but not yet understood by the tolling millions as a whole. The effort now being made by organised and unorganised labour in all countries to participate in the making of laws which they are forced to obey will lay bare to them the secret source of their enslavement by capital. Capital is a thing-it is property. Capital is the stored up, accumulated savings of past labour, such as machinery, houses, food, clothing, all the means of production (both natural and artificial), of trasportation, and communication - in short the resources of life, the means of subsistence. These things are, in a natural state, the common heritage of all for the free use of all, and they were so held until their forcible seizure and appropriation by a few. Thus the common heritage of all seized by violence and fraud, was afterwards made the property - capital - of the usurpers, who erected a government and enacted laws to perpetuate and maintain their special privileges." from the Knights of Labor newspaper, October 16th 1886

by the anarchist August Spies, who has been asked to address the meeting by the Central Labour Union. While Spies was speaking, urging the workers to stand together and not give in to the bosses, the strikebreakers were beginning to leave the nearby McCormick plant.

The strikers, aided by the 'lumbershovers' marched down the street and forced the scabs back into the factory. Suddenly a force of 200 police arrived and, without any warning, attacked the crowd with clubs and revolvers. They killed at least one striker, seriously wounded five or six others and injured an

seventy others. The police opened fire on the spectators. How many were wounded or killed by the police bullets was never exactly ascertained.

A reign of terror swept over Chicago. The press and the pulpit called for revenge, insisting the bomb was the work of socialists and anarchists. Meeting halls, union offices, printing works and private homes were raided. All known socialists and anarchists were rounded up. Even many individuals ignorant of the meaning of socialism and anarchism were arrested and tortured. "Make the raids first and look up the law afterwards"

The authorities has believed at the time of the trial that such persecution would break the back of the eight-hour was the public statement of Julius Grinnell, the state's attorney. for being "accessories to murder". They movement. Indeed, evidence later came were Spies, Fielden, Parsons, and five to light that the bomb may have been other anarchists who were influential in thrown by a police agent working for the labour movement, Adolph Fischer, George Engel, Michael Schwab, Louis

Lingg and Oscar Neebe. The trial opened on June 21st 1886 in the criminal court of Cooke County. The candidates for the jury were not names from a box. In this case a special you can stamp out the labour movement. not allowed to present evidence that the opinion, then hang special bailiff had publicly claimed "I am us! Here you will managing this case and I know what I am tread on a spark, about. These fellows are going to be hanged as certain as death".

Rigged jury The eventual composition of the jury was farcical; being made up of businessmen, their clerks and a relative of one of the fire. You cannot dead policemen. No proof was offered by put it out". the state that any of the eight men before the court had thrown the bomb, had been Revolutionary connected with its throwing, or had even politics approved of such acts. In fact, only three of the eight had been in Haymarket Square

No evidence was offered that any after that first of the speakers had incited violence, May indeed in his evidence at the trial Mayor Harrison described the speeches as "tame". No proof was offered that any violence had are we? We stroll been contemplated. In fact, Parsons had though town with brought his two small children to the our union banners

That the eight were on trial for their of head office. anarchist beliefs and trade union Then we stand activities was made clear from the outset. around listening The trial closed as it had opened, as was to boring (and witnessed by the final words of Attorney usually pretty Grinnell's summation speech to the jury. meaningless) "Lawison trial. Anarchy ison trial. These speeches by men have been selected, picked out by the equally boring Grand Jury, and indicted because they union bureauwere leaders. There are no more guilty crats. You have to than the thousands who follow them. keep reminding Gentlemen of the jury; convict these men, yourself that May make examples of them, hang them and Day was once a you save our institutions, our society." day when workers

On August 19th seven of the all over the world defendants were sentenced to death, and displayed their Neebe to 15 years in prison. After a strength, promassive international campaign for their claimed their release, the state 'compromised' and com- ideals and muted the sentences of Schwab and celebrated their Fielden to life imprisonment. Lingg successes. cheated the hangman by committing suicide in his cell the day before the important that executions. On November 11th 1887 Parsons, Engel, Spies and Fischer were it was like that.

Pardoned

600,000 working people turned out for their funeral. The campaign to free Neebe, Schwab and Fielden continued.

On June 26th 1893 Governor bosses, no more Altgeld set them free. He made it clear he PCWs. Defiance was not granting the pardon because he of the Industrial thought the men had suffered enough, but Relations Act, not because they were innocent of the crime passively giving for which they had been tried. They and uplike SIPTU did the hanged men had ben the victims of at Nolans. Real "hysteria, packed juries and a biased solidarity with

would break the back of the eight-hour Captain Bonfield, as part of a conspiracy involving certain steel bosses to discredit the labour movement.

The anarchist origins

When Spies addressed the court after he had been sentenced to die, he was confident that this conspiracy would not chosen in the usual manner of drawing succeed. "If you think that by hanging us bailiff, nominated by state's attorney the movement from which the downtrod-Grinnell, was appointed by the court to den millions, the millions who toil in misery select the candidates. The defence was and want, expect salvation - if this is your

> but there and there, behind youand in front of you, and everywhere, flames blaze up. It is a subterranean

One

hundred and nine years after years demonstration in Chicago, where - about the only day of the year we can get them out

"once upon a time" We can doit again. We need independent working class politics. No collaboration with government and fellow workers in

struggle, not a blinkered sectional choose to do without rulers. A real make work for the unemployed.

That means politics that can lead us workplace and community councils. A towards a genuine socialism where society where production is to satisfy needs, freedom knows no limit other than not not to make profits for a privileged few. interfering with the freedom of others. A Anarchism. socialism that is based on real democracy - not the present charade where we can choose some of our rulers, but may not

outlook. We still need a further reduction democracy where everyone effected by a in working hours, without loss of pay, to decision will have the opportunity to have their say in making that decision. A We need revolutionary politics. democracy of efficiently co-ordinated

Alan MacSimóin



FLORENCE has to be one of the most beautiful cites in Italy if not in the world. Nestled in a Tuscan valley it lies half way between Milan and Rome. Thanks to the hospitality of some friends in the Anarchist Movement of Florence (MAF) three members of the Workers Solidarity Movement were recently able to visit this city. During the week we spent there we were able to meet with many anarchists, and get a taste of Italian radical culture.

On the Friday night that we were arrived deserted factory with some great graffiti heard while one amorous couple got to learnt more about each others'

activities and current situations. The questions we were asked ranged from the Irish government's current relationship with Sinn Féin to the possibilities for increased class struggle with the cease-fire? We were also asked for our views on the Internet and the attempts by the US government to have some control over it.

COBAS

We found out about the Cobas, which is a loose umbrella group of unofficial trade unions. They grew from broad disaffection with the official trade unions in 1987-88, initially in the railway, education and health sectors. In 1991 they went on to organise

what by now has become a famous one day about 300 young people, loud music and general strike against the Gulf War. It about 12 dogs! was fascinating to talk to someone who was involved in this movement. The talks went on until the early hours. A great deal of thanks must go to our tired translators on that night.

The Social Centres

On Saturday night we were taken on a whirlwind tour of the various social centres which exist in Florence. These Centres of young people simply drinking and are all in occupied buildings and operated inhaling. There were some political books by various groups with different political and pamphlets on display along with agendas. The local councils have kicked bootleg tapes of concerts. out people from these squats but they do not seem to do it with any great persistence.

The first Social Centre I visited in the south of the city. Here a concert had was the 'Autonomist', centre which had a just finished and hugely loud rock music famous rock group playing. The gig itself was being played by a very lively DJ. was free although you were asked to There was a bar and, as in all the Centres, contribute some small amount of money the drink was cheap. Young people sat at the door. Outside it looked like a around and shouted at each other to be

in Florence the MAF organised a meal and on the walls. Inside you had a bar serving know each other better. On the walls an informal question and answer session draught beer, a great sound system, a there was the flag of Cuba, the hammer in their headquarters. Apres the separate area for art, design and street beautiful food and some glasses of wine we theatre props. The place was alive with anti-imperialist struggle from Palestine

AUTOGESTIONE E LOTTA

Some of the many Italian anarchist papers

used by the Greens, anarchists, and people

who campaign for the rights of American

Indians (as some Italian company is trying

to build an observatory over their lands).

There weren't as many people here but

there was still a live rap band, a gallery

displaying some interesting art and a lot

The Blues Brothers, Che and me

Next up we went to a house/villa

to Guatemala. Upon this scene of late night/early morning revelry the handsome features of the Che Guevara, coupled with the Blues Brothers looked down from the walls. I wondered what Che would make of it all?

and sickle (naturally) and posters for every

The Social Centres were a great experience to see in operation. Coming from a country that brings the law down on your head with furious vengeance should you dare think of occupying unused buildings, l was impressed at the new breath of life these places had. I can think of many buildings in Dublin that could be used in this way. The Centres provides a place where young people can go and not be told how to dress or be charged exorbitant money for

drink. Politics don't seem to get debated on Saturday nights (if it gets debated at all, I cannot say). Importantly, the Centres on the edge of the public park which was provide a place where you know there exists a culture which is at least anti-

Anarchists in the unions

On Sunday we met with

Red & Black Revolution a new magazine of anarchist information and debate

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anarchists active in the CGIL (a major union federation) who are in official trade union in Education. They see getting anarchists elected as shop stewards as important in an attempt to deal with the heavy bureaucracy which exists within the official trade unions. They too are faced with big unions who have a leadership completely divorced from the issues affecting the ordinary member. Their aim is to build a rank and file

Gratzi, heres to the future

So after a week of sunshine, art, culture and politics we returned to Ireland. We were treated with great hospitality and shown warm friendship, especially by the comrades of the MAF. I returned hopeful, knowing that the passion for true freedom and anarchy burns not only in some Irish hearts but also in the hearts of friends in Florence.

Charlie Parker

The Land Finally, we went to a Leninist Social Centre

USLABOUR Secretary, Robert Reich, recently told an international gathering that sanctions should be enforced against only the very worst violators of workers rights. This means countries that rely on prison labour, suppress independent unions, or use force to break strikes.

The US fails even this relaxed standard. The economy increasingly uses prison labour (such as making furniture, processing airline and hotel reservations, and doing outsourced clerical work for wages ranging from \$1 to \$10 a day).

The government routinely suppresses strikes (airline attendants, railroad workers and teachers have all been ordered back to work by government decree in recent months). A growing number of US unions operate under court-appointed

Source: Libertarian Labour Keview



Obituary

George Woodcock

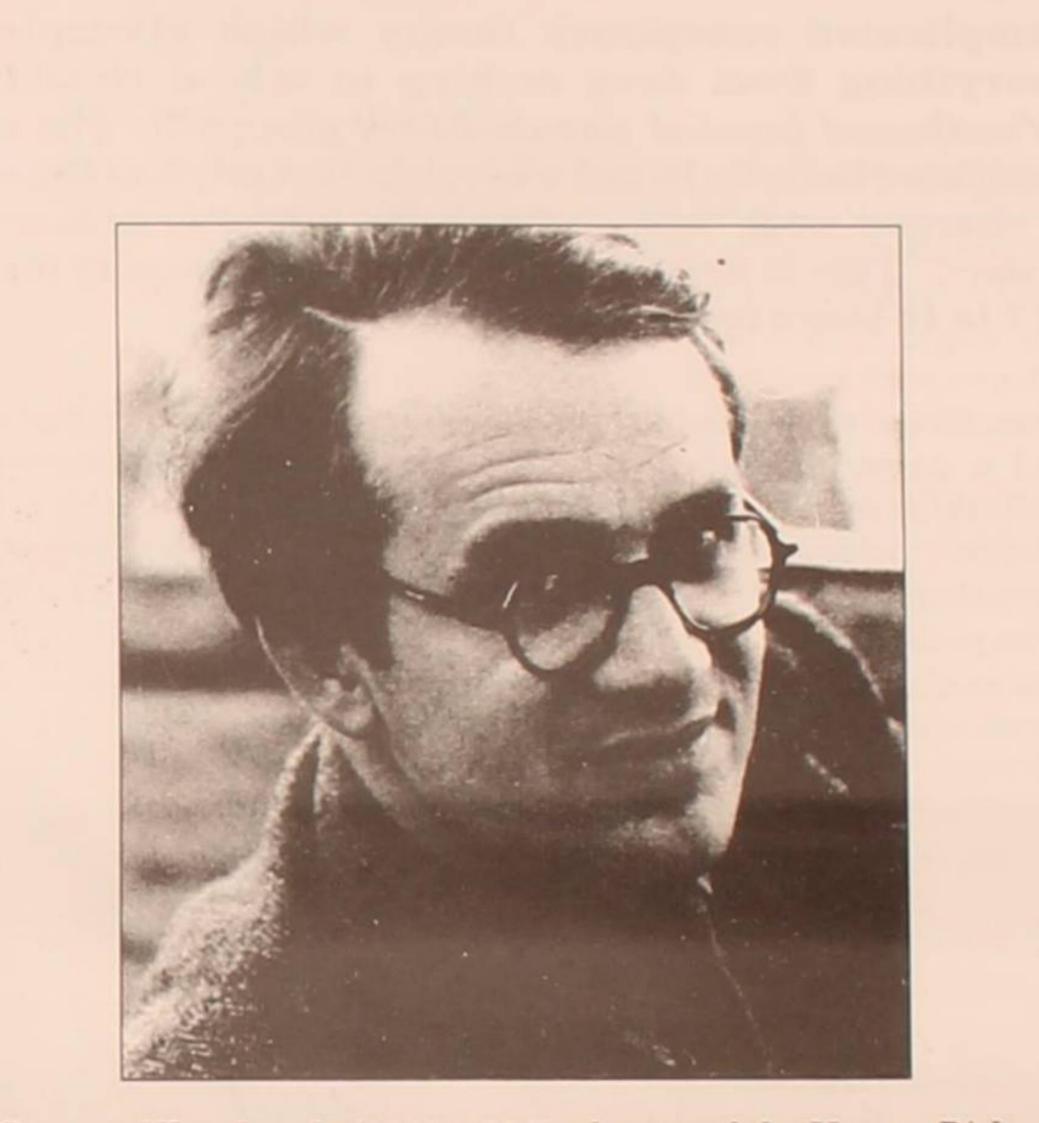
GEORGE WOODCOCK, author of two well known and widely available books on anarchism - Anarchism and The Anarchist Reader - has died, aged 82. Born in Winnipeg, Canada on May 8th, 1912 his life spanned some of the highest and lowest moments of the movement he came to chronicle. He first became active in Anarchist politics in the 1930s when his family returned to England from Canada to escape poverty. For a long period he was editor of the anti-war paper, War Commentary and the anarchist newspaper, Freedom.

His political involvement in the years leading up the Second World War chism, which coincided with the great achievements of was first pubthe Spanish anarchist movement in 1936- lished in 1962, 37. Woodcock, like most of his contempo- has raries - George Orwell and Herbert Read criticised, among others - sought to raise awareness rightly, for it's of the revolution in Spain and of what was emphasis on being achieved by the Spanish working anarchism as a class against great odds. He was a firm movement of the believer in the working class's ability to past. Reflecting reorganise society along fundamentally on the period in democratic and egalitarian lines. The which he had defeat of the Spanish anarchist move- lived, Woodcock

ment came, accordingly, as a bitter blow. wrongly saw the Even so, Woodcock's own passing of support for anarchism and the anarchist anarchism as a idea continued. While his contribution to mass working other areas grew on his return to Canada, class force as an most notably creative writing, he irreversible remained, nonetheless, committed to feature of encouraging a better understanding of modern political what anarchism stood for and its life. His later continuing relevance to movements for contributions social change. For a long period his two impressed best known books were the only compre- anarchism's hensive guides widely available about relevance on anarchism in the English language, and areas such as for this reason alone he will be ecology and remembered.

is a book which will stand the test of time. Emphasising the theory and practice of anarchism, it draws on an array of people associated with anarchism over the years, giving a comprehensive and accessible introduction to the breadth and relevance of anarchist ideas. Noting the revival of interest in anarchism since the 1960s, Woodcock wrote in his introduction "Anarchism, in summary, is a phoenix in an awakening desert, an idea that has revived for the only reason ideas revive that they respond to some need felt deeply by people". George Woodcock died on January 28th, 1995 aged eighty two.

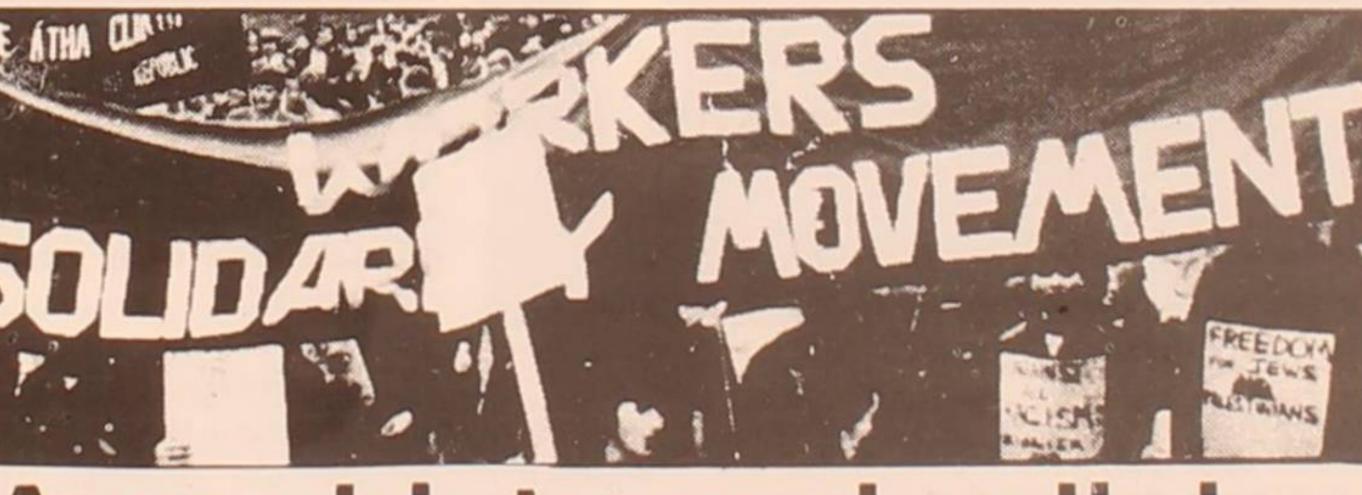
Kevin Doyle



George Woodcock (1912-1995) photograph by Vernon Richards

Thinking about Anarchism

feminism.



Anarchists and religion

is, as is usually the case with mainstream representations of anarchism, almost completely false. It is useful in the wake of the clerical paedophile scandals and the general stranglehold that the church exerts on Irish society to give a truer explanation of our position.

poor will be rewarded in the afterlife for sterilisations. passively accepting their lot in this one.

tarian, whether to a greater of lesser Anarchists we must offer a real practical religion or other mystical ideas. We extent. It is based on 'faith' and obedience. alternative analysis of society. The reality we face is of churches that are stronghold that the church has is not involved in the repression of women, of simply a result of historical circumstances, gay people and all of those who seek to it offers something that people want. It opportunity. change the face of the traditional offersanexplanation of all sorts of natural

THE POPULAR stereotype of (nuclear) family. It is no coincidence that anarchists' relationship to fundamentalists of all religions, from religion is that we are all priest- Ireland to Iran, seek to push back the well?" The simple answer is that we are killers and church-burners. This progress made by women in the workplace but we are also for fighting for improveand the sexual revolution.

Church power in Ireland

As anarchists we oppose this authoritarianism. We are fighting to break the power along with stopping church control of of the church in Ireland. This power is schools. immense. As well as it's direct wealth, they control over 3,000 out of the 3,500 primary schools, in the 26 counties, despite the fact that all the staff wages Anarchists are materialists. We and 90% of building costs are paid by the understand that there is a real and State. They also control 67% of secondary concrete basis for the way society is schools and own Maynooth College. They organised right now. Religion generally have a majority on the boards of about half accept this aspect. sees society as god given and inevitable. the hospitals. This allows them to veto Almost all world religions claim that the even legal operations such as fighting its root causes. The Workers

However it is not enough just to Religion is by its nature authori- oppose the churches' power.

and personal disasters, by saying that they are "the will of god". It offers hope in a world where misery, poverty, ignorance, frustration and alienation are endemic.

To break this stranglehold we need a strategy that unites our vision of a better world in the here and now with struggles that bring people into conflict with clerical power and show up religion as a prop for the status quo, that stands in the way of their needs and desires. In Ireland this means fighting against lerical control of schools, hospitals, etc. It also means fighting for separation of church and state.

Church and State

The question that often arises is "surely as Anarchists you are against the state as ments to people's lives in the here and now. Breaking the stranglehold of the church would ease the way for divorce, reproductive rights including abortion,

For us religion is a private matter. It should enjoy no special privileges, tax reliefs etc. We expect members to be involved in the struggle against the power and control exercised by the churches. Nonetheless members can hold religious beliefs provided they fully

In short we fight religion by Solidarity Movement is fighting for an anarchist society where people will come As to realise that they have no need for The challenge religion in a practical way by showing where it obstructs social progress and by leading the challenge to it at every

Louise Tierney

The Anarchist Reader, incontrast, Summer 1995 Workers Solidarity Page 9

Out More

The world's wealth is produced by us the working class. We ought to enjoy the

The Workers Solidarity Movement is an anarchist organisation that fights for a 32 county Workers' Republic.

We stand for a socialism that is based on freedom and real democracy, a society based on workplace and community councils.

This kind of socialism has nothing to do with the state capitalism that was practiced in Russia, and still is in China, Cuba and other police states.

We oppose coercive authority, and hold that the only limit on freedom of the individual should be that they don't encroach on the freedom of others.

As part of our fight for anarchism we are involved in the struggles for higher wages, for trade union democracy, for womens rights, for jobs.

We oppose all divisions in the working class. We fight against all attempts to set Protestant against Catholic, men against women, skilled against unskilled, old against young, hetrosexual against homosexual.

We are opposed to the British state's presence and to partition. We defend peoples' right to fight back. But we are not nationalists, we do not merely want to get rid of the border. We want to unite our class and create a totally knew

**** I want more information about the Workers Solidarity Movement.

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> Return to Workers Solidarity, P.O. Box 1528, Dublin 8.

Obituary Dr. Maire O'Shea

> DR.MAIRE O"SHEA, republican and socialist, died on March 6th, aged 75. Despite our polițical differences, Máire happily worked with an archists on several campaigns of common interest such as abortion rights and 'Trade Unionists & Unemployed Against the Programme'. Living in England for many years, she was an eminent psychiatrist with the Midlands Health Authority where

> she was a pioneer of patient-centred psychotherapy instead of

ECT and drug treatments. She was also an active member of her trade union, MSF.

A brave woman, she campaigned in Birmingham for the release of the Birmingham Six. In 1985 the English police charged her, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, with conspiracy to cause explosions. Gaining support from her union and from the Irish and left wing communities, the police case collapsed in court and she was acquitted.

Generous to the last, she directed that after a wake in her house that her body be donated to medical research at UCD.

World anarchisT NewS



SERBIAN TRADE UNION REJECTS WAR

THERE IS A media myth that all Serbians are warmongers and ultranationalists. It is not true. The independent Serbian union federation Nezavispost (Independence) condemns the war against Bosnia, and organised a protest in Belgrade shortly after the war began. Several nationalists and members of "opposition" parties backing the war resigned from the union (and some went to the front) to support the war.

Nezavispost president Branislav Canak has no use for their talk of a "Greater Serbia" and the conquest of the former Yugoslavia, "I can't accept this ... For me, this is the end of civilisation. All of us will be the losers". The union claims 200,000 members in mining, food processing, engineering and hotels. Government affiliated 'unions' have been trying to break them by offering cash payments to members who agree to tear up their membership cards.

Source: IUF news bulletin & Libertarian Labour Review

CGT DOUBLES VOTE IN UNION ELECTIONS

THE ANARCHO-syndicalist union in Spain, (Confederacion General de Trabajadores (CGT) has doubled its vote in the latest elections for union representatives to RENFE, the State rail company.

The way representatives are elected in Spain is to allow the workers to vote for which union they would like to support them, and the union then gets that proportion of representatives.

CGT is now the second largest union with 31% of the vote, after CCOO (Comissiones Obreres), the communist-dominated union. The rise of the anarchist vote is due to its more militant stand compared to other unions, in its fight to stop the privatisation of RENFE and its

demand to keep it as a single company The CGT has also increased its vote recently in the SEAT factory in Martorell, Spain, from 7 to 12 delegates, due to its superior strike support work.

AUSTRALIAN ANARCHISM

ABOUT 350 people turned up for the 'Visions of Freedom' anarchist conference in Sydney, Australia, last January. Workshops dealt with anarchist media, workplace organising, womens struggles, privatisation, and more. During the conference a small computer centre connected to the internet was set up. The entire Spunk Press archive (which includes articles, pamphlets and policy statements from the WSM) was available to participants on either computer disk or on paper.

Roadblocks on the Information Super-Highway

IN THE LAST issue of Workers Solidarity we mentioned the anarchist electronic library Spunk Press. Some of our readers may have seen it mentioned since in the Sunday Times (British) as part of a complicated conspiracy theory which attempted to link it to everything from drug making to school riots to bank-robbing to "outlawed loyalist paramilitary groups"!! The same weekend a computer bulletin board was raided in Italy and the administrators of it charged with "association with intent to subvert the democratic order". This is a charge which carries a penalty for those convicted of 7 to 15 years imprisonment.

More recently articles in the US media authorities' original warrants. In any case, and a paper published by the Rand the three magistrates who ordered the raids institute have warned of the danger of the have been unable to find the time to meet internet making Mexico ungovernable with us over the past 23 days; similarly,

to the posting of EZLN communiqués and the organisation of antirepression demonstrations through mailing lists.

Anarchists are aware that capitalism will not allow 'freedom of information' in any real sense. The mass media is all state owned or owned by wealthy corporations. Its primary role is not to tell us about the world we live in but rather to "manufacconsent" (defining the limits of 'legitimate' debate). As long as access to the internet was confined to a narrow layer of academics and

students, freedom of communication the state is seeking to enquiry or its future course". impose limits on this expression.

No charges, no answers

In order to do so, it is trying to label those it wishes to silence as 'terrorists'. That is the purpose of all the events listed above. Press as "replete with errors and A month after the Italian raids the remarkably biased ... Additionally it makes material seized was returned. In a press release Luc Pac, one of those charged, pointed out "The complete restitution of the material seized suggests that nothing useful was found amongst it that might confirm the charges laid out in the

ANARCHIST Books

for a free catalogue of books and pamphlets write to WSM Bookservice, P.O. Box 1528, Dublin 8

through 'netwar'. Essentially this refers the Carabinieri (Police) who actually

expression was permitted. But now that returned the seized goods refused to it starts to become a mass medium of answer any questions concerning the

'Effector on-line', a publication of the Electronic Frontier Foundation [the EFF is a 'highly respected' lobbying body supported by many parts of the computer industry] describes the attacks on Spunk many wild and highly unrealistic accusations of global anarchist conspiracy. No relevantevidence or sources are cited." Many of those involved with Spunk Press suspect that the ultimate 'source' of this article is MI5, desperately seeking a justification for their funding now that the Cold War is over.

What is being attacked is the threat of effective opposition to state repression. The attacks on the mailing lists carrying EZLN communiqués prompted a debate on the internet as to whether it was really that effective or was is just a lot of "alienated bourgeois professors" talking to each other. The lists played a key part in not only getting out the information but also organising opposition to the January invasion by the Mexican army within hours of it happening. Demonstrations and occupations have been reported on it from Italy, France, USA, Canada and Ireland

along with other countries.

Eye-witness accounts

These lists gave activists not only detailed first hand accounts of torture being used by the Mexican state but also exposed the reasons for the invasion in the form of a memo from Chase Bank saying that if the government wanted to continue receiving loans it would have to eliminate the Zapatista's. The liberal mainstream media may be willing to cover events in the third world from the point of view of "look what the nasty tin pot dictator is doing". It is generally unwilling to expose the involvement of western companies and governments as the puppet masters behind this repression. Eyewitness accounts circulated on mailing lists have also revealed the use of US 'War on Drugs' helicopters by the Mexican army in strafing civilian targets.

Although the importance of the Chiapas related mailing lists should not be over estimated they have

> served as a conduit through which the truth about what is really going on in Mexico can flow. Normally it takes Empty promise months or years for these stories to emerge, now it is taking days or hours. At the time of writing it has become obvious that the Mexican army is pursuing a policy of causing food shortages in Chiapas. Although they have now left many of the villages they occupied they destroyed all or most of the foodstuffs before leaving. Reports such as this from Santa Elana are capitulation. typical "As in Ibarra, they returned to find their corn, beans and coffee (constituting a six-month food supply) scattered and eaten by animals, and their houses

First shots fired

ransacked."

It is this sort of information that the state wants to censor from the internet. The censorship will be camouflaged by a mist oflies, hidden behind buzz words like pornography, drugs and terrorism. The last two months have seen the first shots in this battle and have seen some liberals falling into line in this new state offensive. According to the Sunday Times, Chris Smith, the British Labour Party's Heritagespokes-person, said the findings of their article showed the need for international agreements to ban groups preaching violence from the internet.

The state's job will not be easy however. The current structure of the internet makes effectively censoring it a very difficult prospect. And the crude attempts to set activists up for persecution has already met a heated response as thousands have e-mailed protest letters to some of the publications involved. One magazine was forced to publish a double page of letters protesting its original article. Many of these letters came from workers within the computer industry, protesting against the attempt to victimise fellow workers. A key factor in keeping the information freely flowing will be how far workers using and maintaining the net go along with or oppose this censorship.

Joe Black

Tax the greedy, not the needy · Stuff the Service Charges

Perks Before People DL Endorse Water Cut-Offs

situations - fudge it, come up with a

demand for complete abolition of the

charges was quietly shelved, attention

THE FORMATION of the "Rainbow Coalition" in December led to a number of promises of change in the double taxation service charges which have been vigorously opposed by residents' and community groups throughout the state since their inception. Legislation was promised to "delimit" the power of County Councils to disconnect water supply for non-payment of charges.

Legislation was promised to "delimit" the Fine Gael, they opted for the social power of County Councils to disconnect democrats' usual response in sticky water supply for non-payment of charges. Within hours of the government's formulation of words likely to keep everyformation, newly-appointed Minister of one happy for the time being. Thus the State Pat Rabbitte of Democratic Left was on RTE television pledging that "there will be no more disconnections" (or words was focussed on disconnections and the to that effect). Rabbitte's statement came word "delimit" made its appearance. To at a particularly emotive time. The previous three weeks had seen a massive campaign where the power of local residents' groups and the Federation of Dublin Anti-Water Charge Campaigns had combined to defeat attempts by South Dublin County Council to disconnect non-payers' water supply.

As we go to press however (early April) over three months into the government's life - the government has just announced its proposed legislation and it is clear that the pledges in the Programme for Government represented no more than the usual empty political promises. The "delimiting" of the Councils' power to disconnect water simply means that Council officials will have to get a court order to allow them to do so. For Democratic Left this involves a total Having made the abolition of

service charges one of their main demands on entering the negotiations to form a government and having met with stiff resistance to this from both Labour and

> DL it meant that disconnections were finished. However to Labour and Fine Gael (and according to the dictionary) the meaning was somewhat different (Delimit: to fix or mark the limit of Chambers's 20th Century Dictionary).

It didn't take long for the County Managers to spot the loophole. With Councils throughout the State experiencing a dramatic fall-off in revenue as PAYE

announced - just days before DL's Annual Delegate Conference - the capitulation was complete. A party which had started out from a position of complete opposition to service charges had endorsed the right of Councils to disconnect water supply to non-payers - provided they got a court

• Anti-service charges campaigners from Galway joined a lively protest outside

the Labour Party conference in Limerick on April 8th

taxpayers took Pat Rabbitte at his word

and joined the non-payment campaign

(e.g. Meath County Council's income from

charges fell from £122,000 in January

1994 to £79,000 in January 1995) Council

officials launched an intensive lobby on

government ministers to maintain the

As reports emerged that the issue of water

charges and disconnections had led to

several rows among cabinet ministers and

crisis meetings between the leaders of the

three government parties, it began to

appear that the fudge was far from sweet.

And when the legislation was finally

right to disconnect.

Far from sweet

The argument put forward-even by some DL activists who had been

charges is that they are 'only a small party', that the issue would not even be on the agenda but for them and - of course that it is 'a step in the right direction'. They should try telling that to the 900 people who had their supply cut-off last year or to the hundreds now likely to face court summonses. And while the DL Conference did pass an amended motion criticising the government for failing to call service charges double taxation, they overwhelmingly rejected a motion condemning the party leadership for not gaining a government commitment to abolish the charges.

involved in the fight against service

The lesson for anti-service charge campaigners-and indeed for all members of the working class - should be clear. Trust no-one but yourselves, the only way to victory is through solidarity action and through a continuation and intensification of the campaign. Those who claim to use "parliamentary democracy" to achieve change will eventually compromise and fudge - usually in the cause of something called "the national interest".

We're not paying

County Councils in Dublin and elsewhere know that the vast majority of people are not going to pay these charges in 1995 just as they refused to pay them in 1994. They also know that the threat of disconnections or court action doesn't worry us. When they tried their intimidatory tactics before, they were sent packing. Antiservice charge campaigners should now have but one message for those who would attempt to fudge the issue - stop trying to fool us, we know that your mercs and perks are more important to you than your principles (if you have any left).

Continue the campaign

The Federation of Dublin Anti-Water Charge Campaigns has outlined a strategy to render the new regulations on disconnections unworkable. This strategy will include

*Every court case must be contested; *No householder will be isolated and there will be a coordinated approach to all

court hearings; *Legal advice and representation will be arranged;

*In the event of disconnection being ordered, this will be resisted by peaceful

*Where water is disconnected, reconnection will be arranged;

*Appeals will be made to local authority workers and their trade unions to continue to refuse to co-operate with disconnections.

Gregor Kerr

NATIONAL CONFERENCE to discuss the establishment of a co-ordinating group for antiservice charge campaigns throughout the state. SATURDAY MAY 13th ATGWU HALL, MIDDLE ABBEY STREET,

DUBLIN 1 All welcome. Contact the Federation of Dublin Anti-Water Charge Campaigns, P.O. Box 4543, Dublin 1 for details.



contact the Get involved: Federation of Dublin Anti-Water Charge Campaigns by ringing Gregor Kerr 01-4947025 or Joe Higgins 01-8201753.

Labour's record in government:

• Rich get another tax amnesty;

 PAYE taxpayers have to pay the £75 million EU fine for fraud by the beef barons;

• Householders will be dragged through the courts and have their water cut-off for refusing to pay twice.



