

Snouts in the Trough

Elections have passed, faces change but the corrupt political class remains. MPs of all parties made common cause in attempting to delay and minimise the disclosure of their fraudulent behaviour and life of grandeur and wealth, subsidised by the taxpayer.

Everything from moats to chauffeur driven cars, five star hotels to our local Robinson mafia having their noses in the trough claiming over £30,000 in food expenses alone over the last four years. Sinn Féin is not off the hook either, with their three properties in London costing us almost £500,000. Not too bad for a party which doesn't take its seats in Westminster but administers 'British Rule' at Stormont.

The list is endless but politicians stealing taxpayers' money by selling their second homes to make a quick profit is top of the list. Never before has such hypocrisy and legalised robbery been exposed at the heart of our parliamentary democracy.

It goes without saying that there is one rule for us and a very different one for our ruling class. Consider, for instance, what would happen to a single mother of two doing a bit of paid work while living off the peanuts offered by the welfare state. Our jails have more than a few 'fine defaulters', while others of us are flung onto the dole, threatened with house evictions or have to survive on 'poverty' wages.

Meanwhile, our political masters give a nod and a wink, and the guilty MPs get away with a mild slap on the wrist. Is this the best type of democracy they can offer us? One where the rich and politicians are given the freedom to enrich themselves at our expense?

We shouldn't pay too much attention to the promises of change or explanations that only a 'few bad apples



are to blame'. Nor should we be fooled by the scapegoating of the House of Commons Speaker, nor by a handful of very minor reforms.

This scandal is the result of giving power to a small minority in a society. Any group of people with power over others will eventually use it in their interests. We only need to look at the Ryan report about the child labour camps run by the Catholic Church to know this. Bosses, politicians and clerics clearly use their power for their own interests.

Instead of giving our vote every four to five years to politicians who like to promise things they cannot or will not deliver on, we can start doing things collectively for ourselves. We can take direct action like the Visteon workers, we can convince our colleagues of the benefits of solidarity and resistance in the workplace. We can point to the mass non-payment campaign against water charges. This seems a more effective way to get results than trusting

MPs to keep their campaign promises.

As anarchists, we stand for a new society where there will be no bosses or bureaucrats. No minority will hold political or economic power; instead everyone affected by a decision will have the right to take part in making that decision.

This will be a society run in a really democratic way by working people, through councils in the workplaces and community. These will be joined up nationally and internationally, ensuring that efficiency is combined with democracy in the building of a free socialism, summed up in the slogan "from each according to ability, to each according to need".

Sounds crazy? Only if you think that capitalism is the best possible system, in which case you are either rich or you don't expect much from life. Don't Moan – Organise!

Sean Matthews

Inside: Visteon Victory | Climate Change | Racist Attacks

Anarchist News & Analysis

The War on Youth

On RTE news on 18/5/09, Mary Hanafin stated, in her usual Orwellian fashion, that the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA) had now provided a financial incentive to encourage those under 20 to go into training or education. This 'financial incentive' involved cutting the dole to €100 per week for new claimants under the age of 20.

The state considers that €204.30 per week is the basic minimum income for a single adult to survive. If you are applying for a social assistance payment or a medical card and are currently in receipt of an income less than that, the DSFA or the HSE will usually presume that you have another undeclared income or means of support; and refuse you a payment. So, those under 20, who can fight, and possibly die, for their country, are not deemed worthy of the basics of survival.

This attack is just the latest in a spate of attacks on young people and services that cater for them. Child benefit has been halved for those aged 18 and still in full-time education (so much for providing a 'financial incentive' to stay in education!).

Secondary Schools that had been approved to run the Applied Leaving Certificate for



the upcoming academic year have now been told by the Department of Education that they will not be funded to do so. Many of those who had hoped to do the Applied Leaving Certificate will flounder or drop out all together, most likely eventually ending up on the dole, and thus we are back to square one in the problem that Hanafin is allegedly trying to solve.

As well as the other well-documented education cuts at primary and secondary level, there have also been cuts in funding for the very courses that Mary Hanafin wants the under 20s to attend. The director of the National Youth Council, Mary Cunningham, has outlined how some of these courses had been cut from six months to four weeks and would lead to low-grade qualifications. Furthermore, waiting times to get into FAS courses have ballooned. A further report on 26/5/09 outlined the funding crisis affecting youth centres, which may have to close as a result.

In response to this and other cuts, some of which will also affect young people, the SIPTU community branch organised a march of 2,000 people to the Department of Finance on 3/6/09, with many community sector workers walking off the job to take part. One immediate result was some concessions in funding FAS schemes. More of this type of agitation is required if the assault on youth by the generation ahead of them in Leinster House is to be successfully resisted.

Vincent O'Malley

Contacts

Anarchist Organisations

Workers Solidarity Movement

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Organise!

PO Box 505, Belfast, BT12 6BQ
organiseireland@yahoo.com

Revolutionary Anarcha-Feminist Group (RAG)

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

Libertarian Networks

Indymedia Ireland

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

Seomra Spraoi

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

Galway Social Space

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

Campaigning Groups

Free Education for Everyone

Campaign to stop the reintroduction of college fees and to promote the right to free education for all.
stopfees@gmail.com
http://free-education.info/

Shell to Sea

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

Hands Off the People of Iran

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

Choice Ireland

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

Alliance for Choice (NI)

http://allianceforchoiceni.org

Residents Against Racism

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

Seize their Assets - Break Up the Criminal Gangs

PAYE taxpayers are only not being forced to bail out bankers and speculators, we are told that we also will have to meet the compensation and legal bills of a giant paedophile network. And we should be grateful that the child abusers are throwing in a few bob towards the cost!

Since the publication of the Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse, we have heard a litany of so-called apologies and calls for the religious orders responsible for the running of what should rightly be described as child labour camps to 'face up to their responsibilities'.

Politicians and church leaders have rightly criticised the inadequacy of the deal done by Bertie Ahern and Michael Woods with the religious orders in 2002. This deal capped the compensation payable by the orders at €127million.

However, what the report makes clear for all those who denied it up to now is that what went on was a criminal conspiracy which went on for 70 years and which involved several thousand victims and hundreds and hundreds of perpetrators. That's hundreds of abusers and hundreds of people who facilitated and allowed the abuse, who moved abusers around when complaints were made and allowed them to re-offend elsewhere. By any definition that's a criminal conspiracy and the groups who carried it out should be called what they are – criminal gangs – and should have their assets seized.

So it's not about whether or not it's legally possible to 're-open negotiations' or make these gangs face up to their 'moral responsibility'. It's about saying that the schools, hospitals and vast swathes of

Weapons of MASS Destruction



property owned by them should be taken from them and the gangs should be broken up and their influence over Irish social policy ended forever.

Efforts by senior church leaders to distance themselves from this conspiracy are not credible and should not be accepted. Responsibility lies with the entire institution right up to the Vatican. For decades they hushed up complaints and refused to take any action.

They got away with this because of the power imbalances in society. Young children were taken from their families usually because of poverty or neglect (for example the charge of 'having a guardian who does not exercise proper guardianship' was common). They were handed over to viciously abusive institutions, and used as slave labour by their new guardians, digging potatoes with their bare hands, knitting rugs and making rosary beads.

They were subject to the level of organised terror necessary to discipline a slave population and were victim to the unrestricted sadism of those who were entrusted with absolute power over them. Even the capitation grant paid by the state for their upkeep was as often as not siphoned off with the children left hungry and poorly dressed.

The abusers got away with this because a lack of proper democratic structures and accountability in society allowed it.

But when any group of people are given such absolute power over others, the results are inevitable and inescapable, from Artane to Abu Ghraib.

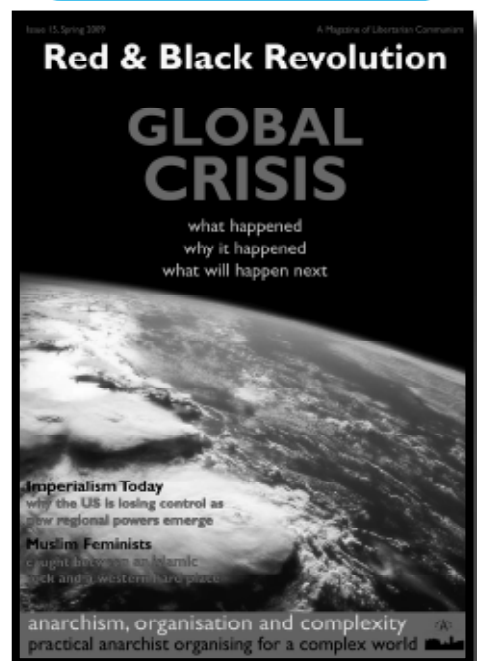
If we want to learn from this tragedy, we should all be asking ourselves how society can be re-organised so that the institutions and power relationship which foster such abuse can be abolished, so that the widespread moral cowardice and unquestioning deference which permitted such conspiracy can become no more than a bad memory.

Gregor Kerr

Red & Black Revolution

The latest issue of the WSM magazine looks at the crisis and sets out to explain why it happened and what we can expect next. Other articles look at how anarchists organise in Ireland, feminism in the Muslim world, science and complex systems, and profiles of some of the women who played a huge role in the Industrial Workers of the World.

€1 / £1 from WSM members or P.O. Box 1528, Dublin 8. For a free back issue email your name & address to wsm_ireland@yahoo.com, with RBR in the subject line.



Race Hate Attacks in Belfast



At the time of going to press, only 14 of the 115 Romanians targeted in racist attacks in Belfast earlier this month have decided to remain in the country. The rest are returning home.

The 22 families had sought refuge in a church hall and then temporary accommodation in vacant student houses after they were driven out of their homes in a sustained and co-coordinated week-long hate campaign.

At one point, up to twenty people gathered outside their homes shouting racist abuse, smashing windows and vandalising cars. One Romanian family was threatened at gunpoint (it is not known whether this was a real gun or a replica) while another had a leaflet quoting Hitler's *Mein Kampf* put through their letterbox.

A rally called by local residents to support the families was attacked by youths who

threw bottles and made nazi salutes. One of organisers of this demonstration, Paddy Meehan, has since received a death threat. Two boys, aged 15 and 16, have appeared in court accused of "provocative behavior" at the anti-racist rally. At a separate court sitting, Shane Murphy (21) was remanded in custody, accused of intimidating the Romanian families out of their homes.

On the other side of the city, graves in Milltown Cemetery have been daubed with graffiti in support of the neo-Nazi group Combat 18. The perpetrators singled out the monument dedicated to Irish republicans who fought on the anti-fascist side the Spanish Civil War.

In County Tyrone, a Polish family, including a four-year-old boy, has also been forced to leave their home after their house and car were vandalised. A Lithuanian family living nearby was also tar-

geted. The upsurge in organised racist activity in the North of Ireland should be a concern to all.

It is believed that those involved in these attacks are politically disillusioned male teenagers from working class loyalist areas ideologically backed by older, experienced loyalists with possible links to one of the many micro white nationalist groups operating here. These include the British National Party (BNP), British People's Party (BPP) and White Nationalist Party (WNP).

It is Ireland's first time going through an economic recession with a large migrant population. We need to challenge racist ideas and confront fascists in our communities, schools and workplaces. If not, incidents like these will become a regular occurrence.

J. Carax

Find out more. Check out www.wsm.ie

Informacje i artykuły w języku polskim dostępne na stronie www.wsm.ie/polska

That's
Capitalism



Local DUP councillor, Adrian McQuillan seemed less than outraged at the sectarian murder of Kevin McDaid in Coleraine. He wrote it off as "tit for tat" and went on to excuse the killers: "What reason can you see for there being tricolours up yesterday afternoon, a Sunday afternoon? None other than for to get a reaction from the loyalist community..."

The BBC reported, on June 8th, that 'Global military spending by governments rose 4% in 2008 to a record €1,059bn – up 45% since 1999'. Meanwhile the OECD reported that the global spend by governments on aid is just €87bn.

The US government had no problem laying its hands on US\$8.4 trillion to prop up banks that had gambled badly on the markets. At US \$173 billion, the American Insurance Group (AIG) alone has received \$50 billion more than total global aid levels.

HSE boss Professor Brendan Drumm and Health Minister Mary Harney claim that the recession has 'forced' them to close hospital wards, stop recruiting staff, restrict the over-70s medical card, and left them unable to fund the cervical cancer vaccine. So what 'forced' them to pay Drumm €512,000 last year?

In 1999, four years after multinational drug giant Eli Lilly sent study results to the US Food and Drug Administration showing Zyprexa didn't alleviate dementia symptoms in older patients, it began marketing the drug to those very people. This was confirmed by documents uncovered during a court case against the company. Lilly admitted that results from seven studies showed Zyprexa didn't alleviate symptoms of Alzheimer's or other dementia. The opposite was the case, with the studies finding death rates among older dementia patients taking Zyprexa were "significantly greater" than those who didn't get the medicine.

www.anarchistblackcat.org



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

In recent years climate change has loomed large in the public imagination. Scientifically, there is little doubt that it is a real threat to the future of human civilisation. The greenhouse effect has been known about since the early 19th century - gases in the atmosphere such as carbon dioxide, methane and water vapour trap heat from the sun, causing the climate of the planet to heat up over time. Probably the most spectacular known example of this effect in action is on Venus.

As recently as the 1960s it was thought that Venus might have a climate that could support life. However, in 1962, a US space probe measured its surface temperature at 425°C. Billions of years ago, it had a climate similar to that of earth today – but a runaway greenhouse effect turned it into a ball of fire.

The existence of the greenhouse effect is beyond doubt, as is the fact that humans have been busily pumping large volumes of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide, into the atmosphere. The only matter for scientific debate concerns exactly what effect the greenhouse gases are having on our climate. As scientists have come up with new and better ways of measuring climate changes, an alarming consensus has emerged.

The global climate has been heating up significantly due to human activity and during the course of the 21st century temperatures will rise at least 1°C more and perhaps as much as 6.5°C. This is likely to have a cataclysmic effect on human civilisation.

Most alarmingly, the melting of ice sheets will see rises in sea levels that will threaten coastal settlements, but that is not the only risk. Any increased volatility in our climate is almost certain to leave it in a state where it

is much less capable of sustaining billions of people.

In many ways, the identification in advance of the great risks that human society faces from greenhouse gases is a triumph of modern science. Climatic patterns are immensely complex and to arrive at the current scientific consensus on climate change has required a vast range of sophisticated experiments, new means of measurement and exceedingly elaborate computer models.

Were it not for the powerful tools of modern science, humanity would have walked blindly into an environmental catastrophe that might have wiped it out. However, there is a big gap between understanding the problem and coming up with a way of addressing it.

Depressingly, it appears that humanity may walk into the environmental catastrophe forewarned and with eyes open. The problem is that there are several features of current human social organisation that make problems like this very difficult to address.

The first problem is that modern human economies are based around the idea of competition and the marketplace. Businesses survive and thrive in so far as they can exploit advantages over one another. A very large part of our economy is ultimately dependant on fossil fuels to provide energy – which is responsible for a large part of our greenhouse gas production.

Any decrease in the use of fossil fuels will damage or remove the competitive advantages of a great number of the world's most powerful economic actors – the oil companies, car manufacturers and all sorts of other powerful industries. Thus, rather than attempting to figure out how to solve the problem, many of the most powerful economic actors in the

world have focused instead on attempting to deny the problem and identifying ways of getting around any measures put in place to address it.

The second major problem is that, on a political level, the world is divided up into a series of nations who generally compete with each other for power and influence. All solutions to the problem of greenhouse gas production will inevitably cause some reduction in economic strength.

Any country that imposes strict measures to address the problem runs the risk of falling behind its competitors economically and politically. Hence, international agreements such as the Kyoto protocol of 1997 have been routinely ignored by powerful countries whenever they think that they will harm their position compared to their competitors.

Finally, the third major problem is that many proposed solutions do not question at all the current political and economic order. This leads to solutions such as "the power of one" - solutions based on consumer choice and education. In reality, consumers generally don't get enough information to truly make informed choices, while very few have enough money to actually have any significant choices in the marketplace.

The major over-riding problem is that our world is organised according to competitive principles and maximising the profits of the wealthy. Given this reality, common problems that require broad, cooperative input from the entire species are difficult or impossible to address. If we can get rid of that problem, stopping and reversing climate change will be child's play in comparison.

Chekov Feeny

Anarchism & the WSM

In the aftermath of the racist attacks that forced over 100 Romanians to flee their homes in South Belfast, the local Workers Solidarity Movement branch is hosting an afternoon of discussion about how we can tackle racism. This will be happening in the city centre on Saturday July 18th. Watch out for posters or check www.wsm.ie for the time and venue.

Workers Solidarity Movement members who took part in the defence of homes in Belgravia Avenue and Wellesley Avenue will give their account of what happened. With the rise of the far-right, as reflected in the nazi salutes and slogans of the attackers, do we need militant anti fascism today?

There will also be discussions about the anarchist idea - anarchists want to get rid of the state and capitalism but what will we replace them with? How will we organise transport, education and health? What about crime? And we will be debating the best form of organisation for anarchists. Everyone is welcome to drop in and take part, or just to have a look.

Meanwhile in Mayo the arrival of Shell's pipe-laying ship was preceded by an increasingly aggressive attitude by Shell's security and the Gardai towards protesters. This reached a new level when local fisherman and Shell To Sea activist Pat O'Donnell had his boat boarded by four masked men who held him and his mate captive before sinking the vessel.



WSM members have been stepping up their work in Shell To Sea to support the local campaigners and to highlight the billions being given away to Shell and other multinationals. The corruption we live under is undeniable in this case. A disgraced cabinet minister, Ray Burke, signed rights to literally billions in gas and oil away to big oil companies. In return the taxpayer got nothing. And this is hardly commented on in the press or on TV.

Millions of euros have been spent on what has felt like a garda occupation of Erris. Finding that money was no problem. It's such a different story when money is needed to keep beds open in Crumlin children's hospital or

get a new school building in Tipperary. Looking after one of the wealthiest companies in the world appears to be more important than giving our children decent schools, or even saving their lives.

We know there are very real limits to what we can cover in a paper that appears only every two months, but we do hope that it gives some idea of anarchism. And we hope it shows its relevance to the very real concerns people have at present.

We are producing 10,000 copies, in northern and southern editions. We would like to make that a lot more. To interest people in anarchism we first have to let them know it exists, and that it is nothing like the absurd stereotype conjured up by much of the media.

If you want to help us let more people know about the anarchist alternative, why not take a bundle of Workers Solidarity and give them out to friends, at work, at gigs or put them through neighbours' letterboxes. Send us your name and address, and we'll send you 20 copies (more if you want them).



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

Mayo & Bolivia: The Fascist Link

For the last eight years the local communities in Rossport and Glengad, County Mayo have been resisting petro-chemical giant Shell's plans for a high-pressure gas pipeline from the offshore gas fields to an online refinery at Bellanaboy. The project is a significant health and safety risk in the medium term, as admitted by Shells own engineers at a recent local forum examining the project. It already has caused high levels of aluminum pollution of the local water supply.

However there is another clear danger to the local community above and beyond the effects of the pipeline and refinery. It is the direct and physical risk of harm from the privatised "security" force hired by Shell to quell effective opposition by campaigners. That company is Integrated Risk Management Services (IRMS), with a head office

in Naas, County Kildare.

IRMS and its owners Terry Downes and James Farrell are on very good terms with the Fianna Fail party, as they did the security for the "Champaign Tent" at the Galway Races. They also have many state contracts for events such as the recent Africa Day celebration in Dublin. So these men get a lot of our taxes directly into their pockets.

You have to wonder what the organisers of Africa Day make of the fact that IRMS employees have links with racist and fascist groups. Recently it has been discovered that several of those who worked, and may still work as 'security' at the Shell compound, are high ranking members of fascist organisations. One such man, Tibor Rozsa, was a commander of the Szekler Legion, a paramilitary fascist group in Romania.



Rozsa was one of three people shot dead earlier this year by the Bolivian government in what seems to have been a plot to start a civil war in the country. Irish man Michael Dwyer was one off those killed, and had worked with Rozsa at Shell's compound in Mayo with IRMS. It's worth noting that less than a year before the shootings, the Bolivian government nationalised a pipeline 'owned' by Shell. IRMS deny any direct involvement in the plot, but major questions remain.

How can a company that has many security contracts from the Irish State get away

with hiring fascist thugs? How is it that these fascists can openly sell badges on the internet 'celebrating' the fact that they are involved in trampling over a local community and international campaign, and regularly assaulting local community activists or filming families and children when they are on the beach.

And just why was it that as soon as news broke of the deaths of former IRMS employees, who worked at the Shell compound in Mayo, that IRMS suddenly pulled the plug on their own website?

Maybe we should ask Terry Downes and James Farrell. They are the owners of, and make profits from, IRMS. As such have no interest in seeing a resolution to the conflict in west Mayo. The longer it drags out the more money it is for Terry and James.

More at:
www.indymedia.ie/article/92865

Mark Malone

Direct Action Gets the Goods: Visteon Occupation Pays Off

The occupation of the Visteon motor parts factory in Belfast ended on May 3rd when the company gave in and agreed pay extra compensation of between six month's and nearly two year's money to the workforce for the loss of their jobs.

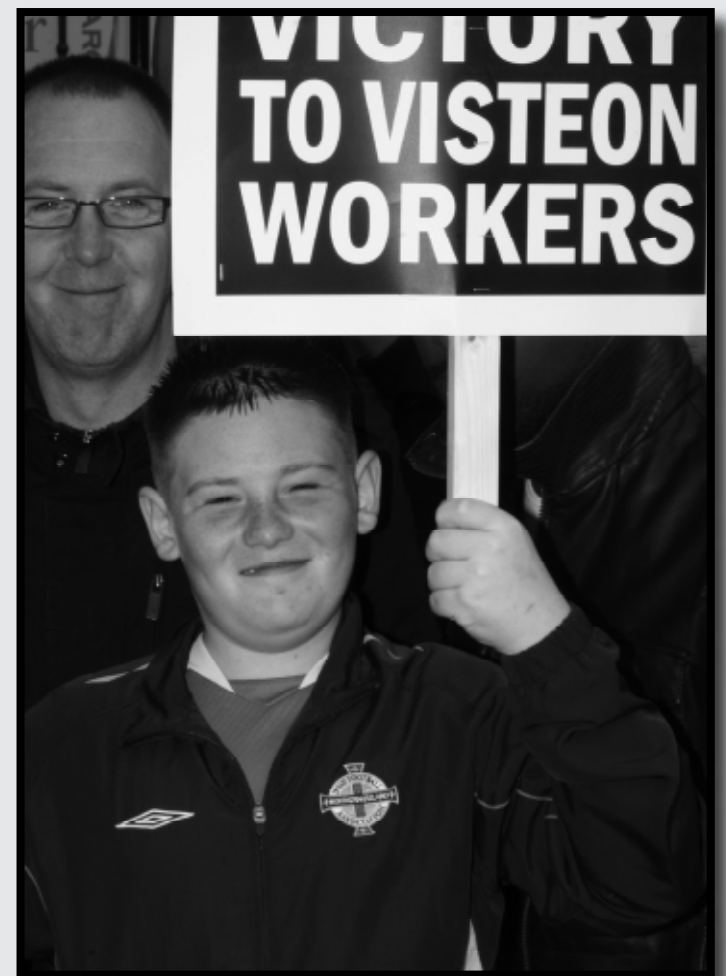
On April 1st workers, members of the UNITE trade union, were given just six minutes notice that the plant was closing down. The agreement that everyone would get the same terms as Ford workers if there were redundancies was torn up by management. There was nothing on offer, just an instruction to clear out lockers and go away. Workers, many of whom had given decades of service, were going to get only basic statutory redundancy money.

Visteon is moving production to countries with weak unions and very low pay, their only interest in Belfast (and the English plants at Basildown and Enfield) was as assets to be sold. The occupation, on its own, would have only been an irritation to management. However, talk of Ford workers refusing to handle any parts that had previously been supplied by the closed factories, worried management sufficiently to get them into talks.

Now it is true that the workforce didn't get their jobs back. Occupations by relatively small factories in a recession-hit industry were not going to be able to achieve that. But the workers did walk away with between six months and almost two year's extra money. They would not have got that by writing to MPs, signing petitions or "using the industrial relations machinery of the state". It was when they decided to take direct action that they put themselves into a position where they could look for solidarity and exert real pressure on their bosses.

Visteon was a victory, militancy was shown to pay. Roger Madison of UNITE said "they've only been offered this because of the actions taken, to lock themselves in a plant for nearly a month. It's refreshing - it's old-fashioned trade unionism." If we want to create a different political climate where working people have the confidence to stand up for themselves, this is exactly the sort of action we need to encourage.

Alan MacSimoin



Film Review: Looking for Eric

Born of a Catalan mother whose family fought Franco's forces in the Spanish Civil War and a father who juggled a nursing career and a passionate interest in painting, Cantona's humble lineage portrays a character quite different to the one we should have expected from the one on the field, with his upturned collar and puffed out chest, his air always suggested that of a French nobleman; that and his football eventually led to him to be known as King.

In Looking for Eric (directed by Ken Loach, screenplay by Paul Laverty,) he plays himself as the saviour to downtrodden anti-hero Eric Bishop. When things start to get the better of the Man Utd obsessed postman and his thoughts turn to suicide, Cantona appears and becomes his motivation.

It is at his prompting that Eric stands up to his indolent stepsons. It is Cantona who convinces Eric to re-ignite his relationship with his first wife. And it is Cantona's inspiration that drives Eric to stand up to

the gang leader whose stranglehold over his stepsons threatens to upset the happy new relationship he has developed with his family.

The film shows us the private life of Eric and his family but of course is not without its football, and the joys and pains of each mirror the other. Eric explains the emotion behind football, and through this we are granted an insight into Eric's release: "where else can you sing with your mates or scream and let go for a couple of hours every week without getting arrested." "Or cry," Cantona adds.

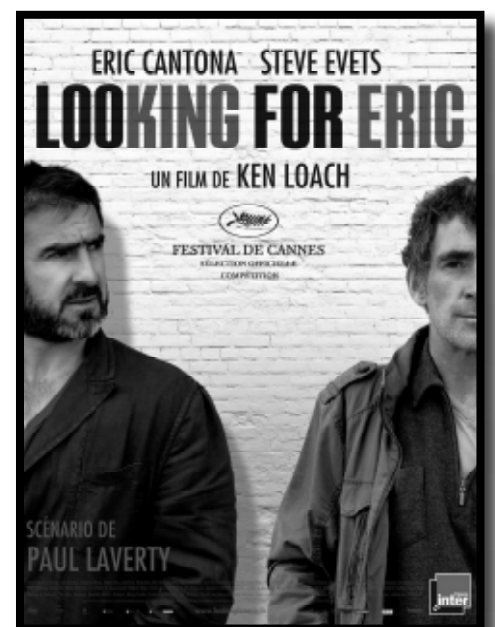
There aren't many players, past or present who understand the unique bond between them and the fans. Cantona though, was certainly one of them. "I must have the freedom to express myself," Cantona once said. "Without freedom there is no happiness, no joy."

Whatever it is about the partnership of Loach and Laverty, they always give us char-

ismatic characters and natural dialogue. There are some scenes always prevalent in Loach films: in Land and Freedom, we have the argument over the collectivisation of land. In The Wind That Shakes the Barley, we have the argument over the signing of the Treaty.

In Looking for Eric, we have the argument in the pub between the Manchester United and the FC United (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fc_united) fans; six Postmen attacking the corporatisation of modern football - questioning the loyalty you can have for a team that it's impossible to have an affinity with due to the sheer monetary impossibility of attending games, the "Prawn Sandwich Brigade" and owners who see the club as a business acquisition rather than a football club. The scene sums up the film; raw, impassioned and not without a large dose of chuckles too.

Some people have said that 'Looking for Eric' is Loach's most light-hearted film in years and the only real criticism is that the



ending breaks from the realism that normally accompanies his work. I don't think so. Sometimes you have to believe that special things can happen. And if there's anyone who can inspire something special, it's that man Cantona.

Ciarán Ó Muireadhaigh