

## ***They Didn't Share the Wealth*** **WHY SHOULD WE SHARE THE PAIN?**

**There is no money left, it's all gone. At least that's what you might think after listening to Peter Robinson, Caitriona Ruane, and the parade of capitalist economists and pundits who parrot this nonsense. Yes, we are heading into a deep recession but guess who is expected to pay the cost?**

The Government has no problem finding money to bail out bankers, it's only when cash is needed to pay decent wages or to provide modern schools and hospitals that nothing can be found. The attack on pay and pensions is open class struggle by employers and the government against working people.

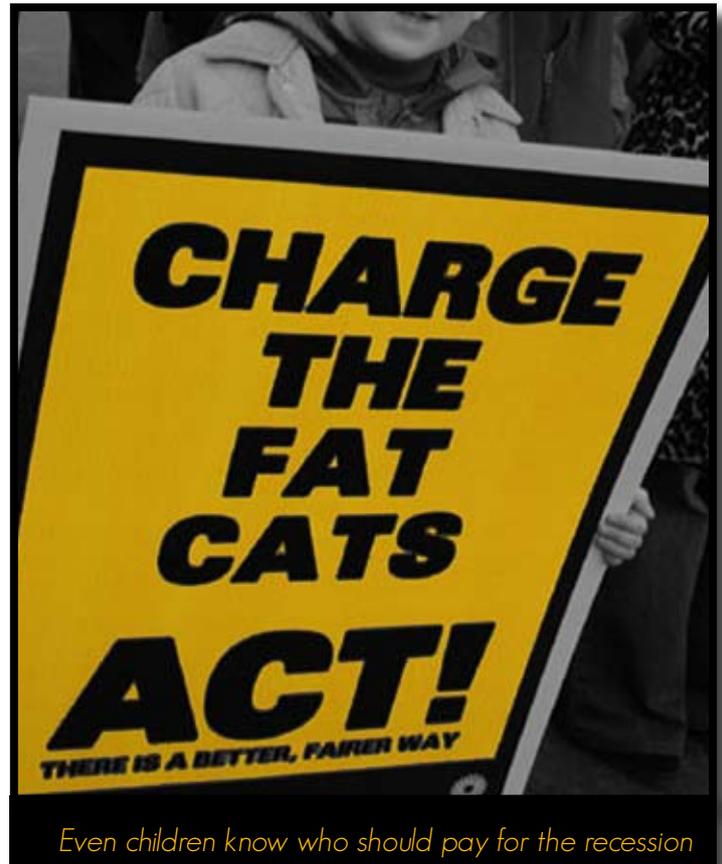
It may sound old-fashioned to talk of class struggle, but what else do you call it when one class wants to preserve its wealth at the expense of the other class?

We have the highest rise in job losses for 37 years. Now our wonderful power-sharing Executive has decided to share even more job losses between Protestant and Catholic. No sectarianism there, all working people will get an equal chance to experience life on the dole. Their latest news is that 1,700 jobs are to go in the Health Boards.

Minister for Regional Development, Conor Murphy, is presiding over an £11.5 million cut in Translink's budget. This means that less used but essential rural bus services will be further cut. If you can't afford to run a car, Conor will keep you fit by making you walk miles to work, school and town. Not that Conor, with his huge salary, expenses and free car will ever be forced to walk anywhere.

And his buddy, Education Minister Caitriona Ruane is talking about privatising the school bus service. That will mean lower wages and less union organisation for bus drivers.

The goal of employers and the Executive is to transfer more wealth from working people to the rich. They want wage cuts across the economy. If we don't fight back they will keep coming back to take more out of our pay packets, close down more of our services and give our children a lower standard of living than we had.



*Even children know who should pay for the recession*

The rich are good at looking after their class interests – we should take the same attitude. They didn't share the wealth in the 'good years', why should we share the pain today?

The UNITE union members working in Calcast in Derry showed that fighting back pays off. When told their jobs were gone, they occupied the plant and forced the bosses to give them each an extra £2,777 in redundancy payments. It shows that we do have real power if we stick together, imagine what could be achieved if we all fight back together.

Inside: Derry Direct  
Action

A Roadmap  
to Peace?

Waterford Shows  
the Way

# A Roadmap to Peace?

**THE recent publishing of the report by the Consultative Group on the Past demonstrates the simmering sectarian tensions and hostility beneath the surface. The 190 page report by the group, chaired by ex-Church of Ireland primate Lord Eames and former Policing Board vice chairman Dennis Bradley marked 18 months of consultation with victim groups and others that have been bereaved through the conflict.**

The main recommendations include the appointment by the British Government of a Legacy Commission to last five years with a £100m bursary to tackle the task of securing reconciliation, social disadvantage and justice. The report also proposed no new public inquiries or any amnesty for 'crimes' linked to the troubles. The group also recommends a new Review and Investigation Unit to replace the police Historical Enquiries Team and the Police Ombudsman's unit dealing with historical cases.

The most controversial aspect of the report included the next of kin of victims to

receive a £12,000 "recognition payment." Although voluntary this sparked controversy over allegations that this will equate the actions of paramilitary organisations with that of the state forces. This "recognition payment" is counter-productive and has only inflamed divisions.

We must recognise that there is no monopoly on suffering and grief regardless of the victim's cause of death. No report will address and satisfy the concerns and grievances of everyone. The report fails to mention in great detail the plight of thousands of people who have suffered physical or physiological injury throughout the conflict.

On the 20th anniversary of the murder of human rights solicitor Pat Finucane, perhaps, the only real benefactor of the report is the British state who continues to deny a full independent public inquiry into the extent of its collusion with Loyalist paramilitaries and republican armed groups, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of citizens. A policy which is enshrined in the 2005 Inquiries Act giving powers to British Government ministers

to prevent disclosing information in any future inquiries.

We should expect nothing less from Governments that are keen to lecture us on upholding 'impartiality', 'human rights' and 'morality' but in reality break every law in the land when it suits and are the greatest practitioners of violence and terrorism. We will never achieve lasting reconciliation and peace as long as we have the cementing of sectarianism at Stormont.

Until we begin to smash the sectarian barriers in our communities and workplaces. We need to remove not only the church from our schools, hospitals and everyday lives, but the barrier of nationalism whether of a green or orange flavour which fosters division, fear and never ending conflict. The only real unity worth fighting for is based on our common class interests against the state and capitalism.

**Sean Matthews**

## Contacts

### Anarchist Organisations

#### Workers Solidarity Movement

PO Box 1528, Dublin 8.  
www.wsm.ie  
wsm\_ireland@yahoo.com  
cork@wsm.ie | belfastwsm@yahoo.com

#### Revolutionary Anarcha-Feminist Group

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.galwaysspace.org>

### Campaigning Groups

#### 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

#### Free Education for Everyone

Campaign to stop the reintroduction of college fees.  
stopfees@gmail.com  
<http://free-education.info/>

**4th Dublin Anarchist Bookfair**  
**Seomra Spraoi Liberty Hall**  
**March 6th March 7th**

Film, debates, workshops, meetings, and lots of anarchist & radical books. Guest speakers include Martha Ackelsberg, author of Free Women of Spain; and Ashanti Alston, a member of the Black Panther Party in the 1960's and early 1970's.

Admission is free. More information at [www.wsm.ie/bookfair](http://www.wsm.ie/bookfair)

**Organising The Fightback**  
*How do we combat the employers' offensive*

A Waterford Crystal worker, Denis Keane (Executive member, Civil & Public Services Union) and Julian Brophy (Free Education for Everyone) share their personal views, alongside a speaker from the Workers Solidarity Movement.

**Saturday 7th March, 3pm**  
**Liberty Hall, Dublin**

# Raytheon: This time it's 9 Derry Women!

There was the whiff of something in the Derry air. The constantly rising civilian death toll in Gaza had already produced the same outpourings of rage on the streets of Derry as it had around the world. Thousands of signatures had been gathered calling on Raytheon to be given the boot, while ever larger crowds had gathered for vigils at the cenotaph, marches through the city, rallies at the Guildhall and at a nonviolent blockade of Raytheon itself. Now more and more of us were becoming determined that we do not have to resign to feelings of helplessness in the face of Israel's war atrocities. Our burning rage was igniting something positive.

There was the definite smell of something very good cooking among those who had been to the last Derry Anti War Coalition meeting. There was a buzz about the evening before when text message went around asking people to meet the next day at a location not far from the Raytheon plant. Something serious was going to be done, and there were a hell of a lot more of us around to do it this time. We all made plans to go down there to see if we could support, or perhaps do more.

I was just putting on my shoes the following day when the next text message went around. "9 women from the Derry Anti War Coalition have gained access 2 the building of Raytheon Systems. Please cm 2 Raytheon 2 support them". This was followed by "9 women chained together between doors in Raytheon, get down when you can". Unbelievable! I ran out and jumped into my friends car while sending-on the text to as many people as possible, my shoelaces were still undone.

One of the people I sent the text to was Helen Deery who had asked to be kept informed of protests. Helen had been very pleased to hear about the "Raytheon 9" sabotaging the Raytheon mainframe 3 years ago and was delighted when the Belfast jury acquitted them because it accepted their defence that it was done in order to impede further war crimes being committed.

Helen knows a thing or two about powerful military machines killing unarmed civilians. In May 1972 her 15 year-old brother Manus was murdered by the Brit-



ish military while eating a bag of chips with some friends in the Bogside. As is usual in these cases, the State "investigated" itself and exonerated itself. Helen would have a very keen sense of what it feels like for ordinary people to be treated as expendable sub-humans.

She also knows that the state doesn't just grant justice out of the goodness of its heart. Justice has to be fought for by ordinary people, hard. I knew she'd be delighted with the news of the occupation. And I was delighted with myself for being able to pass-on this information.

At this point I was outside Raytheon, where a large crowd had gathered in support of the women inside. The Police, frustrated that the 9 women had outmanoeuvred them, were trying to re-establish their authority by being heavy-handed. Then my phone rang. It was Helen Deery "I'm in here, ya dose!". The 9 women in there were not your usual suspects, your tie-died Citizen Smiths or your yoghurt knitters; they were 9 ordinary working class women of different ages and political experience!

Outside, the police arrested 5 people, assaulting one pregnant woman in the process. The media would do their usual job in focusing on the arrests instead of the occupation or the reasons for it. After 5 hours, the 9 women eventually emerged

to rapturous applause from the crowd, but only after securing an undertaking from the police that they would not be arrested or charged and that the police would instead investigate Raytheon for its complicity in Israeli war crimes.

No one seriously believes that the Police are going to go anywhere with that, but it allowed the women to make the point that it is the Raytheon Corporation and the likes of the Israeli State that are the real criminals in this world, not the ordinary people who fight back. Not bad for an afternoons work and an unplanned action by 9 women, I said. Not so, said Goretta Horgan of the DAWC, "We had planned it deliberately as 9 women, as a kind of follow-on from the Raytheon 9, who were all men, to show that women of all kinds can also take direct action".

The 9 women have since been told by the cops that a file has been sent to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) with a view to pressing charges for "burglary, criminal damage and common assault (!)" but all are well prepared to fight that, just as the Raytheon 9 fought and beat the charges against them. A great day then for direct action, for women's struggle, for anti-militarism, and for working class politics. More of this kind of stuff please!

Shane O'Curry

# This Strike is For Us All: Every Worker Must Be Out on March 30th

The national strike called by ICTU should be just the first day of action in what must become a strike wave across every sector until all pay cuts are withdrawn. The super-rich can shoulder the costs of their crisis themselves.

The bosses have spent months using the media to try and divide one set of workers from another and to set those still in jobs against the unemployed. They know that divided we are weak. March 30th is the moment we can throw that back in their face, a huge demonstration of class unity that can force them to back down or face the consequences.

An effective plan could consist of one day's action one week, followed by two days the following week, three days the week after.

The low paid Civil and Public Service Union gave a lead with their national strike on February 26th. Ballots have been taken by bus workers, civil servants, teachers; and all delivered a resounding vote for strike action.

Whatever we choose to do, we need to work out a strategy to win. Trade union leaders have sold us the myth of 'social partnership' for the last 21 years. We need to build an alternative sense of solidarity whereby workers across all unions support each other. The bosses are not our partners, our fellow workers can be.

The government will be happy enough if all we do is have protest marches and a one-day only strike. They won't even be too upset by isolated strike days in different jobs.

For this reason every worker should be out of work on March 30th, not just those in sectors directly affected and not even just those who are union members.

It is time for the trade union movement to stand up and defend the interests of working people as vigorously as the government and the state is defending the interests of the bankers and the employers. There are 600,000 union members,



together we can take the lead and close down the country. That is the sort of short, sharp action that can force them to withdraw the pay cuts.

On New Year's Day the SIPTU Executive said "In this our centenary year, we salute the courage, personal sacrifice, commitment and solidarity of the women and men who founded, built and sustained this great trade union. We are proud of the organisation of tens of thousands of men and women, the improvement of pay and conditions of work..."

"In solidarity with each other, the members of our Union have confronted exploitation and injustice and have sought to transform society so that all our people enjoy dignity and respect at work and in the community."

That's the sort of tradition we need to build on. Unfortunately, many senior union leaders don't see it like that. They are happy for us to "let off steam" and "make a point", all they want is a show of support so they can go back into talks in the hope of being given some small concession.

People like IMPACT's Peter McLoone with his €150,000 a year, plus €25,000 as chair of FAS, do not share the same interests as their members. That is why the top union officials on the ICTU executive can say, "workers did not create the problem, but will contribute to solving it..."

They accept the system as it is. They aren't

calling for a claw back of the €8 billion in tax breaks given to private for-profit hospitals, or for nationalising the Corrib gas field. Why? Would it be because they think that seizing wealth from the super-rich is going too far?

When ICTU was talking to the government about the 'Framework Agreement', they accepted the need for cuts. When Fianna Fail and the Greens proposed a pay cut of 10%, the ICTU delegation suggested a 'pension levy' as being more acceptable.

These people cannot be trusted. Taking back control of OUR unions is part and parcel of the fight to protect what we have won over the years.

Capitalism is failing us; once more it is dragging us all into a crisis not of our making. This crisis is deep and the recession is likely to last for several years. If we don't fight back, we might as well resign ourselves to ever decreasing incomes. If we don't start fighting to end the rule of the billionaires, we will never get away from the insecurity of the boom/slump cycle.

It is true that if we fight we may not win everything we want, there are a lot of illusions in the ICTU leaders and we have gone through two decades with little experience of struggle. It is absolutely certain, however, that if we don't fight we will win nothing.

**Alan MacSimoin**

Find out more. Check out [www.wsm.ie](http://www.wsm.ie)

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

# Clear as Crystal...

## Waterford Shows How to Fight



The workers at Waterford Crystal occupying the plant are an example to us all. Rather than accept the closure of the business, the loss of all the jobs and the destruction of the area's premier industry; workers seized the buildings making liquidation impossible for the receiver.

The receiver issued notice of job losses without first consulting the union as had been agreed. Hired heavies were shipped in to prevent the workers entering the building. With very little notice the shop stewards rallied as many of their members as possible and seized the plant against the aggressive antics of the "security men". They immediately set in place a rota to keep the furnace functioning and organised staffing for the occupation.

The working class of Waterford rallied to them and provided all forms of support. A quarter of

the population of the city attended a rally organised by the local Council of Trade Unions on February 12th.

The objectives of the workers are to keep the plant operating and protect the maximum number of jobs, insure the security of pensions and get decent redundancy payments for those being let go. Whilst some of the leadership of our unions have been talking 'partnership' with employers and government, others have been taking a more direct approach.

Waterford Crystal is a shining example of workers demonstrating the best practice of direct action and solidarity. They want other workers to imitate their example, we should all take a leaf out of their book.

James McBarron

## International Women's Day: Why We Celebrate on March 8th

There are a few ways in which International Women's Day can be approached. It can be ignored. This is what mostly happens in the mainstream media. Unlike Valentines Day and Mothers Day, cards aren't given and presents aren't bought. With no profit to be made out of it, the day is not exactly one that jumps out and grabs the attention.

International Women's Day is an expressly political day. In 1907 women sweatshop workers marched in New York and thus the first International Women's day was born. Often when women are celebrated it is because they are either cute (Valentine's Day) or caring (Mothers' Day).

There is nothing wrong with being cute or caring, but on International Women's day we get to highlight those of us who are politically active, those who are fighting for a better world, those who know that there can be a better world. I don't know their names but I know I have linked arms with women at Shannon Airport protesting against the war. I've

stood in front of bin lorries with women from the estate I live on. I have met women as we marched, leafleted, picketed and posters for the right to have an abortion on Irish soil.

There are many many ways in which life is difficult for women in Ireland, from our pay packets, to the fact that we get little support if we decide to have children and no support if we decide not to have children. We have to wait weeks (and sometimes months) for something as simple as the result of our smear tests. Like men we live in a country which can't provide housing, medical services, and security, basic human needs for all citizens. Yes there is a lot to be angry about and a lot to change.

Thankfully, many of us, like those women who marched in the cold 102 years ago, are not willing to make do with what we have been offered. International Women's day is a celebration of those women who make things better.

Aileen O'Carroll



Dublin Feminist Walking Tour 2008 - This year's tour takes place on Sunday 8th March.

## TV Review: Generation Kill

In Workers Solidarity 105 we reviewed David Simon's 'The Wire'. His follow on project 'Generation Kill' which features some of the same actors is a 7 episode series following the United States Marine Corps' 1st Reconnaissance Battalion during the invasion of Iraq. It's based on the book published by Rolling Stone journalist Evan Wright.

Apparently the show is pretty true to events in the book and this is probably part of the reason why it hasn't received the popular acclaim 'The Wire' did. There are no big stories beyond the backdrop of the invasion of Iraq itself. As in the real war, while Iraq's both military and civilians are slaughtered in large numbers the marines suffer almost no casualties. Their story is long hours of boredom as they drive through Iraq, broken by occasional firefights against an enemy they massively out equip and out train.

On paper the risks are greater, in particular when their officers order them on missions that would be suicidal if the Iraqi army had stood and fought. But the vast majority of Iraqi soldiers during the war had no wish to



die for Saddam and headed for the hills at the first opportunity.

In the first episode this reality is portrayed when the invading marines collect dozens of Iraqi soldiers who have abandoned their posts and are trying to walk out of the battle area. As in the war these 'prisoners' are abandoned as the marines are ordered

to push on despite the known presence of Saddam death squads in the area who are executing soldiers who abandon their posts.

This isn't an anti-war serial by any means. A supporter of the war could probably sit through it and enjoy the seeming invincibility of the marines as they slaughter their

way to Baghdad. But it does contain a critique of militarism, most openly expressed when one of the marines observes that if they behaved in the same way in civilian life they would go to prison.

The military is shown as a machine, the individual killing units are at first hard to distinguish from each other. Unquestioning obedience is central to discipline, even if those issuing the orders are idiots. As with 'The Wire', although many of the individual marines are deeply unpleasant characters performing terrible acts, including the murder of civilians for kicks, they are human despite this.

The closing scene suggests that on an individual level most of the marines are not comfortable with what they did during the invasion but there is no suggestion of a collective understanding developing. Much like 'The Wire' the sense is of a machine that will simply trundle on, chewing up people and making the same mistakes over and over.

Andrew Flood

That's  
*Capitalism*



Private, fee-paying schools for the wealthy received more than €100 million from the 26 county taxpayer last year. €99 million was spent on paying teachers' salaries, and a further €2.1 million on building works in 17 fee-paying schools in 2008. Blackrock College in Dublin tops the list, receiving €3.9 million. Other schools receiving more than €3 million in annual support include Kilkenny College (€3.5 million), St Andrew's College (€3.4 million), Belvedere College (€3.3 million) and Wesley College (€3.1 million). Most of the schools in receipt of this free taxpayers' cash charge fees of about €5,000 per year.

Thai authorities are accused of towing hundreds of migrants out to sea on barges without engines and abandoning them. Reports in the regional news media say that hundreds have died and Indian and Indonesian ships have rescued hundreds more, starving and dehydrated, after days adrift.

Every cent invested in the National Pensions Reserve Fund last year, all €1.69 billion of it, was lost on the stock markets yet the fund managers still took over €20 million in fees.

Of the \$15 billion US taxpayers' money given to Merrill Lynch/Bank of America, at least \$3 billion has been used to give bonuses to top executives.

The government's National Employment Rights Agency has revealed that of firms inspected in 2008 they found one in ten were paying less than the minimum wage. They also found that almost half were forcing staff to work longer hours than legally allowed. Lawbreaking was discovered in 85% of contract cleaning firms, 78% of hotels, 64% of shops and 62% of construction firms.

The United Nations Development Program estimates that everybody in the world could have access to basic social services, clean water, food, housing, health care and education, for \$80 billion per year. The seven richest people in the world have \$1.54 trillion between them.

# Thinking About Anarchism : Are We Irresponsible?

"People who got mortgages they can't afford to pay back were greedy and foolish and should suffer the consequences... They signed a free contract, they're adults and they have to take responsibility for their actions". This is the kind of thing that gets thrown around a lot in recessions. It conveniently ignores a few things.

The idea that getting a mortgage is voluntary comes from the same people who brought you privatisation and the financial markets. They like to call it a free and voluntary exchange. You exchange much of the work you will do for the next 30 years or so of your life for a home in which to live and one day own.

Your second option is to exchange much of that work for a home which you rent and will never own. Your third option is to live on the street. What you don't have is the freedom to put a roof over your head without making any exchange at all. And they expect us to be thankful for that 'freedom'?

We had no say in deciding that those should be the choices we get in life. We don't have the capital the banks have and we don't have the properties the landlord has. The only thing we have to exchange for a roof over our heads is our labour. It's easy for the banks and the landlords to preach to us about how sacred 'freedom of contract' is. They're the ones with the power to decide what your choices are going to be. It's a completely unequal bargaining position.

They will tell you that this is a coincidence. Or that those who own money and property got it through hard work and cleverness. We've now seen how the property developers and the bankers got their money and it had nothing



to do with their own hard work and less to do with brains.

They got it from people like us who wanted a home to live in. The top 10% of Americans own 90% of the wealth. Ireland's not far behind. In other words, they own the houses we need to rent and the money we need to buy them. If you're in the 90%, the only choices you have are those the 10% choose to give you. That's no coincidence.

Real freedom means having a say in the decisions that affect your life. You have no real say in whether or not you'll have a job tomorrow. You have no real say in how you get somewhere to live. If you lose your job because of

an economy that you can't control then you have no control over whether or not you also lose your home.

The ones who do have control of your choices were the ones who were cheerleading the property bubble up in the first place. Now they're blaming the workers who followed their advice. The wealthy are playing an old game but we don't need to fall for their distraction tactics. The only way we will get control of our lives back is if we refuse to take the bait by turning on each other.

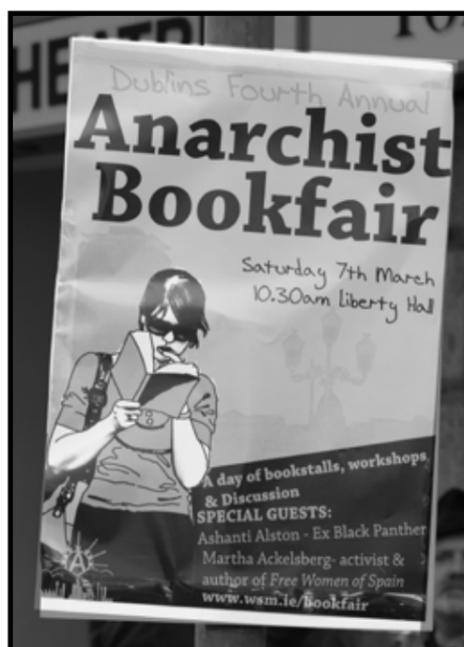
Lucy Parsons

## Anarchism & the WSM

**In February, the WSM continued its series of public meetings about why capitalism is in crisis and why working people should refuse to make sacrifices to benefit the rich. Limerick and Bray were the latest xxxxx. We will be continuing our efforts to spread anarchist ideas in this vein over the coming months, with meetings planned for Drogheda, Galway, Derry, Navan, Tralee, Tipperary and Ballina. Also, our next radio show will be appearing on NEAR 90.3 FM, a Dublin community radio station, in the near future.**

The WSM made its presence felt in a number of protests in early January against the Israeli assault on Gaza. We also supported the anti-fees protest organised by third-level students in February, with a number of our student members active in FEE (Free Education for Everyone), a campaigning group in the universities.

In a leaflet produced by the WSM for the education protests, we argued that "we need to build a national campaign that can fight the battle to prevent cuts at all levels of education, to demand more, not less, investment in our children's future, to stop the further limitation of access to third-level and, ultimately, to push to improve the entire education system." With this in mind, we held a meeting in late February aiming to establish an education workers libertarian socialist network.



In Belfast, WSM members participated in pickets of Subway after management sacked a pregnant migrant worker. The Belfast branch also held its inaugural 'day school' in February, with talks on the history of anarchism and how we can fight the recession.

Meanwhile, we have seen the first signs of workers taking direct action with the occupation of the Waterford Glass plant. Our Cork branch visited the factory to offer their sup-

port and released a statement, an extract of which is quoted below.

"In the last while there has been an unprecedented assault on our living standards. Huge numbers of us have been put out of jobs or put on short time; we have been told bluntly 'Take a pay cut or your job is gone'. Our union leadership has reacted to this with offers of talks and with appeals for calm. While doing this they have leaned over backwards to meet the demands of the bosses and the Government. Against this scenario, the Waterford Glass workers have said NO MORE. The time for talking with your hands tied behind your back are over! Workers did not create this crisis and they sure aren't going to pay the huge price that is being asked to solve it!"

Internationally, as the global recession deepens, there have been signs of increased resistance by working people; with riots in Latvia, Lithuania and Bulgaria. There was a general strike in France, while the government fell in Iceland. As the economic situation worsens in Ireland, our members remain active in their unions, student organisations, communities and campaign groups to try and fight back against the impoverishment and violence that continues to be imposed on us and our class by our rulers. We need you to join us in this fight.