

WORKERS SOLIDARITY

November / December 2010

Twenty-Seven Years of Irish Anarchist News

1% of the Population 34% of the Wealth

Countless walking tours make their way around Dublin daily; generally educating the masses of tourists on the lives lived on these streets before us. It was a different kind of walking tour, comprising around 200 people, that hit the streets around Stephen's Green on October 9th last.

Grainne Griffith

The '1% Political Walking Tour through the Heartland of the Golden Circle', organised by the One Percent Network, was not about the battles of yesteryear or the celebrities of yore. Rather, it set out to both highlight the shocking statistics behind wealth distribution in Ireland and to name and shame individuals who are living in decadent mansions in Dublin 2 & 4, while their debts are bought out by NAMA since the poor darlings can't afford to pay them back. One amongst them was Johnny Ronan, one of the co-owners of Treasury Holdings. Better known for his romantic exploits with celebrity models, Johnny has been building up a considerable bill for Irish tax payers to pay off.

Also stopping at the houses of Dermot Desmond and Tony O'Reilly, as well as the private banking headquarters of Anglo Irish Bank and Bank of Ireland, this tour side-stepped the Dail and Department of Finance and instead brought the public to the houses and institutions where real wealth lies. According to those financial experts, the Bank of Ireland, 1% of the Irish population own 34% of the wealth in our society, figures at odds with the 'accepted' truth that we're all broke. Clearly some people are not broke at all, quite the opposite in fact.

The Workers Solidarity Movement is centrally involved in the organisation of the One Percent Network, which was initiated by a



number of left wing groups in the aftermath of many less than successful marches and rallies initiated by unions, political organisations and lobby groups. Protests have for a long time been directed at the central political institutions in this country and, while the rationale behind this tactic is clear, they have failed to show any real results. We have not seen any retreat by the Government in its policies of increased cutbacks across public services. For a lot of people, this seems to have left them with a sense of powerlessness and disillusionment. So, maybe the time has come to question our tactics, to go back to the drawing board and look for new and inventive ways to ensure that our position, and that of most people in society, is heard.

On September 29th, an indebted builder drove a cement truck, painted with 'Toxic Bank Anglo', to the gates of the Dail. Morning radio was electrified and a facebook group entitled 'A really big thank you to the driver of the cement truck at the Dail' reached over 18,000 members within a couple of days. Speakers at

the One Percent Walking Tour asked the participants to question their own position on the crisis and ask themselves what they were willing to do to be heard. Would they be willing to carry out further actions or support a general strike, what do they think needs to be done? We all need to ask ourselves the same question.

The One Percent Network is keen to avoid the usual marches and rallies and thus will continue its campaign with a Halloween Treasure Hunt in Ballsbridge. Further events will be planned around the Budget. If you would like to get involved you can contact the Workers Solidarity Movement for more information or you can contact the One Percent Network directly by emailing onepercentnetwork@gmail.com

Find out more at:
www.onepercentnetwork.org



Brazilian Democracy

Lula's 'Workers Party' goes to the polls.



Made in Dagenham

A review of the film of the 1968 car factory strike.



Attacks on Dole

An interview with a worker at the coalface, trying to help the unemployed.

Democracy in Brazil



As this issue of *Workers Solidarity* goes to print, Brazil is about to elect a new president. After eight years, the Workers' Party (PT) incumbent, Lula, must step down. His chosen successor, Dilma Rousseff, is poised to become Brazil's first female president, as she holds a 46.9% to 32.6% lead over her closest rival after the first round of voting. Rousseff is a former urban guerrilla who was tortured by the western-backed military dictatorship (1964-1985) before throwing her lot in with electoral politics, joining the PT in 2000.

Alan Morkan

Lula's term as president is held up by some as one of social and economic progress. Official unemployment has dropped from over 11% to 6.9%, while cumulative per capita GDP growth has been 23% compared to just 3.5% for the preceding term. Also, according to the UN, poverty levels have fallen. Much of this economic growth has been due to China's appetite for foodstuffs and iron ore boosting Brazil's exports along with discoveries of offshore oil fields.

However, despite this economic growth, forty million people still live below the poverty line. 1.6% of the landowners still control almost half of the land on which crops can be grown. While inequality still abounds at home, Brazil leads the 9,000-member UN military and police force (MINUSTAH) that has occupied

Haiti since June 2004. The role of MINUSTAH is effectively to suppress any attempts by social movements to achieve equality and democracy, while opening the country to further sweatshops, as has been outlined in previous issues of *Workers Solidarity*. (REFS)

One of the social movements that had helped bring Lula to power was the MST (Landless Peasants Movement). It is the largest in Latin America, with an estimated 1.5 million members organised in 23 out of Brazil's 26 states. Fighting for the redistribution of land, one of its main tactics is land occupations, a form of struggle that has been harshly repressed by the Workers' Party government, despite the MST always calling for a vote for the PT.

The murder of Elton Brum da Silva during a police operation to remove landless families from a farm in Rio Grande do Sul was an example of this. This repression quickly spread. The Anarchist Federation of Gaúcha, who work within and alongside the MST, were active in a campaign to bring the police murderers of Elton to justice, accusing the Governor, Yeda Crusius, of brushing the issue under the carpet. For this, their offices were raided in Porto Alegre on October 29th last year, with most of their documents, computer hard disks, posters, etc. being seized. Six anarchist activists were arrested. Due to it being an election year, the trial has been postponed since July. It is due to now take place in December. The WSM calls for solidarity with our anarchist comrades, against the state repression of Lula's so-called "Workers" Party.

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Revolutionary Anarcha-Feminist Group (RAG)

PO BOX 10785, Dublin 1.

<http://ragdublin.blogspot.com/>

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>

Solidarity Books

Cork Radical Bookshop & Meeting Space

43 Douglas Street, Cork.

solidaritybooks@gmail.com

Just Books

Belfast Radical Bookshop

13-15 Clarence Street, Belfast.

justbooks@rocketmail.com

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>

Residents Against Racism

Opposing racism and deportations.

24 hour helpline: 087 666 2060

Cork Palestine Link

Part of the Free Gaza Movement that is sending a convoy of aid to Gaza.

palestinecork@gmail.com

086 337 8146

Irish Palestine Solidarity Campaign

01-6770253 | info@ipsc.ie

<http://www.ipsc.ie>

Sacking of Socialist Nurse Overturned



Yunus Baksh - sacked for his Trade Union activity

Yunus Baksh, a psychiatric nurse from the north east of England has won a four year battle against his bosses. Sadly his union, the public service giant UNISON, was about as much use as a tailor in a nudist camp. This should be of interest to the 39,000 workers in Northern Ireland who are in Unison.

Joe King

Yunus had a 23-year spotless record in nursing. What annoyed his employer, the local NHS trust, was his union activity and radical views. He was the union branch secretary and also a member of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP).

Just before his suspension from work he had really pissed off management by publicising their large salary increases while at the same time leading a campaign to stop the closure of a local care home. In 2006 he was suspended, but management refused to give any clear reason. They later claimed they were acting on "anonymous allegations of

bullying and intimidation" at a staff meeting.

Four months after this his own union, who he expected to defend him, suspended him from membership. They alleged he had been using the union branch office for SWP activities.

It was subsequently discovered that the allegations against Yunus came from two other members of his union branch, Peter and Kerry Cafferty. Were they credible complainants? Peter is chair of the union's health division in northern England. However his wife, Kerry, had some interesting stuff on her Facebook page. She was a member of groups like 'No more asylum-seekers in Britain' and 'Make Britain Great Again'. There was also a photo of the couple giving nazi salutes.

The nazi website Stormfront was even more informative. There were postings about the allegations, but these appeared before any complaint had been made. They were going after Yunus because of anti-fascist leaflets the union branch planned to distribute. His home was daubed with racist

graffiti and his windows broken. The British National Party also hated him for his role in getting a fascist sacked in 2005.

Under attack from his employer and badly let down by the union he had served for decades, and a disciplinary process that dragged on for nearly two years, Yunus sank into depression. He was too ill to attend his final hearing. His doctors asked for an adjournment but this was refused and he was sacked.

In the meantime head office closed down the union branch. Members who showed support for Yunus were shouted down by union officials. Management were over the moon and began imposing changes on the workforce. Correctly, they saw that a union which would not defend its own activists was hardly likely to stand up to that same management.

In August of this year Yunus won his claim for unfair dismissal. He also won a claim for discrimination as the hearing where his sacking was decided went ahead in his absence despite his being too ill to attend. The employment tribunal found him a "straight-forward and credible witness". The NHS trust's head of Human Resources, Elizabeth Lathem was deemed "not credible". It was revealed that she had met in secret with a Unison regional officer, Elizabeth Twist, to discuss the sacking. The tribunal asked whether the NHS trust "found in Twist and Unison an ally and a shared sense of purpose to remove the claimant?"

There is something very wrong when union officials collaborate with an employer to rid themselves of a militant trade unionist. Yunus is calling for an independent investigation into his expulsion from the union.



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

Attacks on Welfare Continue

We spoke with Vincent O'Malley, a community sector employee who advises and advocates for social welfare applicants and recipients, about the effect the recession is having on the operation of the social welfare system.

WS: What changes have you noticed in how the Department of Social Protection is functioning?

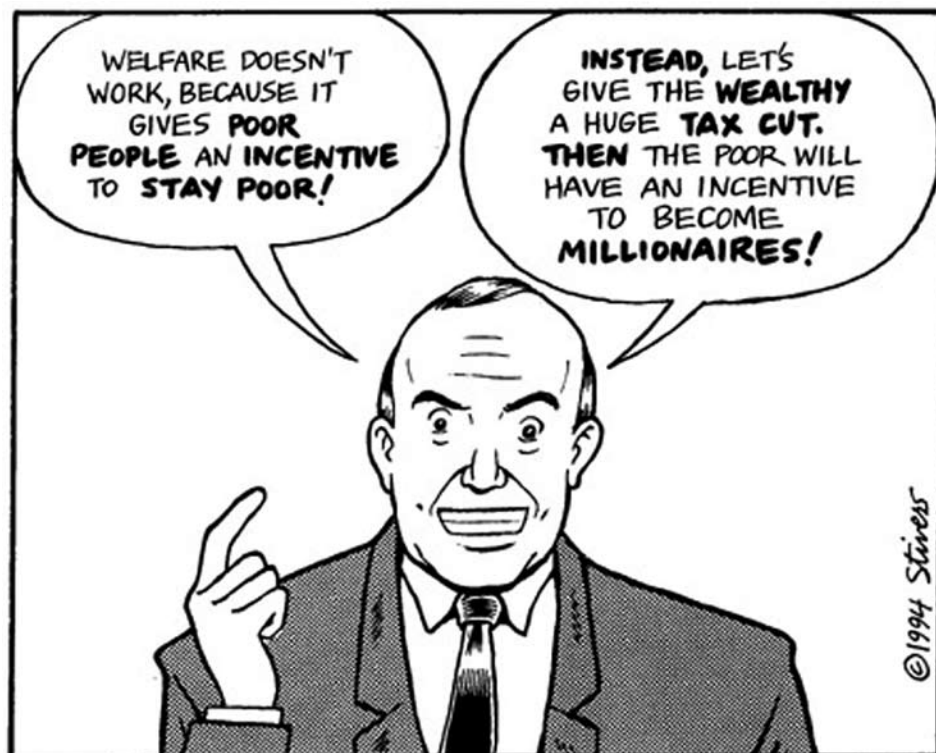
As has been well publicised, there have been long delays in processing welfare payments and there have been both cuts in the rates of welfare payments and changes in the qualifying criteria for payments. These delays have eased somewhat but there has been a large increase in the number of disallowed claims. This has moved the bottleneck elsewhere, namely the social welfare appeals office. So there are now huge delays in processing and hearing appeals, up to fifteen months in some cases. Also, away from the spotlight, the Department of Social Protection (DSP) has been taking a number of other measures to cut welfare.

WS: How has this affected welfare applicants?

There has been a huge increase in the number of social welfare claims being refused on the grounds that the applicant does not satisfy the Habitual Residency Condition (HRC), which basically means that the applicant has to prove that their "centre of interest" is Ireland. This is a somewhat nebulous concept and the guidelines that the DSP use are open to interpretation. However the HRC has been in place since May 2004 and has been implemented more or less consistently and generally quite fairly.

Towards the end of last year, management conducted what they somewhat euphemistically called "training" on the HRC in social welfare local offices throughout the country. From speaking to staff in social welfare offices, I am aware that this "training" essentially consisted of edicts from on high to increase the number of refusals on HRC grounds.

So, I have a variety of cases of clients who have been refused welfare payments on HRC grounds, amongst them people who have been living in Ireland for up to ten years, who have substantial work records in Ireland, who have extensive family connections in Ireland, who have children who are Irish citizens and have no intention of living anywhere else but Ireland. The HRC condition also affects returning Irish emigrants, with, for example, over 200 people



who have returned to care for a sick relative being refused carers' allowance, as has also been covered in the mainstream media.

The HRC condition is now being implemented unfairly and incorrectly, mostly as a result of a change of policy in the Department. However, I have had the odd DSP employee advise me that the decision has been made on the grounds that, as far as they are concerned, "these people are not welcome here."

WS: What about in other areas of welfare supports?

There have been other cuts by stealth, such as in the case of rent supplement payments for separated people. In the past, community welfare officers, who administer these payments, would have generally approved a rent supplement payment to a separated person with shared custody of a child for accommodation suitable for that individual to have their child stay overnight. However, in general, they are now insisting that a legal separation agreement is in place before approving such payments, forcing couples, who may have made amicable, voluntary arrangements, to go through the family court system. In one of my cases, the judge refused to issue a court order for a family who had a voluntary arrangement in place, presumably on the somewhat legitimate grounds of wasting the courts' time, which left them in a catch 22 situation.

WS: What about those who have appealed the decision to disallow their welfare claim?

The problems in the appeals office are compounded by the fact that, whether intentionally or due to the large volume of work facing staff in the DSP, a large part of the delay is due to the files not being passed on to the appeals office, which is required before an appeals officer can deal with the case.

Furthermore, in the past, those who have appealed a decision have almost always been granted an oral hearing if requested. Statistically, there is a much better chance of winning your appeal in this case as you and an advocate get an opportunity to present your case and sometimes question the officer who made the decision. However, appeals officers have now been instructed to make a decision on written submissions only wherever possible. People with literacy problems and some other disabilities find it much harder to make cogent arguments in writing. Also, the opportunity to rebut the submission of the social welfare officer who made the decision is generally lost. While we don't have statistics to hand as yet, it is my guess that there will be a large increase in the number of appeals lost as a result.



Last year the Exchequer lost €7.4bn as a result of the tax break regime, over three times the EU average. According to the government’s own Economic and Social Research Institute, 80% of the tax relief available on pension contributions goes to the wealthiest 20% of earners.

Have you ever woken up in the middle of the night with a strong craving for... gold? You can satisfy that craving any time you want, day or night, with a gold-dispersing machine. Gold to Go machines are already in use in the Emirates Palace Hotel in Abu Dhabi, several spots in Germany, at the Westin Palace hotel in Madrid and the International Airport near Milan, Italy.

In the last ten years there have been 3,183 people brought to court for welfare fraud, adding up to €43 million. Forty-eight of these were jailed for a total of twelve years. At the same time there were only 39 prosecutions for tax evasion amounting to €2.25 billion. This saw six people jailed for a total of three years and nine months.

Peter Sutherland has been sounding off about how the cuts in pay, pensions, education and health should be even more severe. And why not, it won’t affect him. The global businessman, Fine Gael veteran and former EU Commissioner is chairman of Goldman Sachs International, vice-chair of the European Round Table of Industrialists and director of companies in Germany, Turkey and China. His personal wealth is estimated at €128 million. But that doesn’t stop this scrounger picking up an annual pension of €51,138 as a former Attorney General of Ireland.

One retired boss from the Central Bank is getting a pension of over €205,000 a year. Three others pick up more than €155,000 each. Bank governor Patrick Honohan has said “pay cuts are essential”, but presumably not for him and his class.

The Revenue Commissioners’ analysis for 2008 showed that 189 rich individuals with an annual income of €500,000, or more, paid an average tax rate of just 19.86%. Of 234 individuals earning between €250,000 and €500,000:

- 54 paid tax at a rate of 0% - 5%
- 34 paid tax at a rate of 5% - 10%,
- 145 paid tax at a rate of 10% - 20%,
- Just 1 individual paid tax at 20%
- None of them paid tax at a rate in excess of 25%

www.anarchistblackcat.org



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

Thinking About Anarchism: Dual Organisation

The society we live in is a long way off the kind of society that anarchists advocate. So the question that anyone interested in creating a better society has to answer is: how best to act for positive change? The question of how anarchists should organise is one that has been debated over and over. It is clear that anarchism, rooted in ideals of equality, freedom and democracy, needs to adopt organisational practices which foster rather than stifle these ideals.

Bob Kavanagh

Anarchists need to form their own organisations on the basis of a common vision. Acting in isolation, there is little one can achieve. However, it is important for any group that anarchists form to base itself on a shared conception of what they stand for, where they want to go and how they want to get there. Otherwise, there is not enough in common to allow the group to act coherently. Within these specifically anarchist organisations, members can share their experiences and perspectives and thereby refine their political ideas. Such an organisation also allows for collective action, based on a democratic decision making processes. Thus, anarchists can act more effectively by combing their efforts rather than acting in isolation.

How then would an anarchist group such

as this relate to other organisations of the working class, such as trade unions, community groups or campaigns? These are actually two very different entities. The specifically anarchist organisation is a political group based on a shared ideology, while other groups such as those mentioned above are born out of immediate conditions; all workers in a certain industry for example, or all people living in a certain area. The latter type of organisation will by its very nature be composed of people with different politics and ideas. These are the mass organisations that will be at the forefront of struggle, and naturally anarchists belong to these bodies as well.

Within the Left in general, there are many different conceptions of how a political group should relate to mass organisation. Some favour entering these groups with a view to acquiring positions of power for their members, thus allowing their small political group to dictate the actions of the larger group by direct control over decision making. Others see the wider organisations merely as a pool of potential recruits; in other words, the struggle you’re engaged in is unimportant as long as we get a few new members out of it! Anarchists reject such approaches as undemocratic and authoritarian. Indeed, such manipulative tactics are totally counterproductive for the development of a socialist society, even if they are carried out with the best of intentions. Their use has led to a deep distrust by many people of political groups, and a fear of “infiltration”.

Anarchism & the WSM

As the economic crisis goes from bad to worse, we have been active in a variety of efforts to resist the attacks on our living conditions. Together with Éirígí, Seomra Spraoi social centre and the Irish Socialist Network, we organised the One Percent Network walking tour and Halloween treasure hunt. We also helped organise a demonstration on the reopening of the Dail on 29th September, in conjunction with a Europe-wide day of action against austerity called by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). 100,000 attended a similar protest held in Brussels while a general strike in Spain on the same day brought most of the country to a standstill.

At a more local level, we attended a community sector forum in Liberty Hall organised by the unions to fight cuts in community services and were present at the “Claiming Our Future” conference held in the RDS in Dublin on October 30th. Finally, we were amongst those protesting warmonger Tony Blair’s book signing in Dublin, which persuaded him to cancel two similarly planned events in the UK.

In July we reported on the Northern Ireland bill which would have criminalised protests of over fifty people unless they gave police at least thirty-seven days notice. We are happy to report that, after a short campaign by trades unions and community groups, this part of the Assemblies and Parades bill has been withdrawn. Before it was scrapped we had



the farcical sight of Sinn Fein members joining protests against a bill drawn up by a joint Sinn Fein and DUP committee at Stormont, and introduced by a Sinn Fein and DUP coalition Executive.

Within the WSM, twenty of our members attended a successful educational weekend in Tipperary, where we discussed strategies for continuing the struggle for anarchism as

Our view is that when we join a mass organisation like a union or campaigning group, we argue openly within that group for the value of our ideas and approaches, such as a focus on democratic decision making, self management and organisation, and direct action rather than reliance on politicians and other “leaders”. Of course, we also take part in the activity of the mass organisation just like everyone else; it’s not all about preaching! What we hope is that anarchist ideas will become popular within the wider membership by virtue of their effectiveness. This is sometimes referred to as being a “leadership of ideas” as opposed to just trying to take over the official roles and make decisions on behalf of everybody else.

We see the roles of the specific anarchist organisation and the mass organisation to be mutually enriching. If you have a political organisation which doesn’t participate in mass struggle and stays inward looking, then it is completely useless. Not only are you talking to no-one but yourself, but your ideas are likely to be well off the mark, as they have not been tested in practice. Groups like this condemn themselves to irrelevancy in the class struggle. As for the mass organisations, without a healthy injection of revolutionary thinking, it is easy to fall into opportunism and adopt a narrow focus. This often leads them into compromise with their enemy, and can often result in “winning the battle but losing the war”. A classic example of this was the adoption of social partnership in this country, based on the notion that the capitalist class and the working class had shared interests, and were all in it together somehow; a notion which was shown for the nonsense it is when things got tough and as always, the majority were made to suffer while the rich are protected from all harm.

well as the practical skills required in running our organisation and other campaigns. In the south, our Cork branch continues to operate Solidarity Books on Douglas St, which aims to spread the anarchist message in the city. A successful fundraiser for the bookshop, “Chaos Cabaret”, was held in September while we continue to participate in the anarchist forum, an open discussion group, in Cork.

Also, the Cork branch is running a weekly series of talks on radical and revolutionary politics and history during October and November:

- 19th October - Tadhg Barry & Revolutionary Cork (1907-1921)
- 26th October - The Lost Revolution
- 2nd November - The Spanish Revolution
- 9th November - Labour Militancy (1917-1923)
- 23rd November - The Land War
- 30th November - Kropotkin: The Anarchist Prince

With governments North and South now lecturing us on the need for four years of further cuts, we need as many people as possible to join the various campaigns against such measures if we are to maintain any type of civilised society on this island. WSM members are committed to being involved in this process and, if you are also, then we would love to hear from you.

Speeches from the 1% March

The Shelbourne (Louise Minihan)

We had two reasons for starting at this spot. The first was that, as many of you will know because you were here, this is where the anti-capitalist blocs marched from in the Spring in reaction to the Gardai attacks on people protesting at the bank bailouts at Anglo Irish Bank just down the street and at the Dail. The Guards also tried unsuccessfully to stop the first bloc marching.

The second though is directly related to the tour. Scattered around here are a few of the places where the 1% like to hang out and do their dodgy business. Down the road you have the Stephen's Green Hibernian Club which calls itself 'Ireland's Premier Private Member's Club' and boasts "strong networking opportunities with over 1,500 members encompassing industry pioneers, leaders and professionals from Ireland and abroad." Members have included Peter Sutherland, Irish Times editor Conor Brady, Judge Declan Costello and aviation millionaire Ulick McEvaddy.

Back in 2002 membership was €952 a year but don't rush off to join, you have to find an existing member to propose you first. If you are what they call 'new money' then Residence across the street here may be more suitable. Membership was €1600 a year in 2008 but has now been cut to €850. If you've had a good day at NAMA may I recommend a bottle of Saint Estèphe, Château Cos d'Estournel 1990 for €561? That's just under €100 euro a glass, depending on how

much of a gulper you are. So if you do save up a week and a half wages for a bottle, remember to sip slowly and savour the experience.

Also just around the corner is the Kildare Street Club - membership was apparently "over a grand" in 2008. Also here is the Shelbourne hotel where in 2008, thirteen businessmen paid €65,000 for a dinner with Brian Cowen. The 13 included Brian O'Farrell, one of the six people named as part of the ten strong Anglo Golden Circle, he described the dinner as "just like a normal chat"

71 Merrion Square (Bernie Hughes)

This house was bought by Dermot Desmond in 2000 for €6 million. He is estimated to be worth more than €2 billion and is ranked 6th on the Irish Independent's Irish Rich List. He's a tax exile in Gibraltar but, despite this, in 2008 he was offered the Chair of AerLingus.

He was a very strong 'financial supporter' and friend of the corrupt Charlie Haughey and paid €95,000 to have his yacht repaired, which he described at the Moriarty Tribunal as "an insignificant financial matter" but he claimed never to have witnessed any corrupt practises.

At around the same time, in April 1989, Desmond reached an agreement with the Johnston Mooney & O'Brien liquidator to buy their bakery site in Ballsbridge, Dublin for £4 million. The property was sold to a firm called Chestvale in September 1989.



In January 1990 Desmond told semi-state firm Telecom Eireann that the best price he could get for the site was £9.4 million. Telecom agreed to pay this amount. He rejected all suggestions that he owned a company called Freezone, which was registered in the Isle of Man tax haven. It provided much of the financing for the purchase of the property and received £1.3 million in profit. A report for the Department of Industry and Commerce, hotly contested by Desmond, found that the financier was among those who made over £5 million from the sale of the Ballsbridge property. According to this report, Desmond was secretly behind the company that sold the site to Telecom Eireann and was at the same time acting as an adviser to Telecom chairman Michael Smurfit, who was buy-

ing the site on behalf of the semi-state company. The report concluded that Smurfit was unaware of Desmond's "involvement".

Desmond is widely credited with being the inspiration behind the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC). In 1996 he bought Baltimore Technologies for £300,000 and then sold most of his shares before the dot com crash, walking away with £50 million profit. Crashes are often not as bad for the super rich as they have access to the information that allows them to get out first, often with huge profits that they then reinvest once prices have crashed. So in the last couple of years the global number of billionaires has in fact risen. Desmond pulled the same trick with Greencore in 2006.

Review: Made in Dagenham

If you like 'feel good' films this is for you. Leaving a cinema feeling both entertained and optimistic is rare enough, and this film scores highly on both points.

Alan MacSimóin

In 1968 there were 55,000 working at Ford's massive plant in east London. One of them is machinist Rita O'Grady, who makes seat covers with 156 other women at the Dagenham factory. Thinking that women won't cause trouble, management regrades them as 'unskilled'.

However Ford got it very wrong. Rita, encouraged by shop steward Albert (Bob Hoskins), decides that women should be paid the same as men. On one side are her fellow workers, on the other are not only the factory management, but Ford's American top brass (The West Wing's Richard Schiff) who threaten to pull out of England rather than concede equality.

The Dagenham women's strike is one of the lesser-known events of 1968. Compared with the events of Paris, the civil rights movement in the North or the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, it hardly seemed a big story at the time. But it gave a boost to other women workers and to the early women's liberation movement, which led to an, admittedly inadequate, equal pay law a few years later.

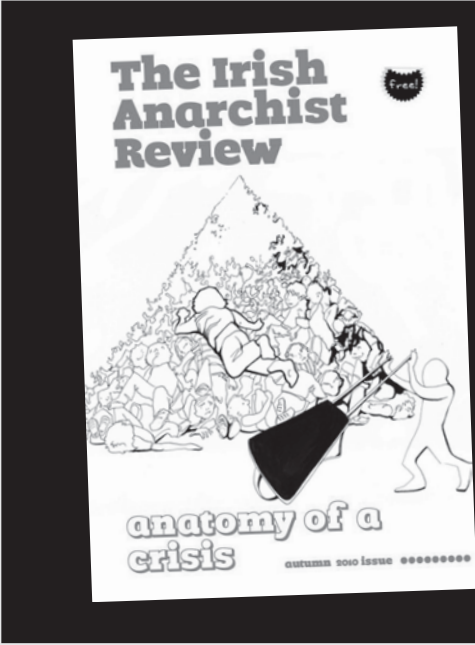
Rita and her workmates spent three weeks on strike and won 92% of their claim. Showing how committed capitalism is to equality, it took another two decades for their claim



to be paid in full.

We don't usually learn it in school but much of what we take for granted was won through workers' struggles. That's how we got paid holidays, the 40-hour week, equal pay and more. It's a myth that equal pay came courtesy of the European Union. Yes, the Treaty of Rome does say that women should be paid the same as men for work of equal value, but that didn't stop both Labour and Tory governments in Britain from stalling equal pay until the 1980s. In Ireland it took a national strike by night telephone operators to stop the government from 'postponing' equal pay.

If you liked Bend It With Beckham or the Full Monty, this is definitely one to watch.



Irish Anarchist Review

The Workers Solidarity Movement is very pleased to announce the second issue of The Irish Anarchist Review. This magazine is dedicated to understanding the contemporary political, economic and social situation that confronts us, and finding ways to advance alternatives.

Contact us with your postal address if you would like to receive a copy or download a PDF from <http://www.wsm.ie/c/irish-anarchist-review-2>

Money for Nothing

It's difficult to open a newspaper or turn on the TV news without hearing some 'expert' tell us that we have to "reassure the bondholders" that pay is being kept down and cuts are being made to health, social welfare and public service jobs.

These bondholders are institutions that lend money to the Irish government at guaranteed rates of interest, currently 6.5%. The top lender is the Bank of Scotland, followed closely by Bank of Ireland and AIB.

The taxpayers of Ireland have already had €7 billion taken from them and put into the two Irish banks. Now these banks are lending that money back to the government at higher rates of interest.

solidaritybooks



43 Douglas St., Cork

Solidarity Books is a radical bookshop in Cork open for the past year. It has a wide selection of books on anarchism, socialism and Irish history. It also holds regular radical film nights and is a meeting space for progressive groups in the city. It is run by WSM.