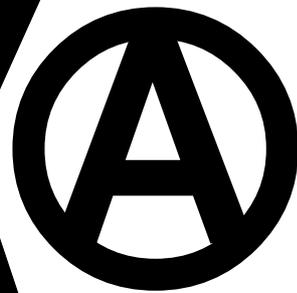


# resistance

## anarchist bulletin

Issue 8  
Ireland  
Free/Donation



# ARGIE BARGIE

THE ARGENTINEAN STATE is on the brink of collapse following the explosion of mass class anger over the last few weeks. A series of continuing protests, demos, occupations and outbreaks of looting has left politicians of all parties, judges, cops and bureaucrats fearing not only for their own personal safety but also for the future of the state itself. At the last count over 30 people had been killed, hundreds injured and five Presidents sworn in over the last few weeks.

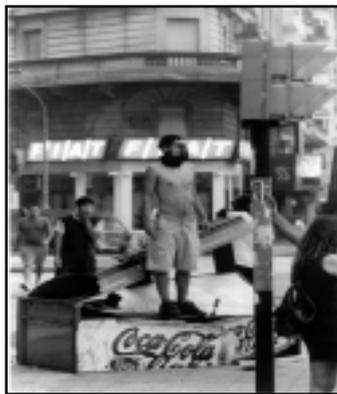
### Roots of Uprising

The uprising had been a long time coming. Argentina has been a favourite and faithful follower of the International Monetary Funds' (IMF) Structural Adjustment Programs which aggressively cut back on social spending in favour of tax cuts for business, whilst exporting billions in debt repayments. Argentina currently owes \$150 billion. The spark that ignited the current wave of rebellions was the imposition of restrictions on cash withdrawals from banks and savings companies as a result of the IMF's granting of \$1.3 billion to cover falls in tax revenue. This resulted in workers not receiving their wages and the 50% of the economy that is irregular and cash based (street traders, etc.) losing their scarce income. Overnight, poverty came to a majority of the population, and those already in poverty faced starvation. It was only a matter of time before working class anger exploded.

### Battle of The Plaza de Mayo

The insurrection that followed has been seen around the world, giving just a small indication of the anger that is building up in the IMF countries, this will surely not be the last. On the morning of 20 December thousands of people made their way towards the Congress Square to demand that President De la Rúa follow his Economic Minister and resign. The crowds were banging pots and pans (cacerolazo), chanting slogans against all politicians, and demanding an end to debt

repayments. The sheer anger and volatility of the crowd left De la Rúa with little option but to resign. Tensions rose further with the arrival of people from the outlying shanty towns, (the Villas de la Miseria) who came prepared to use their traditional tactic of piquetora, blockading and occupying motorways and buildings. The large supermarkets were now being looted by the starving.



### Sticking The Boot In

As we've seen in similar cases, working class solidarity was very apparent with people fetching food for elderly people and those who did not want to risk defying the 35 000 cops now on duty. Piles of nappies and baby food were placed on corners for parents to take. Hundreds of barricades were erected, banks and multinationals were completely destroyed, and very many were set alight. The cops ran out of rubber bullets and began using live rounds, motorqueros (people on motorbikes) formed a people's cavalry and charged at the police. The battle lasted seven hours and left 26 dead. Similar class rage was being expressed all over the country.

### What Now?

The Argentinean state has clearly lost all legitimacy in the eyes of the working class and not just in Argentina. The recent takeover of the Argentinian Embassy in London where a red and black flag was raised is a sign of the kind of direct

action anarchists everywhere need to be using to highlight the misery endured by all as a result of the IMF and WTO. The left are working feverishly to contain and curb the revolutionary urges of a class in revolt, calling for an end to the looting, the formation of a constituent assembly, union power, all the failed bourgeois crap of the last century - and this whilst the proletariat is actively engaged in insurrection!!!

A further danger is that politicians will try to recuperate the anger into a national defence against the IMF, to get people to rally around Argentina. This is already apparent with national flags starting to appear at protests. This nationalist scapegoating must be avoided at all costs since it refuses to bear in mind that the state is split along class lines. ★

## CLASS ATTACK!

THE RECENT UPSURGE of attacks against health workers and emergency services staff is indicative of how much the working class in the north is coming under attack from sectarianism. The murder of postal worker Daniel McColgan brought tens of thousands of protesters onto the streets.

For far too long the working class, exploited in the workplace by fat cat capitalism, have lived under the yoke of paramilitarism of one form or another. Sectarianism, like the religions that spawn it, serves to keep the class divided, thus catering to the needs of the bosses and the state. Meanwhile, in N. Belfast, politicians, fearful of losing votes, remain quiet at the increasingly orchestrated violence there. ★



Ever thought of communicating with radicals around the world on an equal footing?

Why not learn Esperanto, the International Language? For more info, email: [satireland@yahoo.ie](mailto:satireland@yahoo.ie)

For more info about anarchism in Ireland, check out: [rebelweb@cjb.net](mailto:rebelweb@cjb.net)



## THE OUTDOOR RELIEF STRIKE

IRELAND HAS NEVER BEEN REGARDED as a hotbed of working-class militancy. All too often the focus has been on the actions of loyalists and republicans, and the sectarian conflict that has overshadowed the few instances of workers' unity that have occurred throughout the 20th century.

The AFI feel that as class struggle anarchists it is part of the revolutionary process to publicise our true history: not our history as nationalists or republicans, but as oppressed workers.

A major landmark in working class history is the 1932 Outdoor Relief Strike in Belfast, in which people from the Falls and the Shankill fought together against the unionist government and the police.

When the Wall St. Crash occurred, Northern Ireland's economy was hit harder than most countries as its principal industries felt the effects of capitalism's customary downward spiral. 100,000 in the north lost their jobs. Only 42,710 were receiving benefits, and the rest had to survive on partial benefits or nothing at all. Many thousands who were unemployed were simply not registered, while some married men were able to apply for outdoor work, like road building, to earn the bare necessity with which to feed their families.

Due to the poverty (which hit the working class of Belfast hardest of all) outbreaks of TB were commonplace and basic items like food, clothes, and fuel were in short supply. Protest and organisation spread in both the north and south of Ireland. In Belfast, demands made by the Outdoor Relief Workers Committee for an increase in relief rates and abolition of task work were rejected by the Stormont government.

As a result, a strike was called in October and the third around 30-40,000 people went on the march. On the 5th, an attempt by the RUC (Northern Irish police) to block a march to the Lisburn Road Workhouse failed as demonstrators occupied the workhouse.

The unionists in power were surprised by the actions of their 'loyal' workers who were openly in revolt. Their attempt at concessions were rejected while workers later called a rent strike and lit bonfires all over the city. On the 11th, they banned a huge demo and then issued the RUC with rifles, and brought in units from the army. A riot broke out when police tried to break up a workers' meeting which in turn led to Catholics and Protestants fighting back shoulder to shoulder. Barricades were

built and the police redoubled their efforts to break the strike. 2 workers ended up dead and 15 were wounded by gunshot fire.

That they succeeded was due to their erstwhile tactic of 'divide and conquer'. By encouraging rumours of an IRA plot to destroy the northern state, they applied the safety blanket of age-old sectarianism to pave the way for the workers' defeat. Although some cash increases had been won, relief for single persons not on benefit was still held back.

Once again, however, the Irish working class had proved the necessity of overcoming sectarian barriers and of joining together to fight against the state and its bosses. As anarchists, we must endeavour to continue this struggle until the institutions of states 'green' and 'orange', and all shades in between, are smashed once and for all. ★

## EURO -NUL POINT!

THE GATES OF EUROLAND were eventually unlocked on January 1st in a careful, media-managed display of public euphoria. To read the papers, it was as if Bertie was going around Dublin handing out free money. In France, Le Figaro announced imperially that 'the single currency of the Roman Empire never prevented its peoples from expressing themselves' - though it remains doubtful whether this freedom of expression was extended to the slave network which kept the empire ticking over.



For slaves then, read the working class now. The transition from one currency to another means very little when you have a severe lack of both.

So what does it all mean? Well, for Ireland it means closer military links with Europe, and the denial of the right of appeal in European law for those falling prey to issues surrounding the 8th amendment to the constitution (ie abortion). For Europe, it means closer integration; in other words, protectionism for the likes of Germany and France's agricultural and manufacturing industries against the vagaries of world or US recession. It means strengthening the economic base of a European bloc to rival American (and until recently) Japanese hegemony.

Or does it? The mediocre performance of the euro on the world's stock markets

indicates where the real clout still lies. What was once said of the Mexican economy - 'when the US sneezes, Mexico catches a cold' - could be applied to a lesser extent to Europe. Germany, for example, has witnessed its economy grind to a halt with 4m on the dole, while its main banks refuse to reduce interest rates to protect the euro. Its firm stance regarding foreign company takeovers is a clear indication of how national rivalries will continue to simmer under the euro. The 'weaker' nations like Greece and Portugal, and the new arrivals from the east, will help shore up the main economies as their smaller companies will fail to compete, but this effect will be transitory. Meanwhile, immigration controls across the zone will intensify as will the number of refugees seeking entry into the promised land.

As anarchists, we understand the efforts capitalism makes to sustain itself, and look forward to the day that all money, and thereby the method it uses to assert itself in our social relations, will be eliminated. ★

## Join the resistance

The **Anarchist Federation Ireland (AFI)** is an organisation of **class struggle** anarchists aiming to abolish capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. This is **Anarchist Communism**. We see today's society as being divided into two main opposing classes: **the ruling class** which controls all the power and wealth, and **the working class** which the rulers exploit to maintain this. By racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, as well as war and environmental destruction the rulers weaken and divide us. Only the **direct action** of working class people can defeat these attacks and ultimately overthrow capitalism. As the capitalist system rules the whole world, its destruction must be complete and world wide. We reject attempts to reform it, such as working through parliament and national liberation movements, as they fail to challenge capitalism itself. Unions also work as a part of the capitalist system, so although workers struggle within them they will be unable to bring about capitalism's destruction unless they go beyond these limits. **Organisation** is vital if we're to beat the bosses, so we work for a united anarchist movement and are affiliated to the International of Anarchist Federations. The Anarchist Federation has members across Britain and Ireland fighting for the kind of world outlined above. Contact:

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