

LUNCHBOX /1

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WE WANT
CHANGE
NOW

FREEDOM
NOT FEAR

PEOPLE
DEMAND

Editor's Note

THINGS ARE VERY EXCITING, BUT THEY ALSO NEED TO BE WRITTEN DOWN. Well, sometimes at least, and perhaps now is one of those moments. Bruce Lee once wisely noted: "balance your thoughts with action. — If you spend too much time thinking about a thing, you'll never get it done." Action can take place with or without writing, but having both means the two can talk to each other; hopefully they can become friends and have meaningful engagements long into the night.

Writing, as a process of reflection, can sometimes help make the events in

life feel more real. Writing can deepen ones understanding of an action. Without it, moments can often slip away without space for reflection, particularly in exciting times.

Writing things down is also a way of making history. In times of action, it becomes important to reflect on how those actions will be perceived in the future. This is why the action-maker should also be the recorder, the thinker.

Basically, LUNCHBOX is a small attempt at housing some writings that have been floating around.

All contributions, be it reports, reflections, correspondences, articles, photos, drawings, etc are welcome and needed! Send them my way, and with a bit of luck, this will be a monthly thing.

Contact

Moira Murphy
moiramurphy@live.com

cover image: *They Hate our Freedoms!*
[detail] by Cat Kavanagh

DEALING WITH POLICE WHEN DRIVING WITH CANNABIS

SHOULD YOU GET PULLED OVER BY POLICE while you're driving, there are two main rules to keep in mind: exercise your rights and be polite.

At the end of the day a Garda is just a human being in a costume doing his/her job, nothing more, so you should remember to relax and try to be helpful while understanding your rights and actively using these rights to diffuse and divert a situation. So when you get pulled over by a garda you need to remember that being aggressive and confrontational will get you nowhere; being assertive will get you everywhere.

Firstly when a cop pulls you over make sure you pull in and give him lots of room to pull in behind you. Indicate and slowly pull in, its just courtesy.

If you can get your documents ready, put them on the dash board

and if possible start a camera phone recording and leave it in your pocket. This could be useful if the case goes to court, should the Garda make a mistake the case will be thrown out.

When the Garda approaches, have your hands on the top of the steering wheel where the Garda can see them. From here on out you will need to use your discretion, depending on the situation you will need to decide how "yes sir/no sir" or assertive you need to be. This will depend on where and the location of the cannabis is, how much there is and your general confidence in the situation.

Roll down the window just enough for the Garda to speak to you and to pass through any documents the Garda requests, but do not roll down your window enough for the Garda to lean into your car or to have a good look inside. Politely ask "is there a problem Gard?" if he/she asks for you to step

out of the car, comply but close the door behind you. If a Garda asks to search any aspect of your car and you are skeptical, you do not need to give consent. Simply say "I do not consent to a search officer, this is just a routine pull over, theres no reason to suspect any wrong doing" keep repeating "I do not consent". If they keep pushing, say "I will step out of the car and you can search my vehicle but you do so without my consent." (this is where what was mentioned earlier comes into play if you have a recording of this and they search your vehicle anyway it could get thrown out of court) under most circumstances, do not allow a Garda to search your vehicle because they require a warrant.

Only use this advice at your own discretion, every circumstance is different, every Garda is different so be careful and play it safe.



SPAIN'S 15-M

what happened and what we can learn

IT BEGAN ON THE 15TH OF MAY in the form of demonstrations across Spain with an estimated attendance of 150,000. This initial demonstration was organized by a new group called Real Democracy Now (RDN), a loosely organized collective which focused on expressing the feeling of outrage among the Spanish population without recourse to traditional left ideology.

The initial demonstration had two main focuses: the State's handling of the crisis (bailout for the banks, attacks on public services etc) and the representative democratic system, especially the dominance of the two main parties. In this regard there are clear parallels with Claiming Our Future here in Ireland, the group that organized a very well-attended encounter in the RDS last year, bringing together people to participate in the creation of alternative political visions. Like Claiming Our Future, RDN was oriented to the left, in the sense of being against the prioritization of the financial system and the

speculators, but sidelined traditional left ideologies in favour of a focus on democratic participation. As a result, and again much like Claiming Our Future, the initial demonstrations were ambiguous: there was a clearly progressive element but at the same time there was some fairly lame demands circulating, like reform of the electoral system and so on. This is the danger of participative democracy as an idea, it can be used to shore up a system of representative democracy which is clearly in crisis (witness the trend for electoral reform from above, whether it be the abolition of the Seanad or the AV referendum in the UK).



From the beginning RDN was different to Claiming Our Future in the sense that it took to the streets and much more directly attacked the system. However, it was the occupation of Madrid's central square

(Puerta del Sol) which really moved things in a new direction. The resolve of demonstrators to stay on, not to return to business as usual, was in itself inspiring. But more inspiring still was the reoccupation of the square following a police eviction in the early hours of the 16th. Once reoccupied a call went out from Puerta del Sol to occupy central squares across Spain and this call was met in over 65 cities and towns across Spain, including major cities like Barcelona.

The square occupations were quickly illegalized. Local elections were to be held the following Sunday and the government used this as a convenient excuse. But it was also the elections which gave the movement a chance to orient itself more politically. This happened initially by calling for mass abstention from the vote, a clear sign of a general rejection of representative democracy. More importantly still, each square became a laboratory in participative democracy. At this point the RDN organization lost its centrality to the movement and the

“Many consider 15-M to be a political event of historic proportions.”

squares took over as the main agents. Each square began to develop its own politics and demands, participative assemblies were being held round the clock.

I have had a chance to see the manifestos developed in Madrid, Barcelona and Granada. They focus on similar and wide ranging issues. The main features include the erosion of the power and privileges of the political class; regulation of banks and a ban on bank bailouts; reversal of cuts to social services and attacks on workers' pay and conditions; electoral reform in a participative direction. It's quite amazing that mass assemblies involving a very wide variety of people were able to develop, in under a week, a coherent and radical set of demands.

At this point the differences between something like Claiming Our Future and the 15-M movement are clear. 15-M became a permanent and directly confrontational movement launching specific demands against the State. It is led from the bottom up, rather than by leaders of NGOs, Trade Unions and civil society organizations (as is the case with Claiming Our Future).

What most reports confirm as the central dimensions of 15-M, though, is the effect it has had on participants. In this case, many consider 15-M to

be a political event of historic proportions: there is a before and an after and things will never be the same again. What is fascinating, for me at least, is that people seem to have broken through the glass wall that structures what's possible and what's impossible- opening up a whole new field of political potential which, while it always existed, remained repressed or latent in the previous situation. This came out of no where. As one placard put it, 'no one expects the Spanish revolution'.

But what happens next? There are three different processes that indicate what the future might hold. The 'siege of plac Catalunya' (Barcelona) on the morning of the 27th was one

the resolve of the movement and its willingness to operate outside of and in confrontation with the law.

The second process is that of Madrid. From Puerta del Sol a call went out a number of days ago to hold public assemblies in local neighborhoods on the 28th (yesterday). From what I can find out so far these were well attended, with thousands turning out across Madrid. Today (29th May) the local assemblies will join Puerta del Sol and share what was discussed and any demands or principles that have been put forward. In other words there is an attempt to multiply the assemblies which are now the organizational engine of the movement.



28 May O'Connell Street, Dublin

such process. The cops attacked the square at 6am but the demonstrators would not be moved easily. After a confrontation that lasted hours the police were on the verge of emptying the square when the huge support protest, which formed outside the police cordon, broke through and re-occupied the square. At this point the cops gave up. This is an indication of

Finally, and most importantly perhaps for us here in Ireland, there is the international dimensions. Solidarity protests have occurred throughout Europe. However, they have been more than just expressions of solidarity, because people across Europe identify with the energy and demands of the movement and see

in it a directly European movement. Last Thursday's demonstration in Athens brought together huge numbers (15,000 if I'm not wrong) and seemed particularly promising. Here in Ireland a protest took place on the 28th at the Spire in O'Connell Street. Mainly organized by Spanish people, the protest involved expressions of solidarity with our friends in Spain but also an attempt to 'transnationalise' 15-M. We held an open assembly in which anyone could take the mic and freely talk. This was the best element for me- spending Saturday on O'Connell Street talking and listening to people express themselves politically.

However, the difficulties on the international side of things were evident at yesterday's Dublin protest as well. First of all, many representatives of political parties (such as Paul Murphy (SP) and Joan Collins (SWP)) took the mic, which seemed to particularly piss-off many of the Spanish participants. At the same time it was difficult to both express solidarity and to create something specific to the Irish situation- maybe there was a sense of being neither one thing nor the other, neither a solidarity demo nor an Irish protest.

Nevertheless, it seems worth going ahead, both because we're inspired by the movement in Spain and because holding open assemblies in the streets is the best idea of heard of since the beginning of this crisis.

More broadly, could something like the 15-M movement happen in Ireland? The key difficulty, it seems to me, is that most of the initiatives that have been launched so far have been either tame civil society affairs (that avoid confrontation) or connected to the far left parties. This is the case with

the SWP's latest idea, the Enough campaign. This focuses on the IMF/ECB 'bailout'. But we know that once people see the red flag and the ubiquitous newspaper they will turn away. If something is going to happen it will not be ideologically driven or led by a party. I have the feeling that Irish activists are too attached to their ideologies and their party lines to be able to organize something that has a broader relevance. So it will fall to groups outside the left.

To conclude it's worth restating the key elements that are specific to 15-M:

it operates outside of, and largely against, the party as an organizational form, as well as other traditional left forms like Trade Unions

it identifies the politics of elected representation as part of the problem and not part of the solution. Specifically, the movement attacks the political class as a specific element of the reproduction of capitalist domination

strong emphasis on participation and very horizontal in structure – everybody has to think for themselves rather than trying to spread inherited ideologies

the network- the structure of the movement is that of a horizontal network linking together united but different 'nodes'. Each square develops its own politics from the bottom up and relays this via the social and social media networks. There is unity without homogeneity

the movement does not try to brand itself with a specific ideology or identity, it opens itself outwards towards society and attempts to be universal. This is really important as millions of people identify with the movement and this makes it much more difficult for the police to repress it

Each of these points provide valuable insights into the organization of resistance today but will of course have to be put to work within specific and local processes.

Mick O'Broin

the Arpilleristas

ARPILLERAS ARE A KIND OF TAPESTRY named after the hessian cloth they are made of. I would like to explain how such a humble material became of such significance in Chile during Pinochet's reign and how it has now entered Chilean history as both a reminder of the terrible atrocities that happened in those years and as a sign of hope to all oppressed people.

After the military seized power in 1973, many people in Chile were arrested and detained with no prior warning or reason, they became known as "the disappeared" or "los desaparecidos". The majority of these people were male, which left behind many wives, sisters and daughters who then had to earn the income for their families. Traditionally women were confined to work in the home, in what was at the time a very sexist society.

Many women came together and formed groups such as "buy together" groups where they could purchase food in bulk and divide it amongst families. Some women came together to make arpilleras - tapestries - to be sold abroad, these women became known as Arpilleristas. This action brought women together; what at first was a method for women to earn money became a political act. The arpilleristas met in groups and exchanged stories of the hardships they each faced. They became politicised, discussing the situation they were in and sharing ideas on how to improve their lives. They became educated and angry, and many of them went on to join



other activist groups. At the time people were being disappeared for the most trivial of reasons, any propaganda was seen as a threat by Pinochet, but these women weren't considered a threat as the medium was considered feminine and the women harmless.

The aspects of this I find most interesting are:

- Grassroots politics was not common prior to this
- Activism came from an underestimated, previously unthreatening section of society (working class women)
- It took some hugely destructive event for people to take their politics into their own hands.

Looking at the situation in Ireland, it is apparent that we have two strong similarities here. We don't have a strong history of grassroots

politics. And we are in the middle of a hugely destructive recession. The third point is the most exciting and interesting and although it might not be obvious just yet, there is something simmering there... There are things starting to happen, people are looking to the Middle East, North Africa, Spain and Greece and saying "We too have had enough". And these aren't the usual voices of revolt, it's not just the students and the established left turning their anger to dissent. A group inspired by the Spanish assemblies are emulating something similar in Dublin, The Spectacle of Defiance is emerging from the community sector, migrants are standing up to their employers in Galway and Mayo, refusing to remain our economies dirty secret anymore!

Cat Kavanagh

I hit the switch and light cascades through the building.

A beacon streaming through the large Georgian windows signaling activity.

Its 10pm friday and we have just taken over one of the oldest, largest Georgian buildings in Dublin 4 storys, a basement and sealed up servants tunnels.

There's a knock at the door, its my mate.

I remove the two bolt latches and the iron bar going across. The only other way in is through the front door, which is a solid steel door glued locks welded shut. Safe as houses.

Theres another mate gone skipping and will be heading over in a bit. I show my mate some bits and pieces I've been working on. Then grab a few mattresses and head up the stairs to the top floor servent quarters. Only the basement and first floor are hooked with leci so its sloppy and pretty tiring and by the time I get there I'm spent. We throw the mattresses down and are about to bask in sucess when a light from the street catches my mates face.

He walks over to the window to check it out, then scurries away.

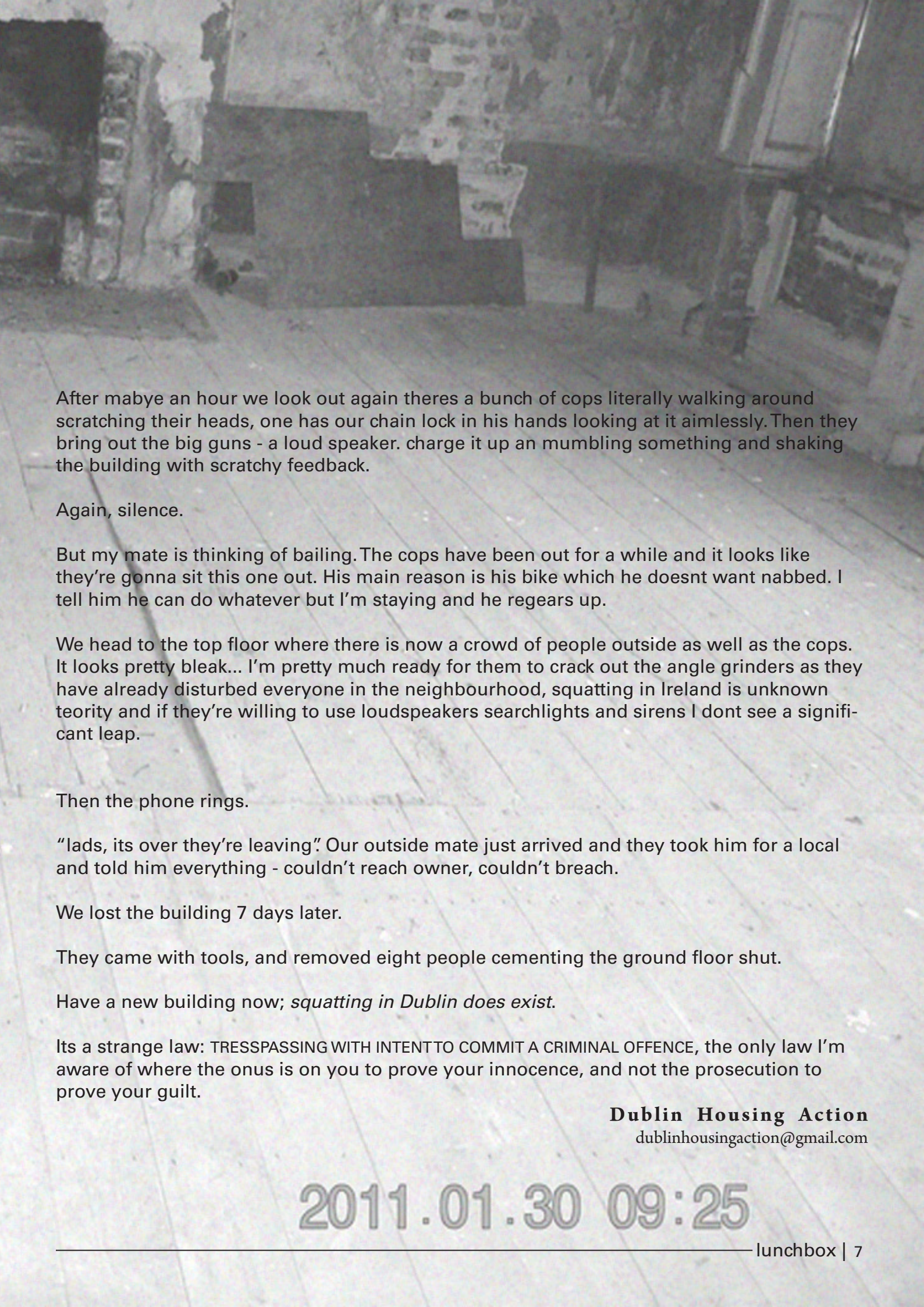
"dude whats the craic?" "its the guards" "you serious?" "yeah." "bollox." its been less then ten minutes since we entered.

We decide that we need to kill the power and I crawl past the windows and hit the switch grab some laptops and tools. This makes the cops pretty curious and in retaliation they blaze a search light through the windows from the back.

My other mate calls and I tell him to hold off then head to the basement to knock out a plan - dont comunicate, let them talk to an empty building.

Theres now two undercover squadcars and two cop cars.

A lot of frustrated cops outside shouting up, and kicking on the doors. Then they turn on the sirens wailing through the walls in bursts but the reception they recieve is a dead building and silence.



After mabye an hour we look out again theres a bunch of cops literally walking around scratching their heads, one has our chain lock in his hands looking at it aimlessly. Then they bring out the big guns - a loud speaker. charge it up an mumbling something and shaking the building with scratchy feedback.

Again, silence.

But my mate is thinking of bailing. The cops have been out for a while and it looks like they're gonna sit this one out. His main reason is his bike which he doesnt want nabbed. I tell him he can do whatever but I'm staying and he regears up.

We head to the top floor where there is now a crowd of people outside as well as the cops. It looks pretty bleak... I'm pretty much ready for them to crack out the angle grinders as they have already disturbed everyone in the neighbourhood, squatting in Ireland is unknown teority and if they're willing to use loudspeakers searchlights and sirens I dont see a significant leap.

Then the phone rings.

"lads, its over they're leaving". Our outside mate just arrived and they took him for a local and told him everything - couldn't reach owner, couldn't breach.

We lost the building 7 days later.

They came with tools, and removed eight people cementing the ground floor shut.

Have a new building now; *squatting in Dublin does exist.*

Its a strange law: TRESSPASSING WITH INTENT TO COMMIT A CRIMINAL OFFENCE, the only law I'm aware of where the onus is on you to prove your innocence, and not the prosecution to prove your guilt.

Dublin Housing Action
dublinhousingaction@gmail.com

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defending academics or transform- ing the university?

words by Mick O'Broin

JOHN HENNESSY, CHAIRPERSON of the Higher Education Authority and former head of Ericsson Ireland, has taken another swipe at the working conditions and freedom of academics, as reported in last Thursday's Irish Times. No doubt many academics and researchers will see in this another attempt to extend private sector rationalities to the university, forcing researchers and teachers into meaningless competition and undermining the autonomy upon which both research and learning rests.

Yet, while it may not be popular in 'left' circles to argue this, things look quite different from the perspective of undergraduate and, to an extent, post-graduate students.

Many undergraduate students feel short-changed by their university education. Students all too frequently struggle to navigate badly designed uninspiring courses taught by lecturers who seem disillusioned and demoralized. There is also the issue of academic salaries. This is especially clear in the case of post-graduate students who often do more than their fair share of teaching and correction for a fraction of a lecturer's salary. Take my own case. I'm a PhD student at the Department of Sociology in Trinity College, where I get 8,000 euros per year for undertaking 6 hours class time per week as well as 50% of corrections for in-course assessment. While my 'studentship' amounts to about 25% of the average industrial wage, the lectures with whom post-graduate students work are often earning upwards of 80,000 and some senior academics are earning much larger salaries. These experiences leave many with little appetite for defending the pay and conditions of academics.

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This leaves us with the political conundrum of what position to take in relation to academic working conditions, at a time when a political response to the crisis of the university is urgently required.

On greater reflection, there are a number of contradictions here. On the one hand, some academics receive wages which are not justifiable. On the other hand, academics are victims of the same attack as other workers in the university and more generally. The attack on academics is also part of the same general attack on public services which affects us all.

Students are generally unaware of the multiple pressures on academic staff and the university's prioritization of research over teaching. The sometimes inadequate teaching we find at the university is not necessarily the result of 'laziness', it is structurally caused by the pointless obsession with racking up publication points to which funding within the university is now tied. Moreover, more and more academics are on short term contracts.

How to negotiate these contradictions? If we attack lecturers we side



with the neo-liberal camp, as the USI has. But if we defend their working conditions than we are left defending an academy which is riddled with problems- and for many people the thought of defending the pay of academics earning in excess of 100,000 a year is difficult to swallow.

Here we come back to some of the fundamental problems with the politics of 'defending public services'. Defending the conditions of academics is a limited and particularistic strategy, unlikely to resonate with students or more widely. It also seems to reproduce or at least not contest the existing hierarchical organization of labor (is the freedom of an academic more important than the freedom of, say, a nurse?). Most importantly, it seems to fall short of confronting the more general subordination of the university to the economy- and the impact this has on the university. What we are witnessing is a qualita-

tive transformation in the relationship between knowledge and economics which is reducing the university to the R&D department of capitalism.

It has to be said that lecturers have generally failed to communicate these transformations to students. This is an absolutely crucial task given the students union (and their publications) 'black out' on any thing relating to the corporatisation of the university. Undergraduate students, or so I gather from my experience of trying to raise awareness of these issues on campus, are simply oblivious to the realities of research matrix, cuts to core funding, knowledge transfer and so on.

In this context defending the working and pay conditions of academics, under the guise of defending public services, is a deeply inadequate and particularistic response.

A more valuable position might

be for workers and students in the university to come together in struggling to transform the university, to democratize knowledge, to undo the hierarchies of expertise, to make relevant the university to the key political questions of today and to confront the neo-liberalization of the university. An inspiring example of this was the Beyond the Crisis event which took place in early May at Seomra Spraoi, an event which took the university outside itself.

This kind of position wriggles out of the false opposition between defending academics and neo-liberalising the university. For the moment, such a politics can only be experimental, but these kinds of experiments hold, it seems to me, the only hope for politicizing the universities in a manner which could potentially prevent their destruction.

taken from the blog
universityincrisis.wordpress.com

a safe indoor grow.

WITH CONTAMINANTS ON THE RISE and often only the cheapest and worst weed on sale, it can be difficult to get clean and good quality cannabis. So you may want to consider growing, which has many advantages. Growing can be very rewarding, giving a great product full of THC as well as TLC, but be warned; the Irish government spends millions of taxpayers' money every year busting growers (don't ask me why; we're still trying to figure that one out)

So with that in mind, allow us to give you five grow tips for a safer indoor grow:

1. Firstly, every grower will tell you to keep your grow-op secret. The majority of busts are made from tip offs and even though you may think its cool to tell your mate, he may tell his mate who might tell his mate, etc. Don't tell anybody and keep your grow room out of bounds. If you can, seal it for the smell and lock it up as well. This is just an extra measure to prevent anyone from stumbling on it by accident.

2. Police infra-red helicopters **won't** be able to see into your house if you have it well insulated. Contrary to popular belief they can't see through walls. They are looking for gaps where heat is pouring out, so keep the lights away from the walls and use insulating tape on any areas you suspect might have gaps in them. Attic grows get caught because, in most attics, only the floor is insulated and so in most cases heat pours out and you can see it a mile away. If you're thinking of growing in your attic, it should be really well insulated and all gaps should be covered.

3. If the Gardai call round to your house for something, do **not** let them in under any circumstance. If they ask to have a look around, refuse and ask them what they want. If they tell you they have the right to come in, ask for a warrant. Once they are in your house, all it takes is for one of them to say they smell marijuana and they could search your entire house with just cause as you gave them permission to enter.

4. If you get caught by the Gardai with a substantial amount of cannabis, you will need to get your plants out of your house **fast**. Your house will be raided very quickly if they suspect you of any dealing. If they don't have your address on file, consider not giving it until your house is clean. It may be good therefore to have a housemate alerted and ready to act.

5. Be careful bringing in lights, soil, pots and any other equipment. Be discreet and when buying this equipment, always pay in cash. Credit card purchases are logged at the store and these logs can be sold to companies (e.g. Dublin Metropolitan Corporation) who can afford them. The Gardai are always looking out for unusual purchases, e.g. 1000w ballasts.