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Tathony House mass eviction declared invalid – People power can win!

Red Network member and Tathony House resident James O'Toole writes about the stunning victory at the Dublin apartment block.

We got letters from the Residential Tenancies Board last night which said the evictions at Tathony House were "invalid".

The remaining tenants, who have been overholding beyond the eviction date of June 2nd, celebrated last night after months of stress.

But the RTB didn't make this decision in a void - the Tathony House campaign has been constantly on the streets, outside the council and Dail and in the media.

There were lots of eyes on this case and we have used people power to highlight the injustice of mass evictions.

Eviction on grounds of sale is illegal in 14 other European countries, but not in landlord government run Ireland.

Imagine we'd have left Tathony House on the June 2nd eviction date only to get the RTB decision while sitting in emergency accommodation? We'd have been furious with ourselves. We stood and fought and stayed beyond the June 2nd date - and we were right to do so.

Overholding is your right if you've nowhere else to go.

What happens next depends on our wealthy Irish landlord. Ronan McDonnell was making over half a million a year rent roll and could get up to € 6 million from the sale.

He can appeal the RTB decision, but he will lose at Tribunal on the same grounds he lost last time. He'd be wasting his time and ours.

He could issue new eviction notices but we'd get 224 days from the date of issue of the new notices. Or he could sell privately with tenants in situ and let a new landlord deal with us.

The best option is to just sell to an Approved Housing Body through Dublin City Council. That way the landlord gets his money and we stay in our homes.

Dublin City Council have written to our landlord 5 times with no reply from him or his lawyer. He refuses to engage.

We've been protesting this eviction non-stop since last October and people all over the country message us saying that we are helping people by standing up and fighting back.

I'm not backing down. Even if the landlord won in the courts and got the county Sheriff to my door, I'd rather go to jail than walk out into emergency accommodation.

We have to draw a line in the sand and say enough is enough. Being a socialist gives me the strength to stand up to a rich man, the council, the government and the courts.

I know it's the work of people like myself and my neighbours that keeps society running - so we should be able to provide housing for everyone who needs it.

Our hard work fills the pockets of rich people like my landlord. Yet workers are facing eviction into homelessness. This is 21st Century Ireland!

We need to fight back against every eviction but as long as neoliberal capitalism rules the roost we will always be put back into the same situation, if not worse.

That's why this country needs a working-class rebellion. Let's hope that Tathony House plays a part in inspiring working-class people to rise up!

The RED Network (incorporating Rebel Telly) are a network of radical socialists within the political party People Before Profit, a 32-county people power movement on the island of Ireland.

www.rednetwork.ie