

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

50p

inside

Corrupt 'Fat Cats' cash in on privatisation — PAGES 6&7

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— PAGE 10

Solidarity price £1

STOP THE DEPORTATIONS NOW!

REFUGEES ARE WELCOME HERE!

**BLACK
& WHITE
UNITE
TO FIGHT
RACISM**

Protest

Saturday 16th June

Assemble 2pm

Dept. of Justice

St.Stephen's Green

Dublin 2

Speakers:

Suresh Grover (Stephen Lawrence Campaign),
Jack O'Connor (SIPTU), Michael D.Higgins (Labour),
Global Music, Gabriel Okenla (Pan African Org.),
Nigerian Support Group, Comhlamh,
Seamus Dooley (NUJ), Pat Guerin (ARC),
Kieran Allen (SWP), Congo Solidarity
Group, Anton McCabe (Meath
Trades Council & Socialist Party),
Sinn Fein, Amnesty, Arasi,
Community of Romanians in
Ireland, Cllr. Finian McGrath
(Ind.), Anti-Nazi League

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AMNESTY FOR ALL

**let
asylum
seekers
stay**

WISHFUL THINKING
CHARLES HAUGHEY has spent the last six weeks on board a friend's yacht off the French coast recuperating from his hard life.

He believes that giving further testimony to the tribunals will kill him before the end of the year.
Meanwhile a Sunday Independent poll found 87 percent of people said they did not believe Haughey's evidence to the tribunals.
But who are the other 13 percent?

Give the Inn a scoop
The Cayman Islands courts ruled last month that they wouldn't release the names of the Ansbacher account holders.

However, in the evidence 30 new account holders were revealed.
Mary Harney has the names but refuses to release them.
Interestingly the Independent group claims to have them too. The fact that Tony O'Reilly used the dodgy bank wouldn't be the reason they haven't printed them, of course.

Foul trade
AN IRISH company is involved in the sale and production of dangerously toxic mercury soap despite a Europe-wide ban.

The soap is supposed to lighten the colour of black people's skin.. Skin products containing mercury can cause foetal damage, kidney failure, nervous disorders and lead to a number of cancers.

Illegal
Mercury soap is openly available for sale in shops around Ireland even though it is illegal and is produced at a factory in Arklow, Co. Wicklow, for export to Africa.
Killarney Enterprises make the deadly "soap" The product, described by the World Health Organisation as a "serious health hazard", is used to bleach dark hair and skin to obtain a lighter complexion.
Killarney Enterprises' soaps trade under the popular names Tura, Arut, Swan, Sukisa Bango, Meriko. South Africa, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Kenya have all banned the products.

Health crisis deepens

WAITING LISTS are growing and the life expectancy of Irish people is falling below the European average.

These are the terrible results of underfunding of the health service, which began with Haughey's government in 1987.

The Irish health service now needs an extra annual investment of £2 billion. So says Michael Kelly, a senior official in the Department of Health.

But the government is ignoring the warning.

Waiting

Some 43 percent of adults on the waiting lists are still in the queue after more than twelve months while 74 percent of children have still not been seen after more than six months.

An extra 9,500 hospital beds are needed over the next ten years.

The crisis has developed because Irish health care spending is way below the level of other EU countries.

The result is that Irish people now have shorter life spans than their European counterparts.

Irish women are now dying two years earlier than the EU life average while men die a year earlier.

Low taxes on profit mean a poor health service. The lower life expectancy is part of the price we pay for subsidising the rich.

Barbaric treatment

A SEVERELY mentally ill man was locked up in a padded cell in Mountjoy for two weeks because there were no beds available in the Central Mental Hospital.

The man who is in his 20s, has a long history of mental illness and treatment in the Dundrum hospital.

The man was kept naked and after two days in the cell, he became so agitated that he was eating his own faeces.

Yet he was detained in these conditions for another 12 days until a bed was found in Dundrum.

Last month, the Irish Prison Reform Trust published a report, Out of Mind Out of Sight, on solitary confinement in jails.

Revealed

It revealed that prisoners who need psychiatric treatment are being dumped in padded cells because there is no treatment available.

The report surveyed Mountjoy, Limerick and Cork prisons between February 20 and March 20 and revealed that 224 prisoners had been placed in solitary confinement.

In 78 percent of the cases, it was for mental illnesses.

Sudan

Oil companies sponsor murder

THE SUDANESE Government is murdering its own people.

It has sent forces to bomb and burn villages in the Upper Nile region of Southern Sudan, killing, maiming and forcing hundreds of thousands to leave their homes.

Why? The areas concerned are oilfields and international oil companies wish to start drilling there.

The government has been fighting rebels in Southern Sudan for forty years and needs the funds provided by these companies to continue its onslaught.

The oil companies apparently have no scruples and continue to make huge profits from

actions such as these in Sudan where blood is shed so that they can collect oil.

These companies include the Canadian Talisman Energy Inc, whose main operations are in Canada, the North Sea, Indonesia as well as Sudan and Sweden's Lundin Oil AB which operates in Europe, North and East Africa, the Middle East and South East Asia.

OMV as well as operating in its home base in Austria also has concerns in the UK, Libya, Bulgaria, Tunisia, Pakistan, Russia and Vietnam and France's TotalFinaElf, which boasts operations in more than 100 countries.

Last year the Sudanese government cleared the area for work

to start. This involved dropping more than 850 bombs on hospitals, schools, churches, markets and relief centres between July and December.

Figures

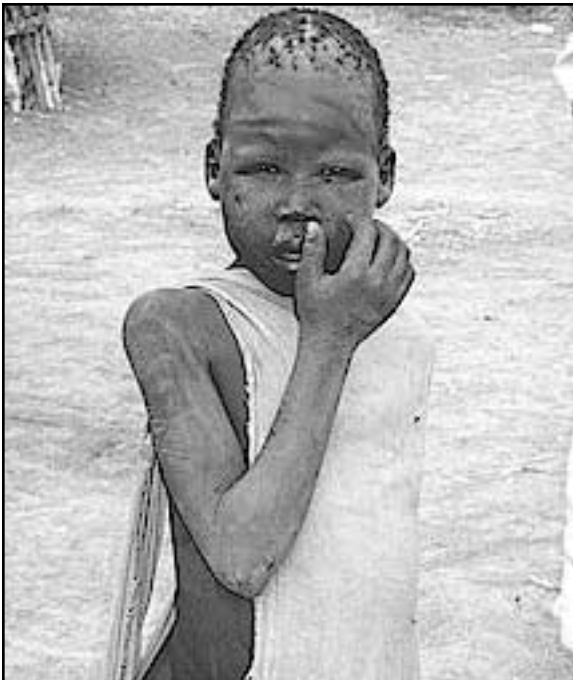
Over a period of four months this year, more than 75,000 people have fled their homes. These figures are from the New Sudan Council of Churches.

At the end of May a group of 44 European organisations under the umbrella of ECOS (European Coalition on Oil in Sudan) organised a day of action to protest

about this carnage for the sake of profit.

Trócaire in Ireland also urged the Irish government to lobby the UN and EU to stop all western investments in these oilfields.

David, is a war traumatized child. He was unfortunate enough to have been born in a village located above oil. His village was wiped out in the "scorched earth" attempts to free up all non-government claims to the oil rich land.



Expensive B&B

FARMLEIGH, the former Guinness family home, is almost ready for its first guests.

At £37 million, it will be the most expensive B&B in the country, and taxpayers will be picking up the tab for it.

However it's not your average five-star lodging.

En-suite

The bomb-proof, security ring-fenced en-suite mini-mansion is strictly reserved for visiting dignitaries, heads of state and the odd cabinet minister.

The residence was purchased from the Guinness family in 1999 at a cost to the tax payer of £23m.

The extra cost arises from making it fit for a king, or at least a Taoiseach.

Documents released to *Socialist Worker* under the Freedom of Information Act show that spiraling construction costs began almost immediately after Rohcon Ltd were awarded the contract.

★ THE Defence Forces didn't wait for the Nice referendum result.

They are to receive 80 armoured vehicles at a cost of £80 million.

Initially their order was for forty vehicles but the Army need at least 67 to fulfill Ireland's commitment to the Rapid Reaction Force. So they just ordered forty more during the referendum campaign.

The vehicles are the type used by the US military and the British Army.

A "WOMEN on Waves" ship is due to sail into Dublin in June to highlight the fact that Irish women do not have the right to abortion.

Each year 6,200 women give an Irish address when they get an abortion in Britain. Many more give a false British address.

Hypocrisy

The abortion rate in Ireland is no different to many other countries but women are forced to pay huge expenses for travel just to suit the hypocrisy of politicians who will not face down the Bishops.

Under a Supreme Court judgement, abortion is supposed to be legal in Ireland for any

woman who is suicidal. But the Dail has put no legislation in place to give effect to this verdict.

Women on Waves was founded by a Dutch doctor, Rebecca Gomperts. Dr Gomperts was a

physician on Rainbow Warrior, the Greenpeace ship which was blown up by the French intelligence service after it protested about nuclear tests.

The ship will not carry

out surgical operations but it will issue advice and support to women who want an abortion. To contact Women on Waves: Phone 087-9220902 or e mail: www.womenonwaves.org

No Logs in our schools

AN Irish advertising company plans to sell billboard space in all secondary schools to commercial companies.

More than 10percent of schools already display advertisements in school yards and corridors.

"It's money for nothing," said Gareth Lloyd, managing director of Ad Infinitum, which sells ads in schools. "If Coca-Cola sponsors material in

schools, is it going to be the first time a child has ever seen that logo? What harm can it do."

Purchasing

School-based advertising falls into a category known as ambient advertising, which is designed to have a high short-term impact on purchasing patterns.

Research shows that, at 18 months, before they can read their own name, children recognise brand

names.

Last year Michael Woods, the minister for education asked education boards to consider the implication of "allowing situations to develop which would result in undue pressure to purchase particular commercial products".

Perhaps if the Government banned the ads and funded education properly the situation won't develop at all.

what we think



They are involved in racism

THE TAOI-SEARCH'S office rang up Amnesty International to tell them to remove their anti-racist billboard posters. They claimed that they were "defamatory".

The Fine Gael spokesman on Foreign Affairs, Jim O'Keefe,

joined in calls for the posters to be removed.

Discrimination

The Labour Party also said that it did not agree with the inference that the politicians are racist.

But Amnesty International's posters are spot on.

Harney, Ahern and

O'Donoghue ARE involved in policies that promote discrimination against black people.

Harney has said that the Celtic Tiger needs to recruit 200,000 more workers.

But her government is refusing to give asylum seekers the right to work. Instead state agencies are trying to recruit immigrant workers who are mainly white.

Ahern has done nothing to discipline Fianna Fail politicians who have called refugees "scroungers".

His government has withdrawn social welfare payments from asylum seekers.

O'Donoghue has given the

Gardaí extra powers to detain asylum seekers and has cut down the time they have to make appeals.

All of these politicians have presided over huge corruption scandals. Their policy of cutting taxes on big business has led

to the run down of our public services. It suits them when people scapegoat asylum seekers and don't focus on their right wing policies.

This is why they preside over a system of institutionalised racism.

POLICIES THAT LEAD TO RACIST ATTACKS

"ABOUT TWENTY of them came to our house with masks and baseball bats. It is all because my partner is Nigerian. We had to move out of the area because we were frightened for our safety"

This is what one caller told Joe Duffy on RTE's Liveline programme recently.

Reporting

Racist attacks are rising in Ireland with many black people reporting verbal and physical abuse.

But the Gardaí are refusing to collect statistics about racially motivated attacks.

These attacks cannot be reported in confidence without people being asked to show a passport.

Politicians have regularly accused the RUC of ignoring sectarian attacks on Catholics but few of them have attacked the Gardaí for not monitoring racist attacks.

For the past few years, Justice Minister John O'Donoghue, has been mounting a propaganda campaign claiming that 75 percent of asylum seekers are bogus.

He has implied that they are here only to benefit from Ireland's meagre social welfare system.

This systematic campaign to vilify asylum seekers has given ammunition to the thugs who harass black people on the streets.

O'Donoghue may claim that he is not responsible for this racism but that makes as much sense as Ian Paisley's pretence that he is not responsible for

loyalist violence.

Nindja Mandiangu who came from the Congo has pointed the finger of blame at who was really responsible for harassing his family in Tallaght.

"The government, the politicians make people not like us because the tell us we are here just to take money"

AMNESTY NOW!

O'DONOGHUE IS determined to expel as many as asylum seekers from Ireland as he can.

Since April 2,000 four thousand asylum seekers have been "dispersed" around the country and forced to exist on the voucher scheme.

They are denied any legal facilities to prepare their case to stay. There is virtually no translation

service to help them. With only £15 a week to live on they can barely make telephone calls to solicitors in the major cities.

But now refugee groups have sprung up all around the country to help the refugees.

Emerging

A huge anti-racist movement is emerging to challenge O'Donoghue.

Unions like SIPTU

have also taken a strong stance against racist practices of employers who want to use immigrants as cheap labour.

Representatives of many of these groups have joined together to call a major march in Dublin on June 16th.

They want an amnesty for all asylum seekers who are already here and an end to deportation policy. Get on this march and show this government that we will stand up to their racist policies.

Join the anti capitalists...
JOIN THE Socialist Workers Party

(PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS)

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Sharon prepares for war



ARIEL SHARON, is the man responsible for the massacre of 2,000 Palestinian refugees in West Beirut in 1982. He is a vicious racist who has made his living over the last 50 years repressing and persecuting Palestinians. He was the military commander of Gaza throughout the 1970s after Israel invaded and occupied the West Bank and Gaza in 1967. Sharon took on his role with glee. He ordered troops to take extreme measures to deal with demonstrators. He was defence minister in the Israeli government in the 1980s and urged soldiers to beat Arab school children in the West Bank. His advice when asked how to deal with demonstrators was, "Cut off their testicles."

EVEN BEFORE the suicide bombing at a Tel Aviv disco, Israel was preparing for full scale war against its Palestinian neighbours.

Brigadier General Yisrael Ziv had told journalists that Israel was "not so far removed" from full-scale war.

The bombing came as a desperate response to the wholesale slaughter that Israel has inflicted on Palestinians.

Just weeks before the bombing Israeli warplanes, supplied by the US, pounded the Palestinian West Bank killing 12 people. It was the first use of jet bombers against the Palestinians for 34 years.

Palestinians who have mainly used stones against the might of the Israeli army wanted revenge for this cruelty.

The bombing was probably conducted by Islamic Jihad or Hamas.

Brushed

After the bombing, the Israeli cabinet brushed aside Arafat's pathetic promise to crack down on militants.

It warned that unless there was wholesale internment within hours it would launch bloody reprisals.

The roots of this whole pattern of violence is the expansionist policy of Israel.

It treats the Arab peoples of the area as sub-human and operates a colonial policy of taking their land.



Friends carry the wounded Mohammed Assadi after Israeli troops shot him for trying to raise a Palestinian flag.

Building for war

ONE OF the major causes of the recent conflict has been the determination of Israel to build new settlements on Palestinian land.

Edward Saïd calls the growth of these settlements in the Occupied Territories since the 1993 Oslo agreement "cancerous".

They were one of the main factors that destroyed the so called "peace process".

The number of Jewish settlers rose from 275,000 to 400,000 between 1993 and 2000.

Successive Israeli governments have encouraged the steady expansion of these settlements.

Seizure

It is part of the unceasing, illegal seizure of Palestinian land by Israel for the past 34 years, which has created 200 Jewish settlements, including 13 in Arab East Jerusalem, with 400,000 residents.

Today Ariel Sharon

defends their "natural growth".

Yet a quarter of the houses in West Bank settlements are unoccupied.

Sharon's "natural growth" consists of small groups of racist zealots moving out of established settlements to set up new ones.

They then demand both military protection and infra-structural support from the Israeli state.

The settlers' attitude to the Palestinians was revealed by one woman who said that the Palestinians would soon stop resisting if every time a Jew was killed or injured a new settlement was built.

Greece strikes again

A MILITANT general strike in Greece forced the government to retreat and shocked the union leaders who called it.

It came three weeks after a similar strike against plans by the Greek government to attack pensions, and was at least as well supported.

"Many workplaces struck that had not taken action for 15 or 20 years," says Panos Garganas, editor of Socialist Worker's sister paper in Greece. "There is a new militancy."

That spirit has forced the Greek government to abandon its planned pension "reform" and promise new measures backed by more money.

A key section of union leaders wanted to grasp that concession and go into negotiations.

They wanted the strike to be less militant than April's, a symbolic show of strength rather than a springboard to further action.

But the rank and file mood changed that.

"The union leaders have been forced to stiffen their position," says Panos. "They are now saying they want to hear how much money is on offer

before entering talks with the government.

The underlying feeling, particularly among fresh groups of workers, is not going to go away."

The success of the campaign to defend pensions in Greece is an example for workers across Europe.

"There is already official trade union backing for delegations to go to the Genoa protests outside the G8 summit in July," says Panos.

The task now is to build on the mood shown by rank and file workers, and connect it to those protests. That can shape events across Europe."

Zionism is a dead end

ISRAEL'S POLITICAL philosophy is usually described as "Zionism".

This is a partly religious and partly historical idea that the world's Jewish population has a claim on part of the territory of the Middle East that has been occupied by Palestinian Arabs for well over a thousand years.

Zionism had little support among Jewish people until the revival of anti-Semitism in the late 19th century.

Jewish socialists always opposed it as a reactionary response to racism.

Zionist leaders tried to win the support of the colo-

nial powers for their cause.

The first British military governor of Jerusalem explained that the Zionists wanted to create a "little loyal Jewish Ulster".

Created

The Zionists created a myth that Palestine was unpopulated..

Zionism gained wider currency following the Holocaust, where 6 million Jews were murdered.

Since none of the allies were prepared to offer a home to Jewish people, they backed the Zionist calls for a Jewish state.

America in particular recognised a strategic interest in backing Israel because

it would give them a power base in the Middle East.

Israel has acted as the watchdog for US interests in the region ever since.

Peace is possible in the Middle East. Jews and Arabs have lived alongside each other before and they could do so again.

The first step is to support the Palestinians in their struggle against the Israeli state and the imperialist powers, like the US.

We are for a democratic secular state in Palestine for Jews and Arabs where each has equal rights.

Ultimately lasting peace and equality for people in the Middle East can only be achieved by a revolution to overthrow all the corrupt regimes in the region.

World round up

Argentina

THOUSANDS OF workers protested the government's economic policies. An estimated 13 million people live in poverty in Argentina, where unemployment stands at nearly 15 percent. Employees of Aerolineas Argentinas blocked the runway of the Buenos Aires domestic airport. Unions have called a general strike for later this month.

Brazil

STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS shouted anti-government slogans and bared their backsides to politicians as some 2,000 students took to the streets to protest against government corruption.

Dubai

THOUSANDS OF construction workers, defied the dictatorial regime to march in protest along motorways demanding that

unpaid wages were paid.

Korea

THOUSANDS OF car workers took to the streets and battled with riot police to protest against economic "reform", which will lead to thousands of job cuts.

Algeria

POLICE FIRED a water cannon at some of more than 100,000 demonstrators in the

streets of Algiers, during a protest to demand greater rights for Algeria's minority Berbers. After a teenager died in police custody in April riots have broken out almost daily in the Berber region.

France

STRIKING AIRPORT workers occupied the runway at Orly Airport, south of Paris. The strike and protest was sparked by staff cuts of some 1,300.

Eamonn McCann

How they stick together

A SUDDEN visitor to the North might have been perplexed by Martin McGuinness' statement a week before the election that, the key negotiations will get under way as soon as the election is over.

The outsider might have assumed that the key negotiations had ended more than three years ago. The euphoria which greeted the conclusion of the negotiations in April 1998 had been reported world-wide.

The vast bulk of people, from both sides of the historic divide, were pictured as warmly united in pinning their hopes for the future on the Agreement.

But Seamus Mallon, too, reckoned that the issues which divide us would be sorted out in 'post-election' talks. And on BBC's *Hearts and Minds* programme seven days before the poll, David Trimble insisted that his post-dated resignation had been designed to help the negotiations which will follow, not hinder them.

Even the DUP stressed that its talks team would be ready for action as soon as the result was declared.

A connoisseur of the ridiculous might conclude that here we have a singular and original political process whereby an Agreement is reached and the negotiations to see if it's reachable scheduled afterwards.

In fact, this isn't as implausible a formulation as it might seem. One helpful way to see the current situation is that the Agreement was about the parties getting themselves into government. The negotiations now imminent are about the extent to which they have to compromise what they have always presented as their principles in order to achieve this.

Cynical

This, of course, is the cynical view. But in a twisted way, the cynical view is the most constructive. It means that although, on the face of it, there's no way the Republicans can deliver decommissioning on the timescale which David Trimble says is his minimum requirement, they'll either find a formula to keep the show up and running, or fumble their way forward anyway.

Although the Provos say the police haven't been reformed nearly enough, and the Unionists complain the reforms have gone too far already, policing will carry on in some rough and ready fashion, children on working-class estates will continue to be battered into better behaviour, and the Assembly and Executive will continue to get on with the business of governance.

There will be tremors, but the edifice won't collapse.

This relative stability arises from the fact the parties are agreed on certain fundamental matters.

It's widely acknowledged that sharp ideological divisions are no longer a feature of conventional party politics in Britain. 'Vote Conservative' read the pre-election cover of the Economist, over a picture of Tony Blair.

There's less acknowledgement of the fact that, in relation to the issues on which New Labour and the Tories have converged, the Northern parties, too have come together. On class issues, there's a centre-right consensus in the North.

Market

The extent to which the free market is being let rip through the public services is documented in *Socialist Worker* every fortnight. The Departments chiefly involved — Health, Education, Higher Education, the Environment (transport) and Finance — are run by Sinn Fein, SDLP and DUP Ministers.

It's their basic agreement on class issues which enables the Executive parties to stick together even when seemingly irreconcilable differences on other matters look certain to bring the house of cards down.

Negotiations on the other matters may stop and start and continue to pose awkward problems for the participants. But the machinery of government established under the Agreement will continue to function. And the ruling class will continue to extend its direct rule over wider and wider areas of life without any pretence of negotiation at all.

Only a strong socialist force unentangled in the Executive can hope to mobilise working people to confront this offensive. Hence the need for the Socialist Environmental Alliance to stay together and build for the future.

Local elections

SEA makes an impact

THE SOCIALIST Environmental Alliance stood in four council seats in Northern Ireland. Whatever the result in votes cast, the campaign has been highly successful.

The SEA revealed that, far from being apathetic, many working people are highly political but until now have had no vehicle by which to express their views.

The response on the doorsteps has been brilliant. On every street canvassers met people who said: "I was going to spoil my vote, but now I won't have to" or "I wasn't going to vote, but now that I know about the SEA, I will."

The anti-sectarian stance of the SEA is the first thing commented on by many. For others, the fact that it is about building the anti-capitalist movement -- campaigning around issues, not just vote-seeking -- has made all the difference.

Divide

Many people said they would not vote for any of the mainstream politicians and agreed that all the established parties use the Orange/Green divide to dodge dealing with "the real issues".

Barbara Muldoon, who stood in the Belfast Lagan-side ward told Socialist Worker: "A door in the Donegal Pass area was opened by a man in a Linfield shirt who launched into a tirade that started with 'all these companies coming here are just screwing us, expecting us to work for lousy wages and to be grateful for it' and ended minutes later with 'that's why I'm voting for none of them. They're all a shower of liars'."

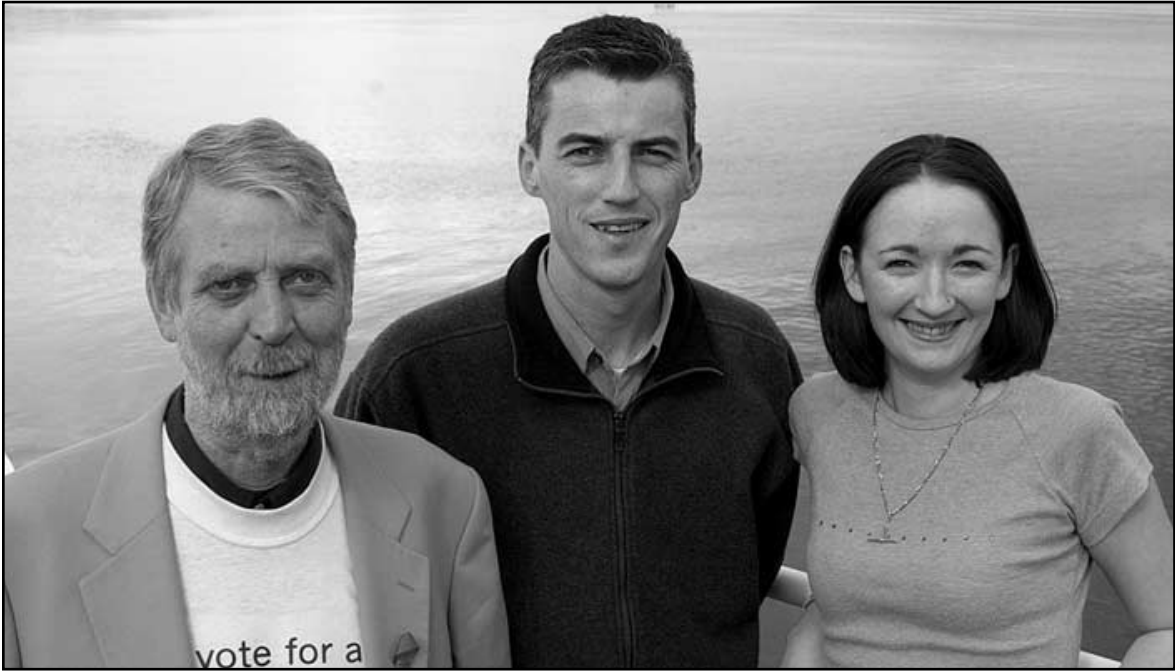
"When I explained that we aren't politicians but campaigners for trade union rights, a decent minimum wage and so on, he was delighted and said he would tell his wife and friends to vote for us too."

In Belfast, the Private Finance Initiative and the special treatment given by the planning authorities to companies involved in PFI was a big issue.

For example the PFI company involved in Wellington College was given the go-ahead to build 400 apartments on what had been school rugby pitches.

Local residents in the already overcrowded area appealed against the planning permission and lost.

It has already cost them £5,000 and they cannot afford the cost of taking it further - something the property speculators count on to get their own way.



The Derry SEA candidates

In Derry, the picture was similar, if the issues are different.

There was a shared feeling that the establishment parties are letting ordinary working people down by bringing low paid, non-union jobs to the city.

One man in Creggan who had voted Sinn Fein since the early 1980s told

candidate Shauna Deery

"I'll give you my No 1, that shower of bastards certainly aren't getting it." Others were less forthright in their language but said much the same thing.

Incinerator

The incinerator and the

welcome given by all the parties on the council to the arms manufacturer, Raytheon, meant that many people were waiting to welcome the SEA to their door.

Others were waiting to tell us about conditions at their workplaces, about the agency working which has become widespread, about low pay and bullying man-

agers.

Now that the election is over, most SEA members hope to keep the Alliance going.

The first activity in Derry will be to support the Women in Black protest at the continued Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory at the War Memorial, 12 noon Sat. June 9th.

Doctors threaten resignation from NHS

OVER NINETY per cent of Northern Ireland's General Practitioners threatened to resign en masse from the NHS unless their contracts are redrawn.

The action comes after a one-day strike on May Day this year.

Doctors have complained that unless "the increasingly massive workload is reduced and a proper environment created whereby family doctors have sufficient time for their patients, then the time will come when they will be forced to vote with their feet"

The action just scratches the surface of the problems in the NHS.

A report published this month lifted the lid on "fat cat" executives in the health boards.

All of Northern Ireland's NHS chief executives are paid from the lowest, £68,000 and to the highest, £108,000.

Expenses

On top of this, two health boards in Belfast pay the executives travel expenses of £37,400 and £34,383.

This comes at a time when the NHS is strapped for cash and

boards are closing hospitals.

In a recent survey, survey 24 percent of nurses said they intend to leave the health service,

Lethal weapon 2

THE NEW plastic bullet, or 'baton round' was introduced in the North on 1 June.

While the old plastic bullets were clearly very dangerous — killing 17 people, 11 of them children — US military data suggests the new bullets may be

mainly due to financial reasons. The Minister who presides over this glaring mistreatment of hospital workers is Sinn Fein's Bairbre de Brun.

even more lethal.

The new plastic bullet will hit the victim at 160 mph risking death and injury to anyone nearby, children in particular.

The secret Defence and Scientific Advisory Council report of 21 August 2000 recommended that "research should be undertaken into post-ricochet trajectories and energy of baton rounds and that steps could be taken to reduce the risk to non-targeted personnel from ricochets", but the Government refuses to say whether this work has been carried out.

Several of the children who were killed by plastic bullets were hit by ricochets.

It is a disgrace that the British army and RUC continue to use these lethal weapons.

Blank paper degrees

Over 1,000 students could be excluded from their own graduation ceremonies because they have not been able to pay their tuition fees.

Queens University told students that, if fees aren't paid you can get a blank piece

of paper instead.

Some 700 students at Queens University Belfast, and a further 300 students at the Ulster University have not been able to pay their fees this year.

Every year thousands of students leave Northern Ireland's university in debt, one figure estimates that the average student in Northern Ireland leaves university

with debts between £7,000 and £10,000.

In a recent survey it was discovered that up to 20% of students leave university early, mainly due to financial reasons.

The cost of abolishing tuition fees in Northern Ireland would cost the government less than £35 million, less than half the money given to the arms company Raytheon.

Joe
Moore

Prison Notebook

JOE MOORE was jailed last month for helping to organise a campaign against bin charges in Cork. The pre-text used was that he was flouting the litter laws.

Just after Joe was jailed still more revelations trickled out about network of bribery and corruption that entangled politicians like Michael Lowry and Charles Haughey.

Yet these gangsters walk about as free men while people like Joe Moore are jailed for taking a principled stance against double taxation. Here is Joe's impression of prison life in a Cork Jail.

"The purpose of imprisonment is firstly to punish offenders by denying them their liberty, and secondly to rehabilitate them, in order that when they re-enter society, that the chances of re-offending are minimal.

My recent experience in Cork prison, demonstrated that this second goal is not being pursued by the Department of Justice.

The conditions, under which inmates are incarcerated, have not changed since Victorian times.

Prisoners are kept locked in their cells for a minimum of sixteen hours per day.

The two-man cells measure roughly 14 feet by 6½ feet and consist of a bunk bed, two lockers and two chairs.

The walls are concrete block with a steel door.

The only natural light comes from a window high up on the wall, consisting of ten glass panes each measuring 3 inches square.

Outside the window is a steel mesh grill.

Cells do not have internal plumbing. There is no running water and no toilet facilities.

While locked in the cell, prisoners are given a small stainless steel pot, in which to relieve themselves. All meals are eaten in this unhygienic atmosphere.

Visiting conditions are barbaric, as no physical contact is allowed.

The visiting room is 30 feet long with a 4½ foot wide table running down the centre.

Prisoners stand at one side, while their visitors are on the other. There is no separation between each prisoner.

In such conditions it is impossible to hear what your visitors are saying, while at the same time you are hearing snatches of conversation from those on either side of you.

This does psychological damage to prisoners' families, who are not guilty of any crime.

It is impossible to explain to a young child or elderly parent that they cannot hug their loved ones.

Each prisoner is allowed one such 30-minute visit per week.

The exercise yard consists of an area 75 yards by 24 yards, surrounded by 30-foot high walls and covered by a steel wire mesh, giving the impression of a giant aviary.

The only physical activity is to continually walk up and down, and when tired to sit on ground as seating is not provided.

Places in the workshop and the school are limited to small numbers, so the majority of prisoners spend their days either locked in their cells or in the yard.

The racism in Irish society against Travellers is demonstrated by the fact that although they only constitute less than 1 percent of the population, they account for almost 9 percent of the population in Cork prison.

Frustrating

The positive fact is however that there is no racism shown towards them by the other prisoners.

Other bureaucratic practices also make life difficult for the inmates, the most frustrating of which is the amount of time from being admitted until a prisoner receives their own clothing.

These items of clothing are taken, so that they can be labelled.

However sometimes this can take up to 6 weeks, during which time, inmates are forced to wear prison issue clothing, which is often the wrong size and can be in a state of disrepair.

All in all, my limited stay has debunked the holiday camp image, that is often portrayed in the media, and the food is far from hotel standard.

These conditions should be ended immediately.

A more humane regime should be introduced, with an emphasis on rehabilitation to ensure that people do not re-offend.

What is also very obvious is the class nature of the society we live in, as prison seems to be a "rich free" zone.

As the rich fight over Eircom ...

Corrupt Fat Cats cash in on privatisation

by SIMON
BASKETTER

Profits in selling

THE GOVERNMENT has paid out almost three quarters of a million pounds for public relations and advice just on the privatisation of Aer Lingus.

The advertising group, Irish

International Group, received £520,184, while public relations consultancy Drury Communications was paid £66,360.

Legal advice on the flotation cost the government £130,527, with solicitors William Fry being paid £62,500, Mason Hayes & Curran £50,000 and McCann Fitzgerald £3,027.



Michael and Denis

tables at a New York function to raise funds for the party.

Some £50,000 came from Telenor, the Norwegian phone company which owned 40 percent of Esat.

O'Brien then proceeded to set up various property and offshore deals which netted Lowry another £950,000.

Sir Anthony O'Reilly as he is now known is also trying to get the phone network.

He as already is worth at least £1.6 million.

The man who owns most of Ireland's newspapers, used the dodgy Ansbacher Bank for some of his deals.

Not really surprising since he has a home on the Cayman Islands where the bank is based.

He has previous experience of telecom licenses.

One of O'Reilly's companies bribed Ray Burke and another of his companies got most of the licenses for digital television TV masts.

For a £1 million sweetener, O'Brien eventually cleared £206 million in pure profit.

He added nothing of value and never worked much harder than the Eircom staff.

The vultures of greed

DERMOT DESMOND is the man behind the onshore tax scam that is the IFSC is also bidding for Eircom.

He has in excess of £150 million and was originally behind NCB Stockbrokers.

NCB were the government appointed consultants to Bord na Móna, ESB, Telecom Éireann.

In all NCB received ten major contracts from semi state companies between 1987 and 1992.

They also played a central role in the Greencore and Irish Life flotations where they received hugely inflated fees. When Desmond was on the Board of Aer Rianta, development plans were "accidentally" leaked to a rival company owned by Haughey's son.



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The Fat Cats Friend: Minister for Privatisation Mary O'Rourke

Private Power

THE ESB is set up for privatisation and the vultures are already circling.

Former Fianna fundraiser Tadgh O'Donoghue, a tax partner with accountants Pricewaterhouse Coopers is running the "rationalisation" plan.

This will reduce staff by almost a quarter, to 6,500 from 8,500.

O'Donoghue says the company needs the job cuts because "pressure from competitors in the liberalising market means it needs a nimble, more supple structure".

O'Donoghue claims the

ESB is "utterly committed" to competition, "and will not do things in the sense of putting barriers in the way of competitors".

Privately owned, power-generating stations are already being built around the country.

For instance, at Dungarvan, Co Waterford are building one Rolls-Royce Power Ventures Ltd as are Statoil in Ringsend, Dublin.

The main rival operators waiting for privatisation are ePower owned by Denis O'Brien and CRH the construction giant who used to run the Ansbacher accounts from their head office.

Privatising everything

DENIS O'BRIEN likes to portray himself as a thrusting entrepreneur who doesn't need any state help. Yet the Esat deal was all about government handing wealth to business.

In the run up to the deal O'Brien hired a rake of political advisors to help him out, including:

● Fine Gael Deputy leader, Jim Mitchell, who

was then a government minister.

● Charlie Haughey's spin doctor PJ Moran

● Pauric O'Huigin, who made £3.5 million out of the Esat deal was an advisor to both Charlie Haughey and Bertie Ahern

● Fianna Fail TD Conor Lenihan.

A special deal was done so Esat could put its masts up on the top of Garda stations.

The then Minister for the Environment, Labour's Brendan Howlin, even changed the Planning Act

directly benefit to Esat.

Denis O'Brien knows every scam in the book. Last month he built two boats in Donegal.

Saved

He availed of a little-known tax incentive scheme and saved himself £15 million in tax.

In a recent speech to ISME O'Brien outlined his wish list for the Irish economy:

■ Privatising the health ser-

vices.

■ Emergency legislation to allow private road building.

On Dublin airport he said, "Michael O'Leary of Ryanair is right."

Baldonnell should be handed over to a private sector operator and within six months Dublin would have two airports.

Denis O'Brien is worth at least £398 million.

While he owns a £7mil-

lion pad in Ballsbridge, his love of taxes avoidance keeps him in Portugal where he

lives. He controls the non-union 98FM radio station.

O'Brien's power company Epower, is currently trying to get contracts in the run up to ESB's privatisation.

Deregulate

He says "The Government needs to immediately deregulate the whole industry".

This may explain why he gave £50,000 each to Fine Gael, Fianna Fail and the Progressive Democrats last year.

Luas the future of CIE

Mary O'Rourke is also trying to sell off most of CIE to private operators. She is using the Luas system as a dry run for privatising the whole company.

Five companies are set to cash in on Luas. They see it as their entry into the Irish transport market.

● Stagecoach

In Britain, Stagecoach operates a fleet of more than 7,000 buses and owns Prestwick International Airport in Glasgow.

It has been at the forefront of the chaos of privatised rail in Britain, running the South West trains franchise and has a 49 per cent stake in Richard Branson's Virgin Rail Group.

Its boss Brian Souter is a right-wing bigot who campaigns against homosexuality.

● National Express

National Express was the national British bus company prior to privatisation in 1988.

It has the largest number of train-operating franchises in Britain and is involved in the joint venture management company of Eurostar. It is the largest private operator of public transport in Australia.

● Connex

Swedish company Connex claims to be Europe's largest private public passenger transport company. A wholly-owned subsidiary of communications giant Vivendi, the company runs 17 per cent of the disastrous British rail network.

● Serco

Serco is a service company which specialises in "managing change" - or cut backs. It is in involved in the defence industry and privatising health services.

● Transdev

Transdev is at the forefront of the deregulation of public transport in France.

Black Gold

THE GOVERNMENT gave away the last public owned oil refinery last month.

The Irish National Petroleum Corporation (INPC), which operates the Whitegate Oil Refinery and the Whiddy Oil Terminal in Cork, was sold to US oil giant Tosco Corporation for £100 million.

But the Government has guaranteed to pay all outstanding debts for the com-

pany. These amount to exactly £100 million

Worse the Government will pay any costs caused by failures to meet existing environmental standards. Tosco, has the worst environmental record of any of the US oil refiners.

Tosco has annual revenues of \$25 billion and refines 1.2 million barrels of oil throughout the US.

And when the oil and gas of the Irish coast flows through the refinery, the Irish tax payer will receive, you guessed it, nothing.

issues for anti-capitalists

Coffee giants roast poorest

HAVE YOU noticed a change in the price of coffee? The answer is no, there hasn't been, for you and me. Yet the profits of the big coffee companies have soared.

Nestlé, the world's largest coffee roaster, made about £1 billion profit from coffee last year, and profits are up 20 percent so far this year.

Halved

The giant US coffee house chain, Starbucks', saw its profits triple in the last five years and rose 40 percent in the first quarter of this year.

How has this been achieved? Because the price paid to millions of people who grow the coffee has plummeted. Two years ago coffee was worth about \$1 a pound.

Today it is nearer 50 cents and still falling. This has halved the income of an estimated 20 million coffee growers. Who exactly are these growers?

An Oxfam report last week said that about 70 percent of the world's coffee is grown on farms of less than 12 acres.

The growers are poor people in Brazil and Colombia, or in the Kafe region of Ethiopia, where the falling price of coffee is leading to food shortages.

They are in Chiapas, Mexico, where wages of the indigenous peoples working on coffee farms are being cut.

They are in Tanzania, where one woman told Oxfam, "How can I pay for school fees when I can barely feed and clothe my children? My children don't go to school and we starve."

Do the giants of the coffee industry care? Of course not. "Trading profits increased and margins improved thanks to favourable commodity prices," says Nestlé.

The giants of the global coffee industry met in London recently. They were no doubt rubbing their hands with glee and they want to make matters even worse.

Coffee production is very labour intensive because berries ripen at different speeds and have to be hand picked.

Researchers have developed a new genetically modified coffee bean that stops growing just before it is ready to be harvested.

The plan is to then ripen them all at once using a chemical spray, and harvest mechanically.

The agro-chemical industry, the big coffee corporations and the big farmers will gain. Poor farmers and labourers will suffer.

Until about ten years ago an international agreement regulated the volume of coffee produced.

Such agreements have



by SAM
ASHMAN

been torn up by organisations like the IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organisation as "barriers to free trade".

Coffee production has become a free for all. Other countries like Indonesia and Vietnam have entered the market.

The amount of coffee produced has soared, the price has fallen, and millions have been pushed into desperation.

At the same time the World Bank and the IMF encourage poor countries to get locked into the world market.

They encourage countries to turn more land over to producing crops to sell for cash.

But when the price on the world market falls, the poorest countries have to export more to get the same amount of money.

So people go hungry while swathes of land are devoted to producing things like luxury flowers for export, or mangel-tout.

Destroy

The mad logic of the market leads to further madness.

One idea being put forward to help poor coffee farmers is to destroy the existing stocks of coffee in order to remove about one million tonnes from the market.

What a waste, of coffee and people's labour!

Some people say the key to ending this awful situation is to back schemes such as "fair trade" coffee, where a greater amount goes to the grower.

But, while well intentioned, the idea that the solution to the problem is for consumers to pay more is wide of the mark.

The real and obvious solution is to cut the vast profits of the big firms and make them pay more to the growers.

The market produces a crazy spiral that results in profits for few and despair for millions.

We need to fight for every small gain that can be made within the system. But it is the chains of the market that ultimately must be broken.

After Abbeylara and corruption scandals

Who do the police serve?

Corruption scandals in Donegal and attempts to cover-up the Abbeylara shooting have focused attention on how the Gardai operate. Here **KIERAN ALLEN** exposes the reality of the Irish police.

THE UNITED STATES runs approximately 125 police assistance programmes in foreign countries. Officially the aim is to establish professional police forces that uphold the rule of law, without fear or favour.

Yet results hardly match the claims. One of the countries which received help from this programme since 1954 is Guatemala where over 130,000 people have either been tortured or "disappeared" at the hands of the police and army.

Another is El Salvador where the police have regularly been condemned for human rights abuses.

When it comes to the police there is a large gap between myth and reality.

In every country, the police are put on a pedestal by right-wing politicians. From an early age children are encouraged to believe in "their" police force. The police are there "to help the community".

Enforcing

They are supposed to be completely impartial in enforcing the law. Their main job is to prevent crime against ordinary people.

Each and every one of these claims is false.

"Police" was originally the name for plain clothes agents in France associated with spying and violence. The first moves to establish a local police force in Ireland occurred in the 1780s in response to nationalist and peasant agitation. Even the moderate politician, Henry Grattan called them "an abominable institution".

The modern police force came about when Robert Peel introduced the Metropolitan Police Act in 1829. Originally sections of the local aristocracy objected to the idea of a body of trained men who were answerable only to state officials -- rather than to themselves.

But the growing labour unrest convinced them that the new police force was needed.

One manufacturer summed up their feelings when he told a Royal Commission, "In case of turn-outs, it would be desirable to

have a force to protect the people who are willing to work."

Ever since, the essential task of police officers has been to act as the muscle men for the wealthy.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the pattern in most countries was to "professionalise" the police force.

This involved an emphasis on training, discipline and developing a bureaucratic hierarchy, which was supposed to govern the behaviour of officers.

But moves to a professional police force also arose from important lessons that the ruling class drew from early conflicts between security forces and the working class.

In some countries, the militia or even the army was used to deal with civil unrest. But the wealthy found that ordinary soldiers who lived in the same sort of poverty as the local working class were often unreliable.

IT WAS necessary to develop a force that was relatively isolated from working class communities - one that earned more and had a career structure that rewarded absolute obedience.

Moreover, this professional police force could also give the impression of being neutral and so above politics.

In the United States, for example, local police forces were regularly changed depending on whether Democrats and Republicans took control of cities. But this only weakened their legitimacy in the eyes of contending factions.

A professional police force that appeared to stand above political and class divisions was far more useful to the ruling elite.

Ever since, police forces have been relatively isolated from the rest of society.

They see themselves as being on a mission to enforce the rule of law. But the law they enforce is overwhelmingly biased towards defending the privileges of the rich.

Ninety percent of those who are jailed have committed crimes against property. The vast majority of offenders are poor.

The police see themselves as being almost at war with sections of the working class community they are supposed to serve.

They are encouraged to be



Gardai attacking Water Charge protestors in Waterford

suspicious of every action and motive of those around them. But this same suspicion never extends to their political masters.

The result is that within the police is concentrated all the most reactionary and conservative ideas of society.

Studies in Britain have shown for example that 80 percent of police officers vote for the Conservatives. In France, one of the police officers' unions has links with the fascist right.

RACISM AND sexism is rampant within the police. Nine out of ten women police officers have said they face sexual harassment.

Only two percent of the British police come from ethnic minorities. Not surprisingly, black people are four times more likely to be stopped by a police officer than a white person.

Of course, individual police officers vary. Not every one of them is a racist or a sexist who treats working class people with contempt.

But the effect of the whole structure of the police is to encourage these attitudes and render the police a pliable tool at the disposal of our rulers.

Until recently, the Irish Gardai have been viewed as being differ-

ent to this general pattern. It is claimed that they were unarmed and more rooted in their communities.

But the same pressures that operate to produce police force that is biased to serving the interests of the elite operate in Ireland as well.

The Irish Gardai were originally drawn overwhelmingly from the ranks of the IRA. One study showed that two thirds of Gardai who were recruited between 1922 and 1952 claimed an IRA membership.

But even though they came from a revolutionary nationalist tradition, the structures of the police force soon moulded them into a conservative force.

Revealed

One of the first commanders of the police between 1922 and 1932 was Eoin O Duffy, a former OC of the Northern Brigade of the IRA.

O Duffy joined the IRA to fight the empire but he soon revealed his class prejudices when he warned the force about "city scum who are always alive for any chance to plunder and loot, ready to espouse any cause which undermines order and government".

In 1928, he led a police pilgrimage to the Vatican where he

was greeted by the fascist dictator Mussolini.

In 1933, O Duffy was sacked by the new Fianna Fail government and went on to form the Blueshirts.

But the nature of the police force did not fundamentally change.

FIANNA FAIL recruited 80 of its supporters into the Special Branch but instead of spying on fascists they concentrated most of their activity on radical left wing republicans.

There was never any pretence that the Irish Gardai were subject to democratic control.

Unlike Britain, no local police boards were established. The Gardai were run directly by the secretive Department of Justice.

Gardai never interfered in the affairs of the rich but concentrated on working class crime.

The Guards never prosecuted Charles Haughey, Ray Burke or those who avoided DIRT tax.

For every miscarriage of justice scandal that occurred in Britain, there has been one in Ireland.

In the mid seventies, for example, a Heavy Gang was formed within the Gardai to beat

confessions out of suspects.

One woman, Joanne Hayes, was forced to confess to the killing of a baby which she could not have committed.

Between 1975 and 1979 no less than twenty people died in police stations and prisons.

The activities of the Gardai have always been concentrated on the "crimes" of the poor and on political "subversion".

Defeated

Major workers struggles such as the post office workers' strike of 1979 were defeated by Garda baton charges on picket lines.

This record shows that it makes little sense to treat the police as "workers in uniform".

Their whole role brings them into conflict with working people because they have to enforce the rule of the privileged.

Very occasionally, they may take industrial action such as during the "blue flu".

But this has never prevented them breaking strikes of workers or attacking protests.

Anti-capitalists need to challenge police propaganda which tries to demonise and divide their movement.

It is also why we need to organise the largest possible numbers to overcome the resistance of the police to direct action.

in my
view

Approaching
Highway 60

*"How much do I know
To talk out of turn
You might say that I'm young
You might say I'm unlearned"*

SO BEGAN one of the verses of the vitriolic anti-war song "Masters of War". The message is as powerful and relevant today as it was when it was written, but its composer would have a problem singing about his youth now. Bob Dylan has just turned 60.

There are many yardsticks people use when measuring the advance of years. But Dylan the angry young protest singer, the man who revolutionised popular music, now fast approaching a pension - that really does seem too much.

I went to see Dylan a few months ago, but I must admit I went with something of a heavy heart.

The previous time I saw him was about five years earlier, when he wheezed and mumbled his way through songs that, although famous, were barely recognisable. This time, though, he was great.

What fascinated me was that in amongst the ageing hippies and the reformed punks there was a surprisingly large smattering of much younger people.

What is more, they whooped and hollered at the classics written many years before some of them were born.

For in as much as a Dylan revival exists, it is to the early Dylan -- the folk protester, the rock rebel -- that people are looking.

I happen to love his last album, Time Out of Mind. An album that deals bleakly with loneliness, aging, impending death is unlikely to inspire many young people though.

Exploded

The earlier stuff? Ah, that's a different question. Dylan exploded onto the music scene in the early 1960s as the post-war consensus was breaking down, black civil rights were taking off and fear of atomic wipeout was growing.

Like many young folk singers of the time, he began to break with the idea that folk singers could sing only old songs.

These new singers used new words relevant to the world they lived in. Dylan's strange and angry voice articulated protest in ways sometimes more stark, sometimes more subtle, but always full of greater rage than his contemporaries.

When he sang of the murder of a black civil rights leader, he attempted in a breathtakingly successful way to explain not just the tragedy of the event, but the nature of racism itself, in "Only a Pawn in Their Game".

Just as his audience thought they knew him, Dylan turned away from folk and protest, picked up the electric guitar, and began painting verbal images of alienation.

Well now he's 60, and hopefully a new generation will discover why he inspired many of us as we began the task of trying to change the world.

Let's finish where we started-Dylan's rage at the politicians, profiteers and arms dealers in "Masters of War":

*"And I hope that you die
And your death'll come soon
I will follow your casket
In the pale afternoon
And I'll watch while you're lowered
Down to your deathbed
And I'll stand o'er your grave
Till I'm sure that you're dead."*

Now, if Eminem could ever direct his undoubted talent and rage in that way, the anti-capitalist movement would truly have a troubadour.

by PAT STACK

film

From here
to inanity

AS CORPORATE shindigs go, the US premiere of Pearl Harbor took a lot of beating. Two thousand guests were flown in to Hawaii for a screening aboard a US Navy aircraft carrier that had been refitted for the event.

Hawaii National Guard's air wing flew formations overhead. Country singer Faith Hill sang the national anthem and, as he walked up the 900ft red carpet, Disney chairman Michael Eisner could have been forgiven for feeling that times were rather good, despite the \$5m party price.

Smoothes

So we have the summer's first mega-movie. Nice people in a historical romance with explosions. Pearl Harbor offers a vision of what Titanic might have looked like if the iceberg was the war-like Japanese.

It's a love story about a triangle of pretty young people —two best buddies and the nurse they both love —set against the mighty backdrop of war, planes, shooting, guns and ammo.

The film smooths over America's "yellow peril" racist invective. In the film the Japanese characters are carefully drawn: they are thoughtful, almost regretful about launching the attack. There is the token black guy forced through prejudice to be a cook.

None of this is an attempt at liberalism but rather ensuring the film doesn't offend in the important Asian market.

Devoid

A Disney film about World War Two was always going to be scary. Hawaii is a place strangely devoid of Hawaiians.

Never at any time does director Michael Bay give any hint of the real human cost of war. The movie has as much relationship to the reality of wartime combat as a Gap ad for khakis.

The company founder Walt was keener on the Nazi regime in Germany than the wonders of American democracy. But far more important things are left out.



RUN FOR cover Ben the whole thing is going to flop

What had been a rising tide of virulent racism against the Japanese turned into the illegal imprisonment of thousands of Japanese Americans in the aftermath of the attack.

On Pearl Harbor itself there is, of course, no

historical context given. The American government knew of the attack and moved the majority of their fleet out of the harbour. But they wanted to use Pearl Harbor to enter the war. The movie's final act is to show the heroes spear-

heading the retaliatory raid on Tokyo on April 18 1942, "America suffered, and grew stronger," the heroine says, "through the trial we overcame."

No mention of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the nuclear strikes, that vapourised tens of thou-

sands, started the Cold War and led to America's imperialist domination of the region that was the revenge for Pearl Harbor.

But then again George Bush Jnr is in the White House.

Film

Better then Tarantino

MEXICO CITY is home to 20 million people and each of them has a different story to tell in the new film Amores Perros. The film's title is translated as Love's a Bitch, but its meaning, derived from street slang, is closer to tough or savage love.

Mexican director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu inventively weaves together the stories of three unconnected couples.

He uses the device of a horrific car crash in the centre of the city and, curiously, the protagonists' pet dogs.

The result is a film divided into three separate but interconnected parts, which is both extraordinarily original and utterly absorbing.

The film has attracted a lot of media attention because of its violence. Its maker has been hailed as the "Mexican Tarantino". But this is an

unfortunate comparison.

Tarantino is slick and superficial in his treatment of violence. Amores Perros is profound, delving into the consequences of violence and showing its painful reality. There is no attempt to glamorise —violence is presented in all its gruesome banality.

Brutality

Where Tarantino uses black humour to minimise the reality of violence, this film does not disguise the brutality of life in this place.

Though not an overtly political film, Amores Perros contrasts the lives of the participants drawn from wildly different backgrounds. There is a working class youth involved in the seedy but lucrative world of dog fighting.

He makes his way through

life in a sharply different way to the pampered existence of a trendy media couple, self absorbed and obsessed with their irritating little pooch, Richie.

The most attractive of the characters is, at first glance, the pleasant, dishevelled, smelly tramp who lives a squalid life with his pack of stray dogs.

He is in fact an ex-guerrilla who now earns (though doesn't spend) big money as a hired assassin. His story, like that of the others, is reflected by his dog's story.

This is a rich, complicated and hugely enjoyable film that ultimately deals with humanity's struggle to lead a decent life in a corrupt world.

Don't be put off by subtleties, the seriousness of the subject, or the length of the film. This is well worth the trip to the cinema.

— TIM SANDERS



Workers create all the wealth in capitalist society. A new society can only be constructed when they collectively seize control of that wealth and plan its production and distribution.

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be reformed out of existence. Parliament cannot be used to end the system.

The courts army and police are there to defend the interests of the capitalist class not to run society in a neutral fashion.

To destroy capitalism, workers need to smash the state and create a workers' state based on workers' councils.

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST

The SWP welcomed the break-up of the USSR and the end of the East European dictatorships. These states were not socialist but were run by a state-capitalist class.

We are against the domination of the globe by imperialist powers and we oppose their wars. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women.

We stand for: free contraception and free, legalised abortion and the right to divorce; the complete separation of church and state, an end to church control over schools and hospitals; an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians; an end to racism and anti-traveller bigotry. We argue for working class unity in the fight against oppression.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

Northern Ireland is a sectarian state, propped up by the British Army. Catholic workers are systematically discriminated against by the state. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers weakens the whole working class. Workers' unity can only be won and maintained in a fight to smash both the Northern and Southern states.

We stand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. Violence will only end when workers unite in the fight for a workers' republic.

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Trade unions exist to defend workers' interests. But the union leaders' role is to negotiate with capitalism not to end it. We support the leaders when they fight but oppose them when they betray workers. We stand for independent rank and file action.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party. This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system. The SWP aims to build such a party here.

news & reports/politics/industry/the unions (01) 8722682 /fax (01) 872 3838 e-mail swp@clubi.ie

PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS

Toll Bridge Strike

As £95 Bills drop through Dublin letterboxes Don't pay the bin tax

AS BIN charge bills dropped through letter boxes in Dublin over the past couple of weeks, thousands of Dubliners vowed not to pay this charge.

The Campaign Against the Bin Tax is organising across Dublin to fight the charges.

Dublin Corporation is demanding £95 in two instalments from those it delivers a wheelie bin to and £65 from those with no bin.

Half of the charge is due for payment by the end of June. But they are unlikely to have an easy time collecting the money.

Nicola from the Kimmage action group told Socialist Worker, "The Corporation is trying to pretend that this charge will help clean up the environment. But in reality it is simply double taxation.

"We have already paid for these services through PAYE and VAT and we should not have to pay this charge."

Fiona from the Glasnevin action group added, "As much as 80 million tonnes of waste is produced each year in this country, but most of it comes from construction, industry and farming.

"Ordinary domestic waste from householders accounts for just 2 million tonnes.

"The Corporation should be going after the big-business polluters."

Both agree that the slogan of "Don't Pay the Bin Tax" is striking a chord with many, many angry working class people.

Over the previous couple of months action groups

have been set up in a number of areas across Dublin and these are swinging into action as the bills are delivered.

In Ballyfermot a big meeting of sixty people and in Cherry Orchard another 40 have voted unanimously to refuse to pay the charge and to organise among their neighbours for mass non-payment campaign.

At the end of May Labour Councillor Eric Byrne organised a meeting denouncing these militant tactics and instead urging people to have faith in the councillors to end the tax.

This did not go down at all well with the 40 people who came to meeting, who applauded activists from the anti-bins tax campaign who argued for organised mass non payment.

Scare

Eric Byrne then tried to scare people saying non-payers could go to jail. It was quickly pointed out that no-one went to jail during the successful campaign of non-payment of the water charges.

At the end of the meeting more than a dozen people left their details to get involved with the Campaign Against the Bin Tax.

Peadar from Ballyfermot told Socialist Worker, "The word here is DON'T PAY!. Our local action groups in this area have

brought together up to 80 people who are delivering leaflets and getting the word out."

In Killester/Howth a lively group of residents have been leafleting and organising since a successful

meeting in the Hollybrook Hotel a few weeks ago. And they joined up with a local Residents Association to get the maximum non-payment.

From previous meetings networks of activists had

Ballymore Eustace

Water works not for sale

A THREAT by workers at the Ballymore Eustace waterworks to take strike action has pushed back plans for privatisation.

The first that workers heard of these plans was in October 1999.

Ever since then the issue has been under discussion at a partnership committee in Dublin Corporation which is responsible for the waterworks.

An extension is needed for the waterworks because of growing demand and it is estimated

that it will cost £40 million.

It was at first proposed to build the extension under a public-private partnership scheme.

This is based on Britain's "Private Finance Initiative" schemes.

Big business builds badly needed facilities and then leases them for about 25 years and charges for the use of the service.

The new extension in Ballymore Eustace was due to supply 15 million extra gallons of water to an already existing supply of 55 million.

Private

A private contractor would both build the extension and then take over the existing plant and manage both for a profit.

However after months of discussion, the partnership committee of the Corporation

agreed that only a normal "design and build contract" should be looked for.

This means that the extension and the existing plant would stay in public ownership.

But top officials in the corporation were not happy and they got an engineering firm MC O'Sullivan to draw up a report which recommended privatisation.

"It was like sending someone to the shop to do a message for you. They were just buying what they wanted to hear," one SIPTU member told Socialist Worker.

Workers were outraged when this report was issued on May 12th. After a ballot they agreed to strike on the next date that the partnership committee met.

Their aim was to pressurise that committee to stick to its promise to keep the waterworks

under public ownership. The threat had some immediate effects.

"The Gods from on high in the corporation came down to meet us.

"We put out case well at the partnership committee and they stuck to their original recommendation." one worker said.

The workers have also set up meetings with other corporation workers in the Marlboro Lane depot in Dublin and have won full backing to resist any threat of privatisation.

The final decision on the matter rests with Noel Dempsey, the Minister for the Environment who is due to issue contract by August 1st.

Workers have now shown that they will not be taken in by the fraud of "public private partnerships" which is just privatisation by another name.

Dun Laoghaire

THE CORPORATE take over of Dun Laoghaire is continuing with the council's attempt to privatise any remaining public spaces along the seafront.

Dun Laoghaire and Blackrock Baths have been used by generations of people in the Dun Laoghaire area as a local amenity that was open for all to use.

Over the last few years the Council has let them fall into a state of disrepair. They eventually shut the baths a few years ago stating that they were

unsafe.

Instead of spending money to repair and improve the baths the council now have proposals to sell off the baths to private developers who plan to build a private leisure centre or luxury flats on the sites.

Meeting

A group called the Dun Laoghaire Heritage and Renewal Campaign was set up at a meeting in Dun Laoghaire last month to campaign against any such plans.

Richard Boyd Barrett, chair of the campaign said, "Every local public amenity faces a similar threat if this sell off goes

ahead. The council are prepared to consider selling off our heritage for a quick profit.

The only people to gain from this will be the private developers. These sites are much sought after because of their ideal location to build luxury apartments with a sea view."

The campaign has launched a petition to campaign to save the baths. "Any proposed sell off to private developers to build private leisure facilities or luxury flats will be resisted. We want the Baths refurbished and kept open to the public", said Richard Boyd Barrett.

Globalise Resistance

Building for Genoa

Day of Workshops, meetings, videos and music.

Project Arts Centre, Dublin

Saturday June 9th

Clinton disrupted

OVER 50 protesters disrupted Bill Clinton's visit to Derry at the end of May. Carrying placards saying "Half a million children killed by Clinton's Sanctions in Iraq", they ensured Clinton could not get away with his phony concern for Irish children.

When the Sinn Fein Mayor Cathal Crumley said Clinton had offered hope to Irish children, there were shouts of "he kills Iraqi and Palestinian kids".

Four times, the for-

mer US president had to depart from his scripted speech to acknowledge the protesters!

The following day in Belfast there were further protests. Following a peaceful alternative feast at Queen's offering a choice of veggie burgers for 50p or a table at Clinton's banquet for £15,000, four peo-

ple were arrested and charged with "behaviour likely to lead to the breach of the peace".

The protesters were man handled by police and in one case got dragged by the hair over barricades.

Belfast was the only place in Ireland where he did not do a walk about because of the protests.

Anti Capitalism

refom or revolution

speakers:

Eamonn McCann &

Martin Smith (SWP Britatin)

Belfast: 18th June

Derry: 19th June Nerve Centre,

Magazine Street

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June 16th: Marxism and Oppression

June 23th: Their democracy and ours

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PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS

ESB

Vote no to PACT

WORKERS IN the ESB are due to ballot on new deal called "PACT —The Programme for Action, Competitiveness and Transparency" in the coming weeks.

The deal will mean 2,000 redundancies and will worsen conditions dramatically. But it is being promoted with a once-off sweetener payment of £2,250 and a 10 percent "reward" increase.

The company is desperate to sell the deal because it will help open up the ESB for privatisation.

The last time they tried to sell it, network technicians —members of the ATGWU —turned it down by 4 to 1.

Contract

The PACT deal opens the way for contract labour on a huge scale.

"Virtually anything can be turned over to contract labour. They are building new 110KV stations to supply growing demand in Dublin.

"Normally this would have been done by ESB workers as it involved mainly steel and electrical work.

"But under this proposal it would be all contracted out". one union activist told Socialist Worker.

Management are also looking for complete flexibility on deployment of labour.

"They want Saturday and Sunday working but for no extra pay. You would get other days off instead.

"They want to bring in a sort of lump work arrangement where a group of workers are given a job and a number of timed hours to complete it. It will be a way of really stepping up pressure on us.

"Originally they wanted us to 'start on site' which could have meant travelling up to 60 hours to a job, with-

out proper travel time.

"This has been dropped - but only temporarily. It will come back again if they get through this deal".

Management and some union leaders have been mounting a major campaign for the deal. Regular "progress reports" were sent out during the negotiations by management.

Voting will be by different categories of worker. Those who vote Yes get the pay reward immediately, putting more pressure on those who vote No.

Rank and file workers, though, should co-ordinate their opposition to this new deal and ensure it gets the thumbs down.

Translink

Fury at 3.5% pay offer

BUS DRIVERS in Translink, which operates Ulsterbus and Belfast's Citybus, are furious over a rotten pay offer.

Recently their unions - the ATGWU and GMB -- put in a claim for a 5 percent pay increase..

As one driver told Socialist Worker, "Many of us thought the claim should have been for more but the

company responded with a final offer just 3.5 percent.

"Even that would be tied to a longer working day.

"Translink rejected any move on the lower paid or holidays and big restrictions on travel passes."Although union representatives accepted the offer it has to be put to a ballot. "Drivers are furious at this offer.

"Union members need to organise to make sure it is thrown out in the ballot," the driver said.

★ Translink's Head of Human Resources, Alan Mercer, has blamed the company's workers for the damage to their health caused by the job.

Earlier this year after an inspector died suddenly from a heart attack Mercer wrote to the supervisors' union the TSSA claiming that busworkers smoke and drink too much, are overweight and eat the badly.

One driver told Socialist Worker, "Mercer should resign. His letter is an insult to drivers. The hours we work and the stress of the job takes its toll on our health. Employees have organised sports clubs and gyms at their own expense and the company have given us no support.

"If Translink bosses were seriously concerned about the health of its workers they would not be trying to force us to work longer hours, would give us a decent basic pay and recruit more drivers and so drastically cut reduce the need for overtime working."

★ Big business interests in Cork are trying to shut down public access to Kinsale Head. A swanky golf links which caters for high-flying business executives has operated at the beauty spot for some time. But the sight of ordinary people is putting these creeps off their shot. So the public walkway which local have enjoyed for decades has been blocked off and is patrolled by security guards. But local activists have not taken this lying down. Local activist Tracy told Socialist Worker, "The view from the walkway is breathtaking and we see no reason why the rich should take this amenity from us. "We are organising to challenge them". On July 1st the first of a series of People's Picnics is organised for the site in order to reclaim it for local people. More details from Tracy

Ispat

Steel bosses want wage cuts

WORKERS AT the former Irish Steel plant in Cork are experiencing some of the harsh realities of privatisation.

The plant originally belonged to the state but was sold off to the Indian multi-national Ispat for a nominal fee.

Ever since there have been several complaints about the level of safety in the plant.

But now Ispat have really turned the pres-

sure on workers. In May they presented them with three demands for cut-backs to help save the plant. They wanted:

★ 10 percent reduction in wages

★ 15 more redundancies from the 240 strong staff.

★ A cut off 6 days off the annual leave days.

SIPTU members at the plant rejected these proposals overwhelmingly and many are now questioning Ispat's commitment to keeping the plant open.

Travellers protest for sites

SOME 60 travellers held a protest outside the offices of the South Dublin Council in Tallaght recently.

They were demanding proper transient sites for travellers who wish to move about.

The protestors came from the Clondalkin Traveller Support Group, Pavée Point and the Irish Traveller Movement.

A government task force report in 1996 recommended that each local council establish a transient site.

But not a single one

has been built.

The protest followed the eviction of travellers from campsites in Rathfarnham and Firhouse. Travellers had moved on to these sites after older sites were surrounded with boulders.

The councils did this without any consultations with the travellers who in some cases had been coming to these sits for nearly thirty years.

The protesters were denied water or toilet facilities at the council offices.

One official also threatened to have travellers physically removed. It was just a small example of the racism that pervades council policy in this area.

SWP branch meetings — all welcome

- **ATHLONE:** Contact 01-872 2682 for details
- **BRAY:** Meets every Wednesday at the Mayfair Hotel at 8.30pm
- **BELFAST CENTRAL:** Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Kitchen Bar, 16 Victoria Square, near Cornmarket
- **BELFAST SOUTH:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Queens Students Union
- **BELFAST WEST** ring for details 07771 781 958
- **BELFAST QUEENS UNIVERSITY** Wednesdays 1pm, Peter Froggatt Centre
- **CORK:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in O'Donoghue's, Drawbridge St
- **DERRY:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.15pm in Badgers Bar upstairs, Orchard St.
- **DROGHEDA:** Meets Wednesdays 8.30pm in McHugh's Pub St, Lawrences Gate
- **DUNDALK Meets** Wednesdays 8pm phone 01-8722682 for details
- **DUN LAOGHAIRE:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in the Christian Institute
- **DUBLIN ARTANE / COOLOCK:** Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Artane / Beaumont Recreational Centre (opp. Artane Castle)
- **DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Conways Pub, Parnell St
- **DUBLIN KILLBARRACK:** Phone 01-8722682
- **DUBLIN CABRA:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Aughrim St Parish Hall, 13 Prussia St
- **DUBLIN BALLYMUN:** Meets every Wednesday at 6.30pm in Balcurris Road
- Phone Kevin on 086-3074060 for details
- **DUBLIN DUNDRUM:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Dundrum Family Recreation Centre
- **DUBLIN RIALTO:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm St. Andrews Community Centre, SCR
- **DUBLIN RATHMINES:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm downstairs J O'Connell's (Pub) Sth. Richmond Street Dublin 2.
- **DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:** Meets at 8.30pm every Tuesday upstairs Bowes (pub) Fleet Street Dublin 2
- **DUBLIN TALLAGHT:** Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Jobstown Community Centre
- **ENNISKILLEN:** Phone 01 - 872 2682 for details
- **GALWAY:** Meets every Wednesday in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square (beside Cuba) 8.30pm
- **LIMERICK:** Phone 01 - 872 2682 for details
- **MAYNOOTH** meets Thursday lunchtime ring (01)8722682 for details
- **SLIGO** Phone 087 6329511 for details
- **SWORDS** Meets Tuesdays 8pm Senior Citizens Hall
- **TRALEE:** Phone 087 6329511 for details
- **TRINITY COLLEGE:** Meets Thursdays 7pm see posters for details
- **UCD** meets Wednesdays 1pm see posters for details
- **WATERFORD:** Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the ATGWU Hall, Keizer St.

ICTU

New General Secretary, same ICTU

THE NEW General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions is David Begg. Begg played a key role in the Communication Workers Union before going on to work for the charity agency, Concern. He will do nothing to change the current direction of the ICTU.

The former ICTU General Secretary, Peter Cassells, is moving on to a higher paid job with the National Partnership Council.

Endorsed

Cassells final days in office sums up the whole approach of the ICTU. He called for a Yes vote in the Nice Referendum even before any major union had endorsed this position.

He issued a statement denouncing "scare-mongering" over the European Rapid Reaction force.

When the Nice Treaty was

being negotiated, tens of thousands of trade unionists from France and Spain protested outside. They were looking for a "social Europe" rather than one run by big business.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions has refused to support these anti-globalisation protests.

Begg is likely to shift the rhetoric of the ICTU slightly while keeping the organisation firmly on the partnership path.

He has acknowledged that "people are really fed up" with the partnership model but claims they "haven't really looked at whether it's a good or a bad thing".

Begg's approach will be to make more speeches attacking jungle capitalism and unregulated markets while holding up social partnership as an alternative.

But social partnership has been the main way in which de-regulation has been pushed in Ireland. It has helped to disarm the labour movement as privatisation and low corporate taxes

were pushed through.

The Heritage Foundation, for example, is one of the foremost right-wing think tanks in the US that is backing the Bush regime. Recently it issued a report praising Ireland for being the second most de-regulated economy in the world.

The OECD has also stated that the Celtic Tiger has the most de-regulated economy behind the US and New Zealand.

Reports

Yet these reports appeared after fourteen years of social partnership.

When this model was first established in 1987, ICTU leaders claimed it would prevent "the New Right" setting the economic agenda.

Begg's own history shows exactly how hollow the rhetoric about social partnership is.

After assuming the leadership of the Post and Telegraph Workers Union he launched a major attack on left wing trade unionists who

had won a base in the Central Sorting Office in Dublin's Sheriff Street.

He led the union into a merger in 1989 to form the Communications Workers Union. The merger was one of the first of a series which was backed up with state grants. It is believed that the CWU received approximately £290,000.

Like other subsequent mergers, the occasion was used to strengthen control of the full time apparatus over the rank and file. Annual conferences were scrapped in favour of biennial conferences, which in turn were broken down into "workshops".

Begg was soon rewarded with a seat on the Central Bank in 1995. There he sat on a board which turned a blind eye to the systematic fraud which private banks perpetuated over the DIRT tax.

Begg's singular contribution was to develop the partnership model at workplace level. Eircom workers were persuaded to set up a special Employee Share Ownership

Programme. Proper pension rights were traded off for getting a share in the company.

But this only laid the ground for the ultimate privatisation of the firm. Begg now claims that if he had known it was going in this direction, he would not have proposed the ESOP scheme.

But it was just a small example of the flawed thinking at the heart of partnership itself.

The privatisation of Eircom has been a disaster for the workers.

Far from bringing more efficiency, the company has pulled out of investment in a broad band infrastructure which could have created jobs in the future.

The whole company looks like falling into the hands of a vulture like Tony O'Reilly who will bring even more job losses.

Begg's record shows that behind the rhetoric about "an unregulated markets" is a figure who has helped disarm opposition to these Thatcherite economics.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

50p

inside

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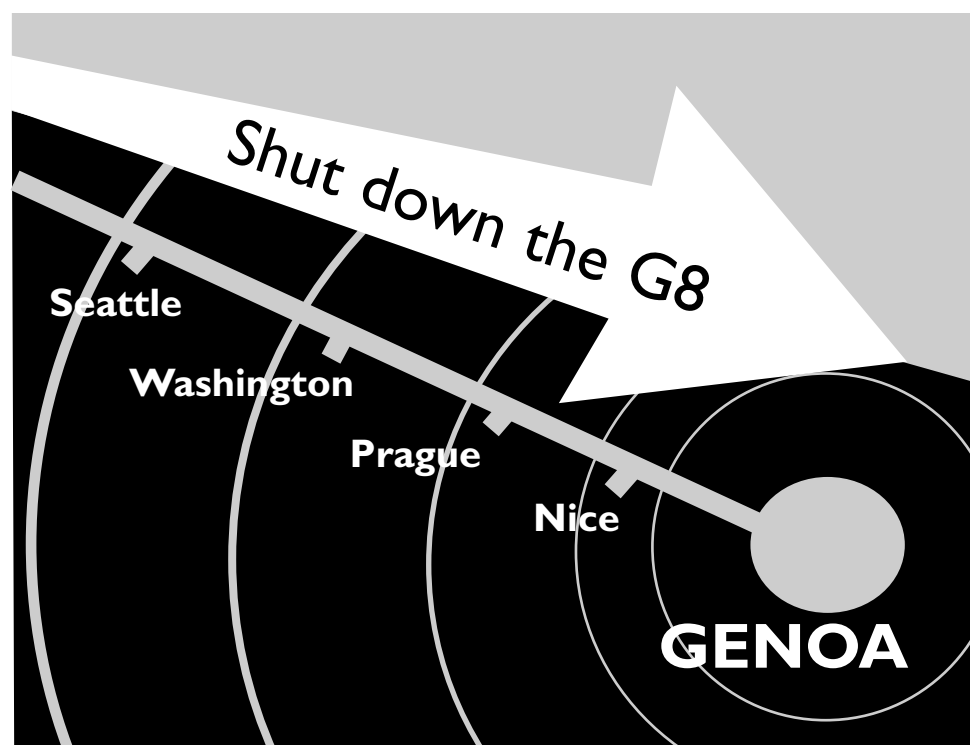
100,000 TO PROTEST IN GENOA:

RESISTANCE IS GLOBAL

'I think there is a pressing humanitarian need to combat globalisation and corporate rule over the world. Mass direct action works. That was shown in

Seattle, Cologne and Prague. that's why I'm going to Genoa'

**—GARY WALSH
Student**



THE WORLD Bank was forced to cancel its planned June summit in Barcelona for fear of anti-capitalist protests.

It is the first time anti-capitalist protesters have succeeded in completely halting a meeting of one of the major institutions of global capitalism.

'Victory! Protest Works' was the jubilant headline on the statement by the Barcelona campaign against the World bank summit.

It will encourage

everyone to step up their efforts to build the protest planned in Genoa on July 21st and 22nd when leaders of the G8 richest countries will gather in the Italian port.

The drive to build the protests was given a major boost last month when Trocaire, the official development agency of the Catholic Church, called on people to go to Genoa to voice their concern about the debt burden on developing countries.

Millions

Trocaire points out that Africa still pays \$37 million each day in debt repayments even though millions of its children are malnourished.

Countries like Honduras and Uganda are spending twice as much on debt repayment as they do on health and education.

Debt is one of the major issues that is under discussion at the G 8 summit.

At a previous summit in Cologne in 1999,

50,000 protestors gathered to put pressure on the leaders of the wealthiest countries.

They responded with the Highly Indebted Poor Countries scheme which was supposed to alleviate debt.

But this was very much a public relations exercise and poorer countries are still paying more in debt repayments that the amount that was cancelled.

Trocaire says that a pre-Genoa meeting of Finance Ministers in February did not send out positive signals and 'no new ideas on debt relief for poor countries were announced'.

Some 100,000 people are expected to gather in Genoa to voice their opposition to the priorities of a system that puts profit before people.

SOME 150 protestors are travelling from Ireland with the anti-capitalist organisation, Globalise Resistance.

The network has been meeting regularly to plan activities to educate people on the realities of globalisation and to raise funds for Genoa.

'On June 23rd we are holding a protest outside the newly opened GAP inside Arnott's on Dublin's Grafton Street. GAP

promotes a cool image but it uses sweatshop labour.

'We are also bringing over people from Trident Ploughshares to talk about organising direct action.

Involved

They were involved in the big protests at Fastlane which attempted to close down the nuclear submarine base.

'We are going to bring this spirit of protest to Genoa on

July 21st and July 22nd.' said Rory Hearne from Globalise Resistance.



If you want to go to Genoa or help raise funds for people who are going, contact Globalise Resistance on 086 4098186 or e mail: globalise_resistance@yahoo.com