

Socialist Worker

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

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Still free after all these years:

HAUGHEY

SCAMS

£35 MILLION

IN LAND DEAL



Lord Haughey in one of those £2,000 pound shirts

CHARLES Haughey has sold his estate, Kinsealy, for between £35m and £40m.

The 240-acre property is being bought by Treasury Holdings, a company that is friendly to Fianna Fail. The developers hope to build houses on the land.

Conveniently, some of the land in Kinsealy was rezoned for development only 12 months ago by North Dublin County Council.

Last year Haughey sold 15-acres of rezoned land in Kinsealy for

£6.6m to Treasury Holdings.

Don't worry though, Haughey still has Inishvickillaune, his island off the southwest coast, a holiday home in France, a home in Co Wexford and his yacht, the Celtic Mist.

While workers are losing their jobs as Celtic Tiger crashes, the biggest crook of them all is still laughing all the way to his offshore accounts.

Haughey should be thrown jail for corruption and his ill gotten gains should be seized.

Water crisis

A WATER shortage across the world is likely to worsen over the next 25 years, according to environmentalists and scientists at a conference last month.

Shortage

Some 450 million people in 29 developed and developing countries already face serious water shortages.

The crisis will be made worse because the little fresh water that is left is being polluted by industrial effluent.

World leaders and global institutions like the WTO continue to promote privatisation of water.

Yet such schemes only lead to increased charges and even more people unable to access safe water.

★ George W Bush's Star Wars depends on satellites precisely fixing the positions of missiles if it is to work.

Jonathan McDowell, an astronomer, studied the positions of ten US satellites. McDowell found just two were in the correct positions.

★ CAR MULTINATIONALS are lobbying hard to scupper new safety measures.

The European Commission proposes new regulations to make vehicles less lethal to pedestrians hit in accidents.

New features would cost £20 per vehicle. The changes could save 2,000 lives and avoid 18,000 serious injuries a year across Europe.

★ ONE quarter of the population of the Southern Health Board region is deemed deprived, despite the economic boom.

And coronary heart disease, a disease closely linked to lifestyle and economic status, remains the biggest killer in the Southern Health Board region, the country's largest health board which serves a population of just under 550,000.

Over half the population of Cork city is deemed deprived, according to the SHB

Privatisation adds up to higher prices

DE-REGULATION was supposed to bring cheap prices. That is what all the stock brokers economists claimed.

They got it wrong. Charges for public services are due to shoot up

because of de-regulation.

Electricity prices are set to rise by 8 percent from October.

The ESB says that domestic users are being subsidised by commercial users.

Because of de-regulation, they will have to offer

cheaper prices to big business — so we have to pay up.

★ The privatised cable company NTL wants to increase fees by 34 percent while its mian rival, Tony O'Reilly, Chorus company also wants a whopping rise.

When the cable company was run by

RTE prices were much cheaper

★ Eircomm has also increased the price of a coin box local call to 30p for five minutes.

It used to be 20p for indefinite calls when it was owned by the state.

STOP THE DEPORTATIONS!

O'Donoghue's blood money

NIGERIANS who are living in Ireland held a match to protest against Justice Minister O'Donoghue's plan to bribe their government to help fast track deportations.

On his return from the UN conference against racism in South Africa, O'Donoghue stopped off in Nigeria to sign a disgraceful deal offering £8 million for a "re-admission arrangement" for deported asylum seekers.

up to the oil companies. "There is the oppression of the Ogoni people. Why do they want to send us back?" said Augustin, one of the protestors

"The former general Abacha stashed away £6 million in Irish banks but an investigation into this was stopped.

Corrupt

"The Nigerian government is corrupt and ordinary Nigerians will not benefit from this £8

million bribe' said Ade.

O'Donoghue's deal shows the growth of state sponsored racism. He would not dream of meeting the South African government to discuss how to send back whites who fled the anti-apartheid regime.

The aim of Fianna Fail is to stop Ireland becoming a multi-cultural society.

"All we want is to be able to work and pay our taxes. We came here to win our freedom," said Tessa.

Cork march against racism

Two hundred anti-racist protestors marched through Cork city centre to highlight the ill treatment of asylum seekers.

Several left wing organisations took part. They were joined by the Cork Council of Trade Unions, Travellers Visibility and Immigrant Solidarity.

The protestors braved very bad weather to hear a number of asylum seekers address the crowd.

The protestors made five pleas—no to racism; stop racist harassment by Gardai, for asylum seekers to be given the right to work; no to deportations; and amnesty for all asylum seekers in Ireland.

Rise in homophobia

A REPORT released by the University of Ulster has confirmed that there discrimination against Northern Ireland's gay community is prevalent.

The report stated that "public authorities are statutorily required to promote equality of opportunity in their policies and services for lesbian, gay and bisexual people", but in practice "many public authorities show little evidence of

policies or practices that affect lesbian, gay and bisexual people."

A survey by the Combat Poverty Agency in 1995 found that 57% of respondents had experienced a range of problems at school due to homophobia, including isolation, depression, poor self-esteem, harassment and bullying.

Violence

Another survey in 1996 showed that over 48% of respondents under the age of 18 had

experienced violence and 90% of students had been called names because of their sexuality.

Sean, a gay rights activist, told *Socialist Worker*, "We need to get more people onto the streets against this homophobia.

"There has been a lot more 'queer-bashing' in the last five years and suicide rates amongst the gay community has gone way up, which is a direct result from the preachings of the church and the bigots."

Hospital beds chaos

ALMOST 46,000 hospital places were lost as a result of bed closures in Dublin and Kildare last year.

The Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) has reported a total loss of 45,988 bed days primarily due to nursing shortages, seasonal closures and renovations.

Lost

Beaumont Hospital in Dublin, situated in the constituency of ERHA chairman Ivor Callely, lost 15,789 bed days last

year. The Mater Hospital, located in the heart of the Bertie Ahern's constituency, lost 9,420 bed days.

The National Maternity Hospital recorded losing 6,940 bed days with Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children close behind with a loss of 5,913.

There are nearly 10,000 adults waiting on hospital treatment.

If the average stay in hospital is taken to be 10 days then the waiting list could be eliminated in a month if all the beds we made available.



Nigerians protest against O'Donoghue's bribe

Protests force big cut to IMF-World Bank meeting

THE anti-capitalist movement can claim another victory.

This time it is in Washington DC in the United States. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund have decided to drastically shorten their meeting in the city at the end of September because of planned mass protests. They have axed five days of the summit and corporate dining.

The police still plan a massive operation against the demonstrators, however, which includes fencing off whole swathes of the city. Already the police have requested \$2.6 million just for bus and van rentals. Another \$1.9 million is to be spent on outfitting the police with special suits and hel-

metts, and the police claim a further \$1.3 million is needed for items like rubber bullets.

But protestors will not be deterred. Many

actions are planned, including surrounding the White House on 29 September and a massive rally the following day.

Dockers strike in Genoa protest

AROUND 150 longshoremen (dockers) and 20 iron workers at the US port of Portland in California refused to unload a cargo ship carrying Italian wine and oil last week.

It was a protest in solidarity with demonstrators who had been attacked by the Italian police at the G8 summit in Genoa.

Anti-capitalists had earlier held a picket at

the port to explain their case.

The fallout from Genoa continues to shake people at the top.

Representatives of the World Bank and IMF have agreed to debate with anti-globalisation groups publicly at the organisations' annual meeting in Washington.

The four US-based groups lined up for the debate are Global Justice, Jobs With Justice, 50 Years Is Enough and Essential Action.

what we think

Peerless Rugs workers show the way Resist the sackings

“Ireland has got off fairly lightly so far and we have to be worried about that” said Brendan Butler from the employers organisation IBEC.

Butler’s comments came after three companies—Tellabs, General Semiconductor and Gateway—announced almost 2,000 lay offs.

For once this employers’ leader was telling the truth. The prospects for the Celtic Tiger are looking extremely bleak as the global recession makes ever deeper inroads.

That recession began in the high tech sector. This is where most of Ireland’s modern manufacturing is concentrated.

Claim

Some media commentators claim that we should not mention the word recession “lest we talk our way into it”.

But it is not talk that brings job losses. Booms and slumps are as much part of capitalism as breathing is to animal life. Once the slump arrives, multi-nationals try to make workers take the sacrifice.

Over the years of the Celtic Tiger, US multi-nationals got a 25 percent return

on their investment—one of the highest in the world. But instead of taking a small cut their profits, they want to destroy the lives of thousands of workers.

But they should not be allowed to. And workers at Peerless Rugs in Athy have shown how to resist.

As soon as their boss announced the closure of their factory, they seized it and the 65 workers have been sitting in since. (See Page 10)

They are not allowing their employer to sell off expensive equipment before he settles up with his workforce—to their satisfaction.

The Peerless workers are also using their occupation as a base for winning wider solidarity, calling a magnificent march in their support which galvanised the whole town of Athy.

Through these tactics they are showing that workers do not have to accept the status of victims.

We are not “disposable assets” to be used only when big profits are available. We have a right to our dignity and our jobs.

Rank and file trade unionists should get behind the Peerless Rugs workers and spread the news that occupation are the way to answer the closures.

Argentina



AN Argentine teacher dresses as the grim reaper as students and teachers from Buenos Aires Province protest along Avenida de Mayo against the government austerity plan that cut salaries for all state workers, including teachers. Thousands of teachers and students took to the streets to protest. The banner behind the drummers reads, “In defence of public education.” There have been strikes and protests across Argentina against the IMF imposed cuts in the recession hit country.

The Colombian Scandal:

What the Corporate Media never revealed

THE MEDIA have gone for the IRA-Colombia story like a pack of bloodhounds. But the real scandal is their own coverage.

All the main newspapers have run stories that could only come straight from the desks of the CIA and MI5. They have presented the FARC guerrillas as ‘Marxist drug dealers’ while barely mentioning a word about the human rights abuses of the Colombian regime.

Yet Colombia has a worse record for repression than even Pinochet’s Chile. Its armed services and their

allies in the right wing death squads are up to their necks in the drug trade. (See page 6 and 7).

America is backing its brutal corrupt regime because it wants to open up the whole of Latin America to free market competition and domination by its multi-nationals.

The geographical position of Colombia makes it essential that it does not fall into the hands of left wing guerrillas.

Just as in Vietnam in the sixties it is being drawn into a brutal and bloody dirty war.

Yet hardly any stories appeared in the corporate media to expose this regime. They are too busy trying to manufacture a story to discredit Sinn Fein. And Sinn Fein is too busy kissing the backside of the US embassy to make a defence of its links with FARC.

Meanwhile three lives of Irish men Niall Connolly, James Monaghan and Martin McCauley have been put in danger because of this black propaganda.

They have been sent to the notorious La Modelo jail in Bogota

where 80 people have lost their lives and where right wing paramilitaries can smuggle in guns with impunity.

They have been fingered as IRA activists by the second in command of Colombian military who has been egged on by the international press.

The Irish government should be told to intervene on their behalf. And socialists, republicans and anti-capitalist activists should get the message out about this horrific regime.



JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

To join the Socialist Workers Party, fill in this form and send it to: SWP, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Name
Address
Trade Union
Phone E-mail

AS DICTATOR VISITS IRELAND

Chinese workers stand up to tyranny



Fianna Fail's latest friend Zhu Rongji

THE CHINESE Premier, Zhu Rongji, is visiting Dublin in September. He will be fêted by the government who want to increase trade with China.

While Fianna Fail are looking for new friends to help make profits for their cronies in big business, people opposed to China's rulers face daily the threat of arrest, detention and worse.

But in China today a growing number of ordinary people are challenging the regime, and its involvement in organisations like the World Trade Organisation.

Strikes, protests and other less visible forms of opposition have grown.

The country's rulers are in a panic about social explosions in the years ahead. The people engaged in that struggle are the inheritors of the opposition crushed in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Socialist Worker spoke to Chinese dissident HAN DONGFANG about this mood of bitterness inside China. He is now editor of the independent publication *China Labour Bulletin* based in Hong Kong, where he also hosts a radio broadcast for people to air their grievances.



Tiananmen Square 1989,

WHAT IMPACT did the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989 have on you?

I WAS an electrician in the railway industry at the time. I got involved in Tiananmen Square by coincidence.

My wife and I were riding on a bus past the protest and saw the students gathered there.

My wife said, "Let's go and see what's happening. We don't have to stay long."

As we got in I started talking to people and I wanted to stay.

From a tent at the square we set up the Beijing Autonomous Workers' Federation, an independent union.

Up until five minutes before the soldiers opened fire in the square, I argued that they would not shoot at ordinary people.

I had spent three years in the army myself when I was 17 years old. It was really awful. It partly broke my Communist dream.

When I went there I was trying to be a real Communist.

We were told everybody was equal but we saw the officers had a completely different lifestyle.

They took the money that was meant for our food. We were always hungry but they had chicken and meat and alcohol.

It did not break my dream completely.

That happened in

Tiananmen Square. I saw police officers beat students. I saw the army open fire.

I saw the bullets in the sky and I was absolutely shocked.

It led me to think, if the system makes these things happen, then how can the system be good?

There must be something wrong with the system.

Some young people advised me to get out. I left Beijing but I saw my picture in newspapers and on TV screens. I was a wanted person.

I was put in prison for two years where I became ill with TB.

On my release I went to the US for a lung operation and now I live in Hong Kong. I am not allowed to go back to China.

WHAT IS the situation like for ordinary people in China today?

LIFE IS getting more and more miserable, and more and more confused. People cannot see the future. That is what people tell me when they call the radio programme.

We talk about their life and families—what is their job—are they unemployed?

I ask them what the situation is, and usually they say bad pay and corruption.

They say the officials are too powerful and the system does not give people a chance to speak out.

Many older people who are in their forties to fifties used to hear a lot about equality.

But since the opening up of China and the reform policy people can see more of the lifestyle of powerful people.

They are dressing well, driving very expensive cars, using mobile phones, going to expensive five star hotels.

People see the different lifestyles and they see themselves and say, "How come I can't make it? How come those people can make it when their salary should be

the same as mine, or at least not so much higher?"

The market economy has brought the reality to people from the dream.

This is the reality—you won't be treated in the way they promised—you have to take care of yourself.

CHINA'S ENTRY into the World Trade Organisation will mean even more privatisation and multinationals opening factories in China. What

effect has the free market had already?

I WILL give one example. Three or four years ago the government reformed the mining industry. Recently a coal mine exploded in Middle China and 15 people were killed.

The coal mine official in the city told me the workers don't belong to us—we privatised it. They belong to the company.

The company said, we just take the coal, not the mine. It belongs to the government. This is the business relationship.

I said, "Who is taking care of health and safety?" and both said, "That's a good question."

This is the difficulty. With the old state contract workers got benefits like medical insurance, education, housing and pensions. This was called the Iron Rice Bowl.

That has now been thrown away. People are coming in from the countryside, brought by a subcontractor.

The government-run trade unions says the people killed were not workers but farmers.

When the government reformed the mines it was called a great success.

They started to make money and laid off workers under the state contract.

This is the big picture. This is globalisation.

The global institutions

search for the cheapest labour to make huge money.

In the export zones in China they open facilities under subcontractors there.

I will get calls at midnight or I am because the workers there have finished work at 11.30pm.

They are people from the countryside, mostly young women aged 18 and 19 years old. Some are only 15 and 16 years old.

They buy a fake identity card as 19 to 20 is the legal age to work. They are forced to work 14 hours a day and the peak is 17 hours a day.

At first they feel happy they can see some cash and the outside world. But after six months working 17 hours a day and no day off, it is too much. People are not machines.

These people don't know that they are workers—they are "farmers" from the countryside.

But when they start industrial action, get organised and fight, that is when they realise they are workers.

They are working together with 1,000 to 2,000 others. Everybody is tired. Then they just go on strike.

There have been many strikes in this area, mostly against long hours and low pay.

Activists from the foreign factory export zones and from state enterprises are thinking we want to do something to get our colleagues organised.

Under such economic and political pressure they still want to get involved as

trade unionists.

MANY PEOPLE have begun to protest in various countries around the world against globalisation and institutions like the World Bank and IMF. What do you think about this?

TO TELL the truth I am not sure what to think. We had a society where the state ran everything and that was bad.

Now people are protesting against privatisation and I am confused what the alternative is.

Many workers in China I speak to wish for the WTO. They say we are living in hell and we are hanging on. We may exchange this hell for another but at least its change.

One worker from Beijing said to me, "Mr Han, how far have you gone to approach the WTO?" He said under the WTO rules lawyers from the US and Britain can set up law firms to defend our labour rights.

I said, what if you are working in McDonald's and you have a dispute? You go to the law firm and McDonald's pay one million and you pay nothing. Who do you think they will take? I told the worker it is a dream. You have to look to your own activity and you have to be strong.

Houses for the homeless not B&Bs for dictators!

Zhu Rongji, is staying in staying in Farmleigh House with a 170 aides. He will be the first guest in the former Guinness family home which was bought by the government..

At £37 million, it is the most expensive B&B in the country, all at the taxpayers' expense.

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

The bomb-proof, security ring-fenced 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 taxpayer of £23m.

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

Eamonn McCann

Why are Sinn Fein embarrassed by FARC connection?

"THE COLOMBIAN adventure has plunged Sinn Fein into the sort of embarrassment they haven't experienced in years."

So claimed one conservative Northern commentator, and you could sense him rubbing his hands with glee at the Provos' discomfiture.

Unusually, Sinn Fein spokespersons didn't, or couldn't, conceal the fact that they felt mortified. The normally unflappable Mitchel McLaughlin was seen on BBC News snarling at a reporter who had asked a perfectly legitimate question, "You're not in Castlereagh now".

Others were desperately concerned to deflect attention away from themselves and towards the intelligence services and "securocrats" who, they claimed, had helped break the Colombian story so as to cause the Republicans maximum damage at a delicate moment in the peace process. They were probably right, that spooks of one sort or another had been involved in the timing of the events.

But that didn't deal with the main question — What was it about the story which the Provos found so embarrassing?

The story was that three people associated with the Republican Movement had been involved with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Farc). Sinn Fein insisted that the connection was somewhat tenuous, and three stages removed, and repeatedly drew attention to the fact that some of the initial reports about the men's activities had been exposed as inaccurate.

All very true. But, again, why was Sinn Fein in such a fluster to put as much distance as possible between themselves and the Farc?

Anti-imperialists

Members of Sinn Fein who regard themselves as anti-imperialists must be asking themselves why their leaders didn't stand up for the Farc. When challenged about the Farc's alleged involvement in cocaine, why didn't they do the obvious and honourable thing, and point out sharply that it's the Colombian armed forces propped up by George Bush, and their right-wing paramilitary allies, who are the main dealers in illegal drugs, and the main killers of innocent people, in Colombia?

If they wanted to deflect pressure from themselves, why didn't they pile pressure on Secretary of State John Reid to explain why senior officers of the Colombian armed forces were in Belfast last year, as guests of the British Army. Who was training whom, and for what?

The party's Washington representative, Rita O'Hare, back home when the story broke, emerged from the US embassy in Ballsbridge to claim (wrongly, it seems) that the US was now satisfied with Sinn Fein's explanation of its attitude, and that Sinn Feiners were still welcome in the White House. Would rank and file Republicans not have felt better if she'd reminded the Yanks that it's only a wet week since Colonel Oliver North was organising cocaine importation from an office in the Pentagon and using the proceeds to pay for guns for the Contra terrorists in Nicaragua?

But, of course, if it occurred to Ms. O'Hare to say any such thing, she will have bitten the words back. It's an article of faith in the upper echelons of Sinn Fein these days that nothing must be done, or said, to upset the American administration. That, nothing else, is the source of their embarrassment over the Bogota Three.

It should serve as a reminder that there has been a price ticket attached to the good will of the US towards Sinn Fein in recent years. The price has been expressed in the requirement to sing dumb when US officials are in earshot about any radical principle you might once have espoused — and to disown any of your associates found consorting with people the US disapproves of. You set out to get the US administration on your side, you finish taking your allotted minor position on their side.

This is what comes of seeing the main point of "the struggle" as winning a better place for your section of the downtrodden in the capitalist scheme of things, rather than in overthrowing the capitalist system itself which treads people down everywhere.

NEW N.I. POLICE FORCE...

Still thugs in uniform

JOHN HUME'S SDLP has become the first of Northern Ireland's mainstream political parties to back the British government's proposed changes to the RUC.

The party has chosen to back the new Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and nominate members of the new policing boards.

The British government claims that the proposed changes will lead to a neutral police force, with equal representation of Catholics and Protestants.

But the old RUC will remain intact. The police will continue to use plastic bullets in Northern Ireland even though their use is banned on the "mainland".

Injury

A British government commission has admitted that the new L21A1 plastic bullet will cause "severity of injury to the brain to be greater".

The RUC will continue to harbour officers who have colluded with loyalist paramilitaries. And any inquiry into police abuse can still be vetoed by the chief constable.

The SDLP jumped as soon as the Catholic Bishops and the Irish government gave their backing to the blueprint for the PSNI. They were quickly joined by the US State Department.

Proposals

Sinn Fein has rejected the current proposals, saying that they fall short of even those proposed by the Patten Commission.

Sinn Fein have been urging the SDLP and the Southern Irish government to "stay on board" and hold out until all the Patten proposals are implemented.

The DUP and the UUP, meanwhile, portray any attempt to reform the RUC's sectarian character as a "concession" to nationalists.

Their stance is the same as that of British right-wingers who



Community policing — RUC style

opposed the Macpherson reforms to tackle police racism following the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

The Ulster Unionists are against cuts in the RUC budget.

Yet Northern Ireland has a bloated police force of 13,000 for a population of just a million and a half people.

The Unionists are also against District Policing Partnership Boards which would be open to anyone who wanted to monitor the police.

Blame

Both unionist parties want to exonerate the RUC and blame Republi-

cans for the troubles.

The SDLP say the reform will get rid of police sectarianism because it aims at equal numbers of Protestants and Catholics.

Both positions are misleading.

The RUC was never an impartial force protecting "democracy"

from "IRA terrorism", as unionists claim.

The RUC was the armed wing of a deeply sectarian state in Northern Ireland.

When thousands of people in Catholic areas challenged that state, the RUC used every undemocratic method it could to repress the opposition.

A force within an force

THE FORMER Tory cabinet Minister Chris Patten dubbed the RUC Special Branch a "force within a force".

Despite this the Special Branch, which has been one of the most sinister arms of the RUC,

will not be disbanded but simply merged with CID.

The Special Branch were deeply implicated in the murder of the solicitor Pat Finucane.

An RUC Special Branch informer William Stobie supplied the weapon used to kill him in 1989.

Special Branch offi-

cers had previously threatened Finucane with assassination.

Later the Special Branch destroyed taped evidence of a confession.

Confession

An RUC Detective Sergeant who recorded the confession before it

was destroyed was so frightened that he told a UTV documentary "when they start to threaten your children you've got to step back and ask yourself is it worth it".

Another RUC Chief Superintendent even said that "I fear the Special Branch more than the IRA".

The Special Branch also directed the widespread use of torture and forced confessions in RUC holding centres.

One man was awarded £30,000 for the torture he endured in Castlereagh.

Allegations

When a police officer, John Stevens, investigated allegations of collusion between loyalist death squads and the police his offices were broken into and set on fire in January 1990.

Yet this shadowy right wing force will now get the backing of John Hume and the Irish government.

Don't join the police — anywhere!

NO AMOUNT of police reform will make the PSNI transparent and accountable.

As long as there is sectarianism at government level the police too will act in a sectarian fashion, just as the racist police in Britain and Ireland act on behalf of a racist state.

Right-wing

The police attract the most right-wing elements in society.

In Italy and Germany up to 15 per cent of the police are in neo-Nazi organisations.

And any police force will protect the interests of business, not those of working class people.

Capitalist society produces police forces that are racist, sexist,

sectarian and anti-working class. There is no "acceptable" police is on offer. Nonetheless, the police should be held democratically accountable to the greatest possible degree.

The SDLP and its middle and upper class supporters are looking for a tough stance on law and order and for jobs in a new police service. It says: "We will be encouraging people from all sections of the community to join the new Police Service."

But for working class people, no police force offers any real alternative to the RUC.

An improvement maybe — but the PSNI officers won't be seen on picket lines defending people's jobs, arresting corrupt government ministers or collecting unpaid taxes from big business.

MACEDONIA: NATO out of the Balkans

ONCE AGAIN NATO is sending troops into the Balkans. And once again the public are being encouraged to see the exercise as a necessary one for the sake of peace and human rights. Four thousand troops, led by Britain are supposedly arriving in Macedonia to collect weapons from the Albanian National Liberation Army as part of a peace agreement between the Albanians and the majority Macedonians.

Destruction
The NATO intervention is called "Essential Harvest". But if witnessing the destruction of a few hundred rifles is the main NATO motivation then a few unarmed observers with video cameras would do the job easily enough.

Nor is this move a "harvest", rather NATO is sowing the seeds of future wars. The key to understanding the latest NATO move is the events of 1999 that led to the bombing of the Serbia. That intervention began with a Western claim that the Albanians of Kosovo needed protection from a brutal Serbian assault that was compared to the Holocaust.

The US defence secretary William Cohen claimed 100,000 Albanian men were missing, possibly murdered. There is no doubt that Albanians were oppressed by the regime of Milosevic, but the Western hysteria was hypocritical because it was not extended to other peoples in a similar plight—such as the Palestinians or the Kurds. The final death toll of Albanians was terrible, but it was less than 3,000 people.

The NATO intervention temporarily checked the growth of the opposition movement to Milosevic, allowing him to crack down on Otpor!, the main force behind his eventual overthrow. **Amnesty International charged NATO with war crimes for targeting civilians in their air strikes.**

After some attempt to prevent the information becoming public Lord Robertson finally admitted that US jets fired 31,000 rounds of depleted uranium during the war. Worst of all the 1999 NATO attack led to a political disaster. The Albanians of Kosovo, organised through their army the KLA, drove over 230,000 Serbs from the region with no

regard for the human rights that were supposed to be at stake in this conflict.

The UN Commission for Human Rights reported: "Killings, oppression, harassment, expulsion, rape and other violations continue to take place at an alarming rate, particularly targeting the non-Albanian communities of Kosovo."

The genuine plight of the Albanians was exploited by the West and Albanian nationalist politicians to create a vicious regime.

The main winners of the war were not the ordinary Albanians—poverty has increased in the statelet of Kosovo, now run by a UN administration on behalf of NATO, using the services of 5,000 former KLA members.

The main winners were the Western powers and the multi-nationals. A year ago, for example, the Zvecan lead smelter was seized by K-For, NATO's force in Kosovo, and turned over to a consortium of international companies.

Now a very similar scenario is developing in Macedonia. The Albanian population of Macedonia is about one third of the country's two million population.

They do have genuine grievances—although nothing like those of the Albanians under Serbia. However once again their sense of injustice is being manipulated.

Petty Chiefs
Their nationalist politicians in the Albanian National Liberation Army have links with the former KLA leadership and are following exactly the same strategy.

When did a genuine liberation movement ever call in the US so that they could hand over their weapons to them?

The Albanian nationalists want to become the petty-chiefs of a NATO protectorate. And their ambitions dovetail with Western interests. The small country of Macedonia is a problem for the West.

For most of the century Macedonians have been discriminated against by the Greek ruling class, who have always had aspirations for territorial control of that region.

A virtual partition of the country along ethnic lines will call its viability into question—and the weaker the Macedonian ruling class the more reliant they will be on Western economic "aid" with the consequent opening up of the area to the multi-nationals.

Press demonises Sinn Fein but

by KIERAN ALLEN

Colombia's killers are backed by US

THE ARREST of three Irish Republicans in Colombia recently sparked a flurry of media comment.

The implication of many of the pieces is that anyone who supports the opposition in Colombia is suspect—a backer of terrorism.

Murdered

But Colombia is far from a haven of peace with a democratic government. An official report for the Colombian government found that 85 percent of people killed in Colombia were murdered by right wing paramilitaries or the army.

Just one example of the daily reality occurred last month. Some 300 men with automatic weapons surrounded the village of La Union, one of several "peace communities" in the Apartado municipality.

Residents of the "peace communities" reject the presence of any armed group, including armed forces and police, in their villages.

Fifteen of the men—who included several known members of the Colombian army—entered the community, forced residents into the town square and gave them an ultimatum: "We are going to establish a base here. You can work with us, leave the area or die."

They identified themselves as the perpetrators of an earlier massacre of six community leaders. The armed men then demanded the names of community leaders, threatened residents and fatally shot 17-year old Alexander Guzman, who tried to escape. They robbed the community of funds and livestock before leaving, warning they would return.

Death Squads

This drug trade is used to fund the right wing death squads. The leader of these squads, Carlos Castano, admits that 70 percent of its funds come from the drug trade.

But this does not stop the Colombian military working with them. The commander of the Colombian army's southern region, for example, is Mario Montoya who previously belonged to a paramilitary squad.

Robbed
As a result of this attack, 55 families were forced to flee their homes, leaving behind their crops, livestock and other belongings.

This is the reality of how forces backed by the Colombian government operate. Today half the population live on less than £500 while 1 percent of the population own 45 percent of the land.

Thousands of peasants have been driven off their land while landlords employ brutal execution squads to eliminate anyone

who speaks of human rights.

Each year three quarters of all the trade unionists who are murdered in the world are killed in Colombia.

The US is backing the Colombian government to the hilt. It has given £1 billion in military aid to a regime led by Andres Pastrana.

The money is spent on clusters bombs, Blackhawk helicopters and "military advisors."

Amnesty International says, "It is the same policy that backed the death squads in El Salvador in the 1980s". It is also the type of policy that started the war in Vietnam in the sixties.

Resources

The US is determined to control country's rich resources. Companies like Occidental Petroleum, BP-Amoco and Texaco work unofficially with the death squads to control huge areas of the country. The Pastrana government has signed away 54 concessions for oil in the past year and cut taxes for the multi-nationals.

The other big industry is cocaine. **The US Drug Enforcement Agency has admitted that "all branches of government in Colombia" are involved in drug related corruption.**

Exposed

Former president Ernesto Samper was exposed in the 1990s as being funded by the right wing businessmen behind the notorious Cali drugs cartel.

The Colombian air force has long been suspected of being a major drug cartel. That suspicion was confirmed when half a ton of cocaine was discovered in 1999 on board the plane of Colombia's chief of military air transport when it landed in Miami in the US.

Plan Colombia leaves almost all the real drugs traffickers in Colombia alone. Instead, by the US's own admission, the plan is aimed mostly at a "drive into southern Colombia", the area controlled by the left wing FARC guerrillas.

Launched
When they appeared to come near to overthrowing the right wing government, the US launched "Plan Colombia", claiming they were fighting "narco-terrorists".

But the reality is that the FARC is a genuine national liberation movement. In 1985, the FARC took advantage of peace talks to try to enter the constitutional arena.

They formed an open political party, the Union Patriótica. They soon swept into power in many local areas and



Government Soldiers flying off on to fight FARC rebels using US supplied hardware and (below) returning with a helicopter full of body bags. 85 percent of people killed in Colombia were murdered by right wing paramilitaries or the army.

The shadowy drug barons

THERE ARE plenty of drug traffickers in Colombia.

Laurie Hiatt was one. She was caught smuggling serious amounts of cocaine from Colombia into the US last year.

She was the wife of the US military attaché in charge of the US's anti-drugs operation in Colombia at the time. Christian Gonzales was caught smuggling cocaine from Colombia in July. He was an employee of the US navy.

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ARE THE FARC DRUG DEALERS?

THE Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—or the FARC—are one of the oldest guerrilla groups on the continent.

They grew out of the Communist Party who fled the cities in the early sixties and formed peasant-based communes in remote areas. Today the FARC have about 15,000 combatants and control 40 percent of Colombia.

They have been building huge popular support and many trade unionists identify with them.

Imposing

After this FARC returned to a completely military strategy. One of the ways they fund their war effort is by imposing a "war tax" on anyone who earns over one million dollars.

FARC also impose a levy on sales of the coca plant that is grown in their areas. But, as the US Drug Enforcement Agency itself was forced to admit, "to date there is little to indicate the insurgent groups are trafficking in cocaine."

The reason why peasants have been forced to grow this crop is because of US economic policies. According to Noam Chomsky, FARC held a recent forum where a spokesperson called for "freezing privatisation, subsidising energy and agriculture as is done in rich countries and stimulating the local economy by protecting local enterprises".

This is the type of programme that was put forward by Castro in Cuba in the early sixties. It is anti-imperialist rather than specifically Marxist. FARC do not see workers as the key agent of change.

Compete
Yet they have to compete against the agricultural produce of the EU and the US which is heavily subsidised. Many peasants used to grow coffee but after the US

threatened to undermine the traditional two party system. But the political elite launched a campaign of murder against its activists. Even the US State Department Human Rights Report acknowledges that 3,500 party members were assassinated.

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WHO IS TALKING TO FARC?

If FARC were successful they would inflict a major blow on US domination. But like Vietnam or Cuba they would not be able to offer a "model" of a socialist country.

ARE FARC MARXISTS?

THE FARC fight against US domination, landlord control and neo-liberal economic policies.

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Issues for anti-capitalists

Does violence mean protests must stop?

THE LEVEL of police violence which was used against protesters at the G8 summit in Genoa, Italy, in July has created a huge debate inside the anti-capitalist movement.

This debate is far more extensive than after previous anti-capitalist mobilisations such as Seattle or Prague. The reason is the ferocity and scale of the state violence.

Infiltrated

In Genoa the police killed 23 year old Carlo Giuliani, tear-gassed and water cannoned peaceful protesters, infiltrated the Black Block anarchists, and raided a school where protesters were sleeping and beat them viciously.

Some of the movement are questioning whether the risk of death, serious injury and major clashes means that people should continue to demonstrate against the summits of the rich and powerful.

Susan George, writer, campaigner and vice-president of anti financial speculation group ATTAC France, has written, "The escalation of state-sponsored terrorism is beginning to terrify ordinary people. I cannot encourage our members to put life and limb on the line to participate in demos where we are going to have the police shooting live ammunition, and the Black Block, completely infiltrated by police and fascists, running wild."

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Target
Despite Susan George's arguments, many in the movement argue that we need to continue to target the summits of financial and political institutions that run the world for the benefit of the corporations.

"I was in Genoa," says the US activist Starhawk, well known on internet discussion circles. "Because of what I saw there, including the moments of real terror and horror, I am more convinced than ever that we need to stay in the streets."

"We need to continue mounting large actions, contesting summits, working on the global scale. If we find ways to organise mass actions that leave resources and functioning coalitions behind, then each grand action can strengthen and support the local work that continues on a daily basis."

"I don't see the choice as being between the danger of a large action and safety. I see that our safest course is to act strongly now."

Nicola Bullard of the Focus on the Global South group based in Bangkok, Thailand, has also come out firmly for keeping up the protests.

"We must continue to mobilise and bring people out on the streets to be counted," she says. "Genoa marks a whole new phase in the struggle against global capitalism and global injustice."

"We cannot go backwards, and we should not be intimidated by the violence. The demonstrators may have come out of Genoa bruised and shaken, but the G8 came out a lot worse—their credibility is in tatters and the blood is on their hands."

To demobilise street protests now would be to deliver a victory to the police thugs and the politicians who stand behind them.

They have tried to batter protest off the streets because it has turned the spotlight on their crimes. The violence our side now faces is because we have won real successes.

One of the most worrying aspects of Genoa for the Italian government was that after the killing of Carlo there were massive demonstrations right across the country in solidarity with the protesters.

It is time for more action. This point was well made by George Monbiot, the British writer and campaigner. "I have stumbled once more upon the fundamental political reality that confrontation is an essential prerequisite for change," wrote Monbiot. "Though I am scared to say it, it is now clear to me that we cannot win without raising the temperature."

However, to simply say the protests must continue is not a sufficient answer to the very real concerns of Susan George or many in Drop the Debt. The best response to police violence is to make sure the next wave of protests is even bigger and more rooted in trade unions and campaigning organisations. The police will feel confident about battering a small gathering. They will feel much less sure if a march is hundreds of thousands strong and full of union stewards.

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Attacking
At Seattle the police were much less confident about attacking workers than they were about beating the students and environmentalists.

In addition, the anti-capitalist movement has to redouble its efforts to make links with local battles over privatisation, job losses and racism.

This will help to widen the group of people who support the movement against the police and the authorities. It is right that tens of thousands of activists will protest against the IMF and World Bank annual meeting in Washington at the end of September.

This summit has had to be scaled back from seven days to two days because of fears of protest. The World Bank was forced to cancel its meeting in Barcelona in May, and world leaders are looking for the most remote places possible to have their summits—such as the WTO going to Qatar.

When we have our leaders on the run we can't allow their vicious repression of our movement to drive us off the streets.

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AS THOUSANDS OF 'TECH' JOBS ARE LOST...

Why do computers crash?

NEARLY FIVE thousand people have been sacked in the computer industry since the start of the year. All the major computer companies—Dell, Intel, Hewlett Packard, and Compaq—have announced huge global redundancies.

It is an ominous sign for the future of the Celtic Tiger.

Yet only a year ago economic commentators were predicting that a "new economy" based on the Internet and high technology would lead to permanent economic growth to the eventual benefit of all.

Now those technology companies' profits and shares have plummeted. The shares of Baltimore Technology, the flagship company for Ireland's software industry, used to trade at £24 a share. Now they can barely sell for 24p.

The collapse shows exactly how chaotic the system is.

Investment is not planned to meet need, but is lured by the promise of huge profits. When those profits do not match expectations there is a flight of capital.

Meanwhile those in work have to work longer hours while thousands in the IT industry are sacked.

JUST AS the industrial revolution fundamentally changed the world, so the information revolution was supposed to create a new, information society. Computers were supposed to assist in creating what Bill Gates described as "friction-free capitalism".

Gates declared: "Capitalism, demonstrably the greatest of the constructed economic systems, has in the past decade clearly proved its advantages over the alternative systems. The information highway will magnify these advantages."

But the hype about computers was full of myths.

In reality information technology is available to a tiny minority of the world's population.

Most people in the world still have homes without electricity. Access to information technology is denied not only to many countries but to many people in the richest countries.

Nor has there ever been a "free" market in the computer industry.

The original big computer company, IBM, gained its position only due to massive investment by the American government, which wanted to ensure that the USA kept ahead in the arms race.

IBM lost out to new companies like Microsoft in the 1970s because it got too complacent.

Microsoft was geared to small personal computers which used a microchip. But the microchip only emerged as a spin off from the heavily subsidised military research.

One of the main sources of Microsoft's success, the Windows format, was an idea stolen from Apple, which had acquired it from Xerox, which developed the technology but failed to recognise its potential.

Xerox was concerned that if people started using computers they would sell less paper and photocopiers. (As it happens the "paperless office" was another fantasy.)

THE INTERNET was also born out of the needs of US military scientists. They wanted a communication system that would still function after a nuclear war so they had to ensure that there was no single centre to it.

The Internet went through a brief period of subsidised anarchy in the early 1990s, but today it is becoming the largest shopping mall in the world. Soon you will be able to get anything you want on the Internet—provided you can pay for it.

The development of the Internet is one of the clearest examples of the distortions that capitalism brings.

It could have provided a huge free encyclopaedia of knowledge for millions of people.

But the World Wide Web had a business potential. The programmers who developed it set up a company, Netscape, to try and make money out of their idea.

Their success attracted other, bigger, capitalists, most notably Bill Gates of Microsoft, into the market.

The next couple of years saw the browser wars as Netscape and Microsoft fought it out to be the dominant player. In the end Microsoft won.

Its browser was not necessarily technologically better. It was just that Bill Gates was bigger and much richer than his rivals.

What went wrong?

Defenders of capitalism argue that the market leads to innovation and choice.

In fact it leads to the creation of monopolies and duopolies.

The computer industry of the 1960s was completely dominated



THE MISERY of 'Friction-free-Capitalism'.

by IBM.

Today Dell and Gateway dominate the PC market. Most PCs run on chips made by Intel and run software produced by Microsoft.

The market is based on an irrational chase for profits. The profitability of a particular area of the economy encourages capitalists to rush to invest in it.

This reached its height in the absurdity of the dot.com boom. Companies that made nothing were worth a fortune as capitalists looked for a quick buck through share speculation. But now the crisis is hitting the more central parts of the computer industry.

Seeing what they think is a profitable opportunity lots of capitalists rush to invest in producing a particular commodity. But after a certain point more of the commodities are being produced than can be sold.

The price of the commodity falls, driving down profits and putting the weaker capitalists out of business.

This has happened with computer micro chips in recent years as the price has dropped from \$17 each to \$1.20. This inevitably leads to a squeeze on profits and some capitalists go to the wall.

RECESIONS ARE built into the system because markets, by definition, exclude real planning. Firms only employ people to produce goods that can be sold.

But they can only be sold if people or firms are prepared to spend on them the money they have received in the past as wages, profits, interest payments or rents.

If all the money in an economy is not spent, then firms cannot sell all the goods they are capable of producing.

They shut down factories, stop hiring and begin to sack workers.

A new generation of personal computer used to appear every 18 months until recently. But the wages of workers were kept low to keep up profits.

The result is that there is a huge surplus of unsold computers despite that fact that millions of people still don't have access to the technology.

Out of control?

According to the neo-liberal agenda, international trade has grown to a level where multinational companies can move production from country to country as they see fit.

GLOBALISATION IS used to blackmail governments to stop them imposing high taxes on profits. Workers are also told that if they look for more money or resist redundancies, companies will simply move to other countries.

Computers would seem to be one of the industries most likely to be affected by globalisation.

Thousands of chips are so small that they can be loaded on a plane and flown round the world at little cost so surely companies can manufacture them wherever they like?

But it isn't that simple.

As far as the location of a semiconductor plant is concerned, the *Financial Times* explains: "Basic

requirements include an adequate labour force, reliable utilities, clean air and copious water supplies.

"Chip makers also look for sites that are well served by the suppliers of the chemicals and equipment used in semiconductor production...semiconductor manufacturers are not lured by low cost labour.

"Typically, labour accounts for less than 10 percent of the cost of running a semiconductor factory with depreciation of the plant being a much bigger factor."

Nor is it true that workers in high technology companies have little power.

A company like Intel which builds a chip manufacturing plant costing \$1 billion can't simply pick it up and move it elsewhere.

Indeed, the size of such investments, and their rapid depreciation, means workers in such plants have immense power.

The speed of technological development means that chip factories rapidly become obsolete.

In the words of Intel management, "If you make \$2 billion dollars capital investment, the bulk of capital investment is written off in four years, and on \$2 billion that is \$500 million a year depreciation."

Such a plant therefore has to make over \$9 million a week simply to pay for its construction costs.

That means workers in the computer industry therefore have immense power that they can use to defend their jobs.

Over the next period they will need to use that power to demand that profits are cut before jobs are slashed.

And they will need to join unions—just as workers in the older industries had to do in the past.

by SIMON BASKETTER

in my view

Protests defy US military

BOMBINGS, marines landing on the beach, ship-to-shore shelling, and in the midst of it all groups of fishermen protesting in boats with banners that say "navy out!"

These are events taking place on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques in the Caribbean. The local population is taking on the might of the US military.

Vieques, off the coast of the larger island of Puerto Rico to which it belongs, is the site of a massive US naval base.

The US resumed military exercises on the island this month. In one week alone 21,000 sailors and 2,000 marines took part.

But protestors defied teargas and rubber bullets to hack away at the four-mile fence that separates the navy base from the islanders.

Fishermen sailed into the restricted zone, interrupting the exercises. "Our enemy is that fence," said 58 year old Miguel Angel Vazquez Ortiz. "Our aim is to tear the fence down, to cross it, and to show them that we won't let up until the bombing ends."

"Vieques has a long tradition of struggling against the powerful for its people's rights," says another protestor. In the 1940s the US government bought control of two thirds of the land.

That was quite easy given that two big landowning families owned 71 percent of the island and the sugar producer Eastern Sugar Associates owned pretty much the rest.

Over 90 percent of the population were landless. They were herded into the central strip of the island while the military took over the rest. Vieques has been used by the US to prepare for every major conflict since the Second World War.

The US even rents the island to its military allies. NATO members pay an estimated \$80 million a year to use it. Puerto Rico is also now the site of the headquarters of the US Southern Command, the potential US invasion force for enforcing US interests in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The health and environment of the islanders are being destroyed as a result.

■ In 1992 US navy jets dropped 40,000 pounds of live explosives on Vieques, including live napalm.

■ In November 1994 200,000 pounds of live explosives were dropped during preparations for bombing Yugoslavia.

■ In 1998 the navy admitted that 273 radioactive depleted uranium shells were fired on the island.

■ In February 1999 the navy says 263 depleted uranium shells were "accidentally" fired on Vieques.

Perhaps all this explains Vieques's cancer epidemic. Cancer rates have increased by 300 percent in the last 20 years, leaving one in five of the population suffering.

Fishermen can't fish in vast areas during the naval exercises. And teachers say schoolchildren cannot concentrate on their work because of the noise of the bombs.

Protests erupted in 1999 when a civilian security guard was killed by an off-target bomb.

There was a mass upsurge of opposition throughout Puerto Rico demanding, "US navy out of Vieques!"

There were also protests by Puerto Ricans living in the US. And on Vieques itself protestors occupied the target practice range and stopped the navy's exercises.

Since then hundreds of protestors have been jailed. Activists travel from the US to take part in the protests.

Black leader Al Sharpton, lawyer Robert Kennedy Jnr and trade union leader Dennis Rivera have all recently served jail sentences for trespassing on the Vieques navy range.

John Sweeney, the president of the AFL/CIO (the American trade union federation), says, "This isn't just a struggle for people in Puerto Rico and in Vieques. It's a struggle for all working families in America."

George W Bush now says the navy training will end by 2003. Protestors say that's not soon enough.

The latest operations began only days after an unofficial referendum voted 70 percent for an end to the bombing.

Puerto Rico has commonwealth status. It is neither an independent country nor a state of the US. It elects a governor, but the US is still responsible for defence, financial affairs and foreign relations.

Now articles in magazines, editorials in newspapers, and many ordinary people are questioning that relationship. Some are beginning to recognise that the struggle in Vieques is part of the struggle against imperialism.

by JAMES READ

book

Homage to Orwell's Spain

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

GEORGE ORWELL went to Spain with many others to fight the fascists. Now a marvellous book 'Orwell in Spain' brings together his writings on this period, including Homage to Catalonia and a number of shorter pieces, reviews and letters.

In the summer of 1936 the fascist General Franco rose against the mildly left-wing government.

But the workers marched on the barracks, persuaded the soldiers to hand them weapons and organised themselves into militias to fight the fascists.

Orwell described his experiences when he fought with the left-wing POUM militia.

Equality

"Everyone from general to private drew the same pay, ate the same food, wore the same clothes and mingled on terms of complete equality.

"It was understood that orders had to be obeyed but it was also understood that when you gave an order you gave it as comrade to comrade and not as superior to inferior."

But while the poor



WOMEN VOLUNTEERS fighting fascism in Spain - INSET George Orwell

fought for real social gains, the rich—or those of them who had not gone entirely over to Franco—were desperate to dampen down the revolution.

They discovered a natural ally. Stalin wanted to make a military alliance with France and Britain against Germany and so wanted to prove that Russia could be trusted not to encourage revolution.

He sold some weapons and aeroplanes to the Spanish Republic but ordered the local Communist Party to set about undermining the revolution.

Returning to Barcelona from the front on leave in May 1937

and Orwell noticed a big change: "Now things were returning to normal.

"The smart restaurants and hotels were full of rich people wolfing expensive meals, while for the working class population food prices had jumped enormously... In the working class quarters the queues for bread, olive-oil and other necessities were hundreds of yards long."

Barcelona

Orwell was present in Barcelona when the crunch came a few days later.

The well-armed Stalinists launched an attack on a telephone

exchange controlled by workers.

This provoked barricades and an uprising by masses of workers in Barcelona. Orwell took a rifle and began the defence of the POUM building.

"That evening we heard that on the Plaza de España four hundred [pro-government] Assault Guards had surrendered and handed their arms to the Anarchists; also the news was vaguely filtering through that in the ... working class quarters... the CNT [the Anarchist-led union] were in control. It looked as though we were winning."

Tragically it was not to be. With the defeat of the revolution in Barcelona,

the military victory of Franco became inevitable with a generation under the heel of fascism.

Looking back in 1942, Orwell wrote: "The question is very simple.

"Shall people be allowed to live the decent, fully human life which is now technically achievable or shan't they?"

"Shall the common man be pushed back into the mud, or shall he not? I myself believe, perhaps on insufficient grounds, that the common man will win his fight sooner or later, but I want it to be sooner and not later."

Orwell in Spain, George Orwell, Penguin £7.99 stg.

Film

Marxist gorillas?

by SIMON BASKETTER

APES RULE the world, humans are slaves, and a square jawed astronaut arrives to start a revolt. That is frankly my idea of a good movie. Fighting monkeys and a bit of a revolution at the end of it is exactly what a summer blockbuster movie should be.

The fact that *Planet of the Apes* was made by Tim Burton, a director who is never less than interesting and sometimes inspired made the prospects good.

The film looks impressive at times and the over

the top crouching human, flying monkey scenes were entertaining.

I quite liked Charlton Heston, who was the star of the original film and is now the head of the National Rifle Association, as an ageing chimp arguing for gun control.

There are enough in-jokes and references to the original, to keep obsessives like me interested. But to be honest the movie is less than the sum of its parts.

In a recent interview, Burton said he didn't want to do a re-make as it was impossible to recreate the time in which the original was made.

Unlike the 1960s, he says, the issues of today



APES OF wrath

are "fragmented." But oddly the movie doesn't have a fragmented vision. It doesn't really have vision at all except a sort of nervous liberalism.

Every time it looked as if the movie was going somewhere it retreats. For instance, the inter-species love plot is stopped because of panic about what to do with the idea.

And the idea that the movie might explore sexuality is pretty much destroyed anyway by the fact that the only human female character spends the movie silently pouting in an animal skin bikini.

Planet of the Apes is a remake of the classic 1968 film. The 1968 version reflected the anger and radicalisation of the times. And the failure to capture the anger and radicalisation of these times is where the current movie really fails.



**where
we
stand**

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.

Peerless Rugs workers show the way

Magnificent solidarity with occupation!

OVER 300 people marched in Athy in solidarity with the Peerless Rugs workers. They have been occupying their factory since July in order to get the money that the Labour Court awarded them as part of their redundancy settlement.

The Labour Court's findings are not legally binding, so the workers haven't received a penny from the boss, Martin Buckley.

The occupation began when the company suddenly announced a closure and the workers found out that their work was being transferred elsewhere.

Locked

The managers were locked into the factory for several hours before the Gardai arrived.

"We eventually let them go but it is a pity that we did not keep their cars. But you don't think of those things when it all happens so fast," one worker said.

Buckley also owns plants in Cork and Mountmellick.

These factories have taken over manufacturing of the rugs from Athy.

He is refusing to pay up, declaring bankruptcy even though Peerless still trades. The savings scheme that the employer ran has also disappeared.

There was massive support from local people, with most shops and businesses in the town displaying posters of the event.

Applauded

Many onlookers stopped and applauded the marchers.

"Today is the first statement of many. If it doesn't get us our money, it will show Buckley up for what he is," Amila said.

The march was joined by a contingent of workers from Precision Holdings in Roscommon who had been out on strike for 11 weeks.

"I'm delighted today was such a success. I hope it's a start and will be written in the pages of history as the first protest to help the lower income group

who are in the many and not fully aware of it.

"We have the political clout if we choose to use it. Let it be a warning to public representatives throughout Ireland that this group is not going to be walked upon.

"For whom does the Celtic Tiger roar?" said Michael a Precision Castings worker who travelled over to join the march.

Gathered

Afterwards the march gathered in the central square of Athy for a rally.

Speakers included Mike Jennings from SIPTU, Jimmy Kelly, a shop steward from Waterford Crystal, Rory Hearne from Globalise Resistance as well as Peerless workers Jan O'Connor, Marie McCabe and Esther Dempsey.

Jimmy Kelly told the crowd, "The Peerless Rugs workers are giving an example to everyone who will face redundancies in the coming recession—occupy your plant and don't let the bosses throw you on the scrap heap".

After the march there was a meeting of Peerless workers and supporters in the Lyons Club in Athy about future tactics and actions to be undertaken.



300 WORKERS and supporters of the Peerless Rugs occupation march through Athy (above). Many onlookers stopped and applauded the marchers. Workers have had their savings stolen by management.

Night courses for anti capitalists

The anti-capitalist movement is the most dynamic movement for change in modern society.

It has organised huge demonstration from Seattle to Genoa. It wants to 'Think Globally - and Act Locally'.

But to bring change you need to clarify your ideas and learn how to organise effectively.

This series of evening classes on revolutionary ideas will provide activists with a valuable resource.

They take place each Monday night at 8pm. Venue to be announced. Participants are asked to read brief photocopied articles beforehand.

They kick off with a 30 minute lecture and then break up into discussion workshops on key topics.

The facilitators for the course are: Kieran Allen, author of the Celtic Tiger: The Myth of Social Partnership and Conor Kostick author of Revolution in Ireland: Popular Militancy 1918-1923.

Both are members of the Socialist Workers Party.

Spaces are limited—so book your place now: Tel (01) 872 2682

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Capitalism is out of control - but could it be tamed or does it have to be removed?

4. Revolution !

How do they happen? Why they don't have to lead to a new Animal Farm

5. From the Coal Face to the Call Centre: The Modern World of Work

'Management by stress' is what many experience.

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'TINA - There Is No Alternative' That was Margaret Thatcher's favourite phrase. She was wrong - but what are the alternatives?

7. Unions: Getting back a radical voice

The union leaders have joined the Celtic Tiger establishment. How do we overcome union bureaucracy?

8. Racism and Sexism: Where do they come from?

The tabloid press scapegoat refugees and single parents. But where do these divisive ideas come from?

9. Organising as an Activist: Tactics and Strategy

Leaflet writing, posters, effective communication - a practical workshop

10: Karl Marx: A brief guide to the ideas of the first anti-capitalist

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PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS



Dún Laoghaire

Save our baths

BATHS ARE not for sale. This is the message that will be going out from a major march and carnival taking place in Dún Laoghaire on the 2nd of September.

The event has been organised by the Dún Laoghaire Heritage and Renewal Campaign and the local branch of Globalise Resistance who recently participated in the G8 protests in Genoa.

The event organisers are opposing any plans to sell off the baths to private developers and want to see the baths re-opened as a public amenity for the area.

Dún Laoghaire baths were built with public

money as an amenity for all. In their prime they were state-of-the-art public baths. Almost everyone in the area has happy memories of swimming there.

In recent years a number of prime sites have been handed over to private developers to build luxury apartments.

One of the most notorious of these was the old pavilion site. Local people were promised a theatre as part of the development which involved apartments and commercial units.

However local theatre groups have been excluded from the new theatre because of the £1,000 a night charge being demanded for its use.

The developers now have their eyes on the Dún Laoghaire and Blackrock

baths and the Carlisle pier in Dún Laoghaire harbour. The campaigners are determined that these sites will not be handed over to private developers.

Eoghan McAdhaimh from Globalise Resistance explained.

"There are fewer and fewer facilities for young people and their families to have a day out. Private developers are eating up the coastal area and public spaces. Places to go and enjoy yourself must be open to everybody not just those who can afford expensive private facilities."

Richard Boyd Barrett, one of the organisers of the carnival and a local representative of the Socialist Workers Party said:

"Enough is enough. The developers have had it all their own way in Dún Laoghaire. Our local environment is being sold off to people who are only inter-

ested in profit. Working class people are being excluded."

The campaign to save Dún Laoghaire Baths is receiving massive support from locals. Thousands have signed the campaign petitions.

"The problem is that the council and politicians in the mainstream parties are working hand in glove with the developers. Every decision they make is the interests of big business instead of the people they are supposed to represent.

"But people power and mass action can challenge their agenda. From Seattle to the recent protests in Genoa there is a new movement that is saying that people must come before corporate profit.

"We need to bring the spirit of that movement to Dún Laoghaire and say 'Our World is not for sale'," said Richard.

United Beverages

WORKERS AT United Beverages in Dundalk are on strike for higher pay. They are members of two unions, SIPTU and ATGWU.

Their fight for higher pay goes back to 1998 when they sought local pay rises under the Partnership 2000 agreement.

The management tactic though has been to keep them in talks while allowing very little to be achieved. The workers held a brief sit-in in 1968 as frustration with this approach mounted.

However the whole issues was tied up in the Labour Relations Commission and little was gained.

The company is owned by the giant multi-national Diago.

Its response to workers legitimate demand has been to issue threats – using the stick of globalisation to try to beat them.

"Why should we pay £22 a pallet in Dundalk when we can get it for £12 in Romania" – this is their attitude.

Dignity

But workers do not have to join a race to the bottom where everybody competes against everybody. They can stand up and fight for their dignity.

Since the strike began workers have also discov-

Roscommon Precision Casting

Locked out for fighting lowpay

WORKERS AT the Roscommon Precision Castings, members of SIPTU, are entering their third month on strike.

As one worker told *Socialist Worker*, "We have suffered terrible low pay, as little as £4.80 per hour. One worker who lives in Moate has been with the company 21 years. His gross pay was £214 a week – before deductions.

"For the past four years we have been demanding £65 across-the-board wage rise. In all that time the management only granted a £5 rise.

"The Labour Court refused to support our demand for £65. They said it was outside the PPF. But the Court said we should benefit from a Gain Sharing

Package.

"The company demanded we unconditionally accept the Labour Court recommendation and drop our wage demand before they would let us know what they would offer on gain sharing."

Having rejected this ultimatum and voted unanimously to strike, the workers came out in June.

"After a month on strike, still PJ Naughten, the factory owner, refused to meet us, or the union and refused to talk to local politicians or the media. Then he announced the plant would close.

"He even postponed the date of closure for four weeks to deprive us of social welfare payments."

The workers are now locked out and cannot even collect their personal belongings left in the factory. They are demanding a redundancy package of five weeks plus statutory entitlement which is currently in the Labour Court.

★ A delegation of Roscommon Precision Casting workers joined the support demonstration for Peerless Rugs workers in Athy in late August. Addressing the demonstration Fintan Ferrick told the crowd, "Having given the best years of our lives to company, the boss could just turn the key and walk away with his profits. We, like you are not taking this lying down."

Later Fintan told *Socialist Worker*, "This was a great day. The display of solidarity is terrific. If we don't get what we want we too will be organising a solidarity march in Roscommon."

Marley Park

SIPTU members who work in Marley Park secured a small victory over their management.

For the last four years they have been called in to supervise concerts held in the park.

Contractors

But this year the management of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown council tried to use contractors.

"They went about it in a sly way. Right up to the last moment they led us to believe that we would be working there.

"Then they told us we would not."

The 35 SIPTU members had a discussion and decided to adopt a policy of non-cooperation and to place pickets on the park of the day of the concerts.

The threat of action made management sit up and take notice.

"They came back to us at the end of the day and offered work for eight people on Sunday and four on Saturday.

"Even more important they gave a commitment to proper negotiations for the future."

Building industry

Action to make the sites safe

BUILDING workers reacted with shock and anger to the tragic death last month of 56 year old carpenter Tim Kelliher on a John Paul building site in Dublin's docklands.

As *Socialist Worker* went to press workers were set to stage a city-wide work stoppage in protest against dangerous conditions on sites.

Deaths on building sites are running at more than one a month. According to the Health and Safety Agency last year 18 people died in the accidents in the construction sector of which three were members of the public. One quarter of all reported fatalities at work are in the building industry. In addition to this over 4,000 were reported injured in the construction industry.

The fatal injuries reported to the HAS display the

callous disregard for workers' safety of the bosses in the industry in their rush to make profits.

The Health and Safety Agency report for last year makes grim reading.

In one example poor maintenance and lack of adequate inspection cost a worker his life. A rope on a crane broke and dropped a 3.5 ton concrete panel on a steel erector.

Employers who cut corners on safety barriers are responsible for many accidents.

In October last year a Roscommon carpenter fell backwards from scaffolding nearly five meters to his death.

Collapsing walls and trenches are another source of avoidable death and injury on the sites. In Carlow a building worker died last year when a masonry wall collapsed on him.

An inadequately supervised apprentice electrician

was electrocuted in a site in Kildare.

Despite this toll of death and injury the HSA only obtained 19 convictions against employers in the industry.

Employers in the construction industry are notorious for skimping on safety but despite an appalling safety record the HSA still fails

to enforce compliance with safety standards.

The HSA itself reports that in 2000 only 57 per cent had safety statements prepared, a little more than a third had safety consultation in place but less than one in ten had a Safety Rep appointed.

Minister Tom Kitt promised tighter regulations

★ **FOUR hundred building workers marched on the new Shelbourne Rovers stadium site on the 22 August as part of the fight against the black economy in the building industry. The stadium is being built using subcontracted labour.**

Billy, a building worker said, "We marched from the Square in Tallaght to the stadium.

"The march split to put a mass picket on the

two entrances. One half stormed the site and chased the subbies off."

The workers occupied the site until all work ceased and all contractors left the site.

Management then agreed to meet the union to discuss the issue of direct employment for workers.

Dave another building worker said, "This is just the start. We won't stop until we rid the building industry of subcontractors.

eighteen months but nothing has been brought before the Dail

SIPTU Construction Branch Secretary, Eric Fleming said he was very concerned at the marked decline in safety standards on building sites around Dublin and is particularly disturbed at the number of deaths and very serious injuries which

"There's a new mood of resistance in the building industry."

Sub-contractors cut corners to reduce cost. Workers don't get holiday pay, sick pay or pension entitlements and health and safety rules are the first to be ditched.

The death of Tim Kelleher who was working for the subcontractor Marbug Construction Ltd on a site in August highlights the dangers of subcontracting.

SWP activist meetings — all welcome

□ **ATHLONE:** Contact 01-872 2682 for details
□ **BRAY:** Meets every Thursday 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

□ **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 BALLYFERMOTT:** Meets Tues 8.30pm in Ruby Finigans Pub

□ **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 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.

Socialist Worker

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

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Solidarity price £1

- **Two thirds of single pensioners below the poverty line**
- **Three out of four female lone parents are dependent on benefits**

LOYALISTS FEED OFF POVERTY AND FEAR

“A CLIMATE of fear is stalking streets—the insidious spectre of sectarian violence must be tackled,” said the *Belfast Telegraph* on 23rd August.

Pipe bombs thrown into Catholic homes and left at GAA grounds are now a daily occurrence.

The “drive-by” murder of Gavin Brett, a Protestant 18-year old standing with Catholic friends near a Glengormley GAA club was “claimed” by the Red Hand Defenders, a covername for the UDA.

Less than three weeks later, 12,000 -15,000 people joined a UDA march on the Shankill Road, led by about 100 masked and uniformed men.

The *Irish Times* reported “UDA members had travelled from all over Northern Ireland with large numbers from the North West”. The RUC made no attempt to intervene.

John White, chair of the Ulster Democratic Party (UDP) said “I believe this parade will reinforce that the sense of community that always prevailed in the Shankill is starting to come back again.”

This was a sick joke from a sectarian bigot. The vast majority of Protestants want a sense of community that includes Catholic friends and neighbours.

Blocked

Ann from Ardoyne, whose children were blocked in June from getting to their Catholic primary school by loyalists, told *Socialist Worker* “I know Protestant mothers I meet in the Post Office. They say to me they don’t agree with what’s happening but feel they can say and do nothing.”

When the SDLP’s Alban Magennis said “the UDA’s orchestrated campaign over the summer months has left the whole community reeling in fear” he was referring to Catholics.

But the UDA thugs are feared by most Protestants also.

The 15,000 strong march was bigger than the same march last year. The UDA and UVF represent a small minority of Protestant working people.

But it is a minority that has been nourished by a combination of the politics of the Good Friday Agreement and poverty the Assembly has done nothing to tackle.

Recent research shows that vulnerable groups are sinking into ever-deeper poverty.

Two thirds of single pensioners and half of all pensioner couples are living below the breadline.

Three out of four female lone parents are dependent on benefits.

Generally, the number of children living on or below the poverty line is increasing.

Jobs are increasingly through agencies like Grafton or Securicor—which means minimum wages.

A North Belfast schoolteacher says: “In this situation the bitterness young men feel can sometimes be turned into desperate sectarian acts”.