

Socialist Worker

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

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STOP THE WAR NOW!

STOP THIS SLAUGHTER



Victims of US bombing

BUILD THE

RESISTANCE

NO REFUELLING AT SHANNON

COPS CORRUPT PIT STOP

THREE PEOPLE, including a Garda has been arrested, arising out of an investigation into the business links between the Advance Pit Stop company and the police.

Whopping

In 1998, Advance Pit Stop won a contract for £600,000 to supply tyres to Garda vehicles. They made a whopping £200,000 on the deal.

The *Sunday Business Post* revealed that the company spent £45,000 on bringing five gardai and a civil servant on golf trips to Spain, Italy and Portugal.

Spent

During the trip to Spain, £5,000 was spent in areas where there were no tyre facilities.

The Gardai civilian fleet manager Oliver Hanlon, described the golf trips as a "brain storming session".

INQUIRY NEEDED INTO DONEGAL GARDAI

THE FAMILY of Frank McBearty have called for a public inquiry into the activities of Gardai in Donegal.

McBearty and members of his family were arrested and questioned about the alleged murder a cattle dealer, Richie Barron.

But it now transpires that the post-mortem examination by the state pathologist John Harbison

found that Barron's death was consistent with a hit and run accident.

Unusually, the Gardai made no attempt to preserve the scene of the death—even though they subsequently alleged murder.

Harassment

McBearty and his family were the subject of intense harassment with 150 summons being issued against them over minor issues. All of these summons were then unexpectedly dropped.

Sellafield: Close it Down

A RECENT EU report claimed that that an accident at Sellafield could have twice the impact as Chernobyl and could cause the death of up to a million people from cancer.

The report was commissioned by the Scientific and Technological Option Assessment Committee of the European Parliament.

It was carried out by WISE-Paris, a French nuclear investigative agency.

But now a number of conventional scientists are lining up to attack it.

Support

In reality, nuclear power has always found support among the scientific establishment who have played no

role in promoting environmental issues.

Their attack on the report is only an attempt to bolster the nuclear industry.

Meanwhile the building of a new MOX plant at Sellafield will only add to the dangers.

Instead of backing Britain and America in their war on Afghanistan, the government should mounting a global campaign to close Sellafield down.

Stop the war ... Cashing in on war

"TIMES CAN be better than they seem!" reads the brochure for a investment conference in London.

It then lists how after a series if world crises from Pearl Harbour to the Gulf war share prices have risen.

Exhibiting

It argues "We are happy to remind you that the best time to buy straw hats always is in the depths of the winter"

Exhibiting Irish comp-

nies at the sick business fair include: Dragon Oil, Conduit, Jurys Doyle Hotel Group and Tullow Oil

● General Motors is one of the companies trying to profit from the war.

Its adverts in the US proclaim how in the "dark times" everyone can help get the economy back on its feet by forking out for a car.

"Let's stand together and keep America rolling," urges the advert's voiceover.

One General Motors executive admitted,

"It is natural that we are thinking of ways to tap into that sentiment for commer-

cial advantage."

● Designer Ralph Lauren has headed up a campaign for the fashion industry called "Fashion for America—shop to show your support."

But the call for "patriotic shopping" has provoked some criticism.

Customers have condemned one clothing salesman for sending them an e-mail which said that doing business with him was a blow against terrorism.

"I didn't mean to offend any sensibilities," he said, "but we live in a capitalist economy."

US interns Muslims

AFTER September 11th around 1,100 people have been interned by the US government but almost nothing is known about who they are, why they have been detained, what charges, if any, have been filed, and how many of them have been cleared and released.

One man has died in custody, in New Jersey, and others are being held indefinitely on immigration violations.

Court proceedings have been sealed in many cases, making it almost impossible to find out why they are in detention and what access they have had to lawyers and consular officials.

Dr Al-Badr al-Hazmi was arrested in the early hours of September 12 at his home in San Antonio, Texas. The Saudi radiol-

ogist had booked five tickets on a flight from San Antonio to San Diego.

Dr al-Hazmi was taken into custody, shackled, flown to New York and held in solitary confinement.

For six days he had no access to a lawyer, and his lawyer was unable to find out where he was.

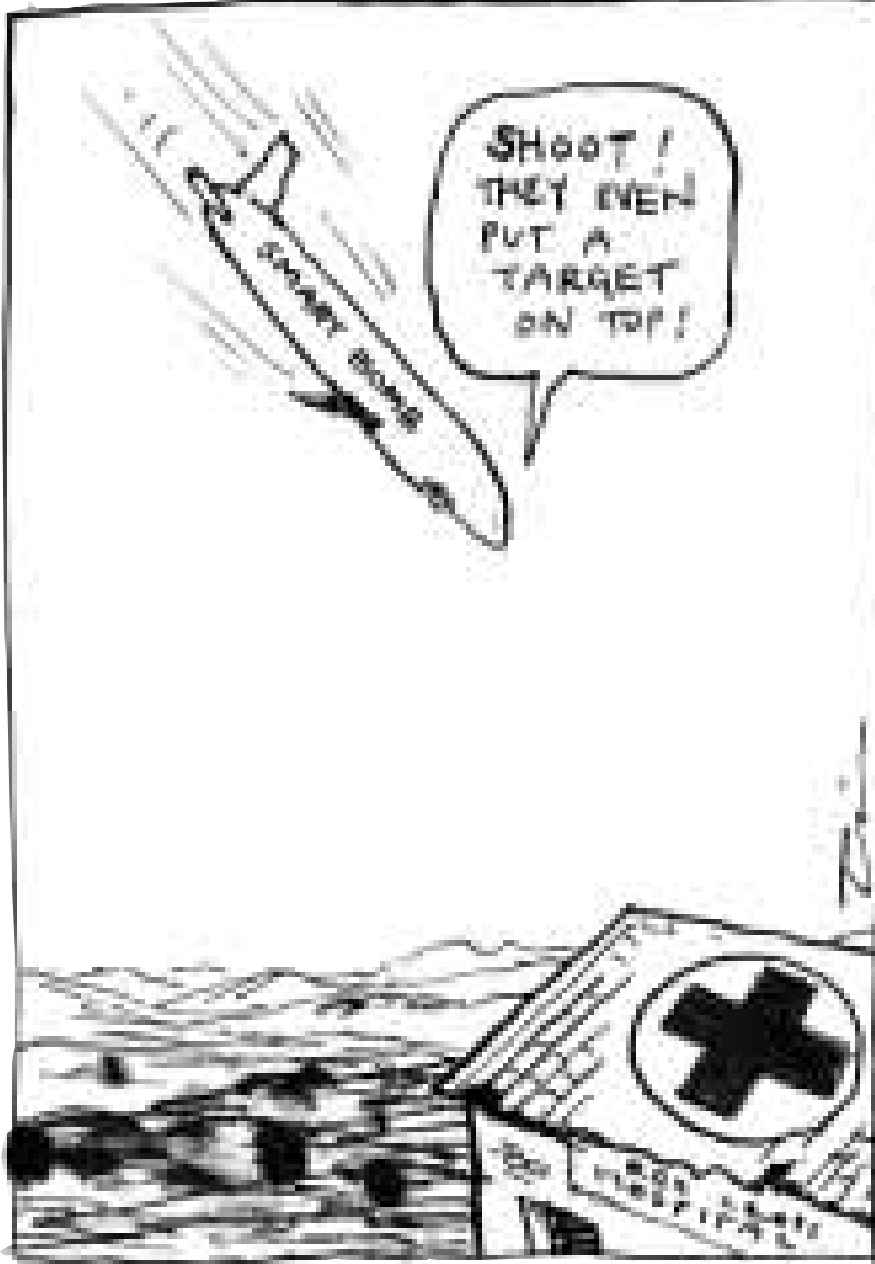
For 12 days he had no opportunity to learn what the case against him was, or to answer it.

Prevented

A Saudi Arabian student, Yazeed al-Salmi, spent 17 days in custody in San Diego, Oklahoma and New York despite being told early on that he was not a suspect.

He said he was denied contact with his family, held in solitary confinement, prevented from washing or brushing his teeth and repeatedly humiliated by his guards.

"They don't call you by name," he said of his time in Manhattan, "they call you '***** terrorist'."



WTC gold comes before victims

ANGRY FIREFIGHTERS fought with police at the World Trade Centre site as they protested at the city's decision to reduce the number searching for victims.

Police, using mace, attempted to prevent firefighters from holding a

minute's silence for the 343 firefighters lost inside "Ground Zero".

More than 1,000 protesters marched. They broke through the police lines, who used mace on the protestors, and held a moment of silence.

The protest came after Mayor Rudolph Giuliani announced a new policy limiting the number of firefighters working at the site.

Asserted

Firefighters said the reason for the personnel cuts was to save the city money as they shifted work at the Ground Zero to demolition contractors.

Firefighter Bob McGuire, whose nephew Richard Allen is missing in the rubble, asserted that remains had been loaded into trash bins in the past two days. "I don't want him to end up in a dumpster," McGuire said.

"You wouldn't excavate a cemetery or a burial ground like that," said Fire Capt. Peter Gorman, head of the United Firefighters Association.

The day before the protests, New York City found enough resources to rescue and escort \$370 million of gold and silver bullion belonging to merchant banks from "Ground Zero".

THE WORLD Health Organisation has produced a devastating report about the miserable sanitation and living conditions of the people of Afghanistan.

It warns of the danger in the coming months of:

- An outbreak of one of the deadliest forms of malaria. Some 300 chil-

dren near Jalalabad were already seriously ill in September and healthcare resources are under strain.

● An increased risk of measles and other diseases which are often fatal to children.

● The spread of diseases like cholera and dysentery.

● Increased maternal mortality.

● Increased injuries because of the war, including landmines, with depleting hospital resources.

Anti-Abortionists split on Referendum

THE anti-abortionists are split on the new referendum being promoted by Bertie Ahern.

The "every sperm is sacred" wing wants the complete range of Catholic teaching enshrined in the constitution.

They argue that human life begins the very moment of conception and so the use of contraceptives like the IUD and the morning after pill is a form of murder!

Supporters of this approach include the former High Court Judge Rory O'Hanlon who believes that the Irish Constitution is directly answerable to the Holy Trinity.

The pragmatic wing, grouped around the Pro-Life Campaign wants to re-create an alliance with the political establishment and will give backing to Ahern's referendum.

They include John

O'Reilly, the backroom planner behind many right wing activities.

O'Reilly campaigned against the setting up of Family Planning Clinics in the past.

In reality the referendum is an attempt to restrict Irish women's access to abortion.

The Supreme Court ruled that any woman who is suicidal is entitled to an abortion in Ireland.

Yet all of the political parties have refused to draw up guidelines on how this should be implemented.

Now Ahern wants to prevent any possibility of legislating for this in the future.

After the Nice referendum he has decided to sacrifice women's rights in order to do a deal with the right wing bigots.

Meanwhile a major pro-choice campaign is getting underway.

It plans to defend the right of Irish women to have abortions carried out in their own country rather than having to travel to Britain.

Corruption: The cover-up grows

THE MORIARITY Tribunal has been sitting for four years. But according to sources close to the proceedings it is likely to last for another four years.

That is eight years of a charade that PAYE workers are paying for.

Even at the end of that period none of the top politicians or business people involved in corruption will be charged.

Now it has been revealed that

at least 29 people who were involved in the Ansbacher account are likely to remain anonymous.

The Ansbacher account was the source from which Haughey drew down bribes of £5,000 a week.

Promised

Mary Harney originally promised that the Ansbacher names would be made public. But as the confidence of the

Golden Circle grows, the cover up is getting deeper.

Which raises more questions about why the unions did nothing to focus anger on this corruption.

Two unions, SIPTU and IMPACT, called for a national protest demonstrations to demand for the jailing of corrupt politicians.

But the ICTU leaders who work closely with Fianna Fail politicians on "social partnership" schemes scuppered the proposals.

what we think

America's new Vietnam

DONALD Rumsfeld, the US Defence Secretary said, "The war isn't going well, either we have something spectacular this weekend or heads will roll." The next day B52 bombers started carpet bombing Afghanistan.

"The only plan seems to be to bomb, bomb, bomb," according to one US official.

Carpet bombing shows what nonsense the talk of "surgical strikes" was. The US and UK are now dumping tons of explosive randomly on civilians. It is not "surgical". It is not "targeted against evil". It is mass murder of the innocent.

Even before the carpet bombing started, they had destroyed aid supplies. The US bombed a Red Cross building twice, even though it was clearly marked with a huge red cross, destroying 35 percent of its food, tents, blankets and other humanitarian supplies.

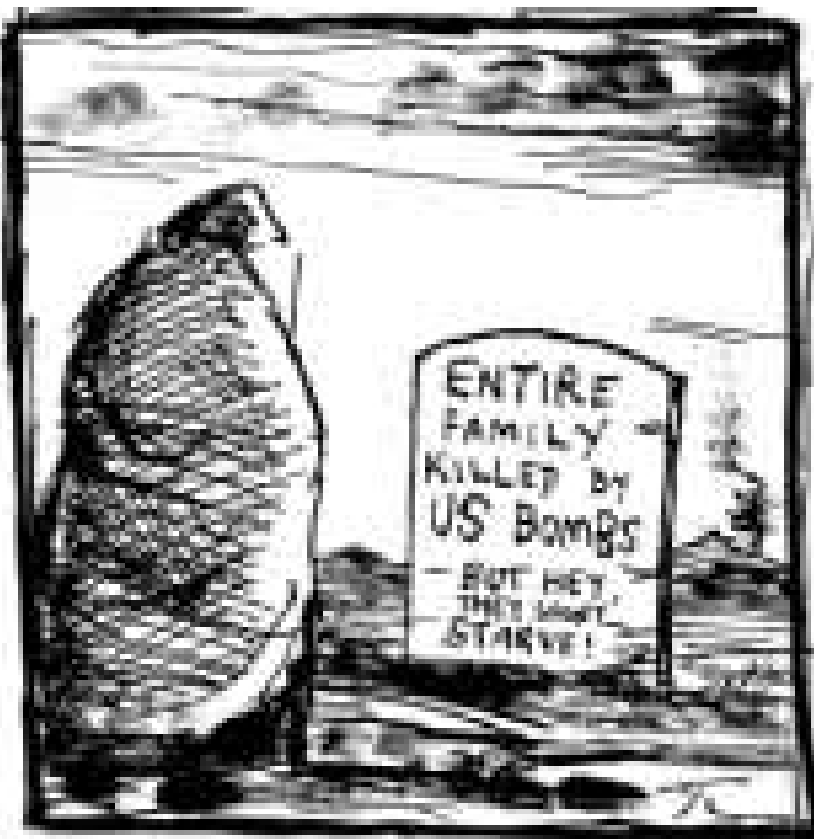
Domination

The "war on terrorism" is a cover for achieving American strategic aims.

These are to assert US military domination over any country it designates as a rogue state. In the process they also hope to pull their European allies into line and gain economic advantage for US companies.

It is the military face of the same globalisation that has been promoted by the "Washington consensus" for the past decade.

The unholy alliance behind America now includes sending Turkish troops to Afghanistan. A quarter of Turkey's entire budget is spent on the military. 30,000 Kurds were killed by its



army in the last fifteen years. Yet the US claims that it is fighting a war against terrorism!

After some hesitation, the US bombers are also aligning their efforts with the Northern Alliance. These are brutal thugs which the US-based Human Rights Watch claims were involved in "summary executions, rape, persecution on the basis of ethnicity".

It exposes the blatant hypocrisy of US claims to be bringing democracy to Afghanistan. It has no interest in any democratic outcome.

Destroy

Carpet bombing was first used to describe the bombing of Vietnam and Cambodia in the sixties.

After the destruction of Hue, during the Vietnam war one US general made the infamous remark, "We destroyed the city in order to save it."

We are supposed to believe this time round that America is destroying a country in order to save it.

But there is one other similarity to the Vietnam war - America can be defeated. The anti war movement has grown far larger and far quicker than during the Vietnam war. Internationally hundreds of thousands have protested against the war.

In Ireland 3,500 turned up a magnificent national demonstration in Dublin despite an almost complete media black out.

The anti-war movement now needs to sink roots in colleges, work-places and local areas.

Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, the Chief of Britain's Defence Staff, has said that "the Cold War against Communism took 50 years and this could take as long".

Building the anti-war movement is only way to end that terrifying prospect.

Stop this slaughter



OVER A thousand people have been killed by Bush's and Blair's attacks on Afghanistan.

The media routinely report civilian casualties in Afghanistan as "Taliban claims" but evidence is mounting of a horrific loss of civilian lives.

Here are just some cases of civilian casualties or near-misses:

★ Gul Ahmed and his seven children were killed. Two youngsters were also killed in a nearby house. Their mud-brick homes in Kabul were blasted apart by a bomb. Four victims were crushed to death and the others were riddled with shrapnel.

★ Mother of three Koko Gul was killed and seven people were injured by a US bomb when two houses were hit in the village of Ghani Khil.

★ Two sisters, aged six and 11, died when US bombs destroyed their home in the village of Wazir Abad near Kabul airport.

★ US bombs hit a bus passing Kandahar's city gates. It burst into flames and incinerated ten passengers. On the same day a UN mine clearance centre in Kabul was destroyed by US bombs.

★ At least 25 civilians were killed in the bombing of Chakoor Kariz village near Kandahar by a US AC-130 Flying Sceptre gunship, according to survivors. The Arabic news station Al Jazeera put the death toll at over 90 and broadcast film of victims of the attack.

★ US aircraft dropped cluster bombs and killed nine people in the village of Shakar Qala near Herat, the UN says. On the same day US bombs hit a mosque and a military hospital in Herat. The US only acknowledged 36 hours later that a bomb had "gone astray" and landed near an old people's home. The Afghan government said that a 100-bed civilian hospital was also destroyed.

★ At least 23 civilians, the majority of them children, were killed when US bombs hit the remote village of Thori, according to the New York based group Human Rights Watch.

★ US bombs destroyed at least 17 homes in Kandahar, killing 18 people.

★ A lorry packed with refugees trying to flee the air raids in Kandahar was hit by a bomb.

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Eamonn McCann

SF in Bush's good books

ANY DOUBT about the key role of the Bush administration in shaping developments in Sinn Fein has been dispelled by an interview with Rita O'Hare in the Irish-American newspaper, the *Irish Voice*.

O'Hare, Sinn Fein's US representative, made plain the depth of Sinn Fein's desire to stay on-side with the Washington regime as the bombing of Afghanistan continues.

In the interview, O'Hare rejected suggestions that the visit of US Ambassador Richard Egan to last month's Sinn Fein Ard fheis had not been approved by the White House.

On the contrary, she told *Voice* editor Niall O'Dowd, Sinn Fein had asked Egan directly to attend the Ard fheis—to reassure the party's rank and file that the Bush regime still saw them as friends. The plea to Egan had been delivered by O'Hare herself, O'Dowd reported, "as the party was reeling from the fallout from the Colombia arrests of three suspected IRA operatives and the World Trade Centre attacks."

O'Dowd continued: "The Bush administration carefully considered the request and granted it, providing a powerful boost for the Republican leadership in their bid to win over doubting members who worried that the US was about to exclude them."

"It was a crucial signal...", declared O'Hare. "It had a huge effect on our membership that the US was not turning on us."

Embarrassed

Whether every member of Sinn Fein will be content to be characterised in this way is a moot point. Some might feel mildly embarrassed at the suggestion they'd be distraught if they discovered that George W. Bush didn't see Sinn Fein any more as a party he could depend on.

But embarrassed or not, it's evident this is the way their own leadership sees things.

The same *Irish Voice* article described an encounter between US Secretary of State Colin Powell and Sinn Fein vice-president Martin McGuinness on the day after Gerry Adams' speech announcing IRA decommissioning. Powell was one of the main architects of US terrorism against national liberation movements in central America in the 1980s, was chief of US forces during the 1991 oil war against Iraq which claimed 200,000 Iraqi lives, and now plays a major role in the US war of suppression against the world's poor.

O'Dowd reports: "Sitting around a fireplace in his inner sanctum next to the State Department's famous Treaty Room, Powell told McGuinness that the Irish breakthrough was 'a ray of light' at a very dark time for Americans. 'Now that we have things moving forward we know they will still need attention from us. You have my commitment on that,' Powell told McGuinness."

Members of Sinn Fein are thus invited to feel chuffed that the man who sends in the B-52s against the people of Kabul and Kandahar promises to make time to keep a weather-eye on Ireland.

The pressures which have brought the Sinn Fein leadership to this pass are frankly explained by O'Dowd. "In addition to the White House, the IRA announcement (on decommissioning) was greeted with heartfelt relief in Irish American circles. Thus it was noticeable at the Martin McGuinness press conference in Manhattan that apart from the journalists, a key group of Sinn Fein supporters were present, giving their imprimatur to the move.

"Almost all are highly successful businessmen in New York..."

This picture of fat-cats purring with pleasure at the way the Provos are developing sits oddly with the warnings of a raft of Southern commentators that Sinn Fein is a party of the Left and poses a threat to capitalist interests in Ireland. To an extent, the contradiction can be explained by reference to straightforward opportunism—saying whatever is needed to mollify a particular constituency at a particular time.

What the *Irish Voice* story signifies, though, is that the radical rhetoric deployed by Sinn Fein to win votes in working-class areas isn't to be taken seriously. When it comes to the crunch, Sinn Fein will do whatever is required to ensure that the rich and powerful have no reason to exclude them.

LATEST PEACE PROCESS CRISIS

Assembly descends into farce

THE FARCE of non-sectarian parties redesignating themselves as Unionists to get David Trimble re-elected as First Minister at Stormont exposed the sectarian reality of the Assembly set up by the Good Friday Agreement.

The fact that Trimble could not be elected without these shenanigans, despite getting 70 percent of the votes at the first try, was a case of the sectarian chickens coming home to roost.

Under the Agreement, any vote in the Assembly on a 'key issue' has to have a 'sufficient consensus' between the 'two communities'.

Majority

This is normally defined as an overall majority that includes a minimum of 40 percent of both nationalists and unionists.

For the election of first and deputy first ministers, the figure is 50 percent of both Unionist and Nationalist MLAs.

This is why elected members must declare themselves to be either nationalists, unionists or others.

Non-sectarian parties who designate themselves as 'other', may as well not



While Trimble has been looking for new recruits to the Unionist Party, Adams searched from a higher source — namely George Bush

exist when it comes to the big votes.

Since 1998, socialists have argued that this set-up institutionalises sectarian conflict in the North.

For all the talk about a chance for the North to develop 'normal left/right politics', the reality is that a socialist party which won a significant number of seats in the Assembly could be prevented from having a real impact by the sectarian parties using these structures against it.

Of course, after over 50

years of Unionist misrule at Stormont, no one would be happy to have a government that did not have some power-sharing across the religious divide.

But the way it's set up at present, the North may as well have one-party rule since there is no way of changing the parties in government no matter how bad a job they do on the health service, transport, education, the environment.

The latest crisis has opened many people's eyes to the very real potential for



corrupt rule by the inter-party Executive.

As is becoming increasingly obvious, the parties in the Executive have every incentive to cover for each other and carve the pie up between them.

While they bicker with Sinn Fein about policing and decommissioning, the UUP and SDLP are only too happy to back Sinn Fein Minister de Brun and McGuinness in privatising the health and education services through the Private Finance Initiative.

600 ATTEND DEMO FOR HOLY CROSS

OVER 600 people attended a rally called by the parents of the children going to the Holy Cross Primary School in north Belfast.

Since June Catholic school girls have been target of a sectarian campaign called by loyalists.

One parent who addressed the rally spoke about her daughters first day of primary school. "My daughter is four years old. Like all four year old girls she is not a threat to anyone, but when she walked to school for the first time in September she was greeted with a blast bomb."

One of the organisers of the rally said, "We want to get as many people to show their opposition to this as possible. I urge everyone here to put pressure on trade unions and other organisations. We are calling on teaching unions, especially, to take some form of industrial action in support of our daughters at Holy Cross Primary School."

She continued by saying, "we have received many letters of support from around the world. The most recent one we received was from the firemen of New York."

Bernadette McAliskey spoke about the need for mass action, "Letters from Hilary Clinton are alright and good, but she won't walk down the Ardoyne Road with you to the primary school. It is the people on the streets here today that will get those children to school."

Selection brought back in

WHILE its proposal to abolish the 11plus has been welcomed by the whole of Northern Ireland, with the exception of the DUP, the "Burns Report" is a con.

It has replaced the 11plus with selection by the backdoor.

The grammar schools are alive and well under its proposals for "Collegiates"—groupings of all second-level schools in a particular area. Selection will now be done behind closed doors, with primary school teachers passing on information about pupils on the quiet which the grammars and secondary schools will use to select who they want.

As John Price of the Campaign Against Selection told *Socialist Worker* "what the grammar schools will concede will be all the change we will get."

While the 11plus exam is going, pupils will now be doing a three year 11plus. The whole of Key Stage 2—from about age 7—will be assessed to produce the 'pupil profiles' which will be used for selection. This will place huge pressure on children, teachers and parents.

Special schools are excluded altogether from the "Collegiates"—so much for Burns' claims about the new system being for "all children".

Costings for the new system is another con. The £45million on offer is not new money, but based on some schools closing down.

John Price of the CAS

says, "If St. Gabriels secondary school in Ardoyne is to be equal in provision to Methody grammar school in South Belfast, they will require the same large swimming pool, gym etc. as Methody."

The historic underfunding of secondary schools means the figure of £45m is a joke."

De Brun imposes health cuts

ANGER against Sinn Fein Health Minister Bairbre de Brun over cutbacks in the health service was seething in West Belfast at the end of October. That was when the Royal Victoria Hospital was set to transfer patients into its new state-of-the-art building.

But de Brun has ordered that the NHS to save £2 million by March 2002.

At the Royal Victoria the cost-cutting exercise means that four floors of the £40 million new building will remain empty until April next year while patients are treated in substandard conditions. The RVH cutbacks will also affect elective surgery and recruitment.

Health unions reacted angrily to this latest round of cuts and called for urgent measures to protect the health service.

One Unison member told *Socialist*

Worker, "The deficit that the Royal has run up is due to years of under-funding and cutbacks."

"The Scottish Executive voted recently to wipe out the deficits of all Scottish hospitals because they recognised where the deficits had come from."

"Sinn Fein claims to be a radical, even a socialist party, so why does its Minister for Health not do what her Scottish counterparts have? Everyone in West Belfast thinks she's a disgrace."

De Brun has also ordered cutbacks at twelve of the North's health trusts. The latest cuts mean Northern Ireland's waiting lists, which are already the worst in the UK, will get even longer. Other trusts faced with cuts include

Homefirst, Belfast City Hospital, Altnagelvin, Down/Lisburn, the Mater, Green-park, the Ulster, United, Craigavon, Newry & Mourne and Armagh & Dungannon.

World Trade Organisation meets as bombs fly...

Their system kills poor across globe

THE NUMBER of people in Eastern Europe and Central Asia living on \$1 a day or less leapt from seven million to 24 million from 1990 to 1998.

That is the backdrop to the conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in the Gulf state of Qatar this month.

The WTO is one of the key institutions of global capitalism, alongside the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Those who defend these institutions claim that "free trade", "globalisation" and neo-liberal economic policies have made life better for people.

Market

Supporters of the market claim that globalisation creates more opportunities for people in the developing world. Yet from 1990 to 1998 the numbers of people living on less than \$1 a day increased by four million people in Latin America, 27 million in South Asia and 49 million in sub-Saharan Africa.

The reality of what globalisation means inspired a huge demonstration outside the WTO's last gathering, in Seattle in 1999. The conference collapsed amid the 30,000-strong demonstration that signalled the birth of the global anti-capitalist movement. World leaders still fear that movement, which is why they are holding next week's meeting in Qatar, where protest is all but impossible.

Qatar was part of the British Empire for 150 years until 1971. The country is the personal fiefdom of the super-rich Al Thani family. The ruler, Sheikh Hamad, seized power when he led a 1995 coup against his father. Such lack of democracy and

Beans that mean farmers go hungry

"IN NICARAGUA coffee pickers with malnourished children beg for food at the roadside.

From Mexico to Brazil tens of thousands of rural labourers have been laid off, swelling the peripheries of the cities in a desperate search for work.

The continuing slump in the price of coffee is spreading misery across the region.

A glut, caused partly by surging production in Vietnam, has led to sliding prices causing hardship for growers on a scale unseen for three decades."

The description is not from some critic of global

rule by a tiny elite are an apt setting for the WTO. Its conference is about enshrining the global domination of the wealthy.

As Pierre Sane, general secretary of Amnesty International, says, "Globalisation has meant riches for some, and ruin and despair for the majority." In more than 80 countries, he argues, income per inhabitant in the year 2000 was less than it was in 1990, and "at least 300 million human beings now have to try and survive on less than \$1 a day".

The New Internationalist magazine points out that on 11 September, the day of the World Trade Centre attacks, over 6,000 children died from diarrhoea. But the IMF and World Bank demand cuts in health programmes, so that money from the world's poorest countries can be funnelled to the bankers instead. That horror is why people across the world will be protesting again next week against the WTO and the world order that it symbolises.



TURTLE POWER: Part of the great Seattle demonstration that shut down the WTO

Champion of world big business

THE WORLD Trade Organisation was set up in 1995 to push for neo-liberal economic policies across the world.

It can give states the go-ahead to impose sanctions against any country that stands in the way of its "free trade" rules. Multinational corporations control 70 percent of a world trade now worth £11.5 billion a day.

Yet WTO rules don't deal with regulating those corporations. Instead they restrict what governments can do to stand in their way. Defenders of the WTO argue that the 142 member countries can vote to change

the rules.

But the WTO rarely votes. Most decisions are taken in "Green Room" discussions which involve the world's most powerful countries, along with heavy lobbying from global corporations. The three-member

WTO panel which rules on trade disputes is effectively controlled by the richest countries and the multinationals.

Its decisions can only be overruled if ALL 142 countries vote against them. In the run-up to the Qatar meet-

ing the US and EU have temporarily shelved important differences over agriculture to push through areas they agree on. These include a series of agreements known by their initials:

●GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services)

is about opening up public services to privatisation.

●TRIPS (Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights) are the way that drug companies want to stop poor countries making cheap drugs to treat AIDS.

●TRIMS (Trade Related

Investment Measures) are measures designed to open more avenues for multinational investment.

The US and EU have used them to force India to allow car giants like Ford and General Motors freer access to the country.

Beirut conference

Anti-capitalism inspires revolt in Middle East

"THIS IS the beginning of the rebirth of the left in the Middle East." That is how a Lebanese socialist describes the atmosphere surrounding a major anti-capitalist conference this month. For many, Beirut summons up images of shootings, kidnappings and seemingly endless civil war.

But the Lebanese capital was hosting the World Forum on the WTO, a conference to challenge the neo-liberal policies world leaders will be pushing at their meeting in Qatar.

"This conference was organised by a number of non-governmental organisations, but it quickly got the backing of all the trade union bodies in Lebanon," says the Lebanese socialist.

Lebanon is negotiating to enter the WTO. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has written the economic policies of the new government.

This has led to privatisation, cutbacks in jobs, cuts in hospital beds and attacks on pensions.

A third of the population is now below the UN poverty line.

The organisers of the conference have been inspired by the emergence of the anti-capitalist movement. The protests in Seattle against the last WTO conference in November 1999 have had a big effect on a lot of Lebanese people educated in the US.

Demonstration

The biggest impact, though, was the demonstrations in July in Genoa against the G8 meeting. The way that the new intifada, the Palestinian uprising against Israeli oppression, has been taken up by the anti-capitalist movement has also been crucial.

For many young Palestinians who are becoming political, the shooting by the Italian police of Carlo Giuliani meant they saw it wasn't just Palestine where these things happened.

People began to make the connections. It can't just be explained as a Muslim/Christian thing or a Jewish/Muslim thing.

A Palestinian from one of

Lebanon's southern refugee camps told me, 'It's people versus tanks in Belgrade, Prague and Ramallah.' The anti-capitalist movement in the West has opened up opportunities for the left in the Middle East.

The Beirut conference is important for the left. The war in Afghanistan has projected it onto a much wider stage. There is a very widespread view that the war is the military wing of capitalist globalisation."

A socialist who has recently returned from Egypt describes how the anti-war movement in the West has had an effect across the world: 'The key thing is that the left and others are protesting against the war all over the world.'

It means the left in Egypt can say that the war is not a Christian 'crusade', as the Islamists say.

'The message to the left in the West is that you must continue to demonstrate so that socialists in the Middle East can point out that this is an imperialist war and build opposition.'

Despite repression the anti-war movement is taking shape, with committees springing into

place. There have been demonstrations on most university campuses. Capitalism, the war and the Palestinian intifada are interwoven for people in Egypt."

Activists

Activists were coming to Beirut from all over the Middle East, but also from Sudan, India and Pakistan.

Speakers at the conference include Green US presidential candidate Ralph Nader, writer Susan George, Indian activist Vandana Shiva, Filipino economist Walden Bello, Palestinian politician Hanan Ashwari, Ahmed Ben Bella (a leader of the Algerian independence struggle) and Lindsey German from the SWP in Britain.

Supporters include Oxfam, the World Development Movement, Globalise Resistance and Greenpeace.

There were four days of discussion on capitalist globalisation and building resistance to it. On the final day there were plans for a march against the WTO and the war.

NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...

Two centuries of imperialism

Millions of people across the Middle East, who deplored the 11 September attacks on the US, are nevertheless bitter and angry at what the US and its allies are now doing in Afghanistan.

Many have sympathy for Bin Laden's message when he talks of "the suffering of the Palestinian people" and says that "American interests are everywhere all over the world."

The West has inflicted barbarous massacres on people throughout the region. Many of those atrocities have been as bad as, and many much worse than, the attack on the World Trade Centre.

Millions of people throughout the Middle East know the talk by George Bush and Tony Blair of fighting for global "justice" is a sick joke. The West backs up the most tyrannical regimes throughout the region.

For much of the last century Britain, France and later the US have directly controlled much of the Middle East, or installed brutal dictatorships. WESTERN powers have intervened in the Middle East for over 200 years. Here are just some of the key events in this bloody history of imperialist intervention in the region:

1779: Britain's East India Company, backed by British military power, establishes control over Kuwait.

1798: French troops led by Napoleon invade and occupy Egypt for three years.

1820: Britain establishes control over part of the Gulf coast.

1830: France invades Algeria. Resistance movement led by Abd el Kader erupts.

1837: Britain seizes control of part of Iran, on the pretext of "defending Afghanistan".

1840: France sends 115,000 troops, a third of the entire French army, to crush the Algerian rebellion, waging "a war of extermination".

1845: French troops asphyxiate an estimated 500 men, women and children in Algeria by setting fires at the mouths of caves where fleeing people had taken shelter.

1860: British and French forces intervene in Lebanon. Spain invades and occupies Morocco.

1861: Bahrain becomes a British "protectorate".

1869: European banks take effective control of Tunisia under "international financial commission" to enforce payment of debts.

1876: Britain and France take control of Egypt's finances to enforce debt payment.

1881: French army occupies Tunisia and creates protectorate.

1882: Britain invades Egypt and bombards the city of Alexandria, making the country effectively a British colony.

1891: Britain imposes "friendship treaty" on Oman, effectively making it a British protectorate.

1909: Britain and Russia divide Iran between them, and Britain gets sole rights to exploit the country's oilfields.

1916: Britain and France agree secret Sykes-Picot Treaty, dividing Arab territories of the collapsing Ottoman Empire between them. Britain grabs what is now Palestine, Jordan and Iraq as well as Egypt. France controls Syria and Lebanon.

1917: Foreign office chief Arthur James Balfour declares that the British government "views with favour" the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

1919: British forces repress rebellion in Egypt.

1920: League of Nations, forerunner of United Nations, "legalises" British and French carve-up of the Middle East.

1920s: Britain uses new weapon of air bombardment against rebels in Iraq and expands areas under its control along the Gulf coast and around Aden.

1925: French forces crush rising in Syria.

1941: Britain and Russia invade Iran and install the Shah as ruler.

1948: Israel created, backed by US and Britain. Some 700,000 Palestinians driven from their land.

1953: US CIA helps organise a coup to overthrow Iranian prime minister Mossadegh, who had tried to nationalise oil, and reinstall Shah as absolute ruler.

1950s: French forces wage brutal war to try and keep control of Algeria, deploying 500,000 troops and systematically using torture. Over one million Algerians die in the war.

1955: British troops crush nationalist rebellion in Oman.

1956: Britain and France, along with Israel, invade Egypt after President Nasser nationalises the Suez Canal. British forces bomb Alexandria, Cairo and Port Said. British troops crush rebellion in Bahrain.

1958: US sends 10,000 troops to intervene in Lebanon to "pacify" the country.

1962: CIA organises coup in Iraq, killing tens of thousands of Communists and marking the beginning of Saddam Hussein's rise to power.

1967: Israel attacks Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon in Six Day War, and seizes control of West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights, which it has occupied ever since.

1970: Britain begins long war in defence of the slave-owning ruler of Oman.

1982: Israel launches full scale invasion of Lebanon. Ariel Sharon later found to be "indirectly responsible" for massacre of 2,000 Palestinian refugees in camps near Beirut.

1983: US navy repeatedly shells Lebanon, killing dozens of civilians.

1988: US warship in Gulf shoots down Iranian passenger plane, killing all 290 people on board.

1991: Gulf War-US-led forces slaughter over 100,000 Iraqi civilians and conscripts.

Thousands take to the streets to ...

Stop this bloody war

"STOP this bloody war now" is the message coming from across Ireland as the anti war movement grows.

Some 3,500 people marched through O'Connell Street on Saturday, November 3rd to demand that the slaughter of the Afghan people has to end now.

It was the largest protest yet in Ireland against the war. Some 200 people marched on the same day in Belfast.

One marcher told *Socialist Worker* why he was demonstrating, "I changed my mind about the war when some minister came on TV and justified the use of cluster bombs.

"Nobody can justify the murder of innocent people. I think its great to see the opposition to this war grow so widely.

"It's about time someone stood up to the slaughter of more innocents."

Pressure

The Dublin march started with a rally at the Garden of Remembrance where speakers criticised the cowardly behaviour of the Irish government in the face of US pressure to support the bombing of Afghanistan.

"The government has no mandate from the Irish people to support this barbaric war" argued John Gormley of the Green Party.

The thousands of pro-



"Nothing justifies Bush's war and any more slaughter" - MONICA FLYNN, Artists against the war

testors at the demonstration would make sure that the voices of opposition to the war would be heard. The march was loud, noisy and angry. "Afghanistan needs bread

not bombs" chanted the marchers.

Groups from all over Ireland came to express their anger at the bombings and to ensure that the continued attempts to suppress the anti-war movement would fail.

Horried

The Dundalk Anti-War Group, set up two weeks ago brought with a minibus of people.

Pat Mulholland, one of the group's organisers said that people in Dundalk were horrified by what happened on September 11th but that tragedy doesn't make this war right.

Keith Corcoran, another

member of the group explained how many people in Dundalk have personal experience of what this war will bring: "Tit for tat violence is wrong," he said.

Joe Moore, president of the Cork Council of Trades Unions described how 90 people came to the inaugural meeting of the Cork Anti-War movement to build a broad based coalition of community groups, churches, NGOs and political parties.

"The government doesn't speak for the people," Joe argued, "The rejection at the Nice referendum was because Irish people believe in neutrality and now the

government is trying to ignore that message".

Artists Against War brought balloons, colourful banners and creative placards.

"Nothing justifies Bush's war and any more slaughter" said Monica Flynn.

The group is growing all the time and is using art as a way of raising people's awareness of the issues and making the campaign more accessible to everyone.

Sandeep Vaidya of the Campaign to End

Sanctions Against Iraq saw the link between this march and the fight to bring an end to the violence and injustice in the Middle East.

"The US government has already outlined its plans to extend the war to Iraq which will increase the misery and suffering of the civilian population already suffering under sanctions.

"The Irish government should not support the US in this war and should not allow the refuelling of warplanes".



Protestors came from across Ireland to the march in Dublin



"The government doesn't speak for the people" - JOE MOORE, Cork Trades Council



Terrorist weapons

IN A horrific turn in the war on Afghanistan the US and Britain are using cluster bombs The British Ministry of Defence defend the weapons saying, "Cluster bombs remain an effective weapon." Cluster bombs are effective at killing and maiming ordinary people.

They are dropped in a casing which splits open, scattering up to 200 bomblets the size of soft drink cans. The bomblets scatter over an area the size of 20 football fields. Each one contains a "shaped charge" capable of penetrating armoured steel up to five

A US military broadcast into Afghanistan monitored by the BBC included

"Attention, noble Afghan people," the messages begin. "We do not wish to see an innocent civilian mistake the bombs for food bags and take it away believing that it might contain food."

"In areas away from where food has been dropped, cluster bombs will also be dropped. The colour of these bombs is also yellow."

"Do not confuse the cylinder-shaped bomb with the rectangular food bag."

inches thick.

Peter La Sueur of the UN Mine Action Programme Afghanistan says that cluster bombs will lead to many more casualties after the conflict ends as about 10 percent fail to explode.

Faulty

"They are a bright yellow colour and very attractive for children. But they are so sensitive that just picking them up could cause them to detonate," he said. During its war on Kosovo two years ago NATO dropped 22,000 cluster bombs in one month.

Some 15,000 faulty ones remained on the ground, effectively becoming landmines. More than 150 civilians have been killed by the bomblets since the end of the war.

As John Pilger put it, "If ever a weapon was designed specifically for acts of terrorism, this is it."

The chief executive of the Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, Andrew Purkis, and Richard Lloyd of Landmine Action said in a letter to *The Times*, "There is evidence from Kosovo and the Gulf War that the components of these weapons are prone to missing their targets and fail in significant numbers to explode.

"The presence of highly sensitive unexploded cluster munitions will increase the number of casualties caused by the severe landmine problem in Afghanistan for years to come, and will deny people facing starvation the use of their land."

A war for oil?

"The good Lord didn't see fit to put oil and gas only where there are democratic regimes friendly to the United States," according to US vice president Dick Cheney three years ago. He also said "You've got to go where the oil is."

Afghanistan has little oil and gas of its own, but not enough to qualify as a major strategic concern. Its northern neighbours, by contrast, contain huge reserves.

Massive

Six US oil giants - Unocal, Total, Chevron, Pennzoil, Amoco and Exxon - have invested heavily in the massive oilfield potential in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The region's untapped oil reserves are estimated to be worth up to \$2,000 billion. Afghanistan is indispensable to the regional control and transport of oil in central Asia.

In 1998, Dick Cheney, then chief executive of a major oil services company, remarked: "I cannot think of a time when we

have had a region emerge as suddenly to become as strategically significant as the Caspian."

But the oil and gas there is worthless until it is moved. The only route which makes both political and economic sense is through Afghanistan.

In 1995 the US oil company Unocal started negotiating to build oil and gas pipelines from Turkmenistan, through Afghanistan and into Pakistani ports on the Arabian sea.

Soon after the Taliban took Kabul in September 1996, the British paper the *Daily Telegraph* reported:

"Oil industry insiders say the dream of securing a pipeline across Afghanistan is the main reason why Pakistan, a close political ally of America's, has been so supportive of the Taliban, and why America has quietly acquiesced in its conquest of Afghanistan."

In 1997 a US diplomat said, "The Taliban will probably develop like the Saudis did. There will be Aramco [the former US oil consortium in Saudi Arabia pipelines] an emir, no parliament and lots of Sharia

law. We can live with that."

In September, a few days before the attack on New York, the US energy information administration reported that "Afghanistan's significance from an energy standpoint stems from its geographical position as a potential transit route for oil and natural gas exports from central Asia to the Arabian sea.

This potential includes the possible construction of oil and natural gas export pipelines through Afghanistan".

Interest

One of the biggest investors in Caspian oil is Chevron/Texaco.

This has a \$20 billion interest in the Tengiz field in Kazakhstan which is considered to be the world's largest oil find in the past two decades. Exxon/Mobil owns a further 25 per cent interest in the Tengiz field.

Cheney, served on the Kazakhstan Oil Advisory Board, with executives from Chevron and Texaco.

US National security adviser

Condoleeza Rice served on the board of directors of Chevron for 10 years - an oil tanker was named in her honour.

Another key Bush aide, Kathleen Cooper, undersecretary of commerce for economic affairs, previously worked as chief economist and manager of economics at Exxon Mobil Corp.

Exxon-Mobil gave more than \$1.2 million to Republican Party candidates and committees during the 1999-2000 American elections.

Unocal spent \$500,000 and a further \$2 million on lobbying. Amoco spent \$1.2 million and Chevron spent \$1 million.

The other significant contributor was Halliburton, the oil business services company from which Cheney resigned as chief executive following his appointment as US vice-president.

Earlier this year, the company signed a \$30 million contract with the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan to develop a 6,000-square-metre marine base to support offshore oil construction in the Caspian.

What socialists say

Who uses weapons of mass destruction?

REPORTS of deaths from anthrax infection in America and its spread outside the US has heightened fears about biological and chemical warfare.

The media is saturated with "alerts" and "warnings" about the possibilities of chemical or biological attacks from "terrorists" and "rogue states".

Members of the US government have made no secret that they want to widen the campaign against the Taliban and Osama bin Laden to include any state that is identified as supporting terrorism. They are using the bio-hazard scare to build up a case for attacking Iraq.

Evidence

Yet British Defence Secretary, Geoff Hoon has said there is no evidence that links Iraq to the anthrax attacks in the United States and US congressional intelligence committees have agreed. The UN's own weapons inspector in Iraq, Scott Ritter has stated, "we were unable to establish in no uncertain terms that Iraq had no capability of producing chemical weapons".

In fact embarrassing evidence from the FBI has identified the strain of anthrax appearing in America as matching the strain "Ames" which was developed by the US as a bio-weapon in the 1960s.

The US government identification of Iraq with Weapons of Mass Destruction, WMD, is hypocrisy of a huge scale.

Only countries with highly developed military-industrial technologies have the ability to develop this kind of sophisticated weaponry and the capacity to harness science in the pursuit of more effective ways of killing people.

During the WW1 the German and the British empires experimented with chemical warfare using mustard and chlorine gas to devastating effect in the trenches.

During WW2 Britain continued to experiment with mustard gas, refining its killing power and developing new ways of delivering it.

To do this the military used "volunteers" from the British army at Porton Down in Wiltshire. British military scientists collaborated with their Canadian counterparts in Suffield, Alberta where they used 2,000 Canadian army personnel to continue the tests.

The United States has been using biological warfare since its own foundation.

Smallpox was used by the American army to ethnically cleanse Native Americans and open up land for colonisation by white settlers. Blankets and clothing infected with the virus were deliberately distributed to communities to spread this highly contagious disease as far as possible.

Between 1961 and 1971 American planes bombed South Vietnam with a defoliant, Agent Orange which contains the chemical dioxin. This poison causes foetal death, congenital defects and cancer and its effects are still evident in Vietnam. Recent studies have shown that the dioxin continues to poison agricultural lands and waterways and runs through the whole food chain.

The US is currently involved in the use of another lethal defoliant, Roundup, as part of Plan Colombia. Roundup, produced by Monsanto who also made Agent Orange, destroys everything it touches, legal and illegal crops, poisoning rivers, destroying the environment and causing the same human diseases as Agent Orange.

Plan Colombia is a war against people, its purpose is to destroy resistance to the Colombian government's efforts to open the country to large scale land and mining exploitation by multinational companies. To date the US has promised \$1.3bn to this project, 84% of which is military aid.

Nuclear

And of course the US is the only nation which has ever used large scale nuclear weapons against a civilian population in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. However, the US, Britain and other European powers have engaged in a form of nuclear warfare in the Balkans and the Gulf war.

Depleted uranium, described by the UN Human Rights tribunal as a Weapon of Mass Destruction, was used as an armour-piercing weapon in both regions. Depleted uranium, produced at Sellafield from nuclear waste, releases a radioactive spray of uranium which can cause a variety of cancers when used.

Illnesses and cancers which have emerged in Kosovo and amongst Gulf war veterans are now believed to be connected with depleted uranium. This weapon is already being used in Afghanistan.

The truth is that it is the so called "civilised" states have the worst record of using biological and chemical weapons and of helping other murderous governments to develop and use them.

-JENNIFER FLYNN

NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...

HOW WARS CAN LEAD TO



The last great revolt of the Middle East—Iran 1979. Demonstrator defies troops

REVOLUTION

“IN A Western democracy if you lose touch with your people then you lose elections. In a monarchy you lose your head.” The words were those of Prince Bandar, the Saudi ambassador to the US.

Revolution usually seems to most people a distant prospect. It is easy to conclude that all that we can do is resign ourselves to what exists, at most pushing for marginal reforms.

Utopian

Anything else, we are told from all sides, is “impractical” and “utopian”. These ideas persist among those sections of the anti-war movement which urge existing rulers to get together through the United Nations or some international court to arrive at a “just solution” to the problems that beset Afghanistan and the Middle East.

It is these very rulers whose machinations have led to the devastation of Afghanistan and turned the whole of the Middle East into a powder-keg. Nothing is more impractical and utopian than to expect them suddenly to become agents of peace. The history of the last 100 years, by contrast, shows that the very horror of war can unleash revolutionary upheaval.

Defeated

In 1903 Japan and Tsarist Russia fought a bitter war for imperialist control of north eastern China. Two years later revolution swept through the defeated Russian Empire. In 1914 all the European powers joined in the mass slaughter of the First World War. By February 1917 revolution overthrew the Russian Tsar and brought the working class to power, led by the Bolsheviks in October. The

German, Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires collapsed in 1918. It was a similar story in the Second World War.

The war that had broken out in 1939 between the Western European powers had expanded to include every major state in the world within two years. By 1943 and 1944 a left wing resistance movement had arisen that came close to producing revolutionary change in Italy, Greece and France, and three years later a revolutionary army took Beijing.

In 1948 Israeli armies defeated Arab armies including Egypt in Palestine. Four years later discontent within the Egyptian army led to the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of a nationalist, anti-imperialist government led by Abdul Nasser.

In 1956 Britain, France and Israel attacked this government, with British planes bombing Egyptian cities. A wave of unrest swept the Middle East, leading in 1958 to the overthrow and public hanging of the pro-British monarch in Iraq.

From 1962 onwards Portuguese fascism waged vicious wars in its African colonies of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. In 1974-5 its inability to win these wars led to revolution in Portugal itself.

In each case war acted inadvertently as the midwife of revolution. That was never how it seemed when war broke out. The first impact of war was usually to produce waves of jingoism among people who had hardly thought about politics before and got their ideas from the mass media.

Opponents of war could feel isolated by the apparently unstoppable barbarism around them. So in 1914 the great German-Polish revolutionary

Rosa Luxemburg was at one point close to suicide.

This changed as the war itself disrupted people’s old ways of living and brought them up against all the harsh realities of capitalist society—the horrific death toll at the front, soaring prices and longer working hours at home, and profiteering by those who preached national unity.

Aggravate

If the present war drags on, the centre of revolutionary upheaval will be the region stretching from the eastern Mediterranean to the Bay of Bengal. Bitter disputes between India and Pakistan over the future of Afghanistan could easily aggravate their conflict over Kashmir and undermine Pakistan’s military dictator.

Even more dangerous from the point of view of Western capitalism is the situation in the Middle East. The rulers of the oil-rich states in the Arabian Peninsula resorted in the past to a system of divide and rule.

They used a small portion of their oil revenues to provide guaranteed jobs and a sort of welfare state for the native-born population. They used vast numbers of immigrant and migrant workers from Egypt, Palestine, the Indian subcontinent and the Philippines to do the dirty and backbreaking work.

But a decade of economic crisis has undermined this system. National income per head in the most important of these states, Saudi Arabia, has slumped to a quarter of its old figure. Jobs are no longer guaranteed, even for the educated middle classes, and there is poverty right next to the opulent palaces of the rulers.

In Egypt, the most important non oil producing state, things are even worse. The “neo-liberal” policies pursued by the government have enabled a very small layer to wallow in luxury.

But there is unrelenting poverty among the peasantry and growing unemployment in the working class areas.

Even the middle classes who rely on state employment suffer impoverishment. Until now vicious repression has managed to keep the lid on any overt expression of discontent.

But this is decreasingly effective. When the lid blows off a highly repressive system, it usually does so explosively.

This is what happened with the last great revolution in the Middle East, that in Iran in 1978-9.

What began as protests by groups of intellectuals, students

and religious figures grew within a few months into the action of millions of poor people and, most importantly, the power of the workers in the oil industry. The country’s ruler, the Shah, was forced to flee as sections of his army switched sides.

In such revolutionary upsurges, not only do people give expression to their discontents, they also begin to try to work out new ways of running society. Ruling classes then try to use the influence of old ideas to prevent people achieving their aims.

Murdering

So, for instance, in Germany after 1918 the capitalist class strove to dissolve the workers’ councils and re-establish its rule, murdering thousands of left wing activists in the process. In Iran after 1978 a section of the capitalist class was able to achieve the same goal, this time working with part of the Islamic establishment to give a religious colouration to its counter-revolution.

Islam is not intrinsically more reactionary than any other religion. People often turn to religion because it offers them a message of hope against oppression. But because the message is wrapped in obscure, religious language, it can be easily misused by those who want to blunt and divert the struggle against oppression.

This is very important today in Saudi Arabia, where the only overt expression of opposition is through religious channels. Dissent can easily slip over into admiration for Bin Laden, as he uses religious language to preach the overthrow of the corrupt monarchy, opposition to the US troops and support for the Palestinians.

Similar ideas in Egypt in the 1980s and early 1990s led to groups committed to armed action gaining a big following among students.

They saw change as coming from coups at the top of society

aimed at purifying it of “corrupt” influences, not from mass struggle from below. The state was easily able to isolate armed groups, execute the leaders and confine thousands of followers to concentration camps in the desert. Today these organisations have been destroyed, but their ideas still have considerable influence.

They can only be challenged by those who offer a clear revolutionary alternative without providing any support for the existing state and its repression.

That means a left that sees things in terms of the struggle of all the world’s exploited classes, of all religions or none, against capitalism and imperialism. An anti-capitalist conference in Beirut next month is one sign of the re-emergence of this in the Middle East.

Crack Apart

Such ideas can gain a mass base if any of the Arab regimes begin to crack apart. Industrial workers are a minority of the region’s population.

But they are concentrated at strategically important points. Once they fight for their own interests they can provide a beacon of hope for all the oppressed.

Building the revolutionary anti-capitalist left in the rest of the world helps this process. Even when the media ignores our anti-war demonstrations, they will often feature on TV broadcasts across the Middle East.

The more people see that there is an international anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movement, the more they will be attracted to its message.

The horror of war is once again a breeding ground for revolution, most clearly in the Middle East.



PORTUGAL 1974: tank joins workers’ and students’ demonstration

in my view

Don't be a dope!

WHAT A menace drugs are! There are substances available throughout this country, the use of which is reaching epidemic proportions. The first one kills roughly one third of Irish adults.

Its victims spend huge amounts of money on their habit. Without it they are reduced to shaking, twitching, irritable wrecks. They can be seen scrounging for bits of their leftover poison down the back of sofas and under beds. Pathetic isn't it! I'm talking, of course of the menace of tobacco.

The second drug, alcohol, is a prime cause of marital breakup, spousal abuse, deaths on the road and suicide. Those who fall under its spell have been known to spend half their monthly wages in one weekend indulging their addiction.

Alcohol is also a gateway drug—one that leads to abuse of other substances, including curry, kebabs or a meat-like substance containing BSE prions and e-coli bacteria. On the street, this potent chemical cocktail is known as a hamburger and is thought to be a multi-billion dollar industry.

What's worse than the actual drugs themselves is the crime surrounding them. The supply of the evil substances—tobacco, alcohol and yes, even dodgy beef—is controlled by gangsters, whose wealth knows no bounds.

Gangster

One such gangster, whose tag is Philip Morris—probably not his real name—makes trillions of dollars a year selling his wares to people, some of whom are as young as nine or ten.

Drugs are in the news because the British 'justice' minister, David 'lock 'em up' Blunkett has decided to reclassify cannabis from a Class B to a Class C substance. This means the police won't be able to stop and search people for possession of small amounts of cannabis, unless they're black that is, in which case they'll be stopped and searched for some other reason.

Despite the fact that Blunkett is only doing this as a trade off against the disgraceful attacks on civil liberties he intends to introduce to combat 'terrorists', it is a good thing that people will no longer be pulled off the streets for consuming a herb that grows naturally on the planet.

The problem is that it does nothing to deal with the hypocrisy that surrounds the issue of drugs. Socialists don't call for the legalisation of drugs to allow the capitalists to come up with new ways of exploiting us.

We don't think it's a good thing that people should spend a large proportion of their lives wasted. But we certainly don't think that those who choose to use marijuana should be thrown in jail.

We certainly don't agree with criminalising people who, through poverty and desperation end up addicted to heroin or indeed any other drug.

Drug addiction is a social and a medical problem, not a criminal one.

How many times must we listen to politicians spouting nonsense about the war on drugs?

A war on drug addiction would mean a war on the poverty, alienation and despair of class society, not a war on MS sufferers trying to numb the pain in their muscles or students in bedsits listening to Pink Floyd and drinking too much tea!

In the 1930's when anti-drug legislation was being introduced in America, racist propaganda claimed that black men were using marijuana (and jazz!) to lure white women away from chastity!

This may be a less sophisticated argument than those of today's spin doctors but it is part of the same hypocrisy that allowed black ghettos to be flooded with heroin. Or that used drug money from Iran to fund the Contras in Latin America while US politicians screamed about the evils of drugs.

Throwing drug addicts out of areas or marching to their houses is no substitute for state action to tackle the causes of poverty.

It is high time that drugs were de-criminalised in Ireland—so that we can get onto the real issue of dealing with a society that forces so many into escapist habits.

by PAUL McCARTHY

Music

Class, weeds and anti-capitalism

By PHIL WAITE

ROCK BAND Pulp have returned to form with their new album *We Love Life*, rediscovering the radicalism of their fantastic 1995 album, *Different Class*. *Different Class* propelled Pulp to the top of the charts, with anthems like "Common People" and "Disco 2000".

They were songs about what it is like growing up working class. They had lyrics that people could identify with and brilliant tunes. The album turned the band's frontman, Jarvis Cocker, into a superstar. Having been a fairly successful Sheffield indie band for the previous 15 years, Pulp now found themselves doing the rounds of showbiz parties, mixing with the very people they had mocked for years.

This is Hardcore, their last album, was tinged with misery and despair. Although there were moments of hope, you got the feeling that Pulp really didn't like their new lives, and the album was missing some of the class conscious themes they dealt with before.

Politics

But that didn't mean Pulp had abandoned politics entirely. Jarvis Cocker developed into a strident critic of the Britain's New Labour government. *We Love Life* is much more opti-



PULP influenced by anti-capitalism

mistic than any of their previous work. Songs on the album reflect the anti-capitalist movement. Recent single "Sunrise" looks forward to a hopeful future, where "all that's gonna change".

"Weeds" is an anthemic celebration of ordinary people—and in particular refugees—surviving against all the odds and growing in hostile environments. Pulp turned down an offer of around £100,000 from Coca-Cola to use "Sunrise" in a TV advertising campaign earlier this year.

Jarvis Cocker said

that the band refused to let the song be used because it was inspired by resistance to the multinationals. He said, "The song's sort of about growing awareness of something different. It's about a feeling of a new dawn and the way people are protesting about things like this, and getting shaken out of their apathy."

"So to have licensed the song given its lyrical content just seemed like the worst thing to do."

Pulp may not have produced the album for the anti-capitalist movement, but they're clearly excited about it.

film

Dry clean partner

THERE IS a new film, *The Man Who Wasn't* by director Joel Coen. It follows the life of Ed Crane, a small-town barber in late 1940s California. Ed, who talks very little and always has a cigarette hanging out of his mouth, is tired of the futility of his life.

An opportunity arises to make money from dry

cleaning when Ed cuts the hair of a camp, bewigged would-be entrepreneur.

The man talks about how dry cleaning could transform America, if only he had a silent partner willing to put up \$10,000 towards a chain of stores.

Ed is aware that his wife is having an affair with her boss. He blackmails the

boss for the \$10,000, but the scheme goes badly wrong.

The film is resolutely low key and underplayed. It is also a skewed and humorous take on the conventions of the B-movies that characters in the film might have watched.

Go and see this atmospheric and funny film.

—JOHN FINNEGAN

book

Weapons in Space

WHATEVER else needs to be said about the planes that plunged into the World Trade Centre in September, one thing is certain.

George Bush's plans for a missile defence shield would have been powerless to stop them.

Yet Bush insists that the project will go ahead. Why?

This excellent small book provides much of the answer.

The missile shield, far from being the defensive device its supporters claim, is in fact largely offensive.

Proponents

Moreover, it is conceived by its proponents as just one part of a much wider agenda to militarise space itself, complete with space-based lasers.

The list of corporations with interests in the missile defence shield reads like a roll call of US multinationals—General Electric,

Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon.

Perhaps above all, however, the US leaders have a political assessment about policing the world order.

Just as Exxon and Shell periodically need the US Marines to protect their oil interests in the Middle East, so US multinationals as a whole need to secure their investments by an ever greater concentration of military power.

Nor are they shy about admitting this. Listen to the US Space Command's sales pitch:

"The gap between 'have' and 'have-not' nations will widen—creating regional unrest...The United States will remain the only nation able to project power globally...Achieving space superiority...will be critical to the US success on the battlefield."

George Bush has turned yet another chunk of the world into a war zone. Left unchecked, he would do the same to the very heavens themselves.

■ *Weapons in Space* by Karl Grossman, Seven Stories Stg£4.99

Marxism 2001

16-17-18 November Arts Block Trinity College Dublin

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- **Vietnam: How US imperialism was beaten**
- **Bush, Star Wars and the Arms Race**
- **Columbia, FARC and the US**
- **Imperialism and militarism today**
- **The Crusades: The last great war against Islam**

Speakers Include:

- Vincent Browne, Eamonn McCann, Chris Harman, Jonathan Neale, John Gormley, Kieran Allen, Bernadette McAliskey, Luke Choto, Brendan Ogle, Brian Manning, Marnie Holborow, Andy Storey**

	ROOM 1	ROOM 2	ROOM 3	ROOM 4
Friday				
6:00 - 7:15	Intifada: Can Palestine be Liberated? Richard Boyd Barrett and Palestinian	No Logo - Naomi Klein and the tyranny of brands Anna Hudson	Marxism and Terrorism Colm O'Riain	
7:30 - 9:00	Rally: Global Crisis, War and Global Resistance Jonathan Neale, Eamonn McCann, Grace Lally			
Saturday				
10:00 - 11:15	Global Recession: Marxist economics and the boom slump cycle Chris Harman	Colombia, FARC and the US Joe Carolan	Prozac nation: Why is depression so widespread Dr Peadar O'Grady	Why hasn't the peace process ended sectarianism? Barbara Muldoon
11:45 - 1:00	Vietnam: How US Imperialism was beaten Jonathan Neale	Seattle to Qatar: The WTO and the deregulation of the world Ciaran McKenna	The Crusades: The last great war against Islam Conor Kostick	The Politics of sex Mary Smith
2:00 - 3:15	Green and Red: Do they mix? Richard Boyd Barrett, John Gormley (Green Party)	Leninism in the 21st century Marnie Holborow	Marx's dialectic: The algebra of revolution Deirdre Cronin	Peadar O'Donnell and the Republican Congress Brid Smith
3:45 - 5:00	The crisis of Irish politics Vincent Browne, Kieran Allen	Imperialism and militarism today Kevin Wingfield, Andy Storey (Afrl)	The revolutionary ideas of Leon Trotsky Donal Mac Fhearraigh	Cuba: The last island of socialism? Paul O'Brien
7:00 - 8:30	The Revolt Last Time: Forum on the Sixties Chris Harman, Eamonn McCann, Bernadette McAliskey	Antonio Negri and The politics of Autonomism Marnie Holborow	The war of independence: why did Kevin Barry die for Ireland? Willie Cumming	From Joyce to Roddy Doyle: Class in Irish literature Sinead Kennedy
Sunday				
10:00 - 11:15	Anarchism: An alternative to Marxism? Kieran Allen	Islamic Fundamentalism: The new enemy? Grace Lally	Women and Globalisation Goretti Horgan	Fast Food Nation: the politics of food Simon Basketter
11:45 - 1:00	Republicanism Eamonn McCann	Africa and the Aids crisis: The Hope and the Horror Luke Choto	Marx's theory of history Brian Manning	The Zapatistas and the revolt against free trade Rory Hearne
2:00 - 3:15	The future socialist society Jonathan Neale	Fortress Ireland: Stop deportations Melisa Halpin, Steve Loyle	Bush, Kyoto and global warming Mark Walsh	Noam Chomsky Paul McCarthy
3:30 - 4:45	After Genoa and Washington: Direct Action and the anti capitalist movement Kieran Allen	The revolt of the rank and file Brendan Ogle, Owen McCormack, Carolan Duggan	The politics of the SWP	How do we stop the fascist threat? Dave Lordan
4:45 - 5:30	Rally: From Anti-capitalism to Revolution Brid Smith, Chris Harman			

16, 17, 18 November Trinity College Dublin

Tickets for Marxism 2001 cost £12 or £8 (unwaged). Return this form for full programme and tickets.

Name:

Address:

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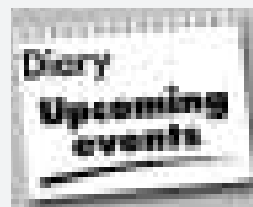
Return to Marxism 2001, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

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- I want ___ tickets to Marxism 2001
Tickets cost £12 or £8 unwaged
- I need accommodation in Dublin for the weekend (accommodation will be with Dublin SWP members)
- I need ___ places in the creche

SWP activist meetings - all welcome

- **ATHLONE:** Contact 01-872 2682 for details
- **BRAY:** Meets every Wednesday at the Mayfair Hotel at 8.00pm
- **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:** Wednesdays at 8pm in Foyle Friend Centre, 32 Great James St.
- **DROGHEDA:** Meets Wednesdays 8:30pm in McHugh's Pub, St. Laurences Gate
- **DUNDALK** Meets Wednesdays 8pm phone 01-8722682 for details
- **DUN LAOGHAIRE:** Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the Christian Institute
- **DUBLIN FAIRVIEW:** Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in Smyths, upstairs, Fairview
- **DUBLIN CENTRAL:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Conways Pub, Parnell St
- **DUBLIN BALLYFERMOT:** 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 FINGLAS/BALLYMUN:** Meets every Wednesday at 7.30pm Phone Kevin on
- for details
- **DUBLIN DUNDRUM:** Meets every Wednesday phonefor details
- **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 RINGSEND:** Meets at 8.30pm every Tuesday upstairs Bowes (pub) Fleet Street Dublin 2
- **DUBLIN TALLAGHT:** Meets every Wednesday 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 for details
- **SWORDS** Meets Tuesdays 8pm Senior Citizens Hall
- **TRALEE:** Phone 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, Keiser St.



- 5-9 Nov** Anti Racism Workplace week
- 7 Nov** Half-day conference on asylum seekers & integration - Dublin centre
Organised by Irish Social Policy Association & UCD Applied Social Science Research Programme Contact Paula Hennelly 01 6369280
- 8 Nov** Indian activist Satya Murty gives the verdict on GMOs Imperial Hotel, Cork 8pm 021 4904327
- 9 Nov** International Day Against Fascism and Anti Semitism.
- 10 Nov** Forum for Choice - 11-4pm Oak Room, Mansion House, D2 6612615
- 10 Nov** Protest against WTO Contact Globalise Resistance 086 4098186
- 16-18 Nov** Marxism 2001 For tickets contact 01 8722682 or email swp@clubi.ie

Anti War events

- Thursdays 8pm** Clontarf anti-war group meets Smiths Pub, Fairview
- Thursdays 8pm** Derry anti-war coalition meets the Junction, Bishop St. 07715 476277
- Fridays 6pm** McDonalds/County Hall, Bray - Peace vigil - 2304621
- Fridays 6pm** Rialto Roundabout - weekly anti-war vigil
- 6 Nov 8pm** Peace Meeting, Tullamore The Bridge House - Contact Linda at 0506-43883
- 30 Nov** INDICT BERTIE! 12 noon Mill Street Garda station, Galway Indictment against Bertie Ahern for aiding and abetting crimes of violence against women - contact 091 565430.

DECEMBER

- 3 Dec** Anti-Bin Tax protest City Hall, Dublin
- 8 Dec** Screening of Injustice, IFC - contact 01 2304621
- 13-14 Dec** Protest at EU summit in Brussels - Contact Globalise Resistance 086 4098186

11 Nov Free Colombian 3 fundraising concert - Olympia Theatre - with Donal Lunny, Sharon Shannon, Paddy Glackin, Liam O'Maolaí, Ritchie Buckley, Philip King & members of Kila 086 8098363

Upcoming event?
Tell us: 01 8722682
swp@clubi.ie





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 workers 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.

RTE

Jobs under threat

RTE management are implementing cuts of £24 million which will mean the loss of over 150 jobs at the station.

The turn-down in the economy has resulted in a drop in advertising revenues as companies cut back. The station claims it will lose £12 million because of this.

Claims

But the government wants to cut the station's deficit from £36 million to £12 million.

This is where the axe will fall:

- £6.75 million from Central Services division,
- £6 million from television
- £3 million from facilities.
- £2 million from freelance payments,
- £1 million plus less for news

One RTE worker told *Socialist Worker*, "We've been given very little detailed information of where the cuts will fall in practice and where jobs are to be chopped.

"It looks like compulsory redundancies and that the 5.5 percent due in December on the PPF will not be paid until much later, if at all.

"The unions have promised a campaign to fight compulsory redundan-

cies and the pay freeze. But they should go much further.

"We have already suffered a major restructuring with a loss of 330 jobs. We should resist any further cuts."

The planned cuts will have an impact on programmes.

As one of the workers commented: "The government seem intent on cutting back RTE to the advantage of private companies.

"It's all part of their privatising of public services agenda."

The cuts will mean less quality home produced programmes and more bought-in cheap American soaps.

"Decent programmes like *Bachelors Walk* or some of the excellent radio documentaries will not now be made.

Dependent

"News coverage is in danger too. At a time of war travel costs would be the first for the axe.

"Without reporters on the spot news would be more dependent on official briefings and hand-outs and on channels like CNN for material from around the world."

Although RTE managers have given assurances that the profit-making 2FM will not be sold off to a private operator, workers are sceptical that this promise can be kept indefinitely.

Another issue is the

future of digital broadcasting.

As a result of the cuts investment in digital media is to be put on the back burner, leaving the field open to others.

Dominated

"This could mean that the future for broadcasting will be dominated by private interests.

"This is obviously the government's agenda," commented another RTE worker.

"Management had told the government it needed a licence fee increase of £50 to maintain the services and jobs at RTE. The government granted just a quarter of this.

"But funding RTE should not depend on pushing up the cost of a television licence.

"A public broadcaster like RTE should be funded from taxation of the big business interests."

RTE workers need to organise to demand their unions mount concerted opposition to these cuts.

Teachers

Teachers up in arms at low pay

THE CONTINUING scandal of low pay has the country's teachers up in arms.

Last month the government made an offer of payment for teachers supervising morning and lunch-time playground breaks and substituting for absent colleagues.

Insist

This was in lieu of a decent offer on the core issue of pay.

For two of the unions in the hands of the benchmarking process, due to report in June 2002.

The government and Labour Court insist its findings will be binding.

The TUI and the secondary school teachers

union, the ASTI, have both rejected the supervision and cover offer.

The national school teachers' union, the INTO, was set to ballot in early November on the government offer on playground supervision and cover.

One INTO member told *Socialist Worker*, "Our union Congress has demanded that our lunch-times are free of supervision duties.

"Like every other worker, teachers need a break in the day but the current procedures require us to be available to supervise children over our lunch break.

"The government offer provides that a school can hire someone to do these duties, but if it doesn't teachers can still be required to work their lunch times.

"Anything paid for supervision and substitution does not count towards pensionable earnings. This

is another way of giving with one hand and taking with the other."

The TUI and INTO have signed up to benchmarking in a bid to achieve a reasonable pay increase.

Teachers fear that this body will insist they accept this rotten deal.

ASTI in revolt

IN THE ASTI anger and dissatisfaction with the union leadership is at boiling point.

One activist told *Socialist Worker*, "Last year we took industrial action to demand a substantial pay increase.

"The convention of our union decided that we would refuse to discuss issues like supervision or substitution until our main pay claim was dealt with.

"We are entitled to a 30 percent pay increase as of right—not at the discretion of some benchmarking body.

"We have therefore refused to have anything to do with the benchmarking process, are not part of the PPF and have pulled out of ICTU to pursue this claim.

"Instead of complying with the wishes of the members, Charlie Lennon, the General Secretary, and his entourage have got us bogged down in side issues.

"Fifteen of the union's 57 branches have passed motions of no-confidence in the General Secretary and negotiators, and others are set follow suit."

There is huge sympathy in the ASTI for Bernard Lynch who spearheads the opposition to Lennon in the union's 18-person standing committee.

Lennon had to publicly apologise for threatening Lynch with physical violence recently and then tried to have Lynch expelled from the Standing Committee.

Legal action to prevent that cost Lynch more than £15,000 while Lennon's legal bill was paid by the union.

Former president Louis O'Flaherty has set up a legal fund to help Lynch pay the bill. "I think every branch in the country will contribute," commented one ASTI activist.

In the mean-time union activists are pressing to stop union subscriptions being deducted at source and paid directly to ASTI head office.

These lists were used by the employers last year to dock the pay of ASTI members in defiance of the Data Protection Acts.

INTO members need to ensure a massive rejection of the offer on cover and supervision.

This should be a springboard for activists in the three unions to ensure their unions come together to organise united campaign of non-supervision and non-cover.

ATGWU

MICK O'REILLY AT KANGAROO COURT

MICK O'Reilly, the Irish Regional Secretary of the ATGWU travelled to London on Monday to face a committee of inquiry into his suspension.

O'Reilly was sacked from his post on completely spurious grounds.

The real purpose of his dismissal was to remove an outspoken critic of social partnership.

Humiliated

O'Reilly had welcomed the Irish Locomotive Drivers Union into membership of the ATGWU when all the rest of the trade union establishment wanted them broken up and humiliated.

Even though O'Reilly has a strong case, the odds are stacked against him.

The personnel on the committee are mainly supporters of the British based union secretary Bill Morris and many of O'Reilly's supporters believe they are biased against him.

When Mick O'Reilly was first dismissed there



Mick O'Reilly

was huge support for him.

In most of the ATGWU regions there were large meetings of shop stewards who protested at the sackings.

But, unfortunately, his decision to obey a gagging order imposed by the London head-office has meant that the union bureaucracy has seized the initiative.

Appointed

They have appointed one official, John Bolger, to the Dublin head-office.

Bolger played a disgraceful role in the Glanbia dispute and his appointment will inspire little confidence.

But the union bureaucracy has used

O'Reilly's silence to organise.

Joined

Tragically leading supporters of the left wing TD, Seamus Healy, in Tipperary also seem to have joined the attack on O'Reilly.

The *Sunday Tribune* has reported that if O'Reilly is sacked a new left wing union will be set up.

Attract

It claims "it would be run on a co-operative basis to attract members from other unions who are disillusioned with their own leaders".

But the real fight should be conducted in the ATGWU itself.

Instead of walking away from the union there needs to be a fight conducted on a 32 county basis for the membership to take control of their union.

A special union conference should be called to decide the future of the union.

That conference should take on itself the right to establish autonomy from the head office in London that is clearly out of touch.

ICTU

ICTU endorse privatisation schemes

A MONTH after protestors were baton charged outside a global conference on privatisation at the Burlington Hotel, the ICTU has gone and endorsed a framework agreement for introducing public private partnership schemes.

Attended

The protest was attended by delegations of local authority workers, bus workers, Aer Lingus workers and workers from the Ballywaltrim water reservoir.

Yet these are the very groups of workers whose jobs may be affected by public-private partnership schemes.

Last month, Finance Minister Charlie McCreevy announced that 135 contracts are expected to be awarded to private firms for

schools, hospitals, water and waste treatment plants.

But he was also able to point to an agreement with the unions to allow these schemes to go ahead.

Transfer

According to the *Irish Times*, "The trade unions have agreed changes that will mean some state employed staff will transfer to private companies, though their working conditions will be guaranteed."

In Britain, most public sectors unions are moving into outright opposition to the equivalent Private Finance Initiative Schemes.

Typically, private firms sign contracts to maintain hospitals or schools and then employ workers on far worse condition than when in the public sector.

The decision of the ICTU to endorse such schemes in Ireland is a scandal that should be taken up in all union branches.

Socialist Worker

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

70p

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- ★ America's new Vietnam page 3
- ★ WTO meets as bombs drop page 5

Solidarity price £1

The Unions must act to:

STOP THE JOB MASSACRE!

THE CELTIC Tiger has moved into recession. In the first week of November 1,200 workers lost their jobs. They include 700 workers at Tara Mines and 320 workers at AFL in Dundalk.

The shape of things to come can be seen directly in Dundalk. AFL is a US owned company and there were no consultations with the unions about the closure.

The management were told at 1pm the plant was closing and the

staff were informed two hours later.

Shop steward Brian Gallagher said, "It seems as if someone has flown in by plane, landed here and just stolen our jobs from us."

"The man never spoke, the manager herself nearly broke down ... it's just a huge shock".

Closure

The closure of AFL follows the loss of 300 jobs at Xerox and a further 200 at the Guinness-owned Dundalk Packaging.

During the boom years the employers pretended to be "partners" with workers.

This was a device to restrain wages while profits went through the roof.

But as soon as the recession hit, they are determined to make workers pay.

They will not use even a small fraction of their wealth to save jobs.

In many cases the employers are using the excuse of September 11th to radically alter workers' conditions.

In Aer Lingus, the management is deliberately exaggerating the scale of the crisis to get rid of more than 2,000 jobs, to introduce a pay freeze until 2004 and to out-source activities like catering.

Privatisation

Yet everyone knows that the airline business will pick up again in the future

The real aim of the operation is to slim down the company and to open the door to privatisation.

In this way Aer Lingus can eventually be sold off to some of the global multi-nationals that look set to dominate the aviation business.



Workers march on the Dail

WE NEED A POLICY OF RESISTANCE

INSTEAD OF accepting the new round of "down-sizing" the unions should be adopting a policy of resistance.

The bosses have long been able to call on government support when facing difficulties.

The Dail was re-called at one stage to help save the Goodman empire.

AIB also received direct government support in the mid eighties to keep them in business.

So why should workers not

receive government support to save their jobs?

The unions should be telling every worker faced with redundancy to organise resistance.

Machinery should not be allowed to leave the plant. Full-scale occupations should be organised.

And these struggles should be targeted at the government to force them to take over plant or guarantee jobs.

That is the only way to ensure that workers do not pay for this recession

GETTING IT WRONG

EVERY MAJOR stockbroker's economist claimed that the Celtic Tiger would continue to boom until 2015. They argued that the combination of a young population and support for "pro-business policies" would make Ireland a capitalist success story.

They got it wrong. The Celtic Tiger was driven by an influx of US investment and it grew in the slip-stream of the US boom. Today there is seven times more US investment per manufacturing worker in Ireland than the EU

average.

But as the US economy went into recession, the Celtic Tiger was bound to follow.

Capitalism is a system driven by an insane drive for profit while holding down. At some point this leads to "over-production"—not in the sense that people do not need what is produced—but only in terms of what the market will bear.

Today millions across the world are suffering from a recession that could reach the proportions of the 1930s.

It shows that instead of leaving our economy to the anarchy of the market, we need proper planning that is carried out by publicly owned industries.