

Socialist Worker

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STOP BUSH

He is the threat to peace

He has got nuclear weapons

His doctrine is imperialism



US military out of Shannon

Why are the crooked politicians still free?

All corrupt roads lead to Ahern

The Flood Tribunal has described Ray Burke as corrupt, nothing of great surprise, but what is becoming more and more clear is that at the heart of the web of corruption in Fianna Fail sits Bertie Ahern.

● Ahern used to sign blank cheques of taxpayers money to fund Charlie Haughey's fancy lifestyle.

● Ahern appointed Ray Burke to his cabinet, and lied about what he new about Burke's corruption.

● Ahern ignored a report on the passport for sale scam that showed millions of pounds had gone missing.

● Ahern's home, St Lukes in Drumcondra, came from FF councillor and builder Joe Burke and friend and FF fundraiser Des Richardson.

Lobbied

Joe Burke lobbied for the release of drunk-drive killer Phillip Sheedy in the Hugh O'Flaherty affair. Ahern backed his friend Burke.

Property developer Tom Gilmartin who gave FF minister Paudraig Flynn £50,000 says Burke introduced him to Ahern with Flynn about building the



Ahern and Burke: As thick as...

Liffey Valley shopping centre.

Gilmartin says he was asked after the meeting for a bribe which he didn't give—he didn't get to build the shopping centre but another friend of FF, Owen O'Callaghan, did.

● O'Callaghan has already admitted paying off councillors. He hired Former FF PR man Frank Dunlop to bribe Dublin councillors. Dunlop has admitted to bribing more than 40 councillors.

As *Socialist Worker* first exclusively revealed over two years and half years ago, Bertie Ahern signed a

statutory order to give a 50 percent tax break to O'Callaghan in controversial and unexplained circumstances.

Tax breaks

The 1994 Fianna Fail/Labour government

decided not to give huge tax breaks to the controversial £20 million Golden Island shopping centre development in Athlone built by O'Callaghan.

On December 14th, the day before the next government came to power, Ahern signed a statutory instrument which saved Owen

O'Callaghan millions of pounds.

That decision was taken against the advice of Department of Finance officials just hours before.

O'Callaghan gave over £50,000 as a political donation to Fianna Fail after a party fund-raising dinner.

On November 10, 1994 when the Coalition Government was on the brink of collapse Ahern met with Owen O'Callaghan.

Six months before Ahern helped out O'Callaghan, the developer stumped up between £5,000 and £10,000 at a fund-raising dinner in Cork.

Later he made a further donation of more than £50,000.

★ KEN ROHAN is a big donor to Fianna Fail. When he was Minister for Finance Bertie Ahern brought in legislation which was backdated for twelve years to allow property owners with art collections to claim tax breaks. It prevented the Revenue Commissioners from pursuing him for £1.5m in tax through the courts.

Rohan was the only one to benefit.

What Flood forgot

WHILE THE Flood report is fairly damning of Ray Burke a couple of things are missing from the report.

★ Tony O'Reilly, who used the dodgy Ansbacher Bank for some of his deals, had one of his companies bribe Ray Burke and coincidentally another of his companies got most of the licenses for digital television TV masts granted by Burke.

Strangely Independent newspapers haven't felt the need to cover this part of the

Burke scandal. ★ Ray Burke was the Minister who started the sell-off of lucrative off-shore exploration licenses for a pittance.

For instance, the license that effectively handed over control of all of Ireland's south coast was granted to giant American company Marathon Oil for a mere £500.

The fact that Bobby Molloy and Mary O'Rourke continued the policy might explain why there has been no investigation of the oil and gas rip-off.

Friends in low places

AHERN'S close friend FF fundraiser Des Richardson, who Ahern appointed him to the board of Aer Lingus, is under investigation by the Flood Tribunal.

For several years, Richardson was earning €60,000 a year from Fianna Fail, and he was also receiving €1,000 a month from the property developer Ken Rohan. Rohan is the businessman who was the sole beneficiary of tax legislation introduced by Ahern when he was Minister for Finance in 1994.

It can also be revealed that Richardson received five consultancy payments, amounting to €25,000, from disgraced lobbyist Frank Dunlop.

Richardson used a company, Berraway Ltd, to invoice Fianna Fail for fund-raising work done on its behalf. His consultancy payments were also paid into Berraway's bank account. Berraway's registered address was that of Dunlop's public relations firm, Frank Dunlop & Associates.

Berraway passed solely into Richardson's hands in 1996. From 1996 to early 2000, more than €1m went through its bank account.

Unfortunately for Rohan, to get the tax breaks his mansion in Charville, Enniskerry has to be open to the public.

It is open, by appointment only, between 1pm-5pm on a few days in January, May and June.

Socialist Worker recommends that readers go and see what we are paying for. Ring (01) 6624455 to make an appointment.

What cuts!

GOVERNMENT ministers quietly accepted a generous salary increase.

From the beginning of October, Ahern gets an extra €8,000 a year and Mary Harney will receive a further €7,000.

Ahern's pay rose from

€201,812 to €209,885 and Harney will now get €179,901.

Ministers' salaries have risen from €158,567 to €164,910, while Ministers of State will get an increase from €108,113 to €112,438.

Why aren't they in jail?

THE OVERPRICED Tribunals occasionally bring some new information to light, but despite judges declaring a rake of politicians corrupt, not one politician has gone to jail on corruption charges.

But why didn't the leaders of the ICTU act. In Italy, for example, there were huge demonstrations to demand that corrupt politicians be sent to jail. And some were jailed after the big demos. But in Ireland, nothing happened!

The national conferences of SIPTU, IMPACT and ATGWU all passed resolutions for a stoppage but nothing was done. The price of inaction was five wasted years.

If those demonstrations take place, Burke, Lowry, Haughey, Lawlor and the rest could find themselves behind bars where they belong.

Union slams asylum policy

A REPORT just out from the ATGWU says that Britain's asylum policies are "repugnant".

The report is in response to David Blunket's plans to ban the children of asylum seekers from attending mainstream schools.

His detailed plans are to build detention centres on military land in rural areas and educate children inside what have been described by many as "internment camps".

Promising that his union, one of the biggest in Britain, would lead the fight against the plans, Bill Morris said "Segregating children for the purposes of education is morally repugnant."

"We fought against segregated education in South Africa and I'm sure we will oppose it here".

Other unions also voiced their disgust. The teachers union, the NASUWT, said "We strongly object to the provisions of this Bill which we believe is a form of educational apartheid."

"It smacks of ethnic segregation".

Referring to the planned war in Iraq Bill Morris, leader of the ATGWU said "It must be bewildering to observe the government pursue foreign and military objectives in relation to Iraq that, if fulfilled, will create many thousands of displaced people, yet pursue a domestic policy of deterrence and discrimination towards refugees".

Morris predicts that the latest right wing policies on refugees will lead to "Labour's Greenham Common".

Media Circus over Maloney's IRA book

A MEDIA circus is the only way to describe the launch of Ed Maloney's book *A Secret History of the IRA*.

Most major news channels in Ireland, Britain and the US featured Maloney plugging his latest book that claims to expose the secret goings on in the Republican movement during the years of the troubles.

Interviews

However, most media interviewers were less concerned with his history of the

IRA, and more concerned with his "sensational" revelations about the Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams.

One of the claims Maloney makes is that the Sinn Fein president took over the IRA's Belfast brigade in late 1972, a claim that Adams has always denied.

In fact Adams denies ever being in the IRA.

Unionist politicians of course were quick off the mark, using the book as an extra stick to beat Sinn Fein with.

Whatever Adam's history, it looks as if the book is a million miles away from his most recent foray into the media in *VIP* magazine as an aromatherapy loving environmentalist.

FF links to the blood scandal

BLOOD Transfusion Service Board (BTSB) chief technical officer Seán Hanratty shredded hundreds of documents in 1993 which could have helped identify the source of the contamination.

Hanratty, was a prominent member of Fianna Fail and a well known supporter of Charlie Haughey.

Attempt

Yet the Lindsay Tribunal made no attempt whatsoever to unravel his role in the scandal.

Angry victims' rela-

tives said this made a mockery of the inquiry.

Hanratty, who died in 1996, was a director of Accu-Science, a company which imported blood products which were in turn sold to the BTSB, of which he was chief procurement officer.

He was co-founder of Accu-Science in 1982, with Michael O'Donnell.

Accu-Science supplied blood bags and other products to the BTSB.

It is also believed to have had links with prominent pharmaceutical companies which supplied products purchased by the BTSB for use by Irish haemophiliacs.

Hanratty was senior

technical officer with responsibility for the board's processing and procurement budget until October 1996.

A member of the Fianna Fail national executive in the 1970s and 1980s, he supported the nomination of Charlie Haughey as party leader in 1979.

Report

The tribunal report concluded that it was Hanratty and former BTSB national medical director, the late Dr Jack O'Riordan, who decided on which commercial products to use. O'Riordan was linked to pharmaceutical giant Travenol, a supplier to the blood bank.

For a Europe for people not profit...

VOTE NO!

THE GOVERNMENT are scared that the growing hostility to the cut-backs and corruption will lead to a No vote to the Nice Treaty. They are right, we have no reason to trust the government over health or education and every single thing they have argued about Nice is a lie as

well. We have already voted NO to the Nice Treaty. This was despite all the propaganda of the government, big business, church, farm and trade union leaders. Stand up for democracy Vote NO!

What about neutrality?

THE NICE Treaty will give the EU new structures to expand its military-industrial complex.

The treaty calls for:
■ 'The progressive framing of a common defence policy, which might lead to common defence'.

■ 'Co-operation between [EU states] in the field of armaments.' EU firms are already major arms dealers—now they will sell even more weapons which will stoke up wars in less developed countries.

■ A legal basis for European Rapid Reaction Force by establishing a 'Political and Security Committee [which] shall monitor the international situation in areas covered by the common foreign and security policy'.

The new Political and Security Committee will have power to send troops to areas of key strategic importance.

They will use language like 'peace making' to disguise their war aims.

★ The government says that neutrality is protected by a special declaration it is adding to the Treaty. But this declaration is not a legal document and is highly contradictory.

The government promises a referendum if there are further moves to a common defence force—but it promised a referendum on entering the ill-named Partnership for Peace—a NATO front organisation—and then broke its promise.

The declaration is not worth the paper it is written on. The issue is not just Irish neutrality but whether the EU should become military machine. This is why we should Vote No.

The Nice Treaty states that the Political and Security Committee should 'exercise, under the direction of the Council, political control and strategic direction of crisis management operations.'

The new EU defence policy will be closely linked to NATO.

According to the NATO Secretary General, the 'indi-

visibility of the transatlantic [US-European] link.. will be carved in stone.

'By 2005 NATO and the EU will enjoy a close and confident relationship at all levels'.

One of the annexes to the Nice Treaty specifies that the NATO Secretary General should attend EU Ministerial meetings and there should be regular meetings

between EU and NATO military committee and staffs.

The Nice Treaty does not allow the EU parliament to exercise control over military policy.

Instead a small group of top politicians, generals and bureaucrats will have considerable freedom to undertake military action to support the EU's multi-national.

Rapid destruction force goes ahead

IRELAND is spending over €230m on equipment and infrastructure for the defence forces to prepare for participation in the European Rapid Reaction Force.

The External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten has called on the US to help the EU strengthen its defence and security systems so as to "be taken seriously as international actor" and act as "a counterpart—if

not a counterweight—to the US" itself.

He said that Europe needs to be able to make a more credible military contribution. "European governments... have not been willing to devote the budgetary resources to make the European rapid reaction force a really credible ambition."

Military

Irish military equipment being allocated to it and the EU states that the force would be used in war.

Secret Documents from a Capabilities Improvement Conference held in November 2001 showed that Ireland's contribution to the Rapid Reaction Force is 850 soldiers including a light infantry battalion of 750, an Army Ranger Wing platoon of 40, as well as headquarters and other elements.

The paper from Ireland stresses to the EU that Ireland has been continuing the development of the defence

forces to "meet new challenges with particular references to peace-keeping and crisis management".

The Government is spending:

■ Over €13.33m for new tactical VHF radios

■ €50.79m for 40 new armoured personnel carriers with negotiations under way for 25 more

■ €31.74m for light infantry tactical vehicles, anti-armour systems, night vision equipment and a field hospital

■ €8.25m for specialist cargo vehicles and troop carriers

■ €126.97m for the development of buildings at military installations.

★ OVER 500 foreign military jets were allowed to land in past year.

The vast majority of the over-flights and landings are by planes from NATO member states.

Almost 2,000 military aircraft flew in Irish airspace.

Permission was granted to 523 military aircraft from 33 countries including the USA, China, Russia, Britain, France, Germany to land between August 2001 and July 2002.

Permission to over-fly in Irish airspace during this time was granted by the Government to 1,980 planes from 29 countries including Israel, the US, Britain and France.

The government refuses to release a break down of which planes come from which country.

Every US military plane that lands at Shannon means that US war-planes can carry less fuel—which means they can carry more weapons.

Nice will mean more privatisation

THE EU promotes the privatisation of public services. Postal, electricity and water services could be "forcibly" privatised if the Nice Treaty is ratified. Article 133 of the treaty undermined the protection of public services within the EU.

Article 133 will allow the unelected EU Commission to open and conduct negotiations with international organisations like the World Trade Organisation on agreement such as the General Agreement on Trade in Services, or GATS.

The GATS agreement deals with 140 sections in

the area of services. It has direct consequences for essential public sector services, including health, education, and transport.

Article 133 calls for 'the achievement of uniformity in measures of liberalisation'.

Pressure

In simple language this means even more pressure to privatise and break up what remains of a welfare state.

The Nice Treaty also allows the unelected EU Commission to open negotiations with organisations such as the World Trade Organisation.

This organisation is currently pushing through a General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), which aims to further de-regulate all public services.

This is a global set of negotiations to open up virtually all services sectors to competition from multi-nationals.

If it goes through, the postal service, hospitals, education, waste and water supplies will be opened up to multi-national 'service providers'.

The Nice Treaty allows the European Commission to 'fast track' negotiations on GATS. It states quite explicitly that the Commis-

sion can open negotiations 'in the fields of services and commercial aspects of intellectual property rights'.

These negotiations are completely secret and even the EU parliament does not control how they are being conducted. But leaked documents show that the EU is demanding that other countries, including some of the poorest Third World countries open up their water, waste and education services for privatisation.

Voting for the Nice Treaty is a vote for more de-regulation, privatisation and a free hand for the multi-nationals.



Stand up to racism

THERE ARE some who campaign against Nice on a right wing basis. Anti-abortion groups are against a 'godless' Europe. Another anti-Nice campaigner has criticised the Treaty because it will let "too many" migrants in here.

Socialists have no truck with these arguments. It is part of the hypocrisy of the EU elite that they want to use Eastern Europe as a source of cheap labour—while Ministers like Michael McDowell deport 'illegal' migrants who come from these areas.

That hypocrisy should not be repeated on the NO

side. The Irish people emigrated all over the world in search of work and freedom. Other people have exactly the same rights.

Migrants are forced to take low wages by bosses who use the work permit system or the fact that they are illegal to super-exploit them.

Welcome

The answer is not to build a fortress Europe but to welcome these migrants by giving them full rights to work.

Instead of exploiting Eastern Europe and keeping its people out, we need to create militant workers organisations all over Europe to take on the bosses.

European Social Forum

WE NEED a Europe that puts workers' rights first. Instead of being a colonial bully boy, Europe should be a beacon against war.

The European Social Forum (ESF) will be the first Europe-wide gathering of the growing movements against neo-liberalism, racism and war.

Tens of thousands of people will gather to discuss, debate and organise.

There will also be a major united European demonstration against war.

The ESF is for everyone who cares about the future of our planet, everyone who believes a better world is possible and necessary.

Wednesday 6 November

ESF opens with demonstration in support of asylum seekers and immigrants.

Thursday 7 to Saturday 9 November
Debates, forums and seminars. Over 150 different workshops. All translated into English, Italian, French and Spanish—other languages also possible.

Saturday 9 November

Afternoon/evening-major anti-war demonstration.

You must register for the ESF-go to www.fse-esf.org. Once registered accommodation is available in Florence.

★ More info @ www.irish2esf.web-world.org or ring 086-4098186

The huge cost of privatisation

DAVID TRIMBLE recently addressed a group of leading bankers, and once again urged the private sector to "play a key role in Northern Ireland's infrastructure" in a "multi-billion pound programme over the next two decades" through PPPs/PFIs.

Like other European leaders, David Trimble insists that the private financing of public services offers value for money and improved services.

In the North one of the biggest areas affected by the use of PFIs/PPPs is in education. *Socialist Worker* investigated the impact they have had so far.

Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education

One of the most celebrated examples of PFI in the North has started to turn sour within a month of its grand opening.

The Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) handed £20 million over to private sector consortium Northwin to build the new Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education.

The centre was opened last month amid a huge fanfare by the minister in charge, Carmel Hanna (SDLP).

Students report that they have been left stranded without the necessary equipment.

Since it opened there have been no rubbish bins, toilet rolls, paper towels, soap or other essentials provided. Kelly, an art student at the college reports, "The private company who built it is locked in a battle with the college over who should provide the basic necessities and maintenance".

Derry Tech

Two years ago the North West Institute for Further and Higher Education (Derry Tech) entered into a PFI arrangement with Northwin Consortium.

The Tech is now millions of pounds in debt. This means that far from the college being able to "focus on education" the opposite is true. They have been forced to slash courses.

Offered

Although there are dozens of A-level subjects offered normally in such colleges, students report that the tech now offers only five. Any class that has less than sixteen students is forced to fold.

Despite promises at the

time that workers' conditions would remain unchanged, more and more lecturers are being forced into casual contracts so that they only get paid for the hours they are in lectures and can easily be dismissed if their particular course gets pulled.

Lisburn Tech

Lisburn Institute of Further and Higher Education (Lisburn Tech) was the first serious casualty in Northern Ireland of the "cost effective" schemes.

It suffered crippling debts through PFIs/PPPs. The tech recently went bankrupt when they couldn't meet their financial obligations to their new "partners".

St Genevieve's School

St Genevieve's in West Belfast was the first ever maintained school in the UK built wholly under PFI. The consultation period took three years and cost £600,000 in fees alone.

Parents would be right to be concerned for the safety of their children when you consider the way the consortium boasts it caught up on the time lost in consultancy.

Obviously impatient to get their hands on the money, the Managing Director of O'Hare & McGovern, one of the companies involved in the consortium

declared, "The only downside was the three year lead-in but we were able to complete the construction within an 18 month timescale taking a fast track approach on site and incorporated innovative ideas which also saved time".

Opened this year, the school is now mortgaged to the Belfast Educational Consortium (BES) for a further 25 years. For those who think that the name of the consortium suggests a connection with education, the reality is very different.

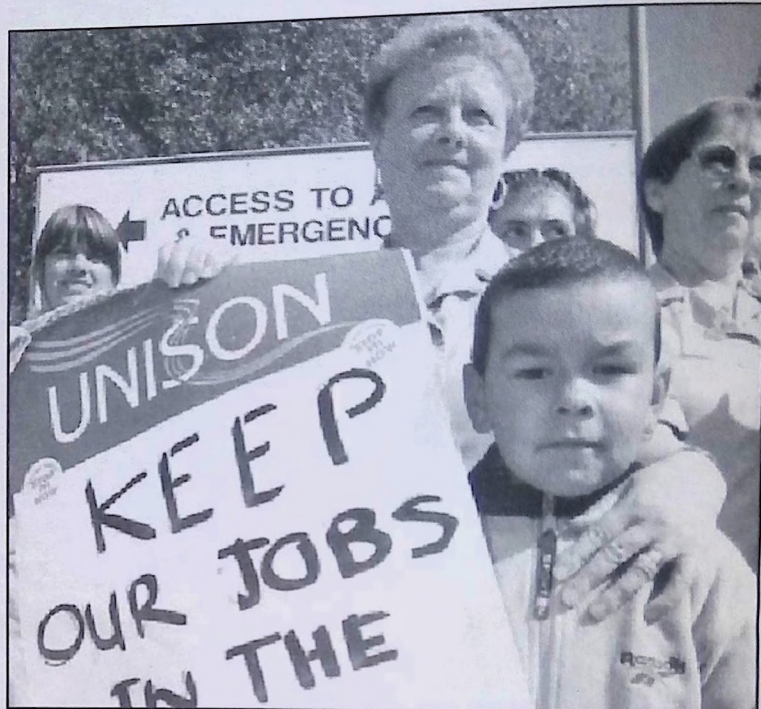
Lucrative

The consortium comprises Interserve FM Ltd, O'Hare & McGovern Ltd and the Bank of Scotland. It is obviously a partnership of convenience, pulled together to take advantage of the now lucrative industry of children's education.

They have currently a contract to provide two new FE colleges, for approximately 6,000 students, in Omagh and Dungannon. Once again the mortgage period for the contract is twenty five years.

Magee University Accommodation

The University has recently erected three new accommodation blocks under PFI. The blocks are used mostly for international students who have little knowledge



of accommodation prices in Derry. They also have a number of units for disabled students who might have difficulty obtaining accessible accommodation elsewhere.

Students report that their rents are £68 per week. Derry residents can't explain the high prices with some saying they are paying less for a mortgage on a three bedroom house in the City.

Building the opposition

ALTHOUGH MILLIONS of pounds have already been handed out to private companies under PPPs/PFIs, compared to Britain the North is still way behind the UK in terms of the amount of contracts that have been handed over.

Because they are essentially in their infancy, opposition has so far been at an ideological level.

People talk about the privatisation agenda to sum up what is rotten about the Assembly and the neo-liberal agenda, yet most people aren't aware the majority of new schools, hospitals and services being proposed are under PFI conditions.

This is set to change with recent announcements that private finance will be used to offset a £6 billion public services budget deficit.

This means that almost everybody in the North will

be affected by the selling off of public services, both as workers and as users.

Only mass pressure from the unions here and in the UK can stop the sell offs.

Unfortunately the Union that has been most vocal against the use of PFIs in the UK has just called off their campaign, to await the result of the Independent Review voted on at the Labour Party Conference.

Defeat

This is a huge mistake. The only other defeat at this level for New Labour came when members voted to restore the link between pensions and earnings. Not only did this not happen but Age Concern say that pensioners are still one of the most impoverished groups in Britain.

Instead of waiting for the auctioning off of our public services to the highest bidders, unions should be acting now, building mass rank and file campaigns to challenge the Assembly and New Labour.

Free the Colombia Three

IF YOU want to look for a perfect frame up, then what is happening to the three Irish men arrested in Colombia should be the blueprint.

From their arrest in 2001 they have been found guilty by nearly every media commentator in the world.

The fact is that there is no evidence at all. All the "key witnesses" have been dropped by the prosecution after they were all discredited.

The men's claims to be studying the peace process is not out of the ordinary considering that they would have been one of many doing the same thing

at the same time. People like Queen Noor of Jordan went to Colombia to do exactly that.

Despite the fact that they are facing horrendous sentences, the "evidence" is pure speculation.

Evidence

In fact if you total up the evidence of international terror it rests on two things: their republicanism, and the fact that despite leadership pressure, grass roots republicans still align themselves with imperialism's most oppressed victims.

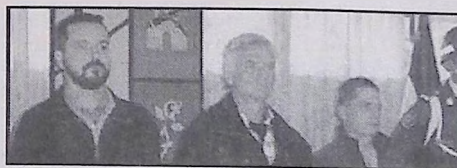
The opening statement on a website about the Colombian trial called "IRA atrocities" claims that "their heinous reputation is linked to the causes

they support, including hunger strikers in Turkey, and the Palestinian terrorists who the Provisional IRA/Sinn Fein train".

Catriona Ruane who is acting as both interpreter and campaigner for the three men says of the men's defence lawyer that "anyone who takes a case like this has an understudy who can take over if the paramilitaries carry out one of their many assassinations".

Both the Fire Brigade Union annual conference and the British TUC conference heard recently from labour activists that Colombia is the most dangerous place in the world for trade unionists.

In the 1990s over 40,000 peasant activists, student leaders, trade unionists and left wingers were slaughtered by the



Colombian state.

None of these things are secret. Human rights organisations the world over say that the state and right wing paramilitary groups are responsible for the vast majority of drug running and terror in Colombia.

None of this seems to fall into the American definition of terror, not to mention truth, however.

The US has handed the Colombian state hundreds of millions of pounds to fight their phoney "war on narcotics".

Accordingly to socialist campaigners "Washington's counter-insurgency strategy in Colombia operated under cover of an anti-narcotics campaign, to justify the accelerated military build-up."

"As always in Latin and Central America the US is directed toward propping up decaying clients, destabilising independent regimes, and most importantly ensuring the destruction or isolation of mass movements challenging the U.S. empire and its client regimes".

Make Ahern's nightmare come true

THE GOVERNMENT spends its time lying its way from crisis to crisis. Over cuts, the economy, the Nice treaty, and the corruption scandals nothing but lies comes from this government.

At the same time the media put up various experts to tell us to vote for Nice and that we can't have pay rises.

For instance IBEC can spend €500,000 presents us with a picture of children and claims that a No vote will deprive them of jobs. Not only is it dishonest it is a bit rich when the same organisation claims its members can't afford to pay redundancy payments.

The government and the bosses are lying because they are scared. They keep repeating that people shouldn't vote against the Nice Treaty because they dislike the government. But that is exactly why we should vote no again.

Admit

According to the OECD, Ireland is the fifth richest country in the world. Yet even the government figures admit the gap between rich and poor is growing.

Some 800,000 people now officially live below the poverty line.

The government has pushed through vicious cuts in every area.

FF claim they have to reintroduce student fees, slash health and education because of a budget deficit.

This is nonsense. Ireland's deficit is

Build the anti war movement

ACROSS THE world there have been massive demonstrations against the prospect of war in Iraq. Opinion polls in every country in Europe people are opposed to the war.

The scale of opposition to the war can be a launch-pad for an even bigger and bolder anti-war movement.

proportionally less than half that of other European countries. Though the inflation rate is double the European average.

Even if the deficit needed to be cleared, just to keep in with the ideology of neo-liberalism, it would be simple. The deficit is €750 million. There was over €400 million in the Ansbacher accounts, and that doesn't count the fines owed for the scam. And not cutting tax on profits to 12.5 percent would wipe the deficit over night.

Slashing

FF are tied to the madness of neo-liberalism. That's why they support Nice, it's why they are slashing services, it's why they will support Bush's war.

There is a boiling anger growing throughout Ireland, over the contempt the rich show for the rest of us, over corruption cuts, inequality and war.

Thousands of people are making the connections between these different issues.

It is that which terrifies our rulers and that is why they seem more and more desperate.

It's time to make Ahern's nightmares come true.

The first step is to vote a resounding no to the Nice treaty.

We also need to build a network of activists that can build militant protests against the government, and can also deliver solidarity with all the groups of workers fighting back.

Socialist Worker urges all its supporters to link the anger and the movements together and help to bring about a regime change in this country.

We have to throw our energies into opposing the war, whether or not the US manages to bribe and bully the UN Security Council into backing it. We also have to be confident to take on the propaganda lies that will be thrown at us as war looms closer.

The protest at Shannon on October 12th is one step. We need to build local anti-war groups in every community and work-place across the country.



TWO protests earlier this month: 6,000 marched for better redundancy deals and 3,000 marched against war on Iraq. Turn to page 11 for industrial coverage, pages 6 and 7 for anti war news.

Unionism threatens Belfast Agreement

THE BLAME for the latest crisis and possible suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly lies squarely with David Trimble.

He has exploited every opportunity to appease the hard right-wingers in his party in a cynical manoeuvre to shore up his support in the next election, due before May next year.

Trimble says that the key issue is whether the IRA have given up violence for good.

This is at a time when Trimble is backing Tony Blair's plans to unleash

massive violence and the killing of innocent civilians for political ends in Iraq.

The hard-right of Unionism, in both the Ulster Unionist Party and Paisley's DUP can't stomach the idea of Catholics and especially 'rebels' like the Provisionals, being treated as equals.

They are out to humiliate Sinn Fein and don't mind if they wreck the peace in the process.

Raid

The massive police raid at Sinn Fein's Stormont offices, involving 200 officers, stands in stark contrast to the lack of action against loyalist paramilitaries during their terror campaign of the last two years.

Senior advisors to Trimble sat with Johnny Adair and

John White on the 'Loyalist Commission', even while they were organising the UDA's campaign of pipe-bombs and attacks on Catholic homes.

John Reid, the Secretary of State, met Adair and other UDA commanders in July. Trimble and Donaldson's antics in the Assembly have only given the veneer of respectability to Adair's sectarian thuggery.

The irony is that, before the massive police raid on Stormont, Sinn Fein were looking very likely to finally accept the 'new' police force.

Adams and McGuinness have bought into the Agreement, and are under pressure from the US Administration to make the final step of joining the police boards.

From calling for the RUC to be disbanded a few years ago, Sinn Fein were at the

point of waiting for some extra legislation to bring the police into line with the Patten proposals.

The fact that Donaldson and Trimble have to seize on every bit of speculation and allegations about the Provisionals—over the Castle-reagh break-in, Colombia and now the alleged photocopying of files in John Reid's office—to find 'evidence' that the IRA is still active, shows how weak their case is.

But the history of Ulster Unionist politics is that they will seize on anything they can to redraw the sectarian divide at every election.

The fundamental rotteness at the heart of the Agreement is that it locks in this sectarian division, and hands the hard-right the ammunition to play games with peace.

MARXISM 2002

22 -24 November, central Dublin

Building Resistance

to Capital and War

Tickets €20 waged €10 unwaged (€25 waged, €15 unwaged on the door)

Ticket Hotline 087 683 8746 or 07901-916156

or write to: Marxism 2002, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8. Web: www.swp.ie

Speakers include:

- Mike Davis (author of *City of Quartz, The Ecology of fear*),
- Eamonn McCann (author, journalist & leader of Irish civil rights movement),
- Francois Duval (Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire, France), speaker from *Refundazione Comunista*, Italy,
- Chris Bamberg (SWP Britain),
- Prof Terry Eagleton,
- Dr Juliet Bressan (Doctors for Choice),
- Kieran Allen (author of *The Celtic Tiger and the myth of social partnership*)
- Luke Choto (socialist from Zimbabwe)
- Richard Boyd Barrett (chair of the *Irish Anti War Movement*)

Anti Capitalism

McCreedy and the WTO

The Minister for Finance, Charlie McCreedy probably welcomed running the gauntlet of tens of thousands of Anti-Capitalist protesters in Washington DC last month. He wasn't asked too many awkward questions about his lies to the electorate and general mismanagement of the public finances.

He did however come out with a few bizarre statements while addressing the WTO/IMF meeting. He had a go at the protesters outside, who at the time were getting rounded up and battered by riot police. He had the nerve to call them undemocratic and unrepresentative. He claims the WTO and IMF are 'successful', which says a lot about his compass for success and failure!

Reorder

The IMF, World Bank and WTO (formerly GATT) were established at the Bretton Woods conference in 1944, to reorder the global economy after World War II. They very quickly became symbols of the economic status quo, as large Western powers, and later multinationals, pulled the strings to ensure that the trio were essentially the economic arm of Western Imperialism. Developing countries pay in all the money, the West dictates all the rules.

The IMF's goal is to provide economic stability and according to McCreedy to, 'facilitate the expansion and balanced growth of international trade'.

Ripped-off

Even most right wing economists admit that Third World countries are having their natural resources ripped off. Things are getting worse as developing countries that are barely able to feed themselves are being forced to hand over public services to multinationals, and pay the inflated charges.

We pay increasing prices in the West for imported goods such as coffee and tea, while prices to growers and producers in the developing world fall. The same

goes for manufactured good like cars. The prices paid by multinationals to miners of metals and ores and rubber farmers in the developing world fall.

The IMF 'weighs' countries in terms of economic power, and voting rights are distributed accordingly. Therefore even if the entire developing and former Socialist world voted together, they could never come close to overturning the will of the US and even one or two allies.

Decimated

The IMF is responsible for the horrendous 'Structural Adjustment Programmes' which have so decimated regional economies, such as South East Asia a few years ago, and Brazil and Argentina this year. These programmes work on the assumption that developing countries should model their economies directly on that of the US.

The goal of the WTO is to govern world trade, 'liberalising' markets and allowing for increased foreign trade, whether the other country wants it or not. Its General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) potentially liberalises 160 areas for privatisation and further competition. These include health, education and transport. When fully passed, it will become illegal for any government to hold a monopoly on, say, education. If multinationals are not allowed in to run schools the company can bring the country in question to a 'dispute settlement panel' of so-called experts.

Unelected

The Nice Treaty will hand of the negotiations of GATS to unelected commissioners.

Human rights laws, public health legislation, food safety laws, self reliance policies, environmental protection and labour laws can be overturned as 'impediments to free trade'. In secret of course. The Canadians, the worlds largest producer of asbestos have petitioned this body because the European Union refuse to allow imports. Even though it is a carcinogenic!

The WTO and IMF are pillars of the neo-liberal market oriented school of economics that are destroying our planet. They cannot by definition be reformed into a more friendly capitalistic force. They are integral in maintaining Western imperialist grip on the developing world. Maybe that's why McCreedy considers them a success?

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Our dossier on the world

Stop Bush

Bush's "rogue state" is threatening the world. It possesses weapons of mass destruction, and has used them. It has attacked, bombed and invaded more countries than any other state. The regime is run by a gang of ruthless killers. They are bent on world domination, and prepared to commit mass murder to achieve it. The state is the US. Its leader is George W Bush.

The Bush gang

DICK CHENEY, vice-president, was George Bush Sr's defence secretary and pushed for the Gulf War in 1991. He boasted about the gruesome killing of Iraqis in briefings to the US Congress. He is a former member of the board of arms giant TRW. His wife was until recently on the board of arms manufacturer Lockheed Martin.

In the build-up to the 1990 Gulf War Cheney asked Colin Powell to examine the use of nuclear weapons against Iraqi troops. Now he says, "There are 40 or 50 countries which could be targeted for diplomatic, financial or military action."

COLIN POWELL, secretary of state, is sometimes labelled a "dove" compared with the rest of the gang.

He is in fact a war criminal. Powell helped organise the cover-up of the notorious 1969 My Lai massacre, when US troops murdered 400 Vietnamese villagers. In 1989 Powell helped lead the US invasion of Panama.

JOHN NEGROPONTE, US ambassador to the United Nations, was ambassador to Honduras in the 1980s, and a central organiser of the state death squads unleashed against trade unionists and the democratic opposition.

The US paper the *Baltimore Sun* uncovered evidence that during his time in Honduras opponents of the regime "were kidnapped, tortured and killed by a secret army unit trained and supported by the US Central Intelligence Agency". The US also coordinated death squads in Nicaragua and El Salvador from bases in Honduras.

RICHARD ARMITAGE, deputy secretary of state, aided the extreme right wing Contra terrorists in Nicaragua in the 1980s.

PAUL WOLFOWITZ, deputy defence secretary, has summed up his philosophy: "We must destroy states."

RICHARD PERLE, chair of the US Defence Policy Board, is long-standing Cold War warrior who was former US president Ronald Reagan's assistant secretary of defence. Even his supporters call him the "Prince of Darkness".

He wants war without end. "We will deal with other states," he says. Perle is also a fanatical supporter of the most right wing forces in Israel, including current prime minister Ariel Sharon. Perle is a director of the Israeli paper the *Jerusalem Post*, and has advocated ending any peace talks with Palestinians.

CONDOLEEZZA RICE, national security adviser, is a former director of the oil multinational Chevron. She served the oil industry so well the company named a tanker after her.

During her years at Chevron it was heavily involved in Nigeria and accused of working with the then Nigerian dictatorship's Mobile Police—a force so brutal its nickname locally was the "kill 'n' go".

In their words

"THIS IS a period of enormous opportunity, a period akin to 1945-7, to create a new balance of power."

* CONDOLEEZZA RICE, Bush's National Security Adviser

"THE US must maintain the mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role."

* PAUL WOLFOWITZ, US Deputy Defence Secretary

"WHEN I was coming up we knew exactly who the 'they' were. It was us versus them, and it was clear who the they were. Today we are not so sure who the they are, but we know they're there."

* GEORGE W BUSH

Facts that damn their system

- * World military spending last year: \$839 billion.
- * US military research budget: \$75 billion.
- * Stealth bomber project: \$48 billion. Cost per bomber: \$2.2 billion.
- * To prevent 500,000 malaria deaths a year: \$1 billion.
- * Annual cost of universal provision of basic services in developing countries: \$80 billion.
- * Annual cost of providing healthcare and nutrition to everyone in the world: \$15 billion.

When FF backed Saddam

AT THE end of the 1980s Fianna Fail were telling everyone to lighten their belts (for a change) but they were building up Larry Goodman's beef empire.

They gave export credit insurance to Goodman to sell beef to Iraq worth hundreds of millions of pounds. The beef was supposed to be from Ireland, and of a high halal quality. In fact it was frequently rotten and came from the EU beef mountain.

Goodman's companies defrauded the Irish taxpayers of millions.

Liam Lawlor was the board of Larry Goodman's meat company. Albert Reynolds and Haughey backed Goodman using all their influence to make sure the scams would keep exports to Iraq.

The complex export credit insurance scam meant Iraq could get loans to buy weapons on the international market. Goodman was guaranteed to get paid whatever happened.

This was at a time when Saddam Hussein was using gas against the Kurds.

The Beef Tribunal showed that Larry Goodman's company were involved in fraud but no charges were being placed against him.

Instead, Goodman was given £6.44 million of taxpayers' money to cover his legal costs.

And we footed the £70 million EU fine for irregularities in the beef industry.

At the time America backed Iraq, so did Ireland's fat cats. One thing hasn't changed though: Larry Goodman still donating to Fianna Fail.

Death machine

THE US has the biggest military force world has ever seen. George Bush's regime will next year spend \$36 billion on a machine whose purpose is to kill and devastate anywhere and anyone who challenge its interests.

Next year's military budget is a \$48 billion jump on what the US already spends on it. It is more than six times the military budget of Russia, the world's second biggest spender. It is more than four times what European Union countries together spend on arms.

And it is more than 20 times the cost of military spending of seven of the countries the US regime is targeting—Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Syria and Cuba.

It is 293 times that of Iraq, the one Bush claims is a threat. Bush now expands his death force even further, with a hit an annual £451 billion in military spending by 2007.



NO BLOOD FOR OIL

Ireland's role

WASHINGTON HAS used UN weapons inspectors towards a military operation in Iraq, scaling back and creating secure country. The Bush administration means to transform the inspection operation. The full-scale invasion authorising UN security means that the UN's mission in Iraq is to be a permanent presence in the country. Ireland has a military and which will

World's #1 rogue state

Bush's War

Machine

Bush's regime depends on a war machine and devastate challenges US

is a \$48 billion depends on arms. military budget of biggest arms times what all the together spend on

the combined of the countries the Iraq, Iran, Libya, Syria and Cuba.

of Iraq, the country Bush now plans to further, with a plan in military spend.

Weapons threat

THE US has more weapons of mass destruction than anywhere else in the world, and has used them more often. It has over 10,000 nuclear warheads in its arsenal.

Any one of these could destroy a city-annihilating hundreds of thousands of people in the process. The US remains the only regime to have used these terrible weapons in war, dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, killing a quarter of a million people.

US defence policy now authorises the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states. The US has built and tested anthrax bombs. And it has built facilities in Nevada that could produce biological weapons.

The US used chemical weapons, Agents Orange, Blue and White, during the Vietnam War. Children in Vietnam are still born with birth defects from their effects.

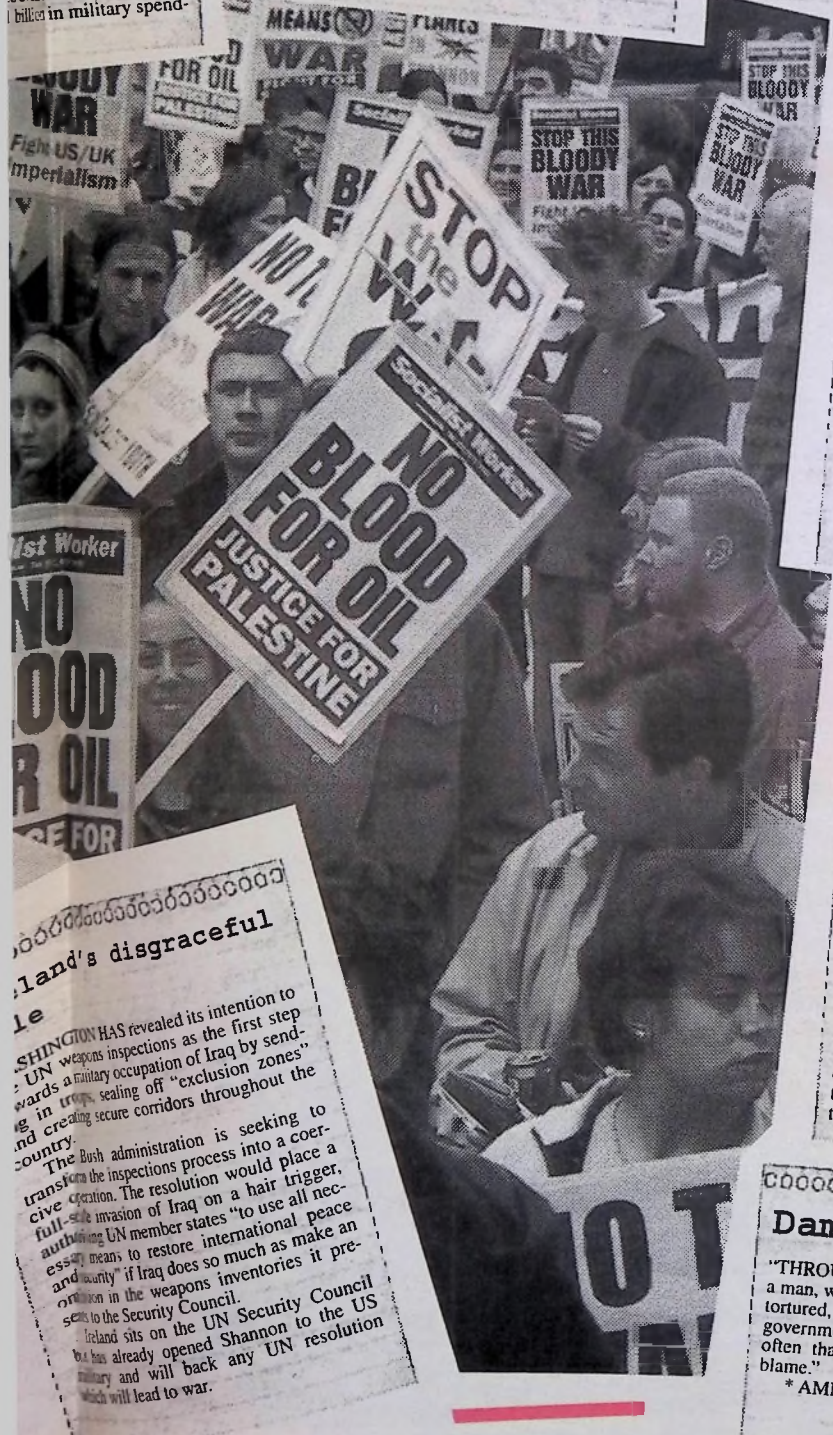
Terrorist haven

THE US is the world's biggest haven for war criminals, and harbours terrorists. They include: HECTOR GRAMAJO MORALES, a former defence minister in Guatemala, was allowed to live for years in the US in the 1990s. He got a study scholarship from the US government. A US court had ruled, "The evidence suggests that Gramajo devised and directed the implementation of an indiscriminate campaign of terror against civilians."

JOSE GUILLERMO GARCIA has lived in Florida since the early 1990s. He headed El Salvador's military when its death squads killed thousands of civilians 20 years ago.

EMMANUEL CONSTANT was head of the infamous FRAPH death squads, which launched a wave of terror in Haiti in the early 1990s. He was on the CIA payroll.

SINTANG PANJAITAN was an Indonesian general who was responsible for a massacre at Santa Cruz in Indonesian-occupied East Timor which killed hundreds of people.



Long range plan

GEORGE BUSH says the US is waging war against "terrorism", and for "democracy". Its real aims are global military and economic dominance. In 1998 a US government report, The Long Range Plan, argued: "The United States will remain a global power and exert global leadership."

"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." It called for the US to build up "war fighting capabilities across the full spectrum of conflict" to "protect US interests and investment".

Another report in September 2000, Strategies, Forces and Resources for a New Century, was written by key members of Bush's gang. It talks of a "blueprint for maintaining global US pre-eminence". It calls for the US to "fight and decisively win multiple, simultaneous major theatre wars".

A pariah state

THE US has refused to accept or has torn up international agreements which most of the world backs.

- * George Bush refused to accept the Kyoto agreement to limit greenhouse gas emissions, which threaten environmental disaster.
- * He has torn up the Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty—a move that threatens a new arms race with the US "Star Wars" or National Missile Defence system.
- * The US has "unsigned" the treaty setting up an International Criminal Court. It insists that its politicians and troops should never be held to account for crimes they commit.
- * It has blocked a treaty to ban biological weapons. The FBI admits weapons grade anthrax sent through the post last year came from a US military lab.
- * It unilaterally amended an agreement over getting rid of chemical weapons to give the US president a veto over where international inspectors could go.

Damning verdict

"THROUGHOUT the world, on any given day, a man, woman or child is likely to be displaced, tortured, killed or 'disappeared' at the hands of governments or armed political groups. More often than not, the United States shares the blame."

* AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

WHAT SOCIALISTS SAY

Direct Action and Revolution

THE DEMONSTRATIONS at the end of September showed the anti-war movement speaks for thousands of people.

In Dublin over three thousand marched against the war. In London, a staggering 400,000 took part in what was the biggest protest since the second world war.

actions are organised where workers are strongest—in the workplace. Mass political strikes are a demonstration of the potential power of the working class to change things. And occupations of workplaces really begin to challenge to right of the capitalists to control the economy.

Some in the movement have counter-posed direct action tactics to marches and demonstrations.

This is a false opposition.

In addition there were further protests in Washington DC and San Francisco in the United States as well as Rome, Spain, Egypt, New Zealand on the same day.

The importance of protest marches like this is three-fold.

It is a public expression of opposition to the war. The mobilisation of large numbers of citizens on the streets contradicts the conventional view that politics is for specialists—an activity which takes place over the heads of ordinary people.

Counter-posed

The key issue though is mass participation. In the anti-capitalist demonstrations across Europe and elsewhere in the last couple of years, groups who regard themselves as the experts in direct action tactics had a vogue.

They quickly ran up against a major problem: Tactics which are the preserve of a minority exclude the participation of masses of people. And small groups are relatively easy for the police to contain or defeat.

Expression

When numbers of people take to the streets to protest they are in effect saying that they are not going to leave it to this or that politician but are prepared to take things into their own hands.

No serious change in society is possible unless thousands of people adopt this attitude, whether over the war; job losses and redundancy payments or any other issue.

Secondly, the experience of taking part in a protest march with thousands of other gives confidence to people. It proves we are not on our own. And it helps to arm people with arguments to take back to their workplaces, colleges or communities to build the mass movement.

What we need is large-scale direct action conducted by large numbers of people.

The courageous daubing of US fighter aircraft by anti war activists in Shannon a few weeks ago caught the imagination of people.

What we need to do now is to link this flair to a movement of thousands of people. We need to build a mass movement of opposition to the war that can bring hundreds and thousands of people to confront the US machine whether at through protests at Shannon Airport, the US Embassy or in work stoppages..

Militant

Just as active protest is stronger than passively sitting at home, so militant tactics of protest are more effective.

Large-scale direct action and civil disobedience really begins to challenge the prerogatives of our rulers.

For example the campaigns of mass non-payment against service charges have been effective in forcing local councils to end water charges and are presenting a real challenge to their imposition of bin charges.

The most effective

Participation

Therefore mass rallies and marches will continue to have a crucial role in building the resistance to Bush's War without End and encourage the participation of large numbers of people in the movement.

We in the Socialist Workers Party look forward to the time when masses of workers take over their industries, factories and workplaces through democratically elected workers' councils.

These would democratically plan and re-organise the economy to ensure production for human need and not for profit. This would be the revolutionary mass direct action that could truly change the world.

Every protest, demonstration and strike where ordinary people take action on their own behalf contains a foretaste of this.

In the 1960s and 1970s the US waged—and lost—a major war in Vietnam

Vietnam: When the US was humiliated

THE VIETNAM War was no battle of equals. The US dropped more bombs on Vietnam and neighbouring countries than all sides taken together during the Second World War.

Two million Vietnamese people lost their lives. The US military drenched Vietnam with chemical weapons such as Agent Orange. Children are still born today with deformities caused by those weapons.

Land mines and cluster bombs dropped during the war continue to kill thousands of Vietnamese people every year.

But this was a war the US lost, despite its overwhelming military superiority. The Vietnamese fought for national liberation. They were fuelled by the desire for redistribution of the land to give poor peasants a chance of making a living.

Driving

The Vietnamese first fought France, its colonial master, and succeeded in driving it out. Then the US stepped in. It feared that Vietnam would join the Russian bloc during the Cold War, or the ranks of "non-aligned" Third World countries that tried to remain

independent from Washington and Moscow.

The number of US troops in Vietnam soared to half a million by the end of the 1960s as it moved from helping to organise a pro-US Vietnamese army to taking on the liberation movement directly.

Behind the US rulers' anti-Communist rhetoric lay a calculated move to gain dominance over large areas of the world.

Linked

The heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people became linked with a mass anti-war movement in the US itself, which even penetrated the army.

Together they made the war unwinnable. The anti-war movement in the US started before the Marines landed in Vietnam. Over 3,000 attended the first anti-war teach-in, held at the University of Michigan in March 1965.

Over 100 universities held teach-ins that spring. The teach-in at the University of California in Berkeley lasted 36 hours, involving over 30,000.

Students for a Democratic Society, a radical campus group, called a national demonstration in Washington against the war on 17 April 1965. Over 25,000 people marched.

By 1967 over 300,000 people had taken to the streets in opposition to the war in Vietnam. The US rul-



A VICTIM of the US war on Vietnam

ing class was becoming scared.

The US President's wife, Bird Johnson, wrote in her diary: "There is a ripple of grim excitement in the air, almost a feeling of being under siege."

The students were the backbone of the anti-war movement, but there was

also support from some workers. They were a minority, but they grew in number during the late 1960s.

The historian Marilyn Young writes: "From the start, opposition to the war was strongest among poorer and less educated Americans, those who would have

to fight and die.

"In 1966, according to a survey conducted by the University of Michigan, only 27 percent of those with a college education favoured withdrawal from Vietnam, as opposed to 41 percent of those with an eighth grade education [the minimum of schooling]."

The turning point

LONG BEFORE the television began showing how the Vietnam War was being waged, conscripts returned from Vietnam to their working class friends and relatives saying, "The only people worth respecting there were the enemy".

As a result, opposition to the war was strongest amongst those who knew someone who had fought in Vietnam. Growing demonstrations gave confidence to everyone to voice their dissent against the war.

Military personnel rebelled. Soldiers in Vietnam began to "frag" their officers. This meant throwing a fragmentation bomb into the tent of gung-ho officers. Anti-war papers sprung up everywhere with-

in the services. These defiant publications were called things like FTA (Fuck the Army) at Fort Knox, Fragg-ing Action at Fort Dix, and All Hands Abandon Ship in Newport.

More and more people refused to be conscripted. During the war 206,000 people refused the draft and were reported to the Federal Justice Department. Over 93,000 people deserted from the US army after 1968. Mass mutiny in the ranks began. Officers could no longer issue orders to soldiers but became compelled to negotiate.

Launched

A memo sent by an aide to President Lyndon Johnson in late 1967 admitted: "Public discontent with the war is now wide and deep." It was then that the Vietnamese launched the Tet Offensive.

ON 31 January 1968 in the Tet Offensive, Viet-

namese fighters made a daring, big push into the cities of the south.

A National Liberation Front commando unit destroyed part of the U.S. embassy in the centre of Saigon, the capital city of the regime in the south, and liberation forces controlled several major cities for weeks.

Although eventually driven back militarily, the Tet Offensive was a resounding political success, exposing the myth of US invincibility.

Tet marked the beginning of the end of the US military intervention. It exposed the lies of the US ruling class, which claimed there was "light at the end of the tunnel".

Tet proved that the world's mightiest army could be beaten—by a poorly supplied army of Vietnamese peasants whose political commitment to fighting for liberation made up for the massive gap in resources.

In the U.S. and around

the world, the Tet Offensive exploded the myth that the U.S. was winning the war.

This gave renewed confidence to activists fighting the U.S. war effort.

As 1968 continued, more and more people began to reject the lies of the Pentagon and instead identify with the courageous struggle for liberation in Vietnam.

Uprising

At an early February press conference, President Lyndon Johnson helped bring home to civil rights and Black Power activists the connections between Vietnam and the struggle at home when he dismissed the Tet Offensive as the work of "a few bandits" and compared it to the urban uprisings that had taken place the year before in Detroit and other cities.

Tet ruined Johnson's hopes for re-election and thrust anti-war candidates

into the running for the 1968 Democratic Party presidential nomination.

The US military's response to Tet was to level the city of Ben Tre in the Mekong Delta.

The officer in charge told reporters, "It was necessary to destroy the city in order to save it."

The events surrounding the Vietnam war have huge relevance for the anti war movement today. The US was forced to withdraw its last troops from Vietnam in 1973. The US ruling class was terribly weakened by its defeat at the hands of the Vietnamese and the anti-war movement at home.

No US ruler has since been able to use ground troops on a large scale to wage war anywhere in the world. Ronald Reagan, George Bush and Bill Clinton have, however, intervened in a series of countries from Central America to the Middle East and the Balkans to try to overcome the "Vietnam Syndrome".

Lessons for today



THE WORLD'S number one military power was forced out of Vietnam for three reasons: First the Vietnamese fought courageously as Tet showed.

Second a massive anti war movement was built in the US and elsewhere, linking up with a growing movement of fightback by the oppressed in the US—those left out of the American Dream—especially the black liberation movement.

Thirdly, these developments infected the US army of working class conscripts, making it more and more "unreliable".

Key sections of the US ruling class began to realise that the political costs of keeping the war

going were becoming unsustainable.

Masses of people were questioning the basis of US capitalist imperialism.

If the war was not liquidated the question of "regime change" in US itself might begin to be posed in all its starkness.

The threatened war in Iraq and beyond will require large numbers of ground troops.

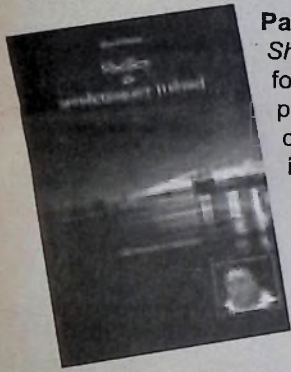
At the same time millions of working class Americans are without any medical cover, working in two or three jobs just to keep a roof over their heads and food on the table.

The creation of a mass anti war movement today can stop Bush's "War without End" and defeat US imperialism once again.

This time it can also be the trigger for massive social upheaval where the gangsters of capitalism and imperialism are brought to account.

Shelley

A short and happy dream



Paul O'Brien, author of the new book *Shelley and Revolutionary Ireland* writes for *Socialist Worker* about the life and politics of Percy Bysshe Shelley and his connection to revolutionary movements in Ireland.

● *Shelley and Revolutionary Ireland* by Paul O'Brien: €16.50 (p/back), €30.00 (h/back). (Redwords, Dublin & London, 2002)

THE LIFE and times of the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley has been raked over and analysed a thousand times. But, the story of his interest and intervention in Irish politics has been either ignored or down-played by his countless biographers.

Generations of Shelley lovers were brought up without any knowledge that Shelley's radical opposition to tyranny and oppression was central to his life and work.

It took me years to discover the revolutionary Shelley and what a great story it turned out to be. Shelley, with his wife Harriet, came to Ireland in 1812 when he was nineteen and threw himself whole-heartedly into the struggle for Irish freedom and justice.

He had put together a collection of poems to celebrate the cause of liberty and Dublin seemed the obvious place to have them published.

In the first weeks after his arrival Shelley produced

a pamphlet, *An Address to the Irish People*, which he distributed around the pubs and coffee houses in Dublin.

The Address was aimed at the masses, with the intention of stirring them up to take action on their own behalf. Shelley wrote it in a style that he believed was assessable to the lowest comprehension that could read. In reality, the style is very artificial, and at times patronises the very audience he was trying to reach.

The failure of the revolution in 1798 and Emmet's revolt in 1803 meant that the Dublin masses were in no mood for instant solutions.

To his credit, Shelley quickly realised the political mistakes of the Address and set about a new pamphlet, *Proposals for an Association*, which was a direct attempt to influence the campaign for Catholic Emancipation and Repeal of the Union in a more radical direction.

His aim now was to build a political party based around those elements of the old United Irishmen who were still active. He met with little response.

He called on John

Philpot Curran and Hamilton Rowan, but they had long traded in their green coats and made their peace with the English establishment. Others, such as Roger O'Connor, who were still politically involved, did not reply—their caution fuelled by fear of government spies.

Invited

He had one success; he was invited to speak at a meeting of the Catholic Association and shared a platform with Daniel O'Connell in the historic Fishamble Street Theatre.

The conditions existed, given time and patience to build the sort of association that Shelley envisaged. But the enthusiasm of youth is seldom tempered with patience, and this ultimately led to the failure of his mission.

But it was not all failure, shortly after his arrival in Dublin he made the acquaintance of Catherine Nugent, and this relationship was a turning point in Shelley's early life.

Catherine was born in 1771. She was an active and valued member of the United Irishmen; her involve-

ment in the rebellion of 1798 was such that if she had been a man she certainly would have been executed.

Their friendship was based on mutual respect and admiration and it was on her account that the Shelley's moved to rooms at 17 Grafton Street, opposite the house where she lived.

Unlike any of Shelley's other acquaintances she was working class, she sewed furs for the rich in the shop of John Newman in Grafton Street.

In Catherine Nugent he encountered for the first time a working class woman not as a victim of society, but as an individual who was fighting for what she believed to be her right. She met Shelley as an equal, as he acknowledged in a letter to her that May.

From her Shelley derived a more detailed understanding of the situation in Ireland and also, I suspect, of the reality of working class life. He learnt more in those short few months than many do in a lifetime.

Shelley always had compassion for the poor and the sick, but in Ireland he encountered for the first time the reality of poverty and this changed his compassion into the anger and commitment that is so evident in his later work.

Adopted

Shelley adopted many styles of writing during his life and some are complex, but there is one

that runs consistently throughout most of his work and can be traced back to those early days in Ireland. A style that is natural, accessible, with a simple imaginative process—where the language of the people is raised to a higher power, with the colouring of poetry thrown over it.

Admirer

Shelley was a great admirer of Robert Emmet. Many of the Romantic poets were drawn in guilty fascination to Emmet's tragic life. Coleridge described him as "A mad Raphael, painting ideals of beauty on the walls of a cell".

Robert Southey was inspired by Emmet's speech from the dock to write a poetic memorial. While in Dublin Shelley made a political pilgrimage to St. Michan's Church, where tradition has it that Emmet was buried in an unmarked grave.

Shelley, no less than Southey and Coleridge, was inspired by Emmet's sacrifice and his admiration shines through in his poem, *On Robert Emmet's Tomb*:

*May the tempests
of Winter that
sweep o'er thy
tomb
Disturb not a
slumber so sacred
as thine;
May the breezes of
summer that
breathe of perfume
Waft their balmi-
est dews to so hal-
lowed a shrine.*

Blazed

Shelley made no attempt to hide the fact that he wrote for a purpose, he never for a moment hid his politics and he battled against the world with what he did best—write-

ing poetry that blazed with anger at injustice and intolerance.

His poetry is "the trumpet of a prophecy" that rings down the ages to give utterance to the inhumanity we see all around us and the need for change.

In 1812 in Dublin the young 19-year-old Shelley sat down to write his poem *To Liberty*:

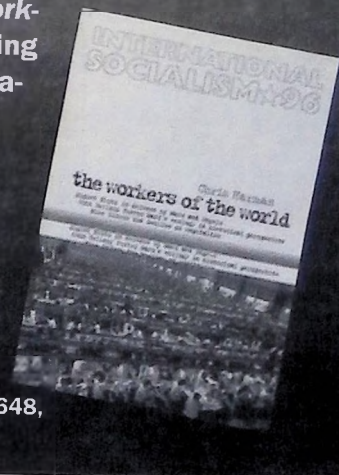
*And a paradise on earth
From your fall
shall date its birth,
And human life
shall seem
Like a short and
happy dream
Ere we wake in the
daybeam of the
skies.*

Almost 200 years later Shelley's "paradise on earth" has not yet come about, but he did well to dream it.

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**where
we
stand**

The present system has led to huge inequalities of wealth. The greed for profit is wrecking the lives of millions and endangering the planet. A new society can only be constructed when the workers take control of the wealth and plan its production and distribution for human need and not profit.

REVOLUTION

That cannot be done on a gradual piecemeal basis. Socialists can use parliament to expose this system but fundamental social change will not come through parliament.

The courts, the army and police exist to defend the interests of the wealthy. They all ensure there is one law for the rich and another for the rest.

To destroy capitalism, we need to remove the present state structures and create a workers' state based much greater political and economic democracy.

AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND WAR

War is a constant feature of capitalism today as the imperialist powers try to dominate the earth. Bush's "War on Terrorism" is a crude device to attack any country which threatens US military, strategic or economic dominance. We oppose this war and see imperialism as the greatest enemy of peace.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression. This divides and weakens 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.

FOR AN END TO RACISM

We fight to end to racism and anti-traveller bigotry. We oppose immigration controls which are always racist. Asylum seekers and refugees should have full rights of citizenship, including the right to work. We oppose deportations.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

The Good Friday Agreement brought an end to armed struggle but it also institutionalised sectarianism by setting Catholic and Protestant communities in competition with each other for under-resourced services. The communal politicians from Sinn Fein to the DUP push policies of privatisation — while building a political base from the competition between 'both communities'.

We stand for workers unity against the Assembly politicians and Blair government. Like great socialist James Connolly, we believe that partition has brought about a 'carnival of reaction.' We want to see an Irish workers republic where all workers gain. Our flag is neither green nor orange but red!

OUR WORLD IS NOT FOR SALE

We oppose the sell-offs of public services to private interests. We fight for direct labour. We want properly-funded, publicly run services democratically controlled from below. We participate in the wider anti-capitalist movement.

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

news & reports/politics/industry/the unions (01) 872 2682 /fax (01) 872 3838 e-mail swp@clubi.ie

PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS

Thousands of workers take to the streets to Make the bosses pay

THOUSANDS of workers around the country took to the streets on Friday October 4 to demand justice for Irish Glass Bottle (IGB) and Peerless Rugs workers and changes in the Redundancy Act.

The largest demonstration took place in Dublin with an estimated 8,000 marching to the Dail.

A large contingent of Dublin Bus workers along with hospital workers from Beaumont, BATU members, corporation and factory workers, teachers and workers from Tara Mines attended. There were banners from IMPACT, The Seaman's Union of Ireland, Mandate and the TUI.



who were, and it isn't good enough to think that it could be allowed be repeated today".

A public sector worker who has been in her job for twenty five years told *Socialist Worker* "Doesn't it just sum this country up

that the likes of Burke can do what he did and people who work hard all their lives are treated like this. They give us a pittance in redundancy while they are enriching themselves. It's appalling".

Other demonstrations

took place in Cork, Galway and Limerick where hundreds more people came onto the streets.

The Waterford work stoppage in support of IGB and Peerless Rugs workers and for a three week statutory redundancy law was

the most successful in the country with 3,000 trade unionists marching in the city.

A group of 700, mainly SIPTU members, marched from the industrial estate on the outskirts of the city to the city centre where they assembled with more than 2,000 other workers.

Threats

Workers from factories such as Ivax, Honeywell, Waterford Stanley, HP Chemie, Kromberg & Schubert, and Waterford's biggest employer, Bausch & Lomb, were amongst those who ignored repeated IBEC threats of disciplinary action to stop work and join the protest.

One of the workers on the march, Billy, told

Socialist Worker: "This is the first trade union march I've ever been on, it's brilliant. We all know that a lot of employers would like to follow the example of IGB and Peerless Rugs and get rid of workers without having to pay a penny.

"This is drawing a line in the sand, but this protest should just be the start so we can win this campaign and other campaigns that follow".

SIPTU member, Jenny said: "It's interesting that SIPTU are supporting this protest in defiance of IBEC and in a few weeks they'll be sitting around a table with them discussing a new partnership deal.

"I think the next trade union protest should be against partnership and against all the cutbacks that we have to deal with".

Justice

IGB shop steward Mick Duffy told the crowd "We've had marches before but they haven't been anything like this ... today we're on the streets for justice.

"Most of you don't know the people you are supporting. But you are here because of the old saying hit one of us and you hit the whole lot of us".

These sentiments were echoed by the marchers.

A SIPTU member who attended with many of her workmates explained "the story of IGB hit a chord with a lot of us. Lots of people were in that position in the 1980s or had parents

★ THE demonstrations brought thousands of workers onto the streets for the first time in years.

The fact that the trade union leaders were forced to call on their membership to take to the streets is the final sign of the bankruptcy of the partnership approach to industrial relations.

However while the demonstrations were well supported they could and should have been much larger.

It demonstrated very clearly that the trade union leadership is not capable of leading a fight.

When IBEC launched its offensive in the days

leading up to the demonstrations, threatening workers who walked off the job and accusing the trade unions of trying to bankrupt the country, the trade union leaders response was pathetic.

Constantly hiding behind the Industrial Relations Act they failed to call a work stoppage leaving many workers unclear as to whether they would have union backing if they did walk off the job.

The results were therefore patchy and allowed the bosses to put the boot in.

Statements from IBEC after the demonstrations taunted the trade union movement for the failure

to mobilise its hundreds of thousands of members.

In Waterford the contrast was stark.

Here the Trades Council actively organised the protests. Members of the Trades Council played a key role in organising shop stewards to call out workers.

SIPTU shop stewards meet their officials as a group and demanded support for walk outs.

Strongest

As a result Waterford had the strongest demonstration in the country.

The lesson is clear. These demonstrations

should be the start of resistance by workers but we cannot rely on the trade union bureaucracy to lead the fight.

Resistance can only be built by struggle and self organisation. Workers need to re-gain the right to make their own pay claims, at local and national level, when they choose.

Social partnership deals took the spirit out of the unions because shop stewards had little power to negotiate. A strong fighting union movement has to be built on strong shop steward organisation.

We need regular workplace meetings with our members. We need to elect

leaders that are willing to fight. That is why a vote for the rank and file factory worker, Des Derwin in the coming election in SIPTU, would be a signal for change.

But a new strategy also needs to be based on socialist politics. Today the leaders of the ICTU are part of a cosy consensus with the political establishment.

They are spending our union dues to promote a Vote YES to Nice—even though Article 133 of that Treaty opens the door to more privatisation.

Socialist politics means seeing your fellow worker as the real 'social partner'.

Northern Ireland Social Security Agency workers take industrial action

ON THE 2ND October 2,000 workers in the Social Security Agency took half day strike action against plans by management to push through extended opening hours in SSA offices.

Despite numerous threats and incorrect messages from management, many of the 36 offices affected were forced to close even though they also employed staff unaffected

by the dispute.

At a protest rally in Belfast called by NIPSA, around 200 workers heard how management had refused to negotiate over the proposed changes.

Many of those attending the rally emphasised that the strike was only the beginning of the industrial action.

NIPSA has also instructed members to observe an overtime ban and to withdraw from the public offices at 3.30pm.

Nora from Dungannon told *Socialist Worker*, "There is so little cover in the office that I have been forced to work to nearly 6pm some evenings,

with the office open until 4.30 I could be here to 7pm".

One worker, summed up the feeling in the offices, "The strike is only a small part of the action.

"On a daily basis we need to maintain the ban on overtime and refuse to deal with the public after 3.30pm and also refuse to carry out any work that directly emanates from the public office after that time."

SSA staff are aware that this is not just about opposing the extended opening hours but also showing management that they are not prepared to let industrial relations proce-

dures be ignored and have management dictate their terms and conditions, without consultation and agreement.

The ongoing action has also meant that non-union members have joined the union in protest at being forced to do the work of their colleagues.

They then immediately joined the industrial action as well, in one office this amounted to 25 workers joining in one day.

The end goal for policy makers in the Civil Service is to see all offices open until 8pm without proper staffing levels or decent wages.

According to one worker in Andersonstown SSA, "If we lose this then we will have longer hours for no extra pay and maybe even weekend opening.

"That's why we have to draw a line in the sand now."

Activists now need to ensure that the action isn't allowed to stagnate, if management don't budge then they will have to be moved by an even more confident and stronger strike, by building strong networks in every work-place.

NI Firefighters

Determined to win

FIREFIGHTERS are currently balloting for strike action over their claim for a minimum £30,000 a year pay deal. *Socialist Worker* spoke to Jim Quinn, Regional Chairperson of the Fire Brigades Union.

Socialist Worker: What do you feel the outcome of the ballot is likely to be?

JIM QUINN: Having spoken to many firefighters over the past few weeks, we are very confident of an overwhelming yes vote in the ballot. There is no doubt that the return will be exceptionally high, in a previous ballot the vote for strike action was 93.3 percent with a return of over 90 percent.

SW: What is the feeling amongst members if a vote for strike action is returned?

JQ: We have been talking to our members now for months, we have been to every branch and the feeling on the ground is very positive. Our members are highly aware of the consequences of striking, but they feel that it is now their only option and if they vote for a strike it will be united.

SW: Tony Blair has now pulled 3,000 troops from the original 12,000 that were to be used to cover during any strike, what do you think?

JQ: Blair has already denounced our claim for fair wages, and has claimed that it is unproductive and will raise mortgage rates and ruin the economy.

However it will only cost 41p per household to fund the pay rise and we believe that the economy can easily cope with this.

On the question of the soldiers, there are currently 55,000 firefighters in the UK, there is no way that 9,000 poorly trained soldiers can carry out our duties competently.

The head of the army has recently stated that they will only be able to carry out basic life-saving duties and that they will have to let properties burn!

The thing we must be clear on is that if we were

given the wage we deserve then this situation would not arise, it is the government that will be putting lives at risk, not us.

SW: Why do you think he has done this?

JQ: It is possible he may have plans up his sleeve to stop us from striking at all. He could use a war on Iraq to invoke some draconian legislation making it illegal for us to strike.

If that happens it will be a disgrace, we are not slaves, workers have the right to withdraw their labour. If Blair goes down this route then firefighters

may feel that they have no other option but to use this right, it is possible they may vote with their feet".

SW: Do you think that there is there an awareness among firefighters of the possible importance of their struggle to other workers?

JQ: We believe in fair pay for all workers, that all workers should be paid the wages they deserve, it is possible that other workers may take heart from our campaign.

We are aware that people are very understanding about why we are fighting for better wages, and there is

no doubt that we have much support among the public for our claim.

Certainly we are conscious of the fact that other workers will follow our dispute with much interest and what they will see is that we are determined to win, we have no illusions about the difficulties ahead but we are completely united and will not be bullied by Tony Blair.

He has said that we have laid down the gauntlet by balloting for strike action and has condemned us for doing so. We will show him that he has picked on the wrong people!

Health Service

INO

OVER 300 delegates attended the conference at the end of September.

The overwhelming feeling from the conference was that benchmarking was just not good enough but the key question of what to do about it is more controversial.

The conference decided to kick it into touch for the moment. Liam Doran argued a strategy of playing for time so that the union was not left fighting the battle for everyone else.

The INO is now seeking the resolution of two anomalies that have arisen.

This concerns the downgrading of public health nurses and mental handicap nurses (RMNH). A strike ballot by RMNHs has actually begun as they are now paid £2,000 less than they staff they supervise.

Benchmarking

Jo Tully from James Hospital in Dublin argued against the idea that benchmarking should not be rejected outright.

"To focus the whole process at the moment on the rectifying of two outstanding issues is a bit like not seeing the wood for the trees.

"Even if the government resolves the issues- which

we will fight hard for- we will still be left with benchmarking which nobody wants.

"It has given us a mere 8 percent rise and has downgraded nursing by refusing us parity with paramedical grades.

"This won't have altered in a few months time".

Even though conference decided to hold off on rejection, the mood was very much against benchmarking and many people feel that it is highly likely that the next time they meet nurses will throw it out.

Disputes are breaking out in hospitals around the country over cuts in services, personnel and overcrowding.

Theatre nurses

THEATRE NURSES in a number of hospitals are working to rule over on-call fees.

This specifically affects theatre nurses. As one theatre nurse explained to *Socialist Worker*: "In some of the large hospitals there are two on-call teams, one a night duty team on call in the hospital and the other at home with a bleep.

The latter are only called in on occasions when a

Bus Eireann

Clerical workers in Bus Eireann have served strike notice, with action due to begin on Friday 25th October. Workers plan to strike on the following Tuesday and then every Monday and Tuesday.

The unions involved are the Transport Salaried Staff Association (TSSA) and SIPTU.

Workers lodged a 30 percent pay claim two years ago but have only been offered 15 percent by the company with changes in work practices attached.

Workers feel they are

entitled to a higher increase because they have lost out in comparison to other grades and sections within Bus Eireann who have got higher rises in salary.

According to one worker "They are now telling us that the final phase of the PPF—the 4 percent—may not come our way because of inability to pay.

They have also put all Bus Eireann staff on protective notice because of our proposed strike.

But people feel strongly about this and we will be taking to the picket lines if management does not offer us decent increases".

Special Needs Assistants

THE Department of Education is sanctioning the employment of Special Needs Assistants in many primary schools for children who have special needs.

SNAs work all day with the children in their care providing vital support for young people who would otherwise find it very diffi-

cult to cope in school.

Despite the valuable job they do SNAs are only paid €8 an hour, receive no holiday pay nor pay for any school closures. This is disgraceful.

All SNAs should join IMPACT trade union and fight for decent pay and conditions.

DIT

Fighting the cutbacks

WORKERS returned to the Dublin Institute of Technology for the start of the new academic year to discover that €3 million worth of McCreavy's cuts were lying in wait.

Part-time teachers are going to have their hours reduced while part-time courses and elements of some full-time courses are going to be cancelled.

A TUI member in the colleges told *Socialist Worker* that already there have

been two meetings of the union branch, with attendances well in excess of anything that has been seen in recent years.

If no progress is made with the DIT in rolling back the cuts, members will be balloted for industrial action.

Blockaded

DIT students explained to *Socialist Worker* what the cutbacks have meant for them. "Lectures have been cut back and facilities are unusable—we can't use fine art and drawing rooms in Portland Row as they are

shut at 5pm. For a practical subject like that we need to stay back in the evenings to do work".

According to a student rep for second years, "Fifty percent of part time teachers have been cut back in DIT as a whole—80 percent in the Faculty of Applied Arts, Design, Furniture, Music, Fine Art. We really need direct action".

Already students blockaded Minister Noel Dempsey, into a room in early October in an attempt to get him to talk to them. Some students are now set to escalate the fight against the cuts.

CPSU

AT THE CPSU Special Delegate Conference on benchmarking, delegates lambasted the report.

Delegates attacked the amount of the awards and the way in which the gap between the low paid and higher paid in the civil service had been widened.

Members were highly critical of the lack of transparency surrounding the work of the benchmarking

body. 80 percent of CPSU members are women and the issue of gender inequities was to the fore in the debate.

The conference decided to refer the report for investigation under the Employment Equality Act.

The conference is recommending rejection of the report and the issue is now going to ballot.

A subcommittee is meeting to discuss the possibility industrial action.

Cityjet Handling

ON THE last Saturday in September a strike breaking CJH worker, driving a toilet servicing vehicle, collided with a Euro Cypriot Airbus.

According to Dermot O'Loughlin, SIPTU branch official in the airport, "We warned that instances like this would happen if CJH employed part-time, inexperienced, strike breaking workers to do the job of full time trained personnel.

"Fortunately no one was injured but we are very concerned that if CJH employ inexperienced part-time strike-breakers then the safety of passengers and workers will continue to be at risk".

Dublin Airport

IN THE election for SIPTU General Secretary, Noel Dowling must be worried by his failure to get the nomination from the Aer Rianta Shannon branch and the fact that he only just got the nomination from Dublin Airport.

Failure to secure a good vote in the airports could make it difficult to win the election. In Dublin, airport workers feel so vehemently against him that one member told *Socialist Worker*, "We're thinking along the lines of ABU except in this case its ABD: Anyone But Dowling.

"I'm voting for Des Derwin because at least he's an

ordinary worker".

Dowling dirtied his bid in the airport with his solo run on the pensions question.

Aer Rianta has been trying to set up its own pension scheme, to replace the existing one that's been running for about fifty years.

The company want workers to leave their scheme before they get the opportunity to see the new one.

As one worker pointed out, "It's a pig in a poke. You couldn't accept it". Dowling however started making a claim for a new pensions scheme without any consultation with SIPTU members in the airport.

Meath Hospital

WORKERS HAVE taken to the picket line after their employer disappeared.

The workers were employed by a firm known as Belgrove Cleaning Service since 1988.

Three weeks ago there were no wages in the office for the staff. For a period of up to a year some cheques given to the cleaners have bounced.

On the September 6th Belgrove closed down.

However another firm called Direct was set up the following day by Paul Corry who had been the manager with Belgrove Cleaning Services, along with Micheal McKeown who

was a partner in Belgrove.

Corry also has acquired a contract with Dunes stores on Georges St.

In St James, former Belgrove staff were employed honouring contracts and pay. But the Eastern Health Board has refused to employ the former Belgrove employees in St Marys in the Phoenix Park, the Meath Community Unit and the South Circular Community Unit.

For some of the workers cheques worth hundreds of euros have bounced.

The workers are demanding to be reinstated, and to get the money they are owed.

Bin charges

The Waterford Council of Trade Unions have backed a motion calling for the abolition of refuse charges and are discussing the possibility of participating in a legal challenge against Waterford City Council to ensure collection of bins regardless of whether bin charges have been paid.

This move is prompted by the expected hike in the weekly cost of bin tags from €2.54 to possibly as much as €6.00 or even €8.00.

In order to mute any opposition to the introduction of service charges in 1999, Waterford City Council declared a three-year moratorium on price rises.

That three year period has now elapsed and the council has indicated strongly that it intends to

follow the example of Waterford County Council who increased the weekly charge to €6.00 last year.

President of the Waterford Council of Trade Unions, Dick Roche told the *Socialist Worker*: "Although the avenue of a legal challenge to bin charges has been left open, what we really want to do is initiate a campaign of mass non-payment.

"The price hike in Waterford is all about turning refuse collection into a profitable business.

"The Supreme Court ruling last year meant that in Cork, and afterwards in Drogheda and Fingal, bin charges were abandoned. We saw a few years ago how a strong campaign and direct action scuppered water charges, we intend to repeat that victory".

Socialist Worker

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