

INSIDE

Bush's neoliberalism causes chaos in New Orleans



By Kieran Allen

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SHANNON: GATEWAY TO IRAQ



Last week more than 1,000 Shia Muslims were killed crossing the Tigris River in Baghdad during a religious pilgrimage. Someone in the crowd shouted that there was a suicide bomber and people panicked.

But the marchers couldn't escape because of a US army checkpoint on the bridge.

The death toll as a result of occupation is now over 100,000. It is Bush and Blair's occupation, not religious divi-

sion that is the cause of the chaos and death. But they are now destabilising Iraq along ethnic lines in order to justify the continuation of the occupation.

Immediately after the massacre on the bridge, Sunnis were blamed for the deaths. In fact Sunnis from the east side of the river tried to help injured pilgrims by bringing them to a nearby Sunni mosque.

Shannon has become cen-

tral to the US war machine.

153,381 US troops passed through Shannon in the first 6 months of this year. Shannon is also used for the transport of Iraqi and Afghan hostages on route to US torture centres.

The Irish Government subsidises the US military's use of Shannon to the tune of €10,000 a day.

By allowing the use of Shannon the Fianna Fail/PD government, led by

Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, is facilitating the mass murder in Iraq.

Until the occupying forces of the US and Britain leave Iraq, the violence and chaos will continue.

Stopping the use of Shannon would hurt the US war machine and free up resources for the disaster victims of Hurricane Katrina. To that end the Shannon Protest is vital.

PROTEST SEPTEMBER 24th

**Bush's neoliberal agenda: €6bn a month on murder in Iraq
While the people of New Orleans starve**

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New Tara Watch campaign



Protest on the M50

A new campaigning group, 'TaraWatch', has been formed to resist government plans to route a major motorway through the Tara Valley.

The group sees it's priority in the short term as representing and articulating the opinion of the 70% of the Irish population who are against the present proposal. The group is determined to keep the issue at the forefront of public debate in the run-up to a high court challenge to the Government decision.

In effect tolls paid to NTR are going to be used by this company to fund the M3 and destroy the Tara complex

Their first public action was a demonstration at the M50 tollbooth in Dublin on Friday the 19th August. Motorists were leafleted with information pointing out that the new road will do nothing to alleviate the chronic traffic congestion in the North-East. In fact the congestion on the M50 is likely to get much worse.

The government is attempting to frame the debate over the M3 in terms of heritage and environmental campaigners versus the commuter and motorist. In this particular action, the group set out to convince motorists that the real problem is the length of commuting times and the lack of public transport, and this of course is a direct result of failed housing, transport and spatial strategies.

The operators of the M50 Tollbridge, National Toll Roads (NTR) were named last week as the preferred bidder to build and operate the proposed M3 under a Public Private Partnership (PPP). Recent controversy about their toll charges and massive profiteering will do

nothing to inspire belief that the new project will represent value for money for the exchequer.

To add insult to injury, the long distance commuter will now see their toll money, paid to NTR, used to fund the M3. In effect their monies are going to be used by this company to destroy the Tara complex.

This new group sees itself as an extending and broadening the already existing campaign against the plan to run the new M3 through the Tara-Skryne Valley. There are now three strands to the broad opposition to the Tara scheme.

The long established Save Tara-Skreen Valley Group are still active and continue to focus primarily on mobilizing expert national and international opinion.

Also the Supreme Court challenge taken by Vincent Salifia continues to wind its way through the courts. We are fully supportive of these other strands and enjoy warm fraternal relations with both.

Tara Watch holds the view that the government have overruled

their own experts, ignored national and international academic opinion and resisted and slandered those seeking to challenge their actions through the courts.

We believe that we must now begin to plan and mobilise for the next stage of the campaign.

We believe that Tara is substantially different from previous road campaigns such as those concerning the Glen of the Downs and Carrickmines. The level of public support available to us is vastly more than either. The iconographic status of Tara means that this campaign can move far beyond actions in Meath, and far beyond the demographic normally associated with environmental activism.

We welcome all activists to become involved in the various actions planned over the coming months. If and when the bulldozers ever attempt to cut through this historic heart of Ireland we fully intend to be in a position to put up a battle our ancestors would be proud of.

Contact us at: info@tarawatch.org

QUOTES OF THE FORTNIGHT

"I wouldn't call myself an activist—that sounds like I'm in the consumer hezbollah. But I have been prepared to stand up and say to banks and politicians: 'Hang on, that line you're spinning is lies' "

Eddie Hobbs presenter of Rip-Off Republic

"I'd like ordinary people to consider the facts for a minute, and then agree with me that, with all due respect to Eddie Hobbs and the rest of the pundit posse, paying €24 or €425 for a bottle of wine in a restaurant mightn't be the greatest disaster that befell Ireland. It's only in the last 15 years we've even had the choice about buying overpriced wine."

Minister of State Tim O'Malley responds to the popularity of the Rip Off Republic show

"We have the ability to take Chavez out, and I think the time has come that we exercise that ability"

Pat Robertson, TV evangelist in US

"I do think the status of a profession goes down the more feminised it becomes, that's a sociological given. Men still have more clout."

Dr Roisin Healy, A&E Consultant Crumlin hospital responds to figures that show women doctors outnumber men in 20 to 35 age group for the first time

"He is no longer independent because of his support for the Rossport Five"

John Cooney, Director of the Humbert-Davitt Summer School on withdrawing Jerry Cowley's invitation to speak **"Having a view on something does not mean I am no longer an Independent"**

Jerry Cowley, TD, responds

"There is not as I understand it, the way the constitution is written, is that women have got rights, inherent rights recognised in the constitution, and that the constitution talks about, you know, not 'the religion' but 'a religion'."

George Bush in his own inimitable way reassures the world that women's rights are protected in the new Iraqi constitution!

"How many more soldiers are you willing to sacrifice before you say enough is enough? How many more are we willing to sacrifice for lies and deception and bullcrap?"

Cindy Sheehan whose son Casey was killed in Iraq last year speaking outside Bush's ranch in Texas

INSIDE THE SYSTEM

By DEIRDRE CRONIN

☠ The latest VHI 12.5% increase kicked in on September 1st. The cost of private health care has now increased by over 63% over the last seven years.

According to the European Commission Ireland recycled just 35% of packaging waste, compared to an EU average of 52%.

The government has serious questions to answer about the deplorable lack of recycling facilities.

☠ Just 2% of people from new EU states have applied for social

assistance in Ireland. Almost 50% have been turned down - many because they have not lived here for the obligatory 2 years.

This means that immigrants to this country are being left in a very vulnerable situation and are easily exploited by unscrupulous employers. According to the Cappuchin Centre on Bow Street, Polish migrants are regulars at their drop in centre.

Many have received misinformation about job prospects and the cost of living in Ireland

☠ One of the few Dublin city centre hospitals left faces threat of closure.

Hume Street Hospital was undeclared unsafe in the event of a fire and now the board of the hospital is considering shutting the hospital and selling the property. This would be the sixth hospital closure in the city centre in recent years

☠ The Department of Social Welfare has 600 staff working on welfare 'fraud'. Yet there are only 17 Labour Inspectors in the Department of Trade and

Employment.

The poor and unemployed are hounded while the businesses exploiting workers are free to do as they like.

The real state scroungers are the likes of former Taoiseach Charlie Haughey who received pension payments of over €132,000 in 2004 as part of a €12 million pension bill for former Oireachtas members. Former President Patrick J Hillery received €204,000 in 2004.

Ray Burke received €90,993, Liam Lawlor €47,226, and Pee Flynn

€75,525 in 2004.

☠ Louisiana Governor's Kathleen Blanco warned that troops had orders to shoot to kill. She said "These troops are fresh back from Iraq, well trained, experienced, battle tested and under my orders to restore order in the streets". She went on to say "They have M-16s and they are locked and loaded.

"These troops know how to shoot and kill and they are more than willing to do so if necessary and I expect they will."

—From DemocracyNow.org

Protest/Events/Reports

email to swped@eircom.net Phone 01 8722682

HEALTH SERVICE CRISIS

Stop Harney's privatisation of health plans

"Local campaigns fighting hospital closures and cut-backs must unite with staff in the health sector if we are to stop Harney's plans that will wreck our health service", said Dr. Peadar O Grady at the launch of his new pamphlet "Why the Irish Health Service is in Crisis".

Attending the launch were a number of health workers and members of the Campaign to Save Monaghan Hospital who agreed that their fight was "at the forefront of holding back the drive to privatisation".

Dr. John Barton, chairperson of the Health Services Action Group welcomed the pamphlet.

He said "The increased involvement of the private for-profit sector in our health service will not be good for patients' health or pockets.

Governments have turned to the private sector to introduce competition, innovation and reduction in healthcare costs.

But such expectations in the for-profit sector have, by and large, not materialised:

costs have not been controlled, quality has not improved, healthcare fraud has been predominantly perpetrated by for-profit institutions in the US, and the profit motive, including satisfying investors' needs, appears more important than the needs of the community."

According to Jo Tully of the INO Executive, "As patients and workers we face a stark choice either we fight for a health service delivered on the basis of need by a workforce properly paid for the work we do or we have imposed on us a US model of health service delivered only to those who can pay and return vast profits to the vested interests".

All in attendance supported the idea of a conference to bring together campaigns in order to intervene in the unions and in wider society to defend health care as a public service.

Dr. O Grady is a child psychiatrist who works in the public health service and a member of the SWP. You can get copies of his pamphlet from 087 9879489

BALLYMUN

Action wins pub victory



Shangan residents picketed to stop the pub

Ballymun residents scored an important victory in August.

Ballymun Regeneration planned to build a pub in Shangan Green in the teeth of local opposition.

Originally billed as a "Neighbourhood Centre" which would include much needed community facilities, the development turned out to be a commercial development with a pub.

One resident told Socialist Worker, "Ballymun is losing its green space and this pub would be just yards from our homes.

Local SWP rep Kevin Wingfield commented, "This shows that if you organise and fight you can get results."

Residents began picketing the site, originally over safety concerns, and stopped all work on the development.

Then they demanded that

the plans for the pub be scrapped.

In August BRL finally bowed to this pressure and signed an agreement not to proceed with the pub.

Locals across Ballymun are angry that the rebuilding programme is more concerned to meet the needs of business than the local community.

Recently part of Poppintree Park was sold to notorious developer Gama Construction and the public swimming pool has been closed to be replaced by an inadequate privately-run "leisure pool". Activists from across Ballymun are coming together to co-ordinate their resistance to BRL and plan to launch a Counter Report. They are meeting on September 12 discuss the way forward.

For details contact Kevin Wingfield 086-3074060

BIN TAX CAMPAIGN



Blackrock residents respond to non-collection by throwing their rubbish in the back of the truck

Legal question mark over Dublin bin bills

A question mark hangs over the legitimacy of thousands of bin tax bills being sent to householders by Dublin City Council.

The bills, many for over €700 for bin charges from 2001 to 2005 contain arrears for the years 2001 and 2002, the period that is being disputed by the campaign in the courts and is likely to end up in the Supreme Court.

However not all areas have received the bills and not all houses have been registered by the council's automated system.

The campaign is calling on all people to keep the bill in the meantime but not to pay a cent of it.

The campaign will produce a model letter that householders can send along with the returned bill in protest to the council.

While the council threaten to remove the service if the bills are not paid the simple fact is many cannot afford to pay over €700 double tax which is fleecing the working class.

They should be met by the resistance of working people

and no better place to start than in the communities with the bin charges.

If non-collection is implemented in September all areas should respond with direct action and civil disobedience.

The key to this is organisation - mass meetings should be held in every community in September to organise a response on a big scale. Meantime contact the campaign in your local area, and as always, if in any doubt 'don't panic and don't pay'.

Contact Brid Smith 087 9090166 for more information.

Campaign defies non-collection

Throwing their bins into the back of bin trucks is the tactic employed by residents and activists involved in the Campaign Against Service Charges in Dun Laoghaire and Blackrock.

The numbers out in the morning is rising and the number of people buying the council tags has dropped substantially.

Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Co Council introduced a new scheme where residents have to buy a €4 tag for every bag of rubbish.

Campaign activists and the SWP distributed leaflets informing residents they were legally entitled to put their bins into lorries without tags.

The law is that there is

nothing to prevent people depositing waste into any waste receptacle intended for that purpose.

Legally, a bin lorry has the same status as a street litter bin (Litter Act 1997, Part 1 Section 5) and anyone is allowed to deposit waste into it, a fact first put into practice a few years ago by campaigners in Drogheda.

KURDISTAN SOLIDARITY

Embassy protests for Kurdistan

By Siofra Ni Chonghaile

August 15th marked the annual anniversary of the beginning of the Kurdish resistance and Kurds in Ireland marked the occasion by protesting outside both the Turkish and Iranian Embassies in Dublin.

Latif Serhilden of Kurdistan Solidarity Ireland said the protests' aim was to highlight to Irish people the plight of Kurds in the Middle-East and expose the violent and undemocratic nature of the regimes in operation in Turkey and Iran.

But he was also quick to criticise the hypocrisy of western leaders who use the Kurdish issue as propaganda

when it suits them but who have repeatedly failed to support independence for Kurdistan and who continue to deny asylum to Kurdish activists fleeing persecution.

Estimated at 35 million strong, the Kurds are the largest stateless people in the world spread over Syria, Turkey, Iran and Iraq where they face national oppression. Since 1984, some four million have been displaced from villages in Turkey and placed in encampments in areas under government control.

A staggering 30,000 plus people have been killed by Turkish military while political activists are routinely harassed and imprisoned for "crimes of

opinion" including PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan. In Iran's north-west Kurdish region, over 20 Kurds have been killed in recent weeks and numerous others wounded and imprisoned after mass demonstrations against the murder of Kurdish activist, Shivane Qadiri. Shivane was shot by Iranian police and later tortured until he died.

The Iranian government has been martial law enforced by 100,000 troops prompting Amnesty International to express alarm at the cycle of violence although so far the international community has failed to react.

Kurdistan Solidarity Ireland can be contacted on 086 8805826.

LOCAL REPORTS

Save Dundrum Bus services

Dublin Bus has decimated the 48A, 14 & 14A bus service and cut the number 13 service.

The residents of Dublin 14 and 16 are outraged and on September 3rd held a protest at Dundrum Luas Station - the new terminus for the 14s.

Local SWP rep, Deirdre Cronin related how a meeting of over 200 people was called when they first got wind of the plans and since have collected thousands of names of support. Dublin Bus has used the Luas as an excuse for taking buses out of the area.

However while the whole of the D14/16 area is witnessing huge levels of development and the reality is the services have been slashed.

The September 3rd protest was only the beginning and more will be organised if a full service is not reinstated immediately.

For further information contact

Bray:

In need of housing



Siobhan Haskins: pleas ignored by Bray County Council

A Bray resident who is living with a degenerative condition and who needs a specially adapted house is waiting almost two years on the council list.

Siobhan Haskins suffers from Motor Neuropathy Deprivation Syndrome, a life long disability which will get worse the older she gets.

"I have spoken to the Bray County Council about my housing needs and they don't care because I'm not a priority which is untrue," she said.

"I need to live in a house that can be adapted for my needs but the council won't do this."

Despite receiving a letter from the Central Remedial Clinic stating that she requires appropriate housing, the council have not acted.

Yet another example highlighted in Socialist Worker of the deep disregard that the council has for the most vulnerable in society.

The Bray branch of Socialist Worker is urging people to contact Bray County Council to complain about the way Siobhan has been treated.

For further information please contact Catherine Kennedy at 086 0749771.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS**Iceland closure**

After nine years trading in Ireland the supermarket chain Iceland is closing all seven of its stores with the loss of 160.

A worker at the Ballyfermot store said: "The company were like cowboys. They really ran rough-shod over us. One day we're working away and the next we're gone."

"We were under the impression we would be looked after but now they are only offering statutory redundancy plus one week."

Nine years ago the Ballyfermot store was the first Iceland shop to gain union recognition after a two and a half week strike by members of Mandate, the shop workers union.

"Don't be too quick to listen to the boss - don't move if your place is closing and keep your eyes open," the worker said. "The union weren't prepared for this and now with all the stock gone and the shops closed what have we left to bargain with?" Mandate are now going to the Labour Court to seek improved redundancy terms.

Campaign for union recognition

WORKERS at north Dublin pharmaceutical manufacturer Gerard Laboratories have taken their campaign for trade union rights onto the World Wide Web.

Their association, the Gerard Labs Unionised Employees (GLUE) (linked with SIPTU) have their website at www.merckunion.org.

The company's owners, Merck KGaA, boast in their corporate responsibility literature that 81 per cent of its global workforce are represented by unions, but have so far backed the Irish management's anti-union stance.

The Dublin managers refuse to deal with the union and even make it difficult for union members to be represented by the union in grievance and disciplinary proceedings - a right also given to staff by the Labour Court order. SIPTU organiser Paul Hardy said: "The Gerard Labs case shows just how important a statutory right to union recognition is."

"Merck has no problem dealing with unions in other countries, just in Ireland. Why? Because our 'voluntary' system of industrial relations means that they don't have to," he said.

Want to help? Go to www.labourstart.org/merck.

CORRUPTION**McBrearty launches Civil Rights Movement**

More than four hundred people crowded into Frank McBrearty's night-club in Raphoe, Donegal to form a new Civil Rights Movement.

It became a forum where scores of people gave voice to the harassment and suffering they had received at the hands of the Gardai and a corrupt state.

It was like glasnost in the old USSR when a Memorial movement provided a forum for victims to tell their stories.

Frank McBrearty and his family have become a beacon, which has given people, courage to finally speak out.

One man had travelled 320 miles from Dimoleague in West Cork. Ten years ago he had a minor row with a neighbour - who just

Woodley speaks at AT&GWU rally

Over 250 activists in the Amalgamated Transport & General Workers Union attended a rally addressed by the General Secretary, Tony Woodley in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford at the end of August.

The Chairperson of the Union, Jimmy Kelly introduced guests from the Campaign for Radiotherapy in the South East and from the anti racist support network in Waterford.

There was a huge welcome for the return of Mick O'Reilly, regional secretary and Eugene McGlone. Both were re-instated into their jobs following a long campaign by union activists against their unfair dismissals.

Tony Woodley pointed out that the nature of the working class in both Ireland and England had changed dramatically, particularly with the decline in manufacturing industries.

Many workers were threatened by the globalisation of industry and jobs are regularly lost to countries where the labour is cheaper. This is what has happened in Donegal with the closure of Hospira.

The struggle of the Gate Gourmet workers at Heathrow Airport shows how both women and migrants can be a dynamic part of the trade union movement. The solidarity shown to them by the walk out of the baggage handlers in British Airways was an inspiration for all trade union activists.

On behalf of the workers at Waterford Crystal, Jimmy Kelly passed on a cheque for £1,000 to Gate Gourmet Solidarity Fund.

Workers at the Dungarvan section of Waterford Crystal are facing the closure of their plant in the next few weeks. The company is moving all production to the Waterford unit.

Fall off in sales in the US is blamed for these cutbacks and workers in Waterford talked of seeing this industry being cut back over the years.

Tony Woodley highlighted the danger of contract labour leaving many areas un-unionised.

The T&GWU has launched a major recruitment and organising campaign which to target new industries and workplaces previously unorganised.

Shop stewards attending the rally welcomed the campaign but rightfully pointed out that a recruitment and organising drive needs to be linked to a fighting union.

-Brid Smith

Shell to Sea Campaign

Galway Shell to Sea protestors picket a garage

Although the Rossport 5 are still ruthlessly imprisoned the campaign for their release has certainly not been confined.

In the last two weeks there have been a series of public meetings and formations of local action groups in towns around the coun-

try and within Dublin demanding the release of the Rossport 5 and for Shell to refine gas from the Corrib basin at sea.

There have been dozens of pickets mounted on Shell and Statoil stations which received great public support.

All groups are now organising to get big contingents to the October 1st national march to the Dail.

On September 10th there will be a blockade of the Statoil Depot, East Wall Road in Dublin. Starts 8.30am and continues all day.

DUBLIN SHELL TO SEA

Over 200 packed into the recent ATGWU Hall for the Dublin Shell to Sea meeting which included Irish Times journalist Fintan O Toole who predicted the campaign would win.

Around 25 people took part in the picket at Usher quay in Dublin city centre. Dublin Shell to Sea meets every Tuesday night in An Taisce building opposite Mother Red Caps, Thomas St at 8pm.

Contact Rory Hearne at 086 1523542 for details.

DUN LAOGHAIRE

Some 25 people attended a meeting which set up and action group to organise local pickets of Shell and Statoil and to build for the national demo on October 1st. Contact Colman Etchingham 087 7583908.

Artane UP to 30 people attended the Artane meeting which set up action group which will picket the Shell station at Beaumont.

SWORDS

Swords SWP has had very successful pickets outside Statoil for the last three weeks.

They are holding a public meeting in Room 5, Senior Citizen Centre, Swords on the 13th September at 7.30pm with

Marie Ni Sheigin of the Shell To Sea Campaign speaking.

BALLYFERMOT

Action group established which picketed the Statoil station in Palmerstown on Friday, 26th August.

Some 15 people attended the protest at Statoil where hundreds of leaflets were distributed to passing cars and local people.

Further protests at Shell on Kylemore Road have been planned.

Contact 087 9090166

RIALTO

Over 35 people attended public meeting with weekly pickets organised by the Crumlin Community Workers Action Group being held on the Statoil station in Templeville Road.

Another regular picket on Shell in Kilmainham organised by local people in the Rialto area.

Contact 087 2917415

CLONDALKIN

An action group set up in the Clondalkin area has organised pickets on Shell in the village and Statoil on the Fonthill Road.

Thousands of leaflets have been distributed. Contact 087 6838746.

TRALEE

Some 17 people protested outside the Oakpark Statoil station in Tralee on August 26th.

Another protest is planned for the Shell Depot, Clash, Tralee on Saturday September 10th.

There are two stalls a week in the town, building support for the Rossport campaign with an excellent response on all occasions.

CORK

Over 120 people attended a Shell to Sea meeting in early August.

Since then the Cork Shell to Sea action group have organised a weekly

blockade at the Shell Depot on the Marina every Thursday morning.

GALWAY

The families of the Rossport 5 lead a 1,500 strong protest on Saturday, August 13.

A weekly picket has also been placed on various Statoil stations throughout the city. Shell has resorted to taking out full page advertisements in a local newspaper outlining the safety of the pipeline.

To date almost 10,000 signatures have been collected in Galway supporting the Rossport 5.

A public meeting will be held in mid-September as part of the build up to the national demonstration on October 1st.

DUNDALK

Over 45 people attended the public meeting in Dundalk.

An action group has been set up to organise pickets on Statoil at the Ballymac Roundabout and the Dublin Road.

GOREY

Following a successful public meeting the action group is protesting at the Statoil station on the Dublin Road and at Shell in Camolin.

The local media have given good coverage to the campaign.

The toxic waters of New Orleans have exposed the nightmare of Bush's America

By Kieran Allen

Over 10,000 people may have died because they became victims of the warmongers and free marketers. This was no 'natural disaster'.

Before 9/11, the Federal Emergency Management Agency listed three likely catastrophes facing America: a terrorist attack on New York, an earthquake in San Francisco and a hurricane strike in New Orleans. The Houston Chronicle noted in December 2001, that 'The New Orleans hurricane scenario may be the deadliest of all'.

These were not just abstract scenarios. More than four hurricanes have whipped New Orleans since 2002.

Yet the Bush regime refused money to build the levees or the wall-like defences around New Orleans. Instead money was diverted to pay for the war on Iraq and tax cuts for billionaires.

The funding cuts were so dire that even the Louisiana Governor, Kathleen Blanco, considered suing the federal government for a larger share of \$5 billion in royalties from offshore oil and gas drilling in the Gulf of Mexico. (Even in Bush's America gas companies pay royalties – although they don't in Ireland!)

Neo-liberals hate public projects like spending on emergency defences. They pretend that we live in an atomised economy where everyone must make 'rational choices' for themselves. They attack the very idea of social solidarity and demand that we look to philanthropy from the rich in emergencies.

And this is precisely how they went about organising the rescue operation.

The people of New Orleans had three days warning when the authorities told them to evacuate the town.

But everyone was supposed to make their own way out by private means. No public transport was provided for free. No free tickets were issued to the elderly for Amtrak – the US state railway company. No provision were made to commandeer hotels; to temporarily put all private buses under public control; to billet people in large houses outside the region; to open university campuses to the poor.

That would have been 'interference in the market'. So the poor were left to fend for themselves as society disappeared behind the market.

By way of contrast, when Hurricane Ivan hit Cuba recently, one million people were evacuated – without the loss of a single life!

When Hurricane Katrina finally arrived, people were told to go the Superdome – but there was no food or water there. Not surprising when you consider that in a capitalist society, you must pay for everything.

The US army and the National Guard fiddled about for days before moving resources to the area. What a contrast with the speed and organisation they put into moving troops and equipment to war zones!

Finally, the worst insult. The New Orleans poor were blamed for upsetting television viewers around the world. They had 'chosen' to stay behind just to 'loot' and rob. This became the dominant message of the corporate media.

If white tourists had taken food and water from shops, the media would have said 'they were helping themselves to supplies in an emergency situation'.

But this is the deep South of the USA where racist scars survive the Civil Rights era. Nothing pleases the Ku Klux Klan fanatics more than seeing white vigilantes guard their property against uppity blacks.

So the floods became just another occasion for their racist fantasies – while thousands died.

If New Orleans makes your blood boil, then get to Shannon on September 24th. The quarter of a million troops who pass through this airport every year, should be back home helping their own people.

COMMENT



Creaking production and refinery system will be pushed beyond breaking point

The trouble with oil

By Tom O Connor

Five brave men from county Mayo are enduring their 9th consecutive week in a Dublin jail for defending their community against oil companies Shell and Statoil.

Aside from the giving away of our gas resources, the debacle in Rosport highlights the complete lack of planning for the future and the lack of concern for our environment or welfare by our politicians.

Oil has been the lifeblood of the global economy for the best part of the 20th century and its availability and usage are reaching a peak at the beginning of the 21st century. Power stations burn oil to produce electricity, the millions of automobiles worldwide nearly all run on oil.

With a global population of over 6 billion and rising, the demands on the

The USA with just 4% of the worlds population eats up 25% of worldwide oil and China, the world's fastest growing economy consumes 8%

limited supply of oil are going to increase. The U.S.A. with just 4% of the worlds population eats up 25% of annual worldwide oil output. China is the fastest growing economy, and at present consumes 8% of the annual worldwide oil output. This figure is liable to treble in the coming years.

The supply will not be there to meet demand, and as more oil is required an already creaking production and refinery system will be pushed beyond breaking point.

Unfortunately our lifestyles are going to change radically because of our dependency on oil. Most experts' opinions on the timescale ranges from 15 to 40 years, but they all agree on one fact, oil is a limited resource and, in geological terms, its demise is imminent.

What are the inhabitants of planet earth when there is no more petroleum? Imagine a planet with no aviation, no road transport, no mechanized farming, and no electric light at the flick of a switch. We would be cast back to the middle ages.

The rise in the use of oil is causing another problem, global warming and climate change. Burning oil releases the gas carbon dioxide into the atmos-

phere causing an insulating effect leading to a rise in temperature.

Although global warming has become a buzzword in the world media, most political leaders are in a state of denial concerning the part humankind and oil are playing in the cataclysmic climate change that is taking place.

The ice shelves in the arctic are melting and breaking up at an accelerated rate leading to a rise in worldwide sea levels. The ice caps on some of the planets highest mountains are disappearing at a ferocious rate and when gone the only source of fresh water for millions upon millions will be gone forever.

The permafrost in Siberia is thawing rapidly, and as it thaws, millions of tonnes of Methane are released into the atmosphere, and Methane is another "greenhouse gas" causing even more global warming.

These are just a few examples of mankind's reliance on oil, and the destruction it is wreaking upon worldwide communities and ecosystems.

What can be done to stop this impending catastrophe? The governments of this planet need to tax the profits of oil and car corporations and divert oil subsi-

dies and the billions spent on arms and war towards massive investments in the technology and infrastructure needed to make alternative energy efficient and practical.

Solar, wind, wave, and tidal sources as well as bio-fuel, and hydrogen are becoming cheaper and are the way forward. Nuclear power is a filthy option and no alternative.

Our scientists must be given free reign to develop new technologies. Christian Huygens first patented the internal combustion engine in 1680. That was 325 years ago. It is high time for mankind to invent something new.

Oil and car multinationals are addicted to profit and to the raw material source of that profit, oil. They will not give it up without a fight. Many politicians are in the pockets of these companies.

We need a change of leadership. The oil companies and their government lackeys must be confronted by a mass movement. If we want any hope of becoming a green planet it seems we must first become a red one!

Tom O Connor, is active in the Bus Worker's Action Group and SWP



Mourning the dead in a make-shift cemetery in Fallujah

(Photo: Eunji Kang)

Raied Al-Wazzan is an Iraqi who has lived in Belfast since 1990. He has just returned from a visit to family in the city of Mosul in Northern Iraq, and spoke to Socialist Worker about the situation there.

SW: What is the situation on the ground in Iraq?

Raied: "It is absolute chaos. There is no freedom and no law and order. There is no electricity, no water and no road services. Before the occupation the vast majority of Iraqis depended on rations from the oil for food programme and the government.

Now the rations have almost stopped. Many people do not have enough to eat. Since my last visit at Christmas the situation, particularly security, has worsened. You cannot even go out to the Mosque for night prayers because US soldiers shoot at everything that moves.

Nothing has improved since the occupation. Everything has deteriorated. People remember when the US destroyed everything in 1991 and then Saddam rebuilt Iraq in only six months under sanctions.

Now we have the superpower that can't bring electricity after two years. That's what's making people fed up with the situation because they cannot see any improvement.

Inflation is higher now, there is less food and no medicine. Two years ago there was a shortage of medicine but you could find anything on the black market. Now there is not even a black market, and you have to cross border to get medicine.

If you are rich enough you can get it. But what if you are poor, if you can't even afford daily food? Casualties since the invasion definitely exceed 100,000. That is who was killed directly by the US and their allies.

But when you count the people who have died because of a lack of medicine or couldn't reach a hospital, then that number doubles or triples. Bush and Blair are responsible for this.

SW: Is the resistance growing?

R: The resistance is growing in strength. The US are not in charge in any way, they

don't control anything except the green zone (a small area in Baghdad). They patrol the country in tanks because it's not safe for them to get out of the tanks.

They have to rely on Iraqis to police and control the situation, but less people are joining the police force as it's seen as a tool of the US. The police have lost the trust of the people of Iraq.

The police have been built on ethnic divisions and they send Shia and Kurd to police Sunni areas and vice versa. So they will not be able to do what the Americans hope they can do.

SW: Who is the resistance?

R: The vast majority of the Iraqi resistance are Iraqi people. The US military command already admitted that 90% of the resistance are Iraqis. It is a nationalist resistance for Iraqi unity against the occupation.

The media try to say that it is only Arab Sunnis. Its portrayal of the resistance just echoes the line from Washington. When the Shia fight the US they call him an Arab, when the Kurd is in the resistance they call him Sunni. You will find Shia, Kurd and Christian in the resistance.

They all want to drive the occupation out of Iraq. Look at the Shia Cleric Moqtada al-Sadr who recently held demonstrations for unity and against the constitution.

There are lots of Shia groups like Al Sadr who are all fighting the occupation in one way or another. Protesters against the constitution in Sunni areas held up pictures of Shia clerics who reject the constitution.

The Sunni are asking for a united Iraq. They are prepared to let Shia control through majority but they want to keep the country intact.

There is not going to be a civil war. There is a huge cross religious and ethnic inter mixing and marriage in Iraq. Many Shia and Kurds marry Sunni and vice versa. We will never see a civil war but a

political war. This is already happening. All the political parties are fighting each other. The US is fuelling this by arming the paramilitaries linked to the political parties.

Like anywhere in the world, if the resistance was not supported by the majority of people then they could not operate. The support for the resistance is growing. People said at the beginning of the occupation 'let's give the US a chance to prove themselves'. We gave them the benefit of the doubt but every thing we have seen from the Americans is the opposite: e.g. humiliating Iraqi people at check points, women at house searches, Abu Gharib. Now nobody trusts the US administration.

SW: Will the new 'constitution' help?

R: The constitution will divide Iraq into a few smaller federal states. The US wants to divide Iraq on the basis of ethnic background.

If you look at the detail of the constitution, every ethnic group will have foreign embassies around the world. Each federal part of Iraq will have its own army. The US wants to divide it into weaker states that will be easier to control and hopefully isolate the Sunni resistance.

The main problem is the occupation. When the occupation ends then over ninety percent of the resistance will stop. We need a political solution. We need to have a proper election not like last January which was a farce. It was like a lottery. We could not vote for a candidate but had to select numbers. The only information we had was the party name.

The only people who could stand for election were those who signed up to the laws set by former US proconsul Paul Bremer. Everything, including the new constitution is based on his laws. It enshrines sectarian division and privatisation. Jobs are allocated according to ethnic groups, for example the defence minister must be Arab Sunni? Why? If he

is a Kurd is he not capable?

Before he left Baghdad, Bremer enacted 100 orders as head of the occupation authority in Iraq. Order 39 decreed that 200 Iraqi state companies would be privatised, that foreign companies could have complete control of Iraqi banks, factories and mines, and that these companies could transfer all of their profits out of Iraq.

Bush and Blair talk of democracy. It is a very beautiful word but it depends on how you apply it. When you bring in your own puppet government—is that democracy?

When only one part of the nation can stand for election—is that democracy? We would like democracy which has the candidates name on the ballot paper. We want candidates that act on behalf of Iraq not for US. But this is not happening because the parties are supported by the US.

SW: Were the London bombings linked to Iraq?

R: The London Bombings were linked to Iraq because when I talk to Muslims in the west and in America they say they have had enough of double standards. 50 were killed in London. But each day more than 50 Iraqis are killed. Where is the chorus of condemnation for them? Such double standards are not acceptable.

I was in Iraq when the London bombing happened. I talked to people in the street and many said, 'let them taste their medicine'. But I personally don't think that two wrongs make a right.

I believe that not all westerners are evil. I have been living in Ireland for the last fifteen years and never met anyone supporting this war. When I go to Iraq I argue that not everyone in Europe or Ireland is evil.

Many are good people who support the Iraq people. But there are a few evil people in power who want to control the wealth of other countries.

The British want to pass the law which makes it an offence to 'condone or glorify terrorism. Which will also be applied to justifying or glorifying terrorism anywhere, not just in the United Kingdom.'

This could include supporting the Iraqi resistance. This law will drive genuine people out of politics and drive most organisations under ground. But no matter what they do this organisation will survive. Just look at Northern Ireland.

They barred Sinn Fein from the media, introduced internment and mass arrests but at the end of it they had to talk. Peace only comes after negotiation.

The new terror laws specifically target Muslims. The same laws will not apply to BNP. This has implications for the anti-war movement. We now have to be careful of what we are saying. But I will keep saying I support the resistance.

The Iraqis have the right to defend themselves. They are occupied and therefore, even under International treaties have the right to defend themselves.

SW: Does Shannon make Ireland complicit?

R: The best thing Irish people can do for the Iraqi people is to refuse the US permission to use Shannon Airport for the war on Iraq. By allowing them use it that's support for mass murder and supporting murder is a crime.

Ireland was always neutral in their foreign policy. They had a good relationship with Arab nations because Ireland supported Palestine.

But we must stop the Irish government allowing the US to use Shannon Airport as a base for aggression. The Irish people have to show the Iraqi people that they don't agree with the government, that the aggression is not done in their name. That's why we hope to see many people opposing Shannon on Sep 24th.

PATRIOTISM IN IRAQ



S24: Everyone to Shannon



Anti-war activists across the Island are leafleting, organising stalls, fundraisers, public meetings and media stunts to get people on the buses for the Shannon Peace Festival on September 24th.

Dublin

Some recent events in Dublin included a fund-raising gig in Whelans that had over 200 people. 70 attended a meeting of Raied Al Wazzan in the city centre. A successful vigil was held for Cindy Sheehan at the US embassy and Shannon information stalls continue on Grafton St at 2pm every Saturday. Contact Dave at 087 2703564

Belfast

The Belfast Anti-War Movement held a vigil in front of Belfast City Hall to highlight and support Cindy Sheehan's campaign.

Around 25 people draped a US flag over a coffin, to signify the dead US soldiers.

A public meeting with Raied al Wazzan and Sinead Ní Bhroin from

the IAWM was attended by 40 people. Students

While it appears as if the Make Poverty History/G8 protests have almost been written out of history, the Students Against Poverty in Belfast is continuing to mobilise. SAP member Sean Mitchell said: "We are aiming to grow from being established in six schools to see Students against Poverty set up in 10 schools including schools outside of West Belfast."

SAP is busy organising a bus to the Peace Festival in Shannon. For more information call Sean on 07717123462.

Cork

Following a very successful meeting on Islamophobia two women from the US organised a fund raising gig with three local bands playing to raise money for a Cork bus to Shannon on 24th September. The anti war stall is run every Saturday and is reporting huge popular support for the demand of a withdrawal of troops from Shannon.

Cindy Sheehan inspires US anti-war movement

By Virginia Rodino, United for Peace and Justice, United States

On Day 24 of the peaceful occupation of Crawford, Texas, Cindy Sheehan wrote:

"While George golfed yesterday, the worst hurricane ever struck New Orleans; oil went up to over \$68.00 a barrel; and an American soldier was killed in the charade and cataclysmic occupation of Iraq.

The soldier's family doesn't even know what's going to hit them yet. The death is 'Pending Notification.' I continually ask myself: 'How do George Bush and other death-mongers live with themselves?'

While George vacations and bikes and golfs his way to the lowest poll numbers since Richard Nixon, other 'patriots' are wrapping themselves in the Stars and Stripes and going along with the farce that the mission from hell, 'Killing more people in Iraq, because so many have already been killed,' is somehow a good thing ordained by God. I can live with myself, but trust me, sleep does not come easily to me these days."

Cindy Sheehan left the Veterans for Peace convention in Dallas, Texas, a month ago and trekked to her vacationing president's ranch to ask, "Why did my son have to die?"

Publicly ignored and slighted by her president, Cindy Sheehan and Camp Casey's presence in Crawford drew widespread attention to the contradictions of Bush's warmongering policies, as well as his supposed care of the troops and their families back at home. Already having lost a child in a senseless war, mothers of fallen soldiers across the country had their ire raised as they observed that Bush could not break out of his vacationing reverie for even a few minutes to meet with a grieving mother.

Bush's callousness and the courage of Cindy Sheehan gave another gigantic boost to a burgeoning anti-war movement in the United States.

The movement had already been riding the energies created by the Downing Street memo hearings led by Representative John Conyers, the formation of an Out of Iraq caucus in Congress, a scathing anti-war testimonial by Respect MP George Galloway in front of the U.S. Senate, Congressional and citizen impeachment inquiries, falling Bush approval ratings, and robust counter-recruitment campaigns across the



Cindy Sheehan

country, among other events, vigils, and demonstrations.

These energies are building to a giant show of strength on September 24-26 in Washington, DC.

These days of action include a mass rally and march, a Ceasefire concert, an anti-war festival, non-violent civil disobedience, and a day of lobbying Congress (see www.unitedforpeace.org).

This is the first major national demonstration in the United States since February 15, 2003, and already several other anti-war movements in other countries, including Stop the War, UK; Stop the War, Greece; Canada; Austria; Australia; and Ireland have committed to mobilizing a solidarity demonstration.

These global activities represent a planet of people who, despite the right-wing produced stigma of protest, the crush of "homeland security" that also is intended to crush political dissent; and the daily struggle to simply support oneself and one's family - are still the world over mobilizing and organizing, determined to march against war and the Bush agenda.

In the United States, we will be marching and rallying under the banner of "Bring the Troops Home Now, End the War in Iraq."

See you on the streets!
 ■ Virginia Rodino is the DC mobilization coordinator for the September 24-26 days of action in Washington, DC.

She is an administrative steering committee member of United for Peace and Justice, the largest anti-war coalition in the United States.

She is also a director of Democracy Rising's Stop the War campaign (see www.democracyrising.us). She can be contacted at rodino@riseup.net.

US Military Out of Shannon

Ireland out of War

Peace Rally Saturday September 24th




with music by:

- *The Revs*
- *Jimi Cullen *The Chapters*
- *Pete Courtney *Cypher*
- *Dermot Byrne *22*
- *Idle Hands *Mark OConnor*

Assemble Shannon Town Centre 1pm for March to Rally and Music at Shannon Airport from 2pm

Irish Anti-War Movement
www.irishantiwar.org/ info@irishantiwar.org /01 8727912



Socialist Worker

Editorial

Web: www.swp.ie Email: swped@eircom.net Phone: 01 8722682

Bush's world order

At the heart of US foreign and domestic policy over the last 2 decades lie two main ideologies. First of all, there is neoliberalism, which involves the emergence of the corporate state and the decline of the welfare state, with the under funding and privatisation of public services such as health, transport etc.

The second is imperialism, involving the invasion of Iraq in 1991 and 2003, the bombings of the Balkans, Kosova and the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Since the election of George W. Bush these policies have been driven to the heart of our global world order. Almost every government across the world, including our own, now supports and push through these policies.

However, last week the disgusting results of neoliberalism and imperialism were revealed in their most stark form in New Orleans and Iraq. Over one thousand Iraqis were crushed in Iraq partly due to a US road block.

Thousands died in New Orleans because the poor were left stranded with no food and water as they couldn't leave because there was no public transport. The National Guard could not respond as most of them are in Iraq. Bush asked people to donate to the Red Cross. There's not a lack of money.

The US now spends \$6 bn per month on Iraq. This is the reality of Bush's 'new world order'. A perspective which is held by our own government, with privatisation of health and the US's use of Shannon. However, Bush's order is crumbling both at home and abroad.

At home his approval rating has dropped to a record low of 45 %. Abroad, Bulgaria is the latest country to withdraw from Iraq. A large turnout on the global day of protest on September 24th will be another important blow to Bush's order.

London bombings linked to Iraq

Blair has done everything possible to try and separate the London Bombings from his decision to partake in the murderous occupation of Iraq. However, last week's Al Qaeda video included one of the London Bombers stating that he was motivated by "the atrocities perpetuated against his people across the world."

He said "Until you stop the bombing, gassing, imprisonment and torture of my people we will not stop this fight. We are at war and I am a soldier."

His target was the "lands and interests of the countries which took part in the aggression against Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan".

The atrocities in London must be condemned but the above statement indicates that what lies at the heart of the attacks was not some 'extreme' religious bigotry but the result of Western governments' foreign policies.

Disgraceful campaign against Muslims

The Evening Herald recently ran a front page story about a 'secret' Dublin mosque that contained "Islamic extremists" who "pose a serious threat".

The truth, if the Herald had any interest in it, is that there are a number of private Mosques in Dublin that Muslims use to pray if they cannot make it to their nearest Mosque for their obligatory prayer time.

There was no explanation in the article of why those attending "posed a serious threat." But such racist targeting of Muslims suits Tony O Reilly because it ensures people get angry at Muslims and not at the obscene wealth and profits he and his newspapers are making, while people lie on hospital trolleys and children attend schools in run down schools.

COMMENT/OPINION

Send your views to swped@eircom.net



Time for a people's movement: THE DAVITT LEAGUE

By Rory Hearne

The Davitt League was launched on August 16th, in Castlebar, Co Mayo on the anniversary of the foundation of the Land League of Mayo in 1879.

Control over natural resources, democracy and corporate power is at the heart of the newly founded 'Davitt League'.

Its founding charter, the "people before profit charter" includes six principles to which the league is committed. These are,

- Ireland's natural resources belong to the Irish people for the benefit of the Irish people;
- Public amenities are not for the generation of profit for a few;
- Equitable taxation is a basic right;
- Democracy in planning is a basic right;
- Irish neutrality is non-negotiable for profit;
- A multicultural Ireland respects all its people equally.

The league aims to create a movement that unites those who agree with this charter.

A meeting will be held in Dublin on October 21st to bring together campaigns and individuals who are interested in being part of such a movement.

This will also mark the anniversary of the first meeting of the National Land League in 1879 which organised a countrywide struggle against Landlordism known as the Land War.

The Davitt League is an exciting development which could be the basis for the emergence of a new left movement in Ireland.

Labour, the Greens and Sinn Fein refuse to rule out coalition with right-wing, privatising, pro-war parties.

A new left movement of people-power can give a political voice to cam-

paigns and help to build a movement to defeat neoliberalism and war.

Maura Harrington, one of the founders of the league spoke to **Socialist Worker**.

"The Davitt League (and its six-point People before Profit charter) emerged as a response to all the events leading up to the jailing of the Rosspoint Five.

"It is the abandonment of democratic exercise by the main political parties which has led to the creation of the League.

"There are close parallels with the reasons that led to the foundation of the Land League and today.

"Just compare the natural resource of Irish land owned by British landlords during the 19th century to the natural resource of gas in the 21st century.

"It makes absolutely no sense in 2005 that the people's natural resources should be made available to multi-national oil companies with no benefits to the Irish people.

"This, by its very nature, is political because the act of politics is to represent the people who vote for their representatives.

"When representatives who have been elected in good faith by the decent exercise of franchise, and when that good faith does not appear to be repaid, then you have a political problem and we would hope to go some way towards offering a political solution.

"In 1879 the Irish people were subjects of the British crown. They were, at that stage, subjected to the whims of landlords and had no control over their own destiny.

"How much has changed other than the composition of the landlords? Our own experience has shown that the state-corporate interest comes before the people.

"What has happened to us in Mayo over the past five years can happen and

does happen all over the country.

"It is the abandonment of democratic exercise by the main political parties which has led to this.

"When the main political parties and those who have been elected by the inherently decent voters with a whole lot of razzmatazz and sound and fury – when that comes to signify nothing, then it behoves the people once more to reassert their will. It is in that context that we set up the League.

"It aims to have at its back bone all those involved in progressive campaigns.

"But we hope also to get the message to people who are not involved in campaigns, to involve those who are not necessarily political – or aligned with groups on the left and may not wish to be – but people who are totally disenchanted.

"There is an Ireland out there that is essentially forgotten and neglected by the establishment classes. It will also be open to activists from Northern Ireland.

"At the meeting on October 21 we hope that there will be a very wide representation of people's movements from all over the country.

"It's envisaged that there will be branches of the Davitt League set up all over the country from the national meeting. Whether or not the League would field its own candidates or endorse candidates as a group remains to be seen.

"It is now time for such a people's movement. It is a chance to get together and set our own agenda and not that of the corporations.

"There is a lot of work and discussion necessary to further this project."

To get involved contact Maura Harrington at

Whose World? Whose gas?



By Andy Storey

The law locks up the man or woman
Who steals the goose from off the common
But leaves the greater villain loose
Who steals the common from the goose

These are the opening lines of an anonymous poem written in satirical protest at the ‘enclosure’ movement of the 15th to 19th centuries, in which thousands of British people found the commonly owned land they had farmed for generations handed over to private individuals.

The evicted population became the core of the emerging industrial proletariat, or else ended up destitute.

The new private owners of the ‘enclosed’ land made massive fortunes from activities such as commercial sheep farming.

Today, some writers speak of a new ‘enclosure’ movement through which areas previously outside the full reach of the market are brought under the control of purely commercial considerations.

This can take a geographical form as capitalism expands into zones previously outside its total control; China and Iraq are examples of this.

The new ‘enclosure’ movement may also take a sectoral form as activities traditionally publicly owned and provided – such as water, education and health – are transferred to market control through privatisation programmes.

Even the human genome may be commodified through patents filed on ‘intellectual’ property by pharmaceutical companies and others.

But the Rosspoint issue raises an older and clearer version of how a resource that should benefit all, and is

in a sense the property of all, is being turned over to a private company for private profit.

This happens all over the world. Shell has taken \$30 billion of oil revenues out of the Niger Delta, leaving local people with little other than continued or deepened poverty, environmental destruction, and the loss of their leaders, including Ken Saro-Wiwa, who was hanged along with his colleagues for protesting Shell’s exploitation of the Ogoni people.

In the poor West African country of Equatorial Guinea, Exxon-Mobil leads a resource exploitation drive that leaves the (corrupt) government with only 12 per cent of energy revenues, and the local people with nothing.

But even the rip-off example of Equatorial Guinea is outshone by the case of Shell and the Corrib gas field.

In 1975, the Irish government strategy for energy extraction was straightforward: the state would have a 50 per cent shareholding in any oil or gas discovery, and the extracting company would have to pay royalties of between 6 and 7 per cent as well as tax at a rate of 50 per cent.

Under the current policy, there is no state shareholding, there are no royalties due, and the tax rate is only 25 per cent.

(And even that low tax rate only kicks in after the company’s exploration and development costs have been recovered).

In addition, the government has granted Shell and its associates 400 acres of Coillte-owned (i.e. state-owned) forest for the laying of the pipeline, and has sought to expropriate private assets – local people’s farmlands – through compulsory purchase orders.

As the imprisoned men have pointed out, because the Norwegian state-owned Statoil company holds 38 per cent of the Corrib field, the Norwegian

public has far more of a stake in this project than the Irish public.

Meanwhile, the Irish government continues to offer new exploration licenses to Shell and others on these extraordinarily favourable terms.

It is not, as government apologists would have it, a question of the Irish state overriding selfish private interests to generate a greater social good.

It is a question of the Irish state transferring the assets of the Irish people – state-owned and private-owned – to boost the profits of an already obscenely rich private company.

The double standard at work is well captured by the earlier cited ‘enclosure’ poem:

The law demands that we atone
When we take things we do not own
But leaves the lords and ladies fine
Who take things that are yours and mine

The Irish state is potentially in a very powerful position vis-a-vis the oil companies as global oil and gas reserves dwindle, and companies become ever more desperate to access and extract remaining resources.

Instead of exploiting that potential bargaining power to strike favourable deals for the Irish people, the state is acting as an agent of corporate exploitation and, potentially, environmental destruction.

And further contrary to claims that ‘globalisation’ leaves governments powerless in the face of corporate forces, it is apparent that Shell could not do what it is doing without the actions and institutions of the state – exploration licenses, grants of woodland, compulsory purchase orders, the judiciary, the prison service.

This injustice can be opposed electorally. The Scottish people thrown off their land by the first ‘enclosure’ movement were also often the people

who had provided the British army with its main supply of foot soldiers. One evicted man, forced off his land to make way for sheep, remarked dryly to an army recruiting sergeant:

“You have chosen sheep over men, let sheep defend you”.

Equally, people in Mayo and elsewhere may say to Fianna Fáil, the PDs and the Fine Gael leadership: “You have chosen Shell over the people, let Shell elect you”.

The government can also be opposed through courageous civil disobedience, of the sort that the Rosspoint 5 have been forced to practice. The ‘enclosure’ poem finishes with the lines:

The law locks up the man or woman
Who steals the goose from off the common
And geese will still a common lack
Till they go and steal it back

Indeed, ‘stealing’ back the land and resources that should belong to the people in the first place should not even qualify as a criminal act.

And the government can be opposed through mass mobilisation and protest. In recent weeks, hundreds of villagers living near the Agbada oil-pumping facility in the Niger Delta forced the closure of Shell’s operations there, cutting production by 10,000 barrels a day.

The villagers are protesting at derisory compensation offers after an oil spill and fire devastated farmlands, fish ponds and local shrines. Shell, the villagers say, is guilty of “cruelty and inhumanity to the plight of our communities and people”.

But they are not taking it lying down, and neither should we.

Andy Storey lectures in Development Studies in UCD

The Irish government continues to offer new exploration licenses to Shell and others on extraordinarily favourable terms

The 'war on terror' is a war on civil liberties



By Rory Hearne

Ireland has introduced a raft of new 'anti-terror' laws which show, despite Taoiseach Bertie Ahern's claims to contrary, that Ireland is in fact up to its neck in supporting the US's war on terror.

The Minister for Justice Michael McDowell signed an agreement in July with the US that will give powers to US law enforcers to interrogate Irish citizens in Ireland.

He also announced that because Britain has adopted compulsory ID cards, it is inevitable that they will also be brought in here.

The Treaty signed last month between Ireland and the USA will mean that "US investigators, including CIA agents, will be allowed interrogate Irish citizens on Irish soil in total secrecy".

In response to this statement, Michael McDowell claimed that it was "a fabrication to say CIA agents would be able to question Irish citizens".

But McDowell was twisting the truth. Under the Treaty the US may indeed ask Irish authorities: "to track down people in Ireland; transfer prisoners in Irish custody to the US; and carry out searches and seize evidence on behalf of the US Government".

It also allows US authorities access to an Irish suspect's confidential bank information. Article 8 of the Treaty allows for US officials to ask questions directly of the suspect here in Ireland.

To top it all off the Irish authori-

ties must keep all these activities secret if asked to do so by the US.

The EU-US Agreement in 2003 which led to the controversial Treaty was negotiated in secret and all related documents were "confidential".

ID Cards

Only days after the London Bombings Irish government officials were saying, "we will have no alternative but to follow British plans for ID cards".

And Seamus Brennan, Minister for Social Welfare, has just announced that his Department will develop an ID card that can store data from a range of government agencies in order to combat welfare 'fraud'.

But figures for claims under false identity are estimated at 2.5% of fraudulent claims. Anyway, ID cards will not stop some of the biggest fraud, that carried out by corrupt politicians, accountants and business people.

The cost of setting up an identity card scheme in Ireland could run to €1 billion. Individual cards could range from €22 to €440. At least this might make the establishment think a little before rushing them in here (although with the electronic voting and other money wasting fiascos it's hardly likely).

A campaign group in Britain against the introduction of ID Cards there (see www.no2id.net) say that "The ID Card will include individual checking and numbering of the population - marking many personal details (up to 51 categories including

fingerprints) as "registrable facts" to be disclosed and constantly updated. The system offers a ready-made police-state tool. ID cards in practice would provide a pretext for those in authority - public or private - to question individuals who stand out for reasons of personal appearance or demeanour.

In no instance has the presence of an identity card system been shown a significant deterrent to terrorist activity.

The shooting dead of Jean Carlos de Menezes showed the danger of granting more powers to the state in order to fight the so called war on 'terror'.

But while the introduction of a shoot to kill policy isn't on the agenda here, the Irish government has followed the US and Britain in using the war on terror to introduce new laws which destroy our civil liberties.

Just like the silence around Shannon, there has been very little attention paid to these new laws in the mainstream media and politics.

In February the Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Act was passed in the Dail. Now the government can access your personal communication data such as constant tracking of your location if you carry a mobile phone, who you are communicating with and your text messages.

The Irish Council of Civil Liberties said in response, "This indiscriminate collection of data goes against a core principle of the rule of law: that citizens should have notice of the circumstances in which the State may conduct surveillance, so that they can regulate their behav-

our to avoid unwanted intrusions.

"Under the European Court of Human Rights, such interference in the private lives of individuals is not necessary in a democratic society."

In July an extra section was added at the last minute to the Garda Act 2005 which allows Gardaí to set up CCTV cameras everywhere.

But no guidelines were set so we don't know what controls will exist and for how long footage will be retained.

The definition of 'Terrorism' in the Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Bill. Terrorism is defined as "intentional acts..., committed with the aim of: unduly compelling a Government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing any act".

This could see strikes and protests attempting to shut down roads, rail or Shannon Airport becoming 'terrorist' acts.

Proposals in the Criminal Justice Bill 2005 include anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs), and further powers for the Gardaí (such as Section 8 of the Bill which increases from 12 hours to 24 hours the time Gardaí can detain someone without charge.

Section 13 empowers the Gardaí to photograph all persons arrested.

While Section 29 allows Gardaí issue an 'on the spot' fine for 'disorderly' conduct in a public place. Gardaí will be judge and jury without any safeguards.)

War on terror is a war on civil liberties

The emergence of the anti-capitalist and anti-war movements across the world in the last five years has meant protests are growing.

Therefore anti-terror laws introduced in the aftermath of September 11th were seen as a good opportunity by the elite to include protests in the definition of terrorist acts.

The ICCL pointed out at the time that, "The anti-globalisation protests in Genoa and Gothenburg were fresh in the minds of many Governments". Schedule 2 to the Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Act 2002 lists 32 offences that can constitute terrorist offences, including the obstruction of vehicles.

But most marches and protests block traffic. The ICCL continues "is it solely intended to "combat terrorism" or does it have a wider purpose? Is it the intention to extend the definition of "terrorism" to cover demonstrations, protests and political dissent as well?"

The war on terror now resembles the acceptance of neoliberal policies by the establishment. No one wants to appear 'soft' on terrorism. The Labour Party now supports this politics of fear.

They are campaigning for the introduction of repressive measures such as the Anti Social Behaviour Orders.

But it is only ending Western intervention in the Middle East and in particular the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, (and here ending our complicity with that bloody war) that will stop terrorism here and abroad.

Whats On/Events

email to swped@eircom.net Phone 01 8722682

Anti War Events

Every Saturday Anti-War Movement information stall on Grafton St at 2pm
See <http://irishantiwar.org/>

Belfast Fundraiser:
Art Exhibition and Classical Music Wed 7th Sept.



Artists, Poets & Musicians against the use of Shannon Airport by US troops en route to Iraq - present
WEDNESDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER
Art Exhibition and Classical Music
@ Safe House (17 Donegal st) 7pm - 8.30pm
Poetry Night @ The John Hewitt - 8.30pm onwards

Belfast Anti-War Movement & Students against Poverty ph 07742 531 617 for information or bus tickets to Shannon

Public Meeting with Rose Gentle: 'The War Comes Home', Thur Sept 8th, Wynn's Hotel, 7.30pm
By Dublin Catholic Worker/Pitstop Ploughshares

Anti-War Pub Quiz
Thur Sept 8th, Red Parrot, Pub Dorset St, 8pm
By Dublin North City Anti-War Group

Israel and Palestine Human rights conference
Saturday 10th September from 10am, National College of Ireland, IFSC, Dublin 1. Free

admission. Irish and International guest speakers, workshops, action.
<http://www.amnesty.ie>

Vigil for all victims of War on Terror

September 11th O Connell Street at the GPO, 8pm.
Benefit Gig: for Pitstop ploughshares

'Give Peace A Dance'
Thursday 15th September 8pm
Lower Deck Pub Portobello

Shannon Peace festival
Saturday 24th September



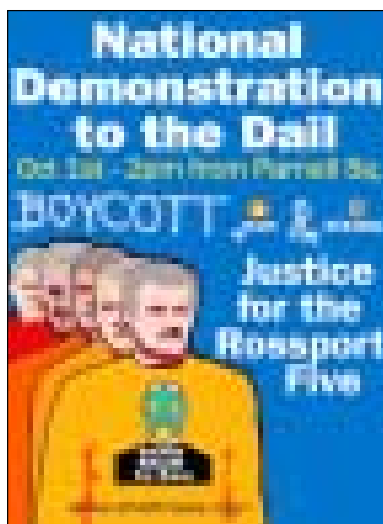
Music, rally, march in Shannon, coaches leaving nation wide
People to Contact About Buses
North Dublin: Tel 087 2839964
Dun Laoghaire: Tel 087 2703564
Dublin South City: Tel 087

Dublin West: Tel 087
Belfast: Tel 004477
Cork email tel 087

Northern Ireland:

Shell to Sea Events

National Demonstration.



March to the Dail
2.00pm, Parnell Sq, October 1st

Other Shell Protests

Saturday Sept 10th
Blockade Statoil Depot, East Wall, Dublin
Starts 8.30am. Meet Promenade Rd.

Waterford City March
March from Glen, 3pm to Red Square for rally.

Sligo - Protest Rally
Assemble Market Yard, 3pm
March to City Hall

Tralee Protest Shell Depot, Clash, Tralee
www.shelltosea.com
Email: info@corribsos.com

Swords Shell to Sea public meeting
Room 5, Senior Citizen Centre
13th September at 7.30pm,
Speaker Marie Ni Sheigin

Dublin Shell to Sea
Meets every Tuesday night, 8pm, An Taisce building opposite mother red caps, Thomas St

Dun Laoghaire Baths

Dun Laoghaire Baths protest



Hurricane Katrina

Socialist Worker
PUBLIC MEETING
The Bush Agenda:
NEW ORLEANS LEFT TO STARVE
IRAQ—MONEY NO OBJECT

Dublin: Wed 7th Sept, 8pm
ATGWU Hall, Middle Abbey St.
Speaker Brian Kelly (US socialist)

Galway: Thurs 8th Sept 8pm
Java's Coffee House, Abbeygate Street, Speaker Dr. Peadar O'Grady

SWP Forums

Dublin South City: Islam, Politics and Religion, 8pm, Wed September 14th, Trinity College
Contact 086 1523542 for details

Tralee: Are the Irish and British Labour Parties two sides of the same coin? Speaker: Sean Moraghan. Abbey Gate Hotel (bar), Tralee.
Thursday, September 8th, 6.30pm

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Socialist Worker is your paper. It's the alternative voice, the voice of socialism and struggle.

Whether it's nurses protesting against under-funding, asylum seekers on hunger strike against their deportation, campaigns against the Bin Tax or support for the Iraqi resistance and opposition to the US use of the Shannon 'Warport', Socialist Worker is giving the real opinions, the real voice of

those movements.

The lack of a political alternative both North and South to oppose privatisation, war and racism has never been more obvious.

Socialist Worker is committed to building such a new alternative left voice, building support for the movements from below, and building toward a world without capitalism, the other world that we believe is possible and more necessary

in 2005 than ever before.

Currently Socialist Worker is a completely voluntary production. We get no advertising finance and it is funded completely by sales.

In order to fulfil the potential that exists in this current period and build support for the projects outlined above we need a higher quality paper and ultimately much higher sales.

Central to this will be raising the finance to cover a

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WHAT THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STANDS FOR

Capitalism 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

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed. The courts, the army and police exist to defend the interests of the wealthy.

To destroy capitalism, we need to remove the present state structures and create a workers' state based on 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.

END RACISM AND OPPRESSION

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

working class.

We are for full social, economic and political equality for women.

We oppose immigration controls which are always racist.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

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!

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party.

This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system.

We call for co-operation between left-wing parties and the formation of a strong socialist bloc.

We stand for fighting trade unions and for independent rank and file action.

Join the Socialists

Fill in the form and send to
SWP PO Box 1648 Dublin 8

Name.....

Address.....

Email.....

Phone.....



Socialist Worker

As thousands march in Dun Laoghaire to save the seafront: **PEOPLE POWER WILL STOP PRIVATISATION**

Voices from the Save Our Seafront campaign:

Christy Moore
singer:

"I have become involved in the SAVE OUR SEAFRONT campaign because I believe that such a vital amenity should be available to all people and not just the wealthy few. I have the impression that Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown council is firmly on the side of the Developers and the wealthy. Their condescending attitude to the SOS campaign and its activists serve to copper-fasten this impression. There are too many Luxury Apartments in the area already. Why should the seafront be the sole domain of Yachties and Millionaires. Historically and traditionally everyone who so desired could paddle and fish, swim and enjoy their day at the Seaside. I maintain that Dun Laoghaire and Rathdown council is seeking to make our seafront the private playground of the privileged few. Is that why we elected them?"

Bob Waddell of
Sandycove & Glashule
residents association:

"Private apartments or any handing over of the public seafront to private developers is just not acceptable. The public wants and deserves a fully accessible public water amenity for kids and families that respects the environment and heritage of the area. People won't accept anything less."

Nicola Sarratt,
Secretary of SOS:

"We reject utterly claims by the council and government that they don't have the money for a fully public amenity. Government coffers are stuffed with money. They just won't spend it unless some developer can make a big profit. We want the government and council to come up with the money to provide an amenity that will be purely for the benefit of the public."



This is a fight for public amenities

By Richard Boyd Barrett

The Save Our Seafront campaign has organised the biggest protests Dun Laoghaire has ever seen against the Council's disgraceful proposal to privatise and destroy the people's baths and the public seafront.

Our protests have seriously rattled local councillors. That's why they deferred the vote on their plan until October. It is why many of them that initially supported these plans, or said nothing, have now said they oppose them.

However, the County management and many councillors hoped the Save Our Seafront protests would disappear over the summer break.

They hoped to push these plans through when the protests died down. With this rally we want to send a clear message to the Council

that opposition to this plan or any other plan to privatise the seafront will continue.

In particular, we must put huge pressure on parties like Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour. They are all still sitting on the fence on the issue and refusing to say where they really stand. We must make clear that parties that engage in that kind of dishonest politics will be punished by the electorate. We want firm commitments from each party that they will oppose this scandalous plan.

We must also make clear that slightly scaling down these plans is not acceptable. The public wants a public swimming amenity for kids and families, no private apartments and no more than two storeys in height.

We want to make sure that the public seafront remains fully public and is developed only as a public amenity. The protests will not stop until we achieve this.

We now also need to crank up the pressure on the FF/PD government. They are deliberately underfunding local councils to push them in the direction of privatisation.

They are doing this in the interests of their big business backers. It is a disgrace that at a time of economic boom, with government coffers full, they refuse to put money into badly needed public amenities and services. If Minister Mary Hanafin (FF) and Fiona O Malley (PD) really oppose this plan, as they say, their government should deliver the funds needed to develop the baths as a public amenity.

This fight for Dun Laoghaire Baths is not simply a local battle. Developers are lining up to put more high-rise exclusive developments in Sandymount, Blackrock Baths, the Carlisle Pier, Bullock Harbour and the tearooms on Killiney Beach. If this plan gets through, the others will follow and

soon you will need to be a millionaire with a swipe card to get down to the seafront.

This campaign also links into other battles by local communities and ordinary people across the country. Whether it is farmers fighting a dangerous gas pipeline through their land in Mayo or communities opposing toxic incinerators and unjust bin taxes, this government is trampling on people, environment and democracy in the interests of big business and a super-wealthy minority.

We need to build a new alliance of communities and grassroots campaigns to challenge this government and demand that people, environment and democracy come before profit.

■ Richard Boyd Barrett is the Chairperson of Save Our Seafront and the local SWP representative for Dun Laoghaire.

SOS is organising a march with music from Christy Moore on September 18th in Dun Laoghaire. For info see inside p 11