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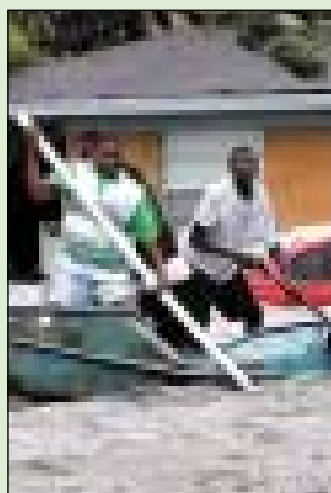
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LEBANON RESISTANCE HUMILIATES ISRAEL

STOP THE WAR

END THE OCCUPATION OF IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN US TROOPS OUT OF SHANNON

The humiliation of the US and Israel in Lebanon is very significant.

It has breathed new life into the opposition to war on a global scale. And it has at least seriously delayed an attack on Iran or Syria.

Throughout the middle east the success of the Lebanese resistance has meant the renewal of confidence of the Arab people that resistance can win and it is possible to defeat the might of imperialist forces. Hizbollah have become the popular heroes throughout the region. In Turkey (an ally of the imperialism) thousands have taken to the streets to demand that no Turkish troops are sent to Lebanon to turn their guns on Hizbollah.

Bush and the neo-cons have reacted to their humiliation over Lebanon by turning up the heat on Iran and threatening to impose sanctions through the UN. They are using Iran's nuclear programme as an excuse to attack the country.

At the outset of the attack on Lebanon Condoleezza Rice talked of the "birth pangs of a new Middle East". But the entire region is in chaos and it has never been clearer that the agenda of Bush and Blair in the region has completely failed.

With the heat turned down on Lebanon the scale of the War in Afghanistan and Iraq is staggering. In the past four months at least 1,600 people have been killed in Afghanistan. The British Army have lost over 22 soldiers there since 2001 with eight of those killed in the month of August alone.

British freighters packed with weaponry and ammunition arrive in the country five times each week. US aircraft are constantly air-bombing villages and towns. In the Helmand province there was only one day in August that the US did not drop their bombs.

The more the US and Britain intervene the more bloody and violent the region becomes.



Israeli devastation in Lebanon

Photo Guy Smallman

Iraq is growing even bloodier by the day with countless hundreds killed in bombings each week – this war barely gets mentioned in the mainstream media any more.

As the horror and bloodshed continue it is clear that imperialism in the region has cruelly failed. This is an appalling world that they have

created and all the more reason why we need to organise in our tens of thousands and get out onto the streets to demand it ends.

September 23rd is a world-wide day of action against the war and occupation of the Middle East. The anti war movement has been reinvigorated by the defeat of the US

and Israel in Lebanon but the consequences may well be an attack on Iran on a horrendous scale.

In the US the opposition to the occupation has grown massively. Bush's ratings are down to their lowest ever and the majority of people want their troops home. Blair is in even bigger trouble and may well be out of office in the next few months. There is only one word for his troubles – "Iraq". He has to go.

We need to send a message to our own regime that war and occupation must be rejected and that they must stop colluding by allowing the use of Shannon to the US murder machine. We must insist that none of our troops are sent into the Lebanon to back up US and Israeli policy. We will not support our troops being used to take out the popular resistance of Hizbollah.

We need to mobilise the biggest numbers possible to give confidence to those who like the people of Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan have the courage to stand up and oppose the illegal occupation of their countries.

Over the coming weeks we can get stuck in where ever we live, work or study to make sure that September 23rd is a huge success.

Local anti war groups can build the demonstration by

- organising public meetings and film shows

- get on the street with stalls to distribute leaflets, sign petitions, urge others to take leaflets, posters etc into their jobs and schools

- visit workplaces, community centres, churches, mosques, colleges and talk to others to get involved in building the demo

- arrange a press conference in your local area by inviting councillors, TD's, union officials, community workers to give their support to September 23rd demo

Get the posters up everywhere and distribute leaflets and stickers to everyone.

DEMONSTRATE SEPTEMBER 23
ASSEMBLE 1.00PM PARNELL SQUARE DUBLIN
Called by Irish Anti War Movement, Peace and Neutrality Alliance, NGP Peace Alliance

QUOTES OF THE FORTNIGHT

"Crap."

— British Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott describing the Bush Administration in a private meeting

"The present attitude is frightening and fascist."

Justice Dermot Kinlen in his annual report on the prison service describes the approach of Minister for Justice Michael McDowell and his officials to prison reform:

"The black majority were misled. The political decisions made by Mandela, Mbeki and their fellow 'moderates', regulating the needs of the poorest, have allowed the continuation of suffering by exclusion, apartheid by other means."

John Pilger, an extract from his new book on South Africa "Freedom Next Time"

"I don't want to be associated with people like Mr Bloomberg or anyone else who supports war crimes"

Declan Bree former Labour TD and former Mayor of Sligo protests at the unveiling of a statue in Sligo by New York Mayor Bloomberg

"We could not rule out the risk of somebody going crazy—or even crazier—within the U.S. government."

Raul Castro, acting President of Cuba, on why he mobilised tens of thousands of troops after the illness of his brother Fidel was announced

"You can send Marines back for a third or fourth time, but you have to understand you are destroying their lives."

Paul Rieckhoff, A spokesperson for Iraq and Afghanistan

Veterans of America responding to the news that 1,200 inactive Marine reservists will be recalled to active duty in Iraq and Afghanistan

"Hizbollah attacked Israel. Hizbollah started the crisis, and Hizbollah suffered a defeat in this crisis."

President Bush kids himself yet again as another adventure overseas fails to deliver a much needed result for his administration

"The Israelis think: 'They are only Arabs. Let's go and kill them'. But in every house we have resistance and fighters. If they want to destroy Hizbollah, they will have to destroy our entire village."

A mourner in Qana

"We have heard that the clubs send in flyers and promotional material to businesses and offices, and there is no doubt the clubs are trying to 'normalise' the sex industry as harmless and as just another night out. Lap dancing clubs, however are part and parcel of the global sex industry and a gateway into prostitution and trafficking."

Geraldine Rowley from Ruhama, an organisation that help women in the sex industry, launches an awareness raising campaign to discourage workplaces from organising nights out to lap dancing clubs

Is Rabbitte preparing to play the racist card?

By Conor Kostick

Pat Rabbitte is at it again. Addressing the Parnell Summer School this year, purportedly in the spirit of Michael Davitt, Rabbitte returned the issue of immigration.

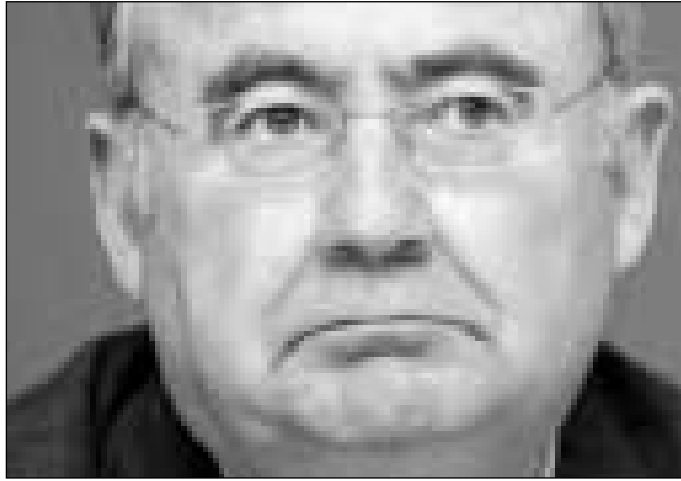
Now, of course there is nothing at all wrong with discussing immigration; it is a crucial issue for the left to be absolutely clear on, or risk the kinds of divisions in the working class movement that have seen the growth of the far right in the past, and in parts of Europe today.

The problem with the way Pat Rabbitte talks about immigration is that it is irresponsible, ambiguous and overall liable to increase hostility to immigrants.

It is not so long since the Labour leader raised the spectre of a huge attack on living standards, created by the arrival of millions of Polish workers. 'There are 40 million or so Poles, after all,' he said 'so it's an issue we have to look at.' There are in fact 38.6 million people in Poland, but the implication that they all wish to come to Ireland is utterly absurd. Yes, a lot of young, skilled, Polish people are coming to Ireland, but the actual figures are that a very manageable 11,900 came in the year to April.

Pat Rabbitte's Parnell School speech was widely reported and, while framing his remarks in perfectly innocuous multi-cultural sentiment, nevertheless he raised formulations that could encourage racism.

He invited his audience to 'ask the workers who used to be



Labour leader Rabbitte: Divide and rule

employed in hotels in Kerry and elsewhere. If there is no displacement, why did it preoccupy the social partners and government for the first 14 weeks of the talks for a new social contract?' He later warned that 'we have not been looking beyond the availability of an almost endless supply of well-educated, cheap labour... The bigger challenges of integration and assimilation rarely surface.' The problem here is that the message is unclear. It could be very easy to understand Rabbitte as echoing the divisive idea that immigrants are coming and taking jobs from Irish workers, and that it is this that leads to racism.

Naturally, Socialist Worker is inclined to mistrust Rabbitte's motives; as someone heading for a

ministry in a coalition government it might well suit him to prepare the ground for an age old strategy of divide and rule. But Labour Party members too, are unhappy with the direction being taken by their leader. The Sunday Business Post quoted members expressing unease that he was 'playing to the lowest common denominator', and 'one would wonder why he is coming back to that [topic] again.' To some extent Rabbitte can claim to be reflecting the genuine concerns of the trade unions, particularly following the Irish Ferries dispute: that immigration is leading to pressure on wages. Last November, for example, the ICTU obtained an e-mail from a Polish company called Kontakt. The e-mail offered to arrange that Polish

workers be registered with Polish companies and therefore avoid Irish labour legislation. It offered these workers at €4.70 per hour.

SIPTU, however, has responded to this kind of activity by pointing the finger not at the immigrants, but the employers. They have employed Polish and Lithuanian organisers to try to organise these worker, who, let's remember, are the people suffering the severest exploitation in Ireland today.

The greatest failure of Pat Rabbitte on the question of immigration is that he consistently omits to make the very simple but crucial point, that it is employers who are using immigrant labour to try to lower wages and condition.

A further sign that Rabbitte is focused upon the immigrant worker as a 'problem' is his advocacy of having a debate on whether to introduce work permits for immigrants. The Labour Party have denied that this means they are in favour of such permits; they just want to debate the idea. But why else bring the issue up?

Such permits are an extremely bad idea. Ideologically, the introduction of work permits will allow the authorities to send out a message that the arriving workers are to blame for unemployment or a fall in wages. Practically, it will lead to a two-tier workforce, with Garda harassment of the immigrant workers, and not the real culprits in this issue, the employers who are seeking to skirt labour legislation.

Back to school – The myth of free education

By Colm O'Rian

Parents, we are told, have never had it so good. The government has given €1,000 to parents of children under six years old as part of the last budget. Further steps are promised to alleviate the burden of childcare costs and we have a free education system. Reasons to be cheerful, it would appear.

However before the thousands of new infants learn to count "one, two, three" their parents will learn the reality of our education system. It is far from free. Parents of both primary and secondary level pupils have several bills to meet before their children set foot in the school. The costs are numerous. The Labour Party carried out a survey of costs facing parents and found that the parents of a child in first year of secondary school faced costs of €1,000. The National Parents Council compiles an annual survey of costs for parents. The



School books average €97

major burden on parents identified by the 2005 survey was as follows:

School uniforms – The average cost of uniform was found to be €109. This figure did not include the school tracksuit, which had an average cost of €38. Footwear

costs amounted to an average of €37 euro – this figure, one assumes, is for one pair of shoes; trainers would be far more. The total back to school clothing footwear allowance granted by the Department of Social and Family Affairs is €120 for children up to 11 years old and €190 for children above 12 years. This won't keep Trevor in shoes for long. Many parents won't qualify as the cut-off point for the scheme is very low-gross household income must be below €44,140.

School Books – The cost of schoolbooks averaged €97, up to a maximum of €400. The Book Rental scheme and the Aid for School Books grants scheme, which alleviate some of the pressures on parents, are direly underfunded.

School expenses & Voluntary Contributions – Schools facing critical underfunding issues often call on parents to bear the brunt of a broken education system. Many

of the costs of running a school such as: photocopying, Art Materials, Physical Education, Drama, Music, Foreign Languages, Swimming, Tests, School Tours and Insurance are passed on to parents.

Bad enough, but it gets worse. A central pillar of free education is equality. If education is free then anyone can achieve irrespective of social status and wealth. Once these costs appear the inequalities become obvious. As the voluntary contribution depends on the wealth of households attending the school, better off areas can have well resourced schools. The playing field becomes less level. Private fee paying schools are a further extension of this inequality – where the rich have a head start from the start. For true equality in education we must fight for a properly funded education system where education is truly free and every school has the resources of the best.

INSIDE THE SYSTEM

Already reeling from their inability to 'sort out' Hizbollah prominent Israeli politicians now face damaging sex scandals. Investigators seized computers and documents from Israeli president Moshe Katsav's home and will question him about allegations that he forced a former employee to having sex with him. The justice minister, Haim Ramon, resigned on Sunday following allegations that he sexually harassed a female soldier.

Aircoach workers secured trade union recognition from the management of the private bus operator following a 20-month campaign. SIPTU first began recruiting drivers at the company in January 2005. Aircoach, which is

owned by UK operator First Group, agreed to recognise the union after more than 90 per cent of drivers voted in favour of representation by SIPTU in May this year.

The Centre for Independent Living inspected seven HSE health centres in Dublin's inner city. It found that five of them were inaccessible by wheelchair while the other two were accessible by wheelchair, but the disabled toilets were not in use.

In a recent poll in Britain 72 per cent of respondents, including 65 per cent of Labour voters, said they believe government policy has made Britain more of a target for terrorists. Only 1 per cent of voters believe the government's foreign

policy has made Britain safer. This is a devastating finding for Blair who is coming under increasing pressure within the Labour Party

US companies are under unprecedented pressure from shareholders to disclose details of their political donations and to hold directors accountable for them. According to shareholder groups recent scandals on Wall Street and in Washington, like Enron and WorldCom, have led investors to demand more information on companies' political contributions, which totalled \$184 million (€143.47 million) in 2002.

A top AIB economist, John Beggs, has predicted an inflation crisis in his most recent

report. He predicts that prices for a whole range of everyday goods are predicted to rocket by 10pc in the final quarter of the year. General inflation, which covers items like food and drink, is predicted to hit 5pc before Christmas - putting it at more than double the European Central Bank targeted rate of 2pc.

Michael McDowell has announced that he will not financially assist the family of Terence Wheelock with costs for an independent forensic examination of his clothes. Terence died in police custody and questions need to be answered about his treatment by the police and the cause of his death.

The forensics cost several thousand euro and

will now be another barrier that the family will have to overcome in their pursuit of justice

The HSE has announced plans to cut services in Roscommon Hospital. About 700 people attended a meeting in opposition to the plan in Roscommon town. There is a further meeting next week to discuss a campaign of action and may involve marches.

The HSE proposes that a joint surgery department would be created between Roscommon and Portlincula hospital, some 33 miles away and all inpatient surgery would, in future, be carried out in Portlincula, leaving Roscommon to specialise in day-case surgery.

EDITORIAL**Discontent bubbles under the surface**

The Irish economy is the great capitalist success story of Europe but political opinion polls are showing very significant drops for both Fianna Fail – down to 35% and for the PD's down to 2%.

The social partnership deal has just been ratified by a huge majority of ICTU representatives but key groups of workers such as nurses, busworkers, bank workers and shop workers remain outside the process and are lodging pay claims over and above inflation. The massive acceptance of the deal does not mean that the unions are silenced for the next ten years. The pay deal has been overtaken by rising inflation rates already.

The cosy consensus at the heart of Irish politics often masks real discontent that is bubbling below the surface. Fianna Fail's drop in the polls has happened when there is an enormous amount of spare cash in Government coffers, the SSIA boats have just landed, there are now over 30,000 millionaires living here. Against that background we have had massive corruption scandals in the Gardai, the giveaway of natural resources to multinational companies like Shell and Statoil, the wrongful jailing of the Rosspoint Five and the McBreartys, crisis in the health service, underfunding of schools, low pay and conditions being forced on workers.

The real issue is where is the focus for all this discontent going to come from. If Enda Kenny and Pat Rabbitte are the opposition presented in the next general election, then there is a very good chance that Bertie's government will get back in.

There is a very real possibility of challenging the government by building on the grass-roots opposition in our communities and unions.

Working people put enormous energy into opposing bin charges, incinerators, private developments on their coastline, fighting for better hospitals and schools, stopping the destruction of their environment by oil companies, fighting to end collusion with Bush and Blair's war. These movements are vibrant and growing around the country but they lack the political representation that can provide a focus to build a different kind of society.

The People Before Profit/ Davitt League Alliance is a serious project with a long term goal to build such an alternative. The coming weeks will decide whether the left can form an alliance that will present a strong opposition based on the social movements and campaigns that can present real opposition to this government.

No troops for Lebanon

It would be a serious mistake to send Irish Troops to Lebanon. UN Resolution 1701 is at best ambiguous and at worst may be used to trigger further conflict. Crucially, the demand that all militias be disarmed is a recipe for dragging Irish and other western troops into conflict with Hizbollah.

The UN resolution attempts to win diplomatically for Israel what it failed to win militarily in its murderous assault on Lebanon. If Irish troops are told to implement such a resolution, they will effectively be doing the dirty work of Israel and their US backers.

The wording of the resolution leaves the door open for Israel to engage in further attacks, if they claim, 'self-defence.' It blames Hizbollah for the conflict when this issue is contested and there is, in fact, growing evidence that the Israeli attack on Lebanon was planned months in advance.

The resolution says nothing whatsoever about Israeli attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure in their recent murderous assault in Lebanon, though these are war crimes by any definition.

The resolution calls for the immediate release of the two Israeli hostages but the same demand is not put on Israel for the Lebanese prisoners it holds.

Irish Troops were sent to Lebanon in their thousands during the last Israeli occupation. Then the country was divided along sectarian lines. Today there is far more unity than division among the people and the popular resistance of Hizbollah could not have been successful but for the courage and persistence of the masses of Lebanese people who stood up against the occupation and flooded back to their villages to prevent the Israeli occupation from gaining any ground.

Any armed forces working in Lebanon under this resolution will be rightly seen by the people as tools of the US and Israel.

Don't be fooled by the media lies about Muslims

Demonstrators in Lebanon, supporting for the resistance of Hezbollah

Photo: Guy Smallman

By Abdullah Sayegh

The growth of Islamist hate-mongering in the Irish media has become apparent, not only in the tabloids, but in the serious newspapers too. An example is the Sunday Independent of August 27th.

Muslims are charged nowadays as being Islamist, a charge which seems at least to imply being murderers and terrorists. To be free of this charge, they are asked to speak their minds frankly to allay majority fears (Harris, Sunday Independent August 27th).

Ruth Dudley Edwards in the same issue, implies that though Islamists are graduates of third level education, their talents are better suited to plumbing and carpentry, but that their parents are starry-eyed about them becoming professionals.

So what is the answer for this dilemma of being a Muslim living in Ireland? According to Daniel Easterman (Sunday Independent August 27th), the Koran (the Muslims holy book) is not open to interpretation, so the battle against the radicals is harder.

In the same issue Edwards and Harris suggested other 'easier' options. Muslim leaders should not listen to tiny groups of leftist 'idiots' and for Muslims to 'come clean'. Muslim leaders should ask the state for assistance. Supposedly the Big Brother state agencies are the best help.

However, there is a fundamental flaw in the analysis of such writers, who do not see further than their prejudices which centre around their interests and ideological persuasions. They are not able to come to terms with the fact that they are dealing with a diverse religious constituency that cannot be represented by a single representative as the European churches are by their heads.

They are also only looking at the recent past rather than at the fourteen centuries since Islam appeared on the map of human civilization. They did not look at the existence of large sectors of non-Muslim communities in the different parts of the Muslim world over the centuries where Islam ruled.

These writers also failed to

look at the more recent history of the founding of the state of Israel. Israel was justified by using the Biblical myth of promised land for the 'chosen people' of God. This resulted in racist laws which turned Palestinians into refugees while accepting that any Jew is a natural citizen of Israel.

Such journalists are failing to see the religious backbone of neo-conservative Americans and how their policies impact on the world, especially the Muslim parts. They do not see that Islam like any other religion can only be understood in the context of the reader's background.

The recent major role played by Islamism was important in shaping the recent history of the world: anti-colonial movements all over the Islamic world were often only successful when Islamists played major roles. Malaysia, Algeria and Morocco are just a few examples.

Social justice and anti-dictatorship movements, whether we agree with the ideology they have or not, often gained momentum under the leadership of Islamists. This argument could also be applied in a similar way to the

Catholic liberation theologians in Latin America.

I am an Irish Muslim and find myself somewhat besieged by this debate. I have to keep telling others what I am not, rather than what I am. As a Muslim, Islam for me is the religion of justice. Wherever there is justice, that will be a reflection of the Islamic ideological stand for life. It is therefore not surprising for example, that in debates, Islamic theologians have supported the legitimacy of a just non-Muslim ruler over an unjust Muslim ruler.

It is also important to note that Islam does not have a monopoly on radicals and suicide-bombers. Islam is not the only religion or social order to produce radicals and suicide-bombers. Religious radicalism, interpreting religious texts to suit ones aims, is not an Islamic ideological position, it is adopted by the marginalised of all societies.

So, even if my support for the resistance to Israeli terror, led by Hizbollah in my birthplace, Lebanon, is going to label me a terrorist and Islamist, I will proudly continue to support justice for the marginalised.

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Object to Incinerator in Dublin

By Rory Hearne

Dublin City Council along with the other Dublin Local Authorities, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County councils have applied to An Bord Pleanála (ABP) for approval on the Poolbeg Peninsula of an incinerator that will burn 600,000 tonnes of household, commercial and industrial waste per annum.

The public are able to make submissions of objection free of charge up until Monday 2nd October.

We are asking the public to oppose the siting of an incinerator on the Poolbeg peninsula on grounds of health fears, traffic and environmental concerns. We are looking for people from the area and the greater Dublin area to send submissions to Dublin City Council opposing the incinerator as the incinerator will potentially impact on everyone in the City. The incinerator is not just a Ringsend or Sandymount issue but one that will at some point impact on everyone in Dublin through either dioxins in the wind, further increased waste charges, traffic and the aesthetic and environmental destruction of Dublin Bay.

The objections to ABP must relate to planning issues such as increased traffic in the area and Dublin, sustainable development for

Dublin, the aesthetic impact on Dublin Bay etc (see below for a possible objection). Contact us for assistance.

Residents of Ringsend, Sandymount and Irishtown have held a number of large protests and meetings in recent months against the massive incinerator planned for Dublin Bay.

The Poolbeg incinerator is being developed as a public private partnership between Dublin City Council and Elsam, a Danish company. Elsam will operate the plant for 20 years and make massive profits from the incinerator (paid for by the tax-payer through bin taxes and the newly proposed incinerator stealth taxes).

So the people of Dublin will get all the potential health hazards of the incinerator plus on top of that extra waste charges that will pay for the profits for the private operator.

The principle underpinning our approach to waste management should be waste reduction, however, with the Public Private Partnership approach the main principle will be providing a profit for the private operator and profits, in this scenario, can only come about through increased waste production or higher waste charges. Either way the environment and the taxpayer loose out.

The recent comments by John Ahern of Indaver Ireland that the proposed Meath incinerator (deal-



New York incinerator: Hazard and charges

ing with 100,000 tonnes) is too small to be financially viable shows that what is behind the government's push for incineration is trying to satiate waste companies' hunger for profit not sustainable waste management.

Another clear example of this is the 'Energy to Waste -Assessing the

Best use of a reliable resource' (!!) conference taking place on Tuesday, 19 September 2006 at the SAS Radisson Hotel, Dublin. At a small entry fee of 500 euro this is democracy in action. Key note speakers include Mr Dick Roche, T.D., Minister for the Environment.

The final conference

session is shockingly entitled: Waste to Energy - the best use of resources or the end of recycling?

Combined Residents Against Incineration is calling a protest at 12.30pm at the conference and is looking for support.

Incineration should be a last stage solution to the waste crisis but this

In July DCC applied to An Bord Pleanála for planning permission for the Poolbeg Incinerator.

**You can stop it!
If you object**

If you would like assistance in making your objection contact Combined Residents Against Incineration or your Res. Association

PROTEST:

12.30 pm Tues Sept 19th

Radisson Hotel, Stillorgan Rd.

Dick Roche, Minister for Environment speaks at incineration conference

For bus meet @ Ringsend Church @11.30 noon,
Star of the Sea Sandymount @ 12pm

Contact Combined Residents Against Incineration (CRAI): Frances Corr: 087 7715825 / May Kane: 087 6994279/ Joan McArthur 01 2694626

government is pushing incineration first rather than investing in more sustainable models that prioritise recycling and waste reduction.

Incineration does not solve the landfill crisis as one third of what is burned comes out as toxic ash which must be landfilled. There are many alternatives to mass burn incineration for sustainable waste management including cleaner production, reuse, recycling, composting, alkaline hydrolysis, biodegradation, and gas phase chemical reduction.

Recent decisions by An Board Pleanála in the instances of the Shell Pipeline in Mayo and the

Ringsakiddy Incinerator shows that this is not an independent body but a tool of government.

The campaign to ensure the environment, communities and people are prioritised over developer's profit will continue, with people power and more protests to step up the pressure on politicians to ensure the incinerator and other non-community friendly developments do not go ahead.

We need cross city and all-Ireland grass roots unity to stop incineration with the one power that can win- people power.

To find out more information contact Frances Corr 0877715825 or Rory Hearne at 086 1523542

New Labour lies on 'water reform'

By Eamonn McCann

One of the ways New Labour is trying to sell "water reform" in the North is to insist that the worst off will be looked after.

Environment Minister David Cairns has promised a "Government's guarantee that low-income households should not need to spend more than three percent of their income on water and sewerage charges."

It's not a guarantee that nobody will pay more than three percent of income, but that nobody "should...need" to pay this much.

The level where the guarantee kicks in is "based on the single person pension credit."

This is a figure for the minimum weekly income appropriate to a single-pensioner

household. At the moment, it's £114.

But £114 a week is far more than a childless single person receives on benefits.

There's more than 100,000 people in this category. Many qualify only for £55 a week. For these, the New Labour plan amounts to a guarantee that they WILL pay more than three percent in water charges.

The "guarantee" is based on the old insulting distinction between the "deserving poor"—pensioners, for example—and the "undeserving poor," like young single people.

Even for those who are promised they won't pay more than three percent, the guarantee isn't dependable.

The guarantee applies to an "initial period" of three years.



Environment Minister David Cairns: 'Guarantee'

That's also the period of the Government-owned Company (GoCo) which is planned to take over water next April.

The guarantee will

disappear when the GoCo gives way to full-blown privatisation.

The private interests which then take over will be able to ditch whatever

guarantees or concessions have been used to get privatisation through.

This exposes the real purpose of "water

reform."

In May last year, consultants brought in by New Labour reported on the privatisation plans: "We do not believe work on implementing this option (privatisation) could begin until the GoCo has been successfully constituted...Factors that will impact...include the legal position regarding non-compliance, demonstration of revenue collection, establishment of the regulatory framework and the risk in the capital programme...We recommend that establishing the regulatory framework and addressing the legal position regarding non-compliance occur before the incorporation of the GoCo."

Thus, the point of the GoCo interlude is to ready the water service

for private ownership—using the three-year period to bring in a scheme for collecting charges, and showing that it will work and that the law will punish people who don't pay.

The "guarantees" are sweeteners to lure people into acceptance as this regime is put in place.

Another and more positive way to look at it—the way Socialist Worker looks at it—is this: that if people don't pay up, or if law can't force them to pay up, the entire scheme will collapse.

The profits of the proposed private company will depend on a steady, guaranteed revenue flow.

This amounts to an admission that the scheme can be scuppered by a non-payment campaign.

INTERNATIONAL

Mexico: Civil resistance to escalate



Protestors in Mexico City brought rush-hour traffic to a crawl, causing the stock market to drop

By Peadar O'Grady

A massive campaign of 'Civil Resistance' that has rocked Mexico since the presidential elections on July 2nd is poised to escalate.

While Mexico waits for the verdict of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TRIFE) the streets of Mexico City are occupied by huge encampments of protesters demanding a full recount of the ballots in the July 2nd presidential election, 'vote by vote, precinct by precinct'. The constitution says TRIFE must announce its decision by September 6th.

The Federal Election Institute (IFE) declared Felipe Calderón, of the ruling National Action Party (PAN), the winner of the election by 243,000 votes, a tiny 0.58% of the total 41.5 million votes. Supporters of the Democratic Revolutionary Party's Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (known as Amlo) insist that he won the election.

Calderon is a neoliberal pro-business politician favoured by the US while Amlo, though no radical, ran a campaign whose slogan ran: 'For all the people - the poor first'. Amlo's support is drawn mainly from workers and the poor. The candidate of the corrupt traditional ruling party PRI failed to win in

even one state.

During the election witnesses reported the stuffing of ballot boxes, dumping of votes in rubbish tips in poor precincts and vote tallies that were altered - all to favour the right-wing candidate, Felipe Calderon (PAN). Amlo's PRD party submitted 900 pages of evidence of election fraud but TRIFE refused to order a complete recount. It decided instead only to recount 9% of electoral precincts. It can then: either annul just the results of some of these precincts and declare a winner, or annul the entire election and order a new election within 2 years.

After two rallies of more than a million people each, Amlo supporters have settled in a well-organized, well-supplied encampment in downtown Mexico City, spilling out for miles from the Zócalo (central square). Protestors have been active blocking roads and organising makeshift kitchens, live music, dance classes, a radio station, wrestling matches, kids play areas, and photo exhibitions. The march on July 30th of up to 3 million protesters was the largest demonstration in Mexico's history.

Students Ivan Saurez and Antonio Hernandez told Socialist Worker: "For the last 20 years we have seen neo-liberal policies that increase poverty. Amlo's party, the

PRD, offers social development and an end to privatisation.

Communications worker Cristina Saragosa Lomas is one of the trade union activists who is backing Amlo's campaign. She said: 'He is the only candidate who supports the working class'. Workers haven't had a pay rise in almost 20 years, so we are now earning less than half of what our parents earned'.

Amlo has called for an escalation of civil resistance if Calderon is announced as president. He has issued a 4-point plan that targets poverty, natural resources like oil and gas, breaking the TV and newspaper monopolies and combating official corruption.

If Calderon is given the presidency a huge demonstration is planned for Mexican Independence Day on September 15th to be followed the next day by a National Democratic Convention to which all grassroots movements are to be invited. This is particularly important as other radical initiatives are also happening in Mexico.

Last year the Zapatista EZLN in Chiapas state announced an alternative to the presidential elections called the 'Other Campaign' involving a tour of all 31 states to encourage indigenous, anticapitalist and left-wing movements. EZLN spokesperson subcoman-

dante Marcos is calling for a new constitution and a Constituent Assembly to replace parliament.

In Oaxaca province a strike since May by 70,000 teachers has developed into a campaign to get rid of the corrupt governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz. Teachers supported by indigenous, trade union, peasant, socialist and anarchist activists have formed a Popular Assembly, blocked highways and picketed companies like Coca Cola and McDonalds, occupied radio stations and organised massive marches of over 200,000 in a state with a population similar in size to Ireland's.

Mexico is a country of 105 million people, which is rich in resources but has massive levels of poverty and inequality compounded by corruption. It has the 13th largest national wealth and is the 4th largest producer of oil in the world but up to half the population live in poverty especially workers, peasants and the indigenous peoples. The richest one fifth take in over half the country's income and Mexican telephone billionaire Carlos Slim is the 3rd wealthiest man in the world.

The potential is now growing in Mexico for the current protests to join up together and form an alternative to the current neoliberal regime. The Latin American revolution appears to be spreading.

New Orleans: They used the deluge to 'clean' the city

By Mike Davis

New Orleans is still broken. There is a "beauty strip" along the river in mainly white neighbourhoods, where "les bon temps" are still celebrated, but the heart of the African-American metropolis, middle class as well as working class neighbourhoods, remains a ghost city. Vast areas of the city are still without power and bodies are still being discovered in the toxic rubble.

More than half of the population, meanwhile, remains in exile. A quarter of a million Louisianans, at least 80 percent black, are in Texas. Another 100,000 are in Atlanta.

Homeowners in New Orleans and adjoining parishes, unbelievably, have not yet received a single cent of federal reconstruction money. Only the small minority of homeowners who had flood insurance have been able to start rebuilding.

Those who rented their homes - a majority of the pre-Katrina black population - receive nothing, and the Bush administration refuses to re-open most of the federal housing projects in the city.

The other day I talked over the phone with a Cajun friend of mine. "Maybe we should invite Hizbollah to New Orleans," he said. He had just read an article in the New York Times about the speed and lack of red tape with which the Shia movement was starting to rebuild southern Lebanon.

Meanwhile, a visiting delegation from Sri Lanka and some of the other tsunami devastated countries was reportedly "appalled" by the incomprehensible conditions they found.

Although he inexplicably failed to interview key local activists or to show any footage of the many recent street protests, Spike Lee's documentary, *When the Levees Broke*, just shown on cable television, is a powerful indictment of the criminal negligence of the Army Corps of Engineers, whose shoddily built levees drowned most of the city.

Spike - in striking contrast to Congress - lets the ordinary people of New Orleans, black and white, speak at length. Their re-telling of their experiences is both magnificent and heart breaking.

Ethnic cleansing, meanwhile, works. New Orleans right now is a small, probably white majority city. At least 100,000 black votes - the former balance of power in Louisiana - have been lost, probably permanently, to the benefit of the Republicans.

Property values in the white "beauty strip" from Tulane to the French Quarter are soaring, and even more black residents will probably soon leave for lack of schools or affordable rental housing.

The Latino immigrants brought into New Orleans by unscrupulous building contractors remain camped out in their cars, harassed or arrested once their labour is no longer needed.

The anger in the city remains incandescent, but the fate of Gulf Coast is now only a marginal national issue. The Democratic betrayal of New Orleans is almost as great as, and certainly more hypocritical than, the Bush administration's.

Hilary Clinton and her ilk are too busy defending Israel's right to destroy Lebanon to waste even crocodile tears on black folk and poor Cajuns.

I must confess to being shocked at how little real rage the Congressional black caucus has mobilised, or how little priority the labour movement has given to one of the most shocking assaults on working class people in modern US history.

The main burden of solidarity with New Orleans has been borne by groups such as Acorn (a national union of working class homeowners), Common Ground (drawn from a broad alternative left and anti-war movement), and a coalition of black nationalist and Afrocentric groups, civil rights veterans and former Black Panthers.

In April, I wrote the following in *The Nation* and, sadly, it remains my judgement:

"It would be inspiring to see in this latest battle of New Orleans the birth pangs of a new or renewed civil rights movement, but gritty local activism has yet to be echoed in meaningful solidarity by the labour movement, so-called progressive democrats or even the Congressional black caucus.

"Pledges, press statements and occasional delegations, yes, but not the unfaltering national outrage and sense of urgency that should attend the attempted murder of New Orleans on the 40th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act [the 1965 act that helped enfranchise black voters].

"In 1874... the failure of Northern Radicals to launch a militant, armed riposte to the white insurrection in New Orleans helped to doom the first Reconstruction. Will our feeble response to Hurricane Katrina now lead to the rollback of the second?"

Mike Davis' book *Planet of Slums* is available for £15.99/€23.99 from Bookmarks, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8 or go to www.bookmarks.uk.com



Homeless

Terror alert farce feeds press Islamophobia

By Peadar O'Grady

The terror alert announced on the 10th of August by British police and then hyped uncritically by mainstream media is quickly degenerating into farce. Of 25 arrested all were Muslims. Only 11 have been charged with anything - 2 of them with lack of cooperation with the police.

Subsequently police arrested another fourteen.

Police claimed that reliable evidence had come from Pakistani authorities of an 'imminent' terrorist attack on several flights to the US. Asma

Jehangir, of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan said that it was obvious information on an 'imminent attack' had been obtained by torture.

The 'evidence' presented by police from raids on suspects homes and internet cafes were: computers, mobile phones, CDs, DVDs, MP3 players and household chemicals peroxide (bleach) and acetone (nail polish remover). Former British ambassador Craig Murray pointed out that if possession of such items makes you a terror suspect in possession of potential bomb-making equipment, then we are all terror suspects!

Citing US chemistry experts, journalist Thomas C. Greene similarly concludes that: 'The sudden mixing of hydrogen peroxide and acetone with sulfuric acid to create a plane-killing explosion, is out of the question... But the Hollywood myth of binary liquid explosives now moves governments and drives public policy. We have reacted to a movie plot.'

It is increasingly clear that the US government put pressure on the British to act on long-standing information held on radical Islamist groups like al-Muhajiroun but that in fact there was no imminent threat. None of those charged had

plane tickets and several didn't even have a passport. The hysterical reporting took scenes of Israeli atrocities in Lebanon off the front pages and served to reinforce Blair and Bush's case for a 'War on Terror' and to whip up islamophobia.

A senior Metropolitan Police officer, Paul Stephenson, claims the Heathrow plot 'was intended to be mass murder on an unimaginable scale'. As journalist John Pilger put it in *Zmag*: 'The difference between the Heathrow scare and Iraq is that mass murder on an unimaginable scale has actually happened in Iraq'.

This is why we occ

The idea of occupying the Derry office of Raytheon, one of the world's largest arms manufacturers emerged from a packed meeting of the Derry Anti War Coalition on August 2nd. The meeting was addressed by former Abu Ghraib interrogator Joshua Casteel of Iraqi Veterans Against War and Hani Lazim of Iraqi Democrats against the Occupation. Discussion from the floor focused on Raytheon, and the role it gave Derry in the arms trade.

The Qana atrocity had taken place the previous weekend and there was some evidence that a Raytheon manufactured Guided Bomb Unit had been used. Activists at the meeting knew that, despite the line of the main parties, there is real anger in the town at the idea of software developed in Derry helping to murder people in Lebanon and Gaza.

On August 9th at 8am, protestors arrived at the building Raytheon shares with a call centre. The police were already in position. At about 8.30, an employee about to go into work hesitated for an instant and the anti-war activists rushed the door. Police started grabbing people by the scruff of the necks and literally throwing them back out. The nine now charged are those who made it into Raytheon's premises.

Once inside, the protestors erected barricades against the police and set about decommissioning the equipment. Many files thrown out the window gave the lie to the claims that the Derry plant had no connection with the arms trade.

Once local radio started to report the occupation, others started to arrive to join the protest. In the course of the day, between 80 and 100 people kept the solidarity picket going. Cars on the main road honked their horns in support. Local residents brought coffee, sandwiches and cake.

The police response was, as usual, over the top. After eight hours, they sent in a SWAT team, complete with sub-machine guns, CS gas and dogs to arrest the nine who, by then, were sitting playing cards. The protestors were carried out in handcuffs. Almost all were battered and bruised in the process. The arrested men, Colm Bryce, Gary Donnelly, Kieran Gallagher, Micky Gallagher, Sean Heaton, Jimmy Kelly, Eamonn McCann, Paddy McDaid and Eamonn O'Donnell are socialists and/or republicans. They are now known internationally as the Raytheon Nine.

Although the occupation was



Death in Qana: This child was murdered by weapons fired by Israel and supplied by arms manufacturers like Raytheon, in the West

entirely non-violent, they were charged with Aggravated Burglary and Unlawful Assembly. These are scheduled offences, meaning they would be heard before a Diplock, non-jury court.

At the bail hearing, the Crown tried to put before the court Eamonn McCann's convictions on public order offences going back to 1968/69/70. However, the judge said that the "vin-

tage" of these made them irrelevant. Initial bail conditions were draconian and prevented the Nine's involvement in any anti-war activity. However following a huge outcry, these have now been lifted.

The campaign to have the charges dropped is gathering strength. The Raytheon 9 and the Derry Anti War Coalition, of which they are all mem-

bers, have received a huge level of support from anti-war campaigners and socialists across the world. (see box)

The nine have a court appearance on Thursday 7th September. As part of the campaign to defend its members, the DAWC is to publish on that day a list of the "Raytheon 99" – the Derry people who assert "Since they were there on our behalf, we believe that the

charges against the Raytheon 9 should be dropped, or else we should all be charged along with them." (see text of letter in box)

Messages of support to the Raytheon 9 resistderry@aol.com or sign the online petition www.petitiononline.com/dawc/petition.html.

See also www.dawc.org and www.raytheon9.org

Stopping these war crimes is not a crime

Here is a minute by minute account of what was happening in Lebanon in the eight hours between 8.30am and 4.10pm (Irish time - Lebanon is two hours ahead of us) that the Derry Anti War Coalition protestors were occupying and decommissioning the Raytheon facility in Derry.

The information comes from <http://lebanonupdates.blogspot.com> and was compiled by journalists in Lebanon.

It raises the question of who are the criminals and why should those trying to stop such slaughter be charged with terrorist offences while those carrying it out go unpunished?

■10:48 Israeli troop landing al-Kharyeb near al-Zrariyeh followed by heavy clashes with Hezbollah
■10:58 Three Israeli air strikes on fish-rearing tanks in Qalya in western

Beqaa

■11:42 Provocative Israeli pamphlets thrown over areas of Cola, Cite Sportive, Arab University, Tariq al-Jadideh, al-Ouza and Bir Hassanm as well as Sour (Tyre)

■11:55 Israel requested Litani passage to be rebuilt, placing responsibility of its reopening on UN

■12:05 Khaibar I rockets fall on Beit Shan settlement

■12:07 Hezbollah shells Haifa

■12:21 Yedioth Ahronot: three rockets fired on Nahariya

■12:23 Heavy Israeli shelling on Iqlim al-Tuffah

■12:49 Four Israeli soldiers killed in Aita al-Shaab

■12:58 Israeli air strike severs Baalbek - Homs road

■13:03 Fierce Israeli shelling on most towns and villages in district of Sour (Tyre)

■13:32 Fierce shelling on al-Ma'aliyeh and al-Qleileh from Israeli warships

■13:45 Hezbollah shell Kiryat Shmona, Sidi Eliaazar, Avavim and Yaro'un settlements

■13:48 Israeli shelling on Kfar Kila - Deir Mimas - al-Khiam road, and Tal al-Nahhas al-Khardali

■14:00 Israeli warships shell western district of southern Sour (Tyre)

■14:15 Israeli artillery shelling on Deir Antar

■14:17 Successive Israeli air strikes on barren fields of villages of Aarsal and Nahleh

■14:22 Hezbollah launches Khaibar I missiles on Zakhroun Yaaqoub

■14:40 Haaretz: rockets fall on Safad and result in 2 injuries

■15:30 11 Israeli soldiers killed in fierce confrontations with Hezbollah in southern Lebanon

■15:53 New TV correspondent: destruction of house in southern Dibil with 7 Israeli soldiers inside

■16:10 Israeli radio: 13 Hezbollah fighters injured

■16:15 Israeli police: Katyousha rockets continue to fall, and around 3,333 rockets targeted Israel since start of war

■16:33 Israeli air strikes target areas in Beqaa

■16:34 Hezbollah announces 4 fighters killed, which raises death toll to 58

■16:55 Warning sirens in Hankeera, Nahariya, and Shlomi

■16:57 Renewal of Israel air strikes on Southern Suburb of Beirut

■17:00 Heavy artillery shelling on al-Khiam, al-Hamamess, al-Wazani, and Sarda

■17:03 Confrontations on Tal al-Nahas - Kafr Kila - Burj al-Mulouk

axis, and 4 tanks destroyed

■17:16 Second Israeli air strike hits Haret Horiek, and thick smoke rises

■17:21 Fourth Israeli air strike targets surrounding of Moawad and Mar Mikhail

■17:24 Israeli air strikes on Bir al-Abed and al-Ruwais in Southern Suburb of Beirut escalate

■17:30 Renewed Israeli air strikes on Haret Horiek during funeral of al-Shiyah massacre victims

■17:44 Heavy artillery shelling on surroundings of Tibneen public hospital

■18:01 Two Israeli air strikes on Jabal al-Rafee' using fissile bombs

■18:08 Renewal of Israeli air strikes on Iqlim al-Tuffah, and heavy artillery shelling on area adjacent to Litani River

■18:09 Israeli warships shell Al Samayieh in Sour (Tyre)

Occupied Raytheon

Derry Anti-War Coalition sends open letter

To Whom It May Concern:

On 2nd July, Joshua Casteel of Iraqi Veterans Against War and Hani Lazim of Iraqi Democrats against the Occupation spoke at a packed meeting of the Derry Anti War Coalition.

In the course of the meeting, over 70 people agreed that DAWC needed to think of new ways of exposing Derry's role in the arms trade. Raytheon is one of the largest arms manufacturers in the world and, despite all the local parties backing Raytheon's presence in the town, there is real anger at the possibility that Derry contributed in the smallest way to

massacres in Lebanon and Gaza.

Following a further packed meeting on Monday 7th August, it was agreed to take action against the presence of Raytheon, and their complicity in the murderous Israeli bombardment of Lebanon and the on-going wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

There is some evidence, for instance, that a Raytheon Guided Bomb Unit was used in the atrocity in Qana.

Over 20 Derry Anti War Coalition members arrived at Raytheon's offices on Wednesday 9 August 2006. When the opportunity to push our

way into the offices arose, most of us tried to get in. The nine who are now known as the Raytheon 9 are those who succeeded.

The Raytheon 9 occupied and decommissioned the Derry Raytheon office in our name. They were there on our behalf and we take full responsibility for their actions.

The Derry Anti-War Coalition believes that it was legally and morally justified to engage in non-violent direct action to highlight Raytheon's role as war profiteers and to call for the closure of its offices in Derry. Derry Anti War Coalition is affiliated to the Irish Anti-War Movement and the

Stop the War Coalition in Britain, and sees this action as an extension of the mass protests against war which we have helped organise, and have participated in, over recent years.

Our members have been charged with serious offences. We believe these charges to be unwarranted. No-one was threatened or injured during the occupation. Since they were there on our behalf, we believe that the charges against the Raytheon 9 should be dropped, or else we should all be charged along with them.

Signed, (The Raytheon 99)

Support pours in from around the world

Over 500 signatories have supported the Raytheon International Support Statement. Here are a few

Noam Chomsky,
Bernadette McAliskey,
Daniel Bensaid,
Councillor Salma Yaqoob, Respect Birmingham Sparkwood and spokesperson for Birmingham Central Mosque)
Alex Callinicos,
Gilbert Achcar,
Robert Brenner,
George Galloway MP
Lindsey German, convenor Stop The War Coalition
Richard Boyd-Barrett, chair Irish Anti War Movement
Ciaran O'Reilly (Acquitted) Pitstop Ploughshares
Deirdre Clancy Anti-War Ireland/Acquitted Pitstop Ploughshare activist
Councillor Patricia Logue, (Sinn Fein) Derry City Council
Councillor Gerry MacLochlainn (Sinn



Fein) Derry City Council
Pierre VANEK (MP Switzerland)
Strathfoyle Youth Forum
Brendan Archbold
Jimmy Kelly, President, Transport and General Workers Union.
Pat Stuart, T&G Executive
Derek Fraser (President of Rochdale NUT)
Dave Barnes, TSSA Executive Committee (personal capacity)
Karen Reissmann, Branch chair, Manchester Community and Mental Health UNISON branch
Sacked Liverpool Dockworkers
Roz Wensum (Prestwick 17)
Councillor Michael Lavalette, (Respect) Preston City Council.
Chris Nineham, Stop the War Coalition,
John Rees, National secretary Respect
Brian Duggan, President, University of Warwick Students' Union
Carlo Morelli, President, Dundee UCU,
South Korean Anti War Coalition
All Together, Korea

Arms companies have a business interest in bloodshed



(Left) Derry Anti War Coalition protest and (Above) Eamonn McCann, during the occupation

By Eamonn McCann of the Raytheon 9

Three times since the partition of the sub-continent in 1947, there's been wars between India and Pakistan, in which the death-toll has run to hundreds of thousands.

The current ceasefire between the two sides in Kashmir is holding, just about, but could collapse at any time.

Only a lunatic would want to increase the killing capacity of either side?

Only a psychopathic lunatic would want to boost the ability of both sides simultaneously to rain down death on the other?

No. The Pentagon last month announced a go-ahead for a \$5 billion deal to supply the advanced F-16 fighter-jet package to Pakistan. "The sale would bolster President Pervez Musharraf in backing the US-declared global war on terror and expand US access, influence and leverage," a US spokesman explained.

As well as the F-16s, manufactured by Lockheed Martin, the deal would include up to 500 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAM)

The Indian Government was extremely angry. But it was then mollified by an assurance that the

US would approve the sale of 126 of Lockheed Martin's F-16s or Boeing's F-18s to the Indian airforce.

The well-known arms company Raytheon could supply AMRAAMs for either F16s or F18s but has decided to stick with the Indian market. Says Raytheon president Torkel Patterson: "Raytheon is looking at a long-term partnership approach in India, rather than a buyer-seller relationship."

"Everybody (is) remarkably satisfied," reports US commentator Frieda Berrigan, "except perhaps the people of India and Pakistan who might have wondered where in the world their countries were going to get the dough for these advanced weapons systems, while so many of them stand on line at the village pump, or walk three miles to the closest school, or labour long hours bent over crops..."

Meanwhile, Sikorsky, General Electric, Raytheon and General Dynamics are scrambling for a slice of the \$6 billion action available from a proposed US arms deal with the feudal dictatorship of Saudi Arabia. A majority of the 9/11 hijackers were Saudi. As is Osama bin Laden himself. And the Saudi royal family seems somewhat uncertain whether it wants to cuddle up to the decadent West or to bring it crashing down. But it sits on an ocean of oil and always pays cash. So none of the arms merchants is going to make a federal case about freedom, or about a little discreet – or even blatant – dabbling in terrorism.

Meanwhile back in Europe, freedom drives ever eastwards as the old Stalinist tyrannies, and the old Stalinist tyrants, embrace the capitalist market. EU newcomer Poland may be unable to provide a decent life at home for its people. But it's been able to equip itself since 2003 with \$3.5 billion worth of F-16s and assorted accoutrements, Lockheed Martin grabbing the giant's share of the loot.

The propaganda has it that arms sales are intended to defend freedom and underpin security. In fact, the record suggests that profit is the relevant criterion. All arms companies have a business interest in bloodshed.

In the better world of the future, the massive resources and vast human ingenuity which currently goes into arms production will be very differently deployed.

What they said about the Raytheon 9

★ We have received word of the awful treatment of Eamonn McCann and the Raytheon Nine at the hands of the British government.

We salute their actions and demand they are freed immediately.

We in the Sadimoun solidarity network have been working in the devastated villages of South Lebanon, everywhere we look there are unexploded bombs, cluster bomblets, mortar rounds and many other horrors created by modern weapons.

If your action only succeeds in stopping one bomb it is worth it.

Simon Assaf - on behalf of Samidoun Solidarity Network, Lebanon

★ You're an inspiration to all of us.

It's an honor to have even a remote association with what you are doing.—Noam Chomsky

★ Nine activists have done what many more should have done and that is intervene. The company Raytheon is responsible for making missiles, the USA and Israel are responsible for making sure they get used, we allow this to happen by not taking action. The 9 have done what politicians tell us we should do, to become active citizens. They have protested the arms trade and in particular this company and their role in the destruction and death in Lebanon. They should be thanked and not prosecuted.—Mark Thomas [comedian and campaigner against the arms trade]

★ I am writing on behalf of War Resisters' International, we will like to endorse your statement in support to the 9 people who could face serious spells in jails for protesting against the presence of U.S. arms manufacturer Raytheon in Derry. War Resisters' International believes that war is a

crime against humanity and therefore we are determined not to support any kind of war, and to strive for the removal of all causes of war. And we believe that war profiteering is one of the major causes of war.

Kind regards, —Javier Garate War Resisters' International

★ I salute your Anti-War demonstration and action in occupying the offices of US Arms corporation Raytheon in Derry.

"What happened in Lebanon between July 12th and August 14th was not self-defence. It was mass murder."

(Irish Times report 15/8/06 from Lara Marlowe who was in Lebanon for much of the war.)

Raytheon supplied the Israeli Defence Forces with the bombs to carry out that mass murder.—Jimmy Kelly, President Transport and General Workers Union.

TGWU represents workers across Ireland England Scotland and Wales.

★ Dear Derry Anti-War Coalition, We who have vigiled monthly at Raytheon Missile System's Tucson, Arizona, missile and bomb factory since 1998 send our support and solidarity to the nine people arrested at Raytheon/Derry on August 9, Nagasaki Day, 2006. We'll remember you with signs at our next vigil, and you may add our group's name to the support statement.—Jack Cohen-Joppa for the Raytheon Peacemakers

★ On behalf of anti-war protesters in Birmingham, and in particular its Muslim community, I wish to offer our admiration, support and solidarity to you for your heroic actions. The state authorities describe you as being guilty of acts of criminality. But it is they who are they real criminals. By their complicity in the murderous assault on

the people of Lebanon, whether through obstructing moves towards a ceasefire at the United Nations or by allowing bomb laden planes refuel on British soil, the British government has been an active participant in the collective punishment of the Lebanese people. And for that are guilty of war crimes. They wish to silence you from speaking out, but your very actions transcend any attempt at censorship. You have sent a message of solidarity to people around the world that the biggest division in the world is not between race, nationality or religion but between oppressors and oppressed. By your acts of solidarity with the oppressed in the Middle East you have given inspiration to all of us and embolden us in our resistance to US and British imperialism. For that, I salute you. —Salma Yaqoob Respect councillor for Birmingham Sparkbrook ward and spokesperson for Birmingham Central Mosque

★ Congratulations to the Raytheon Resisters, from—John Lynes, with the Christian Peacemaker Team in Hebron, in Palestine's occupied West Bank. Well done!

★ In an age when political and industrial protest is gradually being emasculated by the fear tactics of this "New Labour Government" the Sacked Liverpool Dockworkers would like to convey their support and solidarity to the brave men and women of the Derry Anti-War Coalition. We fully endorse their occupation of the Raytheon Arms plant and call on fellow Socialists, Trade Unionists and all peace campaigners to do likewise.

We will do everything in our power to support the Raytheon protesters and demand that all charges against these courageous individuals be dropped immediately.

AN ARAB REVOLUTION

The Middle East is seething with anger following Israel's attack on Lebanon. Anne Ashford gives a historical perspective on the possibility of radical change across the region

THE ARAB people now consider Hizbollah to be heroes because they are confronting the enemy [Israel] and protecting their land... Even if Hizbollah were destroyed, another Hizbollah would emerge within a year or two somewhere else—maybe in Jordan, in Syria, in Egypt or in Iraq.”

Perhaps when he spoke these words King Abdullah of Jordan was thinking of his father's comments when, in 1968, 200 Palestinian fedayeen (fighters) fought the Israeli army at the Jordanian town of Karameh: “We are all fedayeen now.”

Back then, the fact that Palestinians had taken up arms to fight for their own liberation electrified the Arab world. It stood in contrast to the rout of the Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian armies by Israel in the 1967 Six Day War.

Yet four decades later, Israel still occupies Palestine and US clients are in power in from Egypt to Saudi Arabia.

For all its heroism, the struggle of the Palestinian nationalist movement also shows the limits of national liberation. In 1968 Yasser Arafat led the fedayeen at Karameh. In 1993, his Fatah movement accepted a peace deal which left most of Palestine under Israeli occupation.

In 2006, tired of compromises and corruption, Palestinian voters kicked Fatah out of office in favour of the Islamist group Hamas.

The Egyptian revolution followed a similar pattern. A rebellion in 1952 ended the era of direct imperialist control by Britain. But following the catastrophic defeat of nationalist leader Gamal Abdul Nasser in the 1967 war, Egypt's rulers scurried to embrace neo-liberalism, allied themselves with the US and made peace with Israel.

Alone, Egypt was no military match for an Israeli regime armed and financed by the US. Alone, Egypt's experiment in state-run “socialism” could not survive the pressures of a global economy.

Common interests

Nasser, of course, would have agreed. He dreamed of breaking down borders drawn by chance and colonial whim, uniting Arabs in a new regional superstate, based on a common language, cultural affinity and a shared history of struggle against imperialism.

Today, many Islamist activists argue for an anti-imperialist movement uniting Muslims across the globe—crossing national borders, and transcending divisions of race and language.

These projects assume Arabs or Muslims share a common interest in fighting imperialism. But in reality Arab and Muslim societies are divided by class, and this basic fact shapes the lives of ordinary people across the Middle East.

Three decades of neo-liberalism have created societies more polarised than ever between rich and poor. The interests of capitalists and the state are enmeshed. Financial “reform” means cheap loans for big business, privatisation hands state resources to companies owned by the children of government ministers, while development projects siphon money to corporate shareholders.

The Egyptian ruling class may be a junior partner in global capitalism, but it has no stake in the demise of the current economic system.

Hizbollah's conception of the struggle



between oppressors and oppressed, of a dividing line within every society, makes more sense in our globalised world than the idea of a united Arab nation confronting an external aggressor. Yet even this conception has its problems.

Siding with the oppressed is vital, but only recognising their oppression ignores the unique power that ordinary people have to transform society. The mass of people have the power to create a different world, not because they are downtrodden but because they are workers.

It is workers who keep the oil flowing through the pipelines of Saudi Arabia and Iraq, workers who take ships along the Suez Canal, workers who bake bread, drive trains, serve fries at McDonald's and sweep the floors of tourists' hotel rooms.

This labour supports the economy of every Middle Eastern state, and therefore the stability of every Middle Eastern government.

The working class is the only force in society that can escape the limits of national liberation, because it also challenges the rule of imperialism's internal allies—the powerful local elites in countries such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

In many countries the working class—those dependent on waged employment—are a minority in societies composed mainly of peasants, small traders and other groups.

It was Leon Trotsky who, in his analysis of the 1905 and 1917 Russian revolutions, showed how organised workers in modern industry could become the core of a wider revolutionary movement.

'The movement in Egypt called on oil workers to stop supplying Israel with the oil it needs to wage war on Lebanon'



Their concentration in key economic sectors and large workplaces could compensate for their small number, and allow them to lead other oppressed groups in revolutionary struggle.

Trotsky argued that no other class could achieve this. The Russian middle class was too weak and cowardly, and the peasantry was too divided to play such a role.

The same points apply to Egypt today. The ruling class has no interest in confronting imperialism. Sections of the middle class might wish for greater democratic freedom and less US domination of the region, but they lack the collective economic power of organised workers.

Just as in Russia, it will fall to workers to win national liberation in the Middle East. Imagine if general strikes stopped Saudi oil flowing to the West, brought Cairo and Baghdad to a standstill and halted US warships on the Suez Canal. And why stop there?

Under workers' control, the resources of the Middle East could be channelled into healthcare and education, instead of weapons systems, international debt repayments and the luxury lifestyles of the elite.

When workers lead struggles for

democracy or against imperialism, those struggles raise the possibility of socialist revolution.

Trotsky how the potential existed for “the democratic revolution to grow over immediately into the socialist”. And such revolutions can spread across borders. Trotsky dubbed this process “permanent revolution”.

This is not a pipe dream. There are countless examples showing the power of workers in the Middle East.

In 1979, it was a strike by oil workers, together with a rebellion in the armed forces, which overthrew the Shah of Iran. His dictatorship was described by Washington as the “second pillar” of their domination of the region, Israel being the first.

In 1991, Egypt signed a structural adjustment programme drawn up by the International Monetary Fund which among other things abolished subsidies on basic food items. Riots forced the government to bring back the bread subsidy.

The democracy movement in Egypt, known as Kifaya (“enough”), recently called on Egyptian oil workers to stop supplying Israel with the energy it needs to wage war on Lebanon.

A new left

Across the Arab world a new left is beginning to emerge. Inevitably it has been forced to address issues raised by the failure of the Arab nationalist revolutions of the 1950s and of Arafat's Fatah movement.

Translating the potential for working class power into reality means bridging the gap between the small forces of organised revolutionaries and the millions of people radicalised by political and economic crisis.

This is a question socialists in the Middle East have grappled with since the 1940s. Tragically, they did not always find the right answer. Sometimes the left stood aloof from the struggle for national liberation because it was not under their control. More commonly, they substituted other social forces for the leadership of the working class.

Communists in Egypt dissolved themselves into Nasser's state-run party, arguing that independent working class organisation was an obstacle to national unity. They saw the state under nationalist leadership as the main vehicle in the fight against imperialism.

In reality the opposite is true. Only an international movement, linking together workers across the Arab world and beyond, has the strength to defeat imperialism.

Today imperialist war in the Middle East has the potential to bring all classes outside the narrow ruling elite into conflict with the current political system. This creates the possibility of a broad unity of forces ranged against imperialism and its local allies.

But unless the working class, organised independently, wins leadership of this broader movement, the rebellions will follow the same path to defeat as those in the 1950s and 1960s.

LINKS

To read Leon Trotsky on permanent revolution go to www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/works/1931-tpv

To read Israel: The Hijack State, John Rose's classic pamphlet on Israel, Palestine and the possibilities of Arab revolution, go to www.marxists.de/middleeast/rose/

For more ideas call Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop, on 020 7637 1848.

COMMENT

Children's Books

Marxism and magic



Will the Muggles be governed by the outright dictatorship of Voldemort or the good magicians?

By Conor Kostick

Children's literature is much more laden with politics and philosophy than, perhaps, is commonly realised. A well known example would be C. S. Lewis's Narnia books, at the heart of which is an extended interaction with Christian theology.

This observation is not meant as necessarily a critical one; sometimes the philosophy inherent in a work is precisely what makes it so valuable.

The Moomin books of Tove Jansson are possibly the greatest works of existentialism in fiction, the strength of characters like Snufkin and Little My is rooted in their fierce independence from any kind of obligation. In so far as they form relationships they do so freely, and not because it is required of them.

Lewis's works are wonderful and the escape they offer from our humdrum world of competition and stultifying rules into one of fantasy has quite rightly been appreciated over the generations. The theology working through them does, however, emerge from time to time in a problematic way.

The biggest difficulty is probably in the character of Aslan. If Aslan is as powerful as we later see him, the creator of the world, then why must he die in *The Lion The Witch and the Wardrobe*?

The rather contrived answer is that his death is required because the forces for good have accepted into their ranks a traitor, Edmund, and this contravenes ancient laws. Lewis wanted to have a scene in which Aslan takes on the sins of humans through self-sacrifice, even if, perhaps somewhat like the Christian religion, this does not make a great deal of sense.

The Harry Potter series by J. K. Rowling is, for the large part, extremely positive in the implicit politics it contains. Bravery is celebrated, as is multiculturalism, in the form of Harry's friends, and a refusal to bow down before bullying. But it is worth being aware of some problem areas.

Overweight people in the series are generally portrayed in a very negative light, such as Dudley Dursley or Vincent Crabbe. The reality of the experience of overweight children at schools is, however, that rather than being the bullies, it is they who are more likely to be unhappy and picked upon.

Perhaps a deeper issue in the Harry Potter books is the relationship between magicians and non-magicians, the muggles.

The central issue of the books is whether the muggles will be governed by the outright dictatorship of Voldemort or the subtle invisible government of the good magicians. In either case the muggles are passive inferiors for whom we are invited to feel a mild amusement at their quaint ways.

This schism is an elitist one that contrasts very strongly with, say, Ursula Le Guin's much more sophisticated portrayal of the relationship between magicians and non-magicians in the Earthsea series. For Le Guin, the goatherd, the sailor or the farmer are dignified, respected, individuals and wizards have to earn their trust. For, quite rightly, the non-magical population has seen a lot of harm as well as good come from those who have power.

My own book *Epic* is set in a world where everybody on the planet has to play a certain online game to determine their income, their job and where they are to live. Judicial challenges are resolved by battles between game characters in the arena.

The game, however, has become unfair, with a small elite controlling the most powerful weapons and magic in the game to ensure their decisions are always victorious or go uncontested. Into this structure I set loose various characters who, without being conscious of it, based their outlook on the thinking of Hobbes, Marx and Machiavelli respectively.

Not only was this great fun, but I think it helped avoid an overly crude 'evil versus good' set up and therefore one of the greatest weaknesses of children's fantasy, which is the lack of a convincing motivation for those characters representing the dark side.

Conor Kostick is currently attending the International Book Board for Youth's conference in China, where his fantasy novel, *Epic*, has been awarded a place on IBBY's honours list. *Saga*, the sequel to *Epic*, is published in Ireland this October.

REVIEWS

FILM

The manufacture of fear



The lines between reality and fantasy are utterly blurred

A Scanner Darkly,
Directed By Richard Linklater

Reviewed by Trevor Byrne

Just because you're paranoid . . .

Seven years from now, twenty percent of the world's population will be addicted to a new superdrug called Substance D.

The drug is culled from a small, blue flower – the problem is, no one seems to know where this elusive flower comes from, or who exactly is harvesting and distributing it.

Cue sweeping, Orwellian levels of government surveillance and unprecedented public paranoia. America is at war – but with who?

Keanu Reeves plays Bob

Arctor, a government narc who's insinuated himself with a colourful posse of druggies. However, in a brain-bending twist, it soon becomes apparent that Arctor is in fact investigating himself.

Embracing his Substance D abuser role, Arctor soon finds himself addicted for real, and the lines between reality and fantasy are utterly blurred.

Confused? You probably will be. Neither Philip K. Dick (the film is based on his novel of the same name) nor director Richard Linklater seem to rate dramatic irony much, so expect to be as dazed as Arctor himself.

Of course, this isn't necessarily a bad thing and is almost certainly what Linklater is try-

ing to achieve; as any sense of 'truth' is purposefully obfuscated by the shadowy governmental powers that be, we are in essence complicit with Arctor and his pseudo family of endlessly, aimlessly theorising Substance D abusers.

Featuring reams of fantastic, machine-gunned dialogue and a brow-furrowing plot, the film demands attention from the audience - Dazed and Confused this certainly ain't.

Stealing every scene, Robert Downey Jr. is excellent as the slimy, hyper-articulate Barris, while Woody Harrelson pulls off the affable and perpetually bamboozled Luckman with ease.

Reaves' portrayal of the

almost literally torn-in-two Arctor is one of his better performances, even if he is aided somewhat by Linklater's 'rotoscoping' technique (each frame of the film has been painted over, creating a disorientating, cartoon-like effect).

Unblinking in its portrayal of drug abuse and its possible consequences, *A Scanner Darkly* simultaneously poses a number of never-so-relevant questions about the role of government in the manufacturing of fear.

Amusing and alarming by turns, it's definitely worth a watch.

A Scanner Darkly, Animation/Sci-Fi, Directed By Richard Linklater, Starring Keanu Reeves, Robert Downey Jr., Woody Harrelson, Wynona Ryder, Rory Cochrane, Cert 16

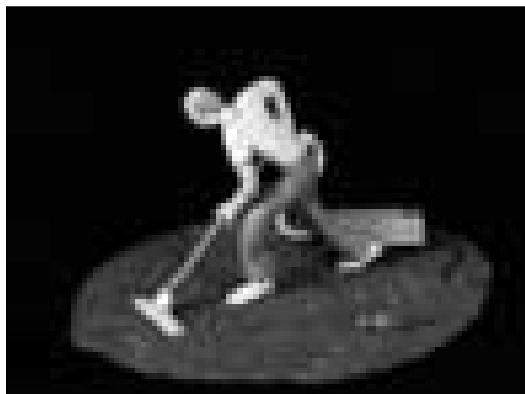
EXHIBITION

The world of work as seen by art

Aspects of Work in Art from 1970 to Present
An Art Exhibition of Art about 'Work' in the Glucksman Gallery, Cork
Reviewed by Brendan Archbold

Over 30 different artists from around the world contributed to last month's art exhibition on 'Work' in the Glucksman Gallery in U.C.C. in Cork. The exhibition examined many different themes such as gender relations, working conditions, strike action, migration and globalisation.

The issues of migration and globalisation were particularly relevant in the Irish context given our history of emigration and, more recently, the reversal



Robert Adrian X, *Househusband*, from *24 Jobs*, 1979,
Ludwig Wien Photo © MUMOK

of this trend for both Irish workers and economic migrants who have either returned to Ireland or are newly arrived on our shores. The precarious nature of work in the world of global capitalism is a feature of the

exhibition as the infamous 'race to the bottom' allows capital to change location at the click of a mouse, leaving workers abandoned and jobless.

The piece by Olga Chernysheva offers an image of life in a Russian

chocolate factory and features a range of photographs of the female workforce ingeniously set into the cavities of an empty chocolate box. The Paul Graham photographs of crowded dole offices in England portray the misery of unemployment while Moira Zoitl contributes a representation of Philippine maids in Hong Kong.

In keeping with the exhibition's focus on those aspects of working life which involve not working (such as unemployment and industrial action), the gallery organised a panel discussion on August 17th. and invited the Dunnes Stores Strikers against Apartheid (1983-1987) shop steward, Karen Gearon to speak. After hearing Karen

describe the many highs and lows of being on strike for almost three years, a very lively and interesting discussion followed. Inevitably the possibility of putting in place a boycott of Israel similar to that which help isolate the old Apartheid regime in South Africa was aired and Karen voiced strong support for such an approach.

The Glucksman Gallery features an exhibition on 'Cooling Out' on the paradox of feminism from 1st. September to 26th. November. If it is anything like the exhibition on 'Work', it is to recommended.

Brendan Archbold is national official in Mandate trade union. For details of exhibition goto www.glucksman.org

Protest/Reports/Struggle

email to brid@swp.ie Phone 01 8722682

BIN TAX CAMPAIGN

Hundreds take action to defeat non-collection

In the last few weeks hundreds of people around Dublin were involved in direct action to defeat the bin tax.

They have been out in the mornings on their estates and dumping bins of rubbish into the bin trucks where the council's computer mechanism has rejected them.

Non-collection of bins as a direct result of the massive non-payment campaign, has now spread to Ballyfermot, Drimmagh, Inchicore, Bluebell, Finglas and Cabra.

Numerous packed meetings of over 300 people have taken place in the Ballyfermot and Drimmagh areas.

"Campaign members are responding extremely well to the organised dumping of the rubbish" says Brid Smith of the Ballyfermot/Inchicore campaign.

When the Council truck leaves bins behind they tag them with an orange sticker which gives instructions to arrange back payment of bin charges with the Council.

"In the vast majority of cases people are not complying but instead are turning out to meetings, getting organised on their streets and sticking with the campaign.

"No doubt some people have been forced into paying but we are delighted with the positive response to this latest development", according to Brid Smith.

The campaign is waiting for a date for a Supreme Court case in which the Council will appeal a decision by the Circuit Court in favour of the campaign.

The Court deemed the bin charges for 2001 and 2002 to be illegal on the basis that the Council failed to provide people with a financial incentive to re-cycle.

If the appeal succeeds it will be a significant development in the fight against the bin tax.

Whatever the outcome, people are voting with their feet and getting to campaign meetings and protests in very large numbers.

Other protests are being organised by the campaign.

Areas in the Dublin South Central constituency have organised protests outside the bin depot on Davitt Road which is along the Luas Line and hope to attract attention for the ongoing popular campaign against this unjust double tax.

Contact the Bin Tax Campaign on 087-9090166

PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT ALLIANCE

Watch the deal go down on Galway Bay?

By Dette McLoughlin

A €2bn harbour expansion and marina development has been proposed for Galway City Docks and is being promoted by existing 'big' business interests there.

The reclamation of 100 acres of foreshore at Renmore and construction of a 1400 metre 'deepwater jetty' out into Galway Bay is already at an advanced stage of planning by the Galway Harbour Company, a semi-state firm.

An Taisce has called for the compilation of a major report to consider all of the options for users of Galway Bay.

Despite a request to Galway City Council that a public conference be held

none has been called. It is actually Council policy that an overall plan be agreed in advance of any redevelopment.

The Galway Harbour Company plan is almost ready for submission to the planning authority needing only the Environmental Impact Statement.

This plan would see the harbour relocated and the development of the 32-acre area around the existing harbour to provide marine leisure and tourism facilities including for the lucrative cruise liner industry, along with retail and residential properties.

A group comprising representatives of the Galway Harbour Company, the Galway City Council, Ireland West Tourism, the Galway

Chamber, and the Marine Institute has put together a plan for the area at the request of Minister Ó Cuív (FF).

The 'independent' chairman of this group is John Killeen, CEO of Cold Chon, a company that recently started building a major new oil terminal near the harbour before any plan was ready.

Their report was presented during the Galway Races to Bertie Ahern who expressed his support in advance of it being seen for approval by the cabinet in September.

There are concerns that the Harbour Company project may be the first in Galway to bypass discussion by elected City Councillors and instead be considered by a new unit of An Bord

Pleanala.

Said Derrick Hambleton, PB4P Galway, 'Galway Bay after all, belongs to the people of Ireland. Its commercial and public amenity development must be more openly and transparently discussed.'

People Before Profit in Galway is organising a public information meeting. Our local planning authority must consult with the public and listen to their freely expressed concerns!

Tues Sept 12: People Before Profit Galway: Port Development: Dream or Reality? Speakers: Derrick Hambleton Environmental activist. Catherine Connolly City Councillor Save Our Seafloor, Dun Laoghaire Ctte Member 8pm, Imperial Hotel, Eyre Square, Galway Contact: 086 3366525.

SHELL TO SEA



Report by Philip Ikurusi:

A walk across Ireland from Rosspoint to Dublin organised by Shell To Sea took place in the first two weeks of August.

The walk was an opportunity to raise awareness across Ireland about the Corrib gas project, and the robbery of natural resources by Shell.

I was able to identify with this campaign by being part of the walk. I joined the group at Leixlip. A group of dedicated men and women, including a young boy of about nine years, inspired me to keep going. Even the wet Irish weather could not dampen our spirits and the cars showed their support by honking as we walked.

The 7-8 km walk from Leixlip to Liffey Valley (The Deadman's Inn) was like having an evening walk with friends. We chatted, and a lot of interesting questions were thrown at me concerning Shell's activities in the Niger Delta (Nigeria), where I am from.

I gladly answered most of their questions, which helped to keep their spirits and enthusiasm alive.

The last stop for that day was 'Deadman's Inn' at Liffey Valley, arriving at about 2.45 p.m. Photos were taken, and I exchanged contacts with a lot of the walkers. It is worth noting that the walk was well organised and co-ordinated. At every stop, leaflets were distributed, and people signed petitions to show their support. Thousands of leaflets were distributed across Ireland, and the walk was a great success.

In my opinion, the concerns of the people of Rosspoint are genuine because Shell, as an oil corporation, have destroyed my environment, polluted my streams, poisoned the air I breathe, killed so many of my brothers and sisters, and destroyed so many villages, with the help of government forces. This is what we contend with in the Niger Delta every day, and the same must not be allowed to happen here in Ireland.

METEOR

Communication workers fight for Union recognition

By Joe Moore

Meteor, the third mobile phone operator in the state, refuses to recognise its employees right to be represented by a trade union.

Meteor has over 15% of the mobile phone market with 625,000 subscribers.

Since Meteor began to operate in 2001, the Communications Workers Union (CWU) has recruited a number of Meteor workers.

This was carried out by leafleting outside the work place and meeting any worker who responded to

the leaflet in a venue away from their place of employment.

It was not safe for workers, if their employer knew that they were talking to, not to mind joining a trade union.

Despite this atmosphere a number of workers went public, and together with the CWU brought a case to the Labour Court.

This case concerned staff on 'personal contracts', who were receiving pay increases well below the average.

The Labour Court ruling was a landmark one, with implications for all

workers on personal contracts. It deemed that the minimum increase all such workers should receive should be the same as the terms of the national pay agreements.

Meteor management indicated they would appeal this decision in the courts.

In January 2006 Eircom bought Meteor.

The CWU has a recognition agreement with Eircom and represents the majority of unionised staff there. Therefore it was assumed that this agreement would now also apply for Meteor workers.

This was not the case however. Just as Meteor management had refused to deal with the CWU before, neither would Eircom management meet to discuss the matter now.

As a result the CWU has withdrawn all cooperation with implementing any changes in work conditions within Eircom.

This situation has applied since the middle of this July.

As Socialist Worker went to press, senior Eircom managers have conceded that they will discuss the matter with the CWU.

MAYFIELD AGAINST MICROWAVE MADNESS

By Aidan Tynan

A campaign initiated by Mayfield residents Mary Anders and Ted Tynan has taken on the might of telecommunications giant O2.

Two years ago a mobile phone mast appeared without warning on the roof of the Cotton Ball public house in Mayfield. Local people started asking questions and a number of them complained to Cork City Council.

It eventually transpired that the company O2 had breached the conditions under which such masts can be erected.

When pressure from

locals forced the Council to order its removal, the offending mast reappeared a mere ten metres away in the pub's car park! This spurred the campaign to greater action and the mast was again removed but, in a move that can only be described as arrogant and crass, was relocated to the roof of a Centra supermarket following a lucrative deal with the proprietor.

The campaign, going under the name, Mayfield Against Microwave Madness, seeks to highlight the dangers of microwave radiation on the unsuspecting public.

The mast is now more egregiously placed than

before since, included within its deadly catchment area is the local secondary school.

Don't be fooled by those (like the well-paid scientists in the employ of the telecommunications firms) who downplay the health and safety risks. Independent research has proved there are links between long-term exposure to microwave radiation and leukaemia, heart disorders and brain-degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and epilepsy.

One particular study, in Naila, Germany, ascertained that cancer rates trebled within seven years in people living within a

400m radius of a mobile phone mast.

The Mayfield campaign is not opposed to mobile phone use but rather to the irresponsible provision of services by companies too profit-driven to care about anything as insignificant as public health.

Rather, it insists that the 50-year-old safety regulations, to which this country is supposed to adhere, be updated for the 21st century.

Until such time as the mast in Mayfield is removed to a safe distance, Mayfield Against Microwave Madness will continue their protest against Centra and O2.

AER LINGUS

SIPTU recently uncovered a potential deficit of 336 million euro in relation to indexation in the Irish Airlines General Employees Superannuation Scheme.

The current contributing employers into the scheme are Aer Lingus, the Dublin Airport Authority (formerly Aer Rianta) and SR

Technics (formerly TEAM Aer Lingus).

Aer Lingus is liable for 51% of the potential cost; Dublin Airport Authority is liable for 41% of the cost and SR Technics 8%.

However, because most of the service of the SR Technics employees accrued under Aer Lingus it is being

argued that it is Aer Lingus who is liable for the majority of this cost as well.

The issue has arisen in light of the proposed privatisation of the State National Airline by the current Government.

Therefore the unions are arguing that because the sale of Aer Lingus was a

Government decision it should be Government that funds the entire cost of the pensions issue.

A mass meeting of affected employees has been called for next Wednesday 13th September at 1 o'clock in the North Terminal in Dublin Airport.

UCD SIPTU

Strike over contracts and pensions

SIPTU members in UCD have voted overwhelmingly for industrial action over the issue of employment contracts and the right to a pension.

SIPTU has made a call for support of the strike and picket being undertaken by its members in UCD on Monday the eleventh of September. SIPTU explains that more than one third of staff in UCD are on a Fixed Term Contract, which is an extraordinarily high figure for a public institution.

In our view, casualisation and abuse of contract staff is occurring in UCD.

Six years ago, on 27 June 2000, the Governing Authority of UCD approved an agreement that had been concluded between SIPTU and UCD management.

This agreement involved three principles:

1. "fixed term contract staff are not treated in a less favourable manner to a comparable permanent worker."

But UCD is not paying proper pension entitlements to this staff. This is clearly in contravention of the Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act 2003.

2. "fixed term contracts will not be used to avoid giving employees

security of employment."

UCD management have kept people on contracts for many years? in one case since 1981? and not given these staff a permanent contract.

Currently SIPTU has 20 cases before the Labour Relations Commission and we expect many more will go there.

2. "Fixed term contracts will apply in the case of vacancies arising from a temporary absence"? they would be limited to certain defined circumstances.

Over the last two years, UCD management are replacing permanent jobs with temporary contracts. Existing staff have to work harder to cover for this disruption.

SIPTU members balloted by an 82 percent majority to take action on these issues.

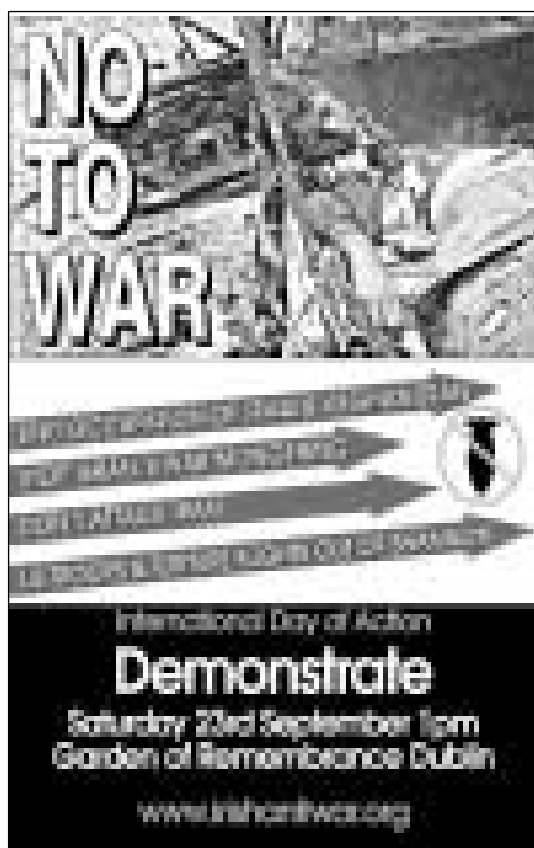
We want management live up to their own policy and the law by providing contract staff a pension; and ensuring that all who are entitled to a permanent contract, receive a contract. Pickets will be placed on all entrances to UCD on Monday 11th September and we would ask for your support in not passing them.

IRISH ANTI WAR MOVEMENT

www.irishantiwar.org

WHAT'S ON

All out for Sept 23 demonstration



The momentum is building up for the September 23 No to War demonstration in Ireland at 1pm, Parnell Square, Dublin. This has been given added urgency by the recent attacks on Lebanon by Israel with the support of the US.

The protest is part of an international week of protests which will see huge demonstrations around the world, against the occupation of Iraq, continued threats of attacks on Iran. The Irish protest is called by Irish Anti War Movement; Peace and Neutrality Alliance; NGO Peace Alliance.

It is highlighting the continued use of Shannon airport by US military forces for torture flights and troop movements.

Anti war activists across the country have been mobilising and organising to build the largest possible demo on Sept 23.

Socialist Worker calls on all its readers to get organised over the next few weeks.

Contact the Irish Anti War Movement to link up with others in your area. Contact the IAWM on info@irishantiwar.org; www.irishantiwar.org or telephone 087-6329511

DUNDALK LEBANON PROTEST



Part of the anti war protest which took place in Dundalk in August

IRELAND PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

Luas firm Connex in tram line retreat

The Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign (IPSC) won a small but significant victory in the international struggle against the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory.

Connex (operating in Ireland under the name Veolia) run the "Luas", Dublin's light-rail system and are currently building a near identical system in occupied East Jerusalem.

Representatives from Israel had been in negotiations with Veolia Ireland to have Israeli engineers and drivers trained on the Dublin Luas, with a view to then operating the illegal tramline in Jerusalem.

The training was due to begin next month, and a contract was being finalised.

But recently, Veolia was forced to cancel the proposed deal with its Israeli counterpart following pressure from the Irish trade union representatives, responding to overtures from the IPSC.

The tramline being built by Connex/Veolia will run between Israeli settlements in occupied East Jerusalem. The settlements, which have been built on annexed

Palestinian land, are illegal under the 4th Geneva Convention, and are recognised as such by the Irish government.

If completed, the Israeli tramline will permanently link Jewish-only settlements such as Pisgat Ze'ev, French Hill, Neve Ya'akov and Gilo, to Israeli West Jerusalem, thereby cementing Israel's hold on occupied East Jerusalem, and ensuring that there can never be a Palestinian state.

An IPSC spokesperson stated: "This is a small but significant victory for the Palestinian right to self-determination.

"This tramline, like the

Apartheid Wall, is an integral component of Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem.

"You would expect a tramline to be fairly innocuous, but the lesson is no: when you do business with Israel, you invariably do business with the Occupation.

"Veolia clearly understand that there is a growing awareness of this within Irish society.

"People are realising that diplomacy has utterly failed to curb Israeli crimes. We must cut ties with Israel in order to force it to end its Occupation."

DONAL LUNNY AND FRIENDS REMEMBER PALESTINE

25 Sep 2006

Olympia Dublin

An evening of traditional song & music featuring: Andy Irvine, Iarla O Lionaird, Róisín Elsafty & Graham Henderson

The Olympia, Monday 25 September. Doors open 7.30pm
Tickets Euro 25 from Ticketmaster (phone 0818 719 300) or the Olympia Box Office (phone 0818 719 330).

Proceeds from this event will go to IPSC.

Tues 5 Sept to Sat 9 Sept: CANT PAY? WONT PAY! In a new twist to Dario Fo's hilarious political farce Ourclann moves the action to Dublin in the 1980s. Directed by Noelia Ruiz With: Rachel Carey, Joan Brogan, Joseph Jennings, Dave Hurley and Paul Nolan. 8pm T36 - Teacher's Club 36 Parnell Square West - D1 Tickets €12/10 Bookings: 086 35 79 515

Wed 6 Sept: Belfast Anti-War Movement Public Meeting - TIME TO GO Troops out of Iraq - No Attack on Iran Speakers: Eamonn McCann (Raytheon 9); Eye witness report from Palestine; Speaker from BAWM Transport (House High St) 7pm

Wed 6 Sept: NUI Galway: First anti-war stall of the new academic year at NUI Galway. Anyone who wishes to get involved, help out can meet outside the students union bar at noon that day. We will have fliers & posters for 23rd Sept. demo in Dublin and be taking names for the Galway Peace Bus to the demo. Contact: Kiran 086 8443695; Email: k.emrich1@hotmail.com

Thurs 7 Sept: The Raytheon Nine have a court appearance. The Derry Anti-War Coalition is calling for a large and lively presence at the court to show support. Take the morning off work, be at the Courthouse in Bishop Street from 9.30am and be prepared to sing, shout and make it clear that the nine were there in our name.

Tues Sept 12: People Before Profit Galway: Port Development: Dream or Reality? Speakers: Derrick Hambleton Environmental activist. Catherine Connolly City Councillor Save Our Seafront, Dun Laoghaire Ctte Member 8pm, Imperial Hotel, Eyre Square, Galway Contact: 086 3366525.

Tues/Wed Sept 12/13: Palestine as 'State of Exception': a Global Paradigm Institute of International integration Studies, Trinity College Dublin This conference aims to theorise what Edward Said called 'the question of Palestine' in the context of globalisation. Trinity College Dublin, IIS Seminar Room, C6.002, Level 6, Arts Building. <http://www.activelink.ie/ce/active.php?id=1918>

ANTI WAR DETAILS

GALWAY
There will be a bus going from Galway to the national antiwar protest in Dublin, Saturday 23rd September, organised by Galway Alliance Against War and Galway Students Against War. Seats must be booked in advance and asap to ascertain demand. Bus leaving the Galway Cathedral car park at 9.15am.

The cost is €6 for students, concessions or €12 for anyone else. The bus will leave Dublin around 6pm to arrive back in Galway for 9-10pm.

To book a seat please contact: email: 5dette@eircom.net text 086 8443695 phone 087 9159787

BELFAST
DEMONSTRATE: Sat 23 Sep, 1pm, Labour Party

Wed Sep 13: International solidarity in the 21st Century Spain 1936 - Venezuela 2006: Viva la quinta brigada 6.30pm at the ATGWU Hall, Middle Abbey Street, Dublin. With * Bob Doyle, Irish Veteran of International Brigades in Spanish Civil War, Author of: Brigadista: An Irishman's Fight Against Fascism * Michael McCaughan, Journalist & Author of The Battle of Venezuela * Maura Harrington, Shell to Sea campaign * Richard Boyd Barrett, People Before Profit Alliance & Chair Irish Anti War Movement Organised by People Before Profit Alliance

Thurs Sept 14: Ballymun Against War Public Meeting, 7.30pm Axis Centre Ballymun Details 086-3074060 kevin-wingfield@eircom.net

Thurs 14 Sept: Hans Blix to address National Forum On Europe, Westin Hotel in Dublin. <http://www.forumoneurope.ie/index.asp?locID=210&docID=1043> and <http://www.forumoneurope.ie>

Wed 20 Sept: Irish Anti War Movement Debate: Why was Lebanon invaded? 6 prominent speakers - 3 from each side of the argument Chair: Deaglan de Breadun - Irish times journalist Royal Dublin Hotel - 7.30pm info@irishantiwar.org; www.irishantiwar.org

Thurs 21 Sept: SWP Forum "From the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Guinea. Oil The New Scramble for Africa." Speaker, Philip Ikurusi, Niger Delta activist. Victoria Hotel, Patrick St., Cork. 8.00pm

Sat 23 Sept NOT TO WAR DEMO: See separate panel for details

Mon 25 Sept: Irish Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Donal Lunny & Friends Remember Palestine. An evening of traditional song & music featuring: Andy Irvine, Iarla O Lionaird, Róisín Elsafty & Graham Henderson. The Olympia, Mon 25 September. Doors open 7.30pm. Tickets 25 euro from ticketmaster or The Olympia box office. A fundraiser for the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign www.ipsc.ie; aime_devir@yahoo.co.uk

Dublin Shell to Sea: Meets every Tuesday night, 7pm, An Taisce building opposite Mother Red Caps, Thomas St

Conference, Manchester. Coaches from Belfast £30 Tel: 90996491, 07717123462 Info at: www.bawm.org STOP BUSH & BLAIR'S WAR <http://www.bawm.org>

BALLYMUN
Thurs Sept 14: Ballymun Against War Public Meeting, 7.30pm Axis Centre Ballymun Details 086-3074060 kevin-wingfield@eircom.net

SWORDS
Meets in Swords Senior Citizens Centre 8pm or contact Eimear on 087 9650301 for further information.

OTHERS
Visit the Irish Anti War Movement website: www.irishantiwar.org, email info@irishantiwar.org or Tel 086-30740603074060

SWORDS

The inaugural meeting of the Swords anti-War Group on August 16th hosted a speaker from the Irish-Palestinian Solidarity Campaign who outlined how the Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, now faces huge opposition among Israelis and said that the government must get things right 'next time' in his speech on the day of the ceasefire. A recent Smith opinion poll reported a mere 6% of the public believes the outcome of the war was good for Israel. Only half those polled believe the ceasefire will hold for more than a month.

Attention was directed to the latest developments in Gaza where 200 civilians have been slaughtered with impunity, 45 of which were children.

Consideration was also given to the 9 Anti-war protesters, including civil rights campaigner Eamonn McCann, who were charged under terrorism laws following an occupation of the offices of US arms manufacturer Raytheon in Derry, Northern Ireland

A statement was read

from the Derry Anti-War Coalition which said, 'It is tragic that the Raytheon factory was held up at the time of its opening as an example of the "peace dividend" for the North, when its function is exporting death and destruction to innocent people in Lebanon.'

The two main forthcoming events which the group will focus on are: a boycott of Israeli goods, to take place on August 26th. Members resolved to find out what Israeli goods are being supplied to and sold in Irish Supermarkets.

The second focus is an International Day of Protest, which is to take place on September 23rd. Swords anti-war group will have a series of stalls in order to raise the profile of local anti-war activity. Car Stickers will be produced if possible to increase the level of awareness. Forthcoming forums will be advertised.

If you are interested in joining the group simply come along to Swords Senior Citizens Centre next Tues 29th August at 8pm or contact Eimear on for further information.

Public meeting: INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY SPAIN 1936 - VENEZUELA 2006: VIVA LA QUINTA BRIGADA

Wednesday September 13th, 6.30pm at the ATGWU Hall, Middle Abbey Street, Dublin.

With * Bob Doyle, Irish Veteran of International Brigades in Spanish Civil War, Author of: Brigadista: An Irishman's Fight Against Fascism * Michael McCaughan, Journalist & Author of The Battle of Venezuela * Maura Harrington, Shell to Sea campaign * Richard Boyd Barrett, People Before Profit Alliance & Chair Irish Anti War Movement Organised by People Before Profit Alliance

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

DUBLIN BUS PRIVATISATION: STOP THE SELL-OFF!

GOVERNMENT 'ROW' HIDES TRUE MOTIVES

By Owen McCormack

While Dublin's traffic crisis gets worse, the government is refusing to provide funding for an extra 200 buses.

This shows that it is more concerned with implementing its neo-liberal agenda than solving the cities transport crisis.

The public row between the PDs and Fianna Fail masks a united attack on public transport workers and Dublin Bus.

Despite differences between the parties, they both want the same thing, more non-union, private operators working city routes.

The long-term agenda is to undermine unionised conditions in a strong and militant workforce.

The PDs want a full Thatcherite attack now. They want to take some of the Dublin Bus routes and hand them over to private operators now.

Fianna Fail are willing to bide their time and give the private companies only new routes for now.

Like the PDs though, their long-term agenda is to force the state company, Dublin Bus, into a competitive tendering system for all the city's routes.

Fianna Fail believe they can achieve the same end as the PDs but by negotiating with the unions.

The overall proposals have been essentially the same for years. The only reason that Cullen's predecessors in the department backed down in the past was union opposition and the threat of all-out strikes across the whole CIE company.

The current row has more to do with pre-election posturing than any substantial difference in policy. Fianna Fail have always been smarter in getting its neo-liberal agenda through with the least danger of a confrontation with the unions involved.

Cullen, (himself a PD in Fianna Fail clothing), has the guts of a deal done with

the unions.

He has held off agreed funding for 200 buses until now in order to make sure that private operators get a slice of any government funds.

The PD transport spokesperson, Tom Morrissey, (a failed Fine Gaeler, and currently facing corruption allegations at various planning tribunals) wants to take a swath of Dublin Bus existing routes now, in order to prove how Thatcherite he and his party is at dealing with militant and unionised workers.

Funding for an extra 200 buses was announced in 2001. But the government has held off releasing the funds in an attempt to force the bus unions to agree to allow private operators onto the city's routes.

Workers should not be fooled by this so-called split.

Both parties remain united, with the same goal of forcing Dublin bus workers to compete with non-union operators on much reduced rates of pay and conditions.



UNION WAS RIGHT TO THREATEN STRIKE

The NBRU were absolutely right to threaten strike action in order to highlight the Government's hypocrisy over its funding of Dublin Bus.

The union has a right and a duty to campaign on issues that affect its members.

Historically, low funding has been the cause of poor pay rates and conditions.

The union should

continue to demand proper funding for all CIE companies, to the European average.

It should not be bounced into accepting any proposals that will pave the way for private operators competing for routes that its members now work.

However the announcement last week of strike action by the NBRU General Secretary caused anger and

confusion among its members.

Most drivers had heard nothing about the issue until it was announced at a press conference.

Even the union's executive was not informed of any decision to strike.

Drivers are right to demand more openness and consultation from their leaders on any future campaign.

PD'S REAL TRANSPORT AGENDA

Mary Harney's party showed its real agenda with the row over Dublin Bus funding. Its spokesperson, Tom Morrissey, claimed that until the government funded private non-union companies, unions could always threaten strike action.

Funding their friends in the private sector is a way of undermining a strong unionised workforce. Morrissey also claimed, ludicrously, that private companies were more efficient and better value for taxpayers money. He cited the example of the LUAS.

He conveniently forgot that the LUAS was built with billions of euro of public money. He also seemed unaware that it runs on tracks and can therefore side step the city's chronic traffic congestion.

State companies, both here and around the world, have a record of providing better services for lower costs, in transport and other services. The PDs are keen to claim that their proposals are very different from the failed policies of Thatcher in Britain. In fact they are identical and their goal is the same - enrich private operators and undermine public transport workers.

Neo-liberalism is just a new word for Thatcherism.

Workers should continue to campaign for proper funding for buses and trains. We have to expose this government that can spend billions on roads and lavish billions more on proposed Metro projects that will be run by private companies like Connex, while starving state companies of decent funding.