

Socialist Worker

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WORLD OF
BOMBS AND
DISEASE**

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Even if the
UN backs
the bombing
of Iraq
we say...



**This is still
a war for oil and US power**

STOP THE SLAUGHTER

Organise, Protest & Demonstrate



■ Blair: Bribes

BUSH AND Blair are using threats and bribery to get a UN resolution to back the war.

The global anti-war movement has put them on the defensive and Blair knows he will be kicked out of office if he does not get cover from the UN.

The warmongers need nine votes out of the 15-strong Security Council and they also have to make sure that none of the five permanent members (US, Britain, China, Russia and France) uses their veto.

The US and Britain are now offering blood money to win the vote.

According to the Guardian newspaper "Russia and China are putting their power of veto

up for sale in the form of debt write offs and promises of a share of the action in post war oil contracts'.

Sweeteners

The ten other countries face

a combination of threats and sweeteners.

One US official has said that though there are no direct threats 'that's not to say that countries are not aware that we provide them with assistance'.

Here is how it works:

■ Mexico: The pay off for a yes vote is the easing of immigration barriers on Mexicans entering the US.

■ Bulgaria: Wants entry to

NATO. It is also set to receive over \$31 million in US military grants and nearly \$100 million from another fund.

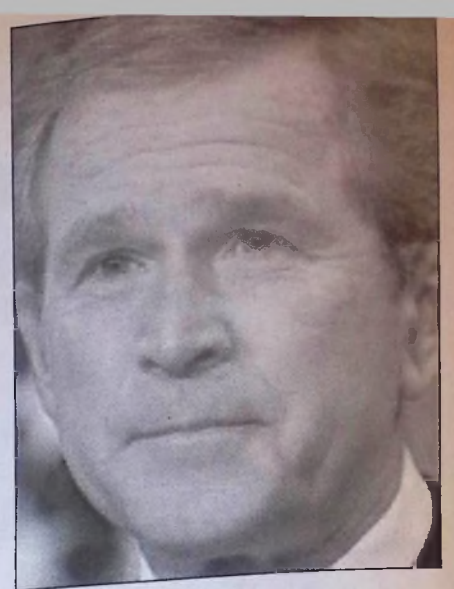
■ Chile: Their biggest fear is that a NO vote could halt a trade agreement

■ Angola, Guinea, Cameroon: They have been told that a NO vote will lead to a cut in aid. It is no idle threat. Yemen lost a \$70 million aid programme when it voted against the 1991 Gulf War.

□ Bertie Ahern claims says that Ireland will give open backing to Bush if he gets through a UN resolution.

But a resolution that is bought through bribery will never make a colonial war right.

Blackmail at the UN



■ Bush: Threats

WHAT MONEY WON'T BUY

THE US has tried spectacularly to buy support in Turkey with the offer of \$26 billion in grants, loans and loan guarantees.

But it was halted, at least temporarily, by mass protests. On March 1st the Turkish

government was due to recommend to parliament that 62,000 US troops be allowed to enter their country.

Pressure

But 100,000 demonstrators assembled in Ankara many shouting 'Yankee go Home'.

The march was organised by the Anti-

War Platform and put huge pressure on the ruling Justice and Development Party.

60 deputies were expected to defy the party whip and support the entry of US troops but after mass pressure it rose to 100. The government failed to get the required majority to let in the US troops.

The decision is a

huge blow to Bush and Blair. They had hoped to use Turkey to launch a invasion into Northern Iraq.

They were perfectly prepared to let Turkey crush Kurdish resistance. Turkish general Yasar Buyukyanit has proposed reintroducing military rule in six largely Kurdish provinces in Turkey.

Free Egyptian activists

ARRESTED FOR no reason, "disappeared" off the streets, held without trial and tortured. That is the fate of peace protesters in Egypt, a key ally of the US and Britain in the Middle East.

Eleven Egyptian activists remain in custody. Nearly all have been tortured. This is the country where Tony Blair has twice taken his Christmas holidays-one of them paid for by the Mubarak regime. The arrests began after an anti-war protest in January.

Then last week officers of the State Security Intelligence (SSI) seized Kermal Khalil, one of the leaders of the anti-war movement in Egypt, only days after he underwent a major operation. Amnesty International has formally taken up his case.

Brutality

Wa'el Khalil, a spokesperson for the detainees, says, "We know that many of those kidnapped by the SSI have been tortured with great brutality. We are especially worried about Kemal and fear he may not survive ill-treatment."

The others still in custody are Sabri Al Sammak, Ibrahim Al Sahari, Tamer Hindawi, Abdel Gawad Ahmed, Mohammed Khalil, Samir Al Foli, Magdi Al Kordi, Mahmoud Hassan, Mohammed Dakhli, and Mohammed Hosni.

The Egyptian government receives massive aid from the US and Britain.

■ For further information, or to register support, e-mail Jonathan Neale of the International Campaign Against US Aggression on Iraq at findjonathan@hotmail.com.

■ Send messages of protest to President Hosni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, by e-mailing webmaster@presidency.gov.eg and to General Habib al-Adeli at the Ministry of the Interior at moi@dsc.gov.eg

Supermacs are super-exploiters

FAST FOOD chains are famous for exploiting young workers and paying them peanuts.

And it's not just the multi-national McDonalds and Burger King chains which are responsible.

Recently Irish owned Supermacs were found guilty of illegally keeping school students working until 4.30 am.

Hours

The law requires that 16 to 18 year old workers must finish six-and-a-half hours earlier by 10pm.

Even the usually pro-boss authorities were forced to act by Supermacs' impunity. Judge John Garavan commented, "This company has been the recipient of inspections in the past when they were given a chance, and they did not take it."

The chain was forced to admit that it kept no proper records of starting and finishing times of its young workers.

Rates

Employers are required to keep records of hours worked, holiday entitlements and rates of pay for three years.

Supermacs could not



■ Supermacs: A passion for overworking young people

produce these important records.

Supermacs had been forced to pay €80,000 in

arrears to staff since 2001.

When it comes to rubbish food and super-

exploitation, Irish bosses can stand proudly alongside Burger King and McDonalds.

Fight for a free education

EDUCATION Minister Noel Dempsey is set to announce the return of fees for colleges from next September.

Students will be asked to pay 2000 euro a year for Arts courses, 3000 a year for science courses and 4,000 for law and medicine.

They will be issued with loans, which they will have to pay after leaving college.

Reduction

The move will lead to a reduction in the number of working class students attending colleges.

Entry to subjects like medicine will be determined by ability to pay rather than by who is best suited to practice.

It will make an already elitist situation even worse. But students are not likely to take this lying down.

A recent election to the Students Union in UCD, saw three people from the Campaign for Free Education take officer posts.

It ended more than a decade of Fianna Fail control of the union.

What about HIS missiles?

IRAQ HAS been ordered to destroyed its Al Samoud missiles because they could possibly fly up to 180 kilometres.

This is not even far enough to go from Baghdad in central Iraq to Basra in the south.

But just as Baghdad announced that it had destroyed the first ten weapons, British and US warplanes stepped up attacks on Iraq.

Over the weekend, they hit targets that could be used to defend Iraq in the event of a ground invasion from Kuwait.

Stockpiles

Whatever the Iraqi regime's arsenal, it pales to nothing in comparison with the Israeli stockpiles, especially as Israel definitely does have nuclear weaponry.

Israel's Jericho I ballistic missile has a range of 500 kilometres.

The Jericho II is even more deadly.

Its range of 1,500 kilometres means it can hit targets in Iraq, Syria, Iran and even Russia.

It can carry a payload of 1,000 kilograms, more than enough for a nuclear weapon.

Bush and Blair do not want to "rid the region of weapons of mass destruction".

They just want to make Iraq defenceless.

We need regime change here

BUSH AND Blair have lost the argument for a war to remove weapons of mass destruction.

So now they claim that they are bombing Iraq to bring democracy and freedom.

They have some nerve talking about democracy.

Millions of people have marched against war on February 15th. Opinion polls, outside of America, are all against war. Yet our rulers are not listening to the will of the people.

Ahern had even the nerve to claim that the 150,000 people who marched in Dublin supported his policies! He must not see 'US troops out of Shannon' on the posters.

Dictators

We clearly need 'regime change' in Ireland, Britain and the US – rather than just in Iraq.

The US has no problem with dictators – as long as they are pro-US. Take, for example, Islam Karimov, the president of the central Asian state of Uzbekistan.

He won a recent election with nearly 100 percent of the vote – just below Saddam's poll rating.

He locks up thousands of political prisoners and according to Human Rights Watch use 'systematic torture' on them.

But there is no talk of liberating the people of Uzbekistan because the US has established permanent military bases in the country.

And that gives them access to a vital strategic area next to Russia and China and close to the Caspian Sea where there are huge reserves of oil.

Colonial powers have always justified their rule by claiming to bring civilisation and democracy.

And it is always a lie.

Scores

The people of Iraq will eventually settle their own scores with Saddam Hussein. The overthrow of tyrants by their own people is not unusual.

The people of Romania got rid of Ceausescu; the people of Indonesia got rid of Suharto; the people of Iran overthrew the Shah. Yet all of these tyrants were as bad as Saddam Hussein.

The best thing we can do to help get rid of Saddam Hussein is to end sanctions and stop this war.

That way the people would at least be able to organise for their freedom rather than starve or be murdered.



■ Part of the peaceful Irish Anti War Movement protest in Shannon on March 1st

IN THE EVENT OF WAR: A SOLIDARITY STOPPAGE

WAR IS only weeks away, whether or not the UN give it backing. We therefore have no time to loose.

In the event of war, we need to organise the most effective form of direct action to bring to an end as soon as possible..

The Irish Anti-War Move-

ment is calling on everyone to stop what they are doing at 12 o'clock on the day war breaks out.

Walk-outs

This means walk-outs from workplaces, colleges and schools. This type of peaceful, mass direct action is the only

way to make Ahern and Blair listen.

But building for action on this scale requires huge organisation. It means that activists must prepare the ground now.

February 15th was enormous because the idea of a global protest caught the mood of

masses.

The solidarity stoppage is also being organised on an international basis. It too can catch the imagination of hundreds of thousands and shake the establishment.

But we need to re-double our efforts to get the word out now.

Do you think this war is about oil and US power?

Do you think people should come before profit?

Had enough of Bush, Blair and Ahern's contempt for democracy?

Do you want to fight racism, and the scapegoating of refugees?

YES? Then you belong in the Socialist Workers Party

To join or for more information: Fill in the form and
Send to SWP PO Box PO Box 1648, Dublin 8
Phone (01) 872 2682 Email swp@clubi.ie Web www.swp.ie

I want to join the Socialist Workers Party

Name.....

Address

.....

.....

Phone.....

Email.....

Union/College.....

(If applicable)

Bush's ally forced to flee his presidential palace

Uprising rocks Bolivia

ONE OF George Bush's staunchest allies in Latin America had to flee his presidential palace in the Bolivian capital, La Paz. Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, the multimillionaire businessman president, escaped hidden in the back of an ambulance as government buildings in the capital burned.

Outside the palace people and police were fighting on the same side against troops sent to quell a mass rebellion against poverty.

There were mass demonstrations and riots in La Paz and other key cities.

A 48-hour general strike was called by the Bolivian Labour Federation. Even the police went on strike.

Battles

"The crisis has reached such a point that the guard dogs of the state have turned against it", said Puca Wara, a socialist in the Bolivian city of Santa Cruz.

In La Paz striking police and ordinary people fought running battles against troops, who shot at least 32 people dead. Sanchez de Lozada has, for now, survived in office.

But he has had to withdraw the tax rises and cuts that sparked the protests, promise wage rises to many groups, and sack his entire cabinet.

The tax rises had been demanded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and its backers in the US White House.

'The guard dogs of the state have turned against it.'

They wanted ordinary Bolivians to pay so international bankers would continue to get interest on Bolivia's crushing debt burden.

The rebellion in Bolivia is a severe blow to the US. The US Washington Post paper reports, "The country has become Washington's virtual standard bearer" in Latin America.

"Prior to last week's events, the Bolivian government had been the true believer of Washington's free market gospel."



■ Demonstrators in the Bolivian capital La Paz

HOW TO FIGHT A WAGE FREEZE

THE SPARK for rebellion was a government plan to freeze workers' salaries and impose a 12.5 increase in income tax.

The Associated Press agency reported how in the capital, "Word of the new tax spread quickly. Labourers and peasants expressed outrage.

Shop owners simmered with anger.

"Soon, students in school uniform and taxi drivers took to the streets. Furious policemen then walked off their jobs to join demonstrators."

Targeted

People targeted, and set fire to, government buildings. The rebellion quickly spread to

other key cities such as Santa Cruz and Cochabamba.

An eyewitness in Cochabamba described how "The city is shut down.

"The decision to take to the streets is the only choice that many have left."

The government measures threatened to plunge even more Bolivians into poverty. Years of IMF-backed neo-liberal policies have left over 60 percent of

Bolivia's eight million people living on less than \$2 a day. And, despite slavishly following IMF plans, the debt burden is crushing Bolivia's poor.

Sanchez de Lozada was economy minister in the 1980s when Bolivia's crucial tin industry was all but wiped out.

That and the devastation of other industries has pushed more and more people to try and scratch a living in the countryside.

A war on the Poor

MANY HAVE turned to growing coca plants. Coc leaves are a traditional stimulant chewed by many people in the high altitude of Bolivia. Some coca production has been used as the raw material for production of the drug cocaine.

But the government backed by the US, has been waging war on all coca production, threatening to reduce even more people to destitution.

This has fuelled mass protests by coca growers. One of the growers' leaders, Evo Morales, has become a key opposition figure and was at the centre of last week's protests. Morales only narrowly lost the presidential election last year.

The US has poured military aid into Bolivia under the cover of a "war on drugs" George Bush hopes to establish three major new military bases in Bolivia to project US power in a strategically vital region.

The region is home to vital oil and gas supplies, above all in Venezuela and Colombia. Bolivia itself has some of the world's biggest reserves of natural gas.

President Sanchez de Lozada has made deals to exploit these reserves with companies including the now discredited Enron corporation, as well as BP, Shell, British Gas, France's TotalFinaElf and Spain's Repsol.

The rebellion in Bolivia has left Sanchez de Lozada hugely weakened, has terrified global corporations and badly rattled George Bush.

It shows how popular anger can explode and challenge the priorities of those at the top of society.

the Eamonn McCann column

SDLP and SF: Can you spot the difference?

FOLLOWING 700 garment industry job losses in the north west since the beginning of the year, the SDLP and Sinn Fein have set out their detailed policies for regeneration of the region.

The *Derry Journal*, on February 23rd, carried lengthy articles by Mark Durkan and Mitchel McLaughlin on "New Economic Visions" for the area. The similarities were so striking that cynics have speculated a double-jobbing ghost-writer may have written both pieces.

It was time, declared the SDLP leader, "for an end to the second-class economic treatment of Derry." Alongside, the Sinn Fein national chairman complained that "decision-makers" saw Derry as "populated by second-class citizens."

Durkan wanted the Derry area designated a "special action zone." McLaughlin preferred "a

cross-border enterprise zone."

Durkan proposed "substantial academic investment", McLaughlin urged "the expansion of Higher/Further education."

Durkan demanded funding for "the development of the north-west as a hub region between the National Spatial Strategy in the South and the Regional Development Strategy in the North through the Derry-Letterkenny corridor." The Sinn Fein man advocated "a coordinated approach to the Irish government's National Spatial Strategy" to create "a north west corridor" and make Derry "the regional hub of the north west."

And so on. There were differences of detail. The SDLP leader wanted the proposed all-Ireland police training college located in Derry. McLaughlin didn't mention the issue. No doubt there will be alignment on this matter too once Sinn Fein joins the policing boards.

As to how the plans might be realised, Durkan declared: "I am calling today for all parties and all politicians to set aside party political considerations and work together in a cohesive and systematic way with our social partners to rescue this city and the North West from the ravages of economic decline."

McLaughlin called on "all of the political parties, business, civic and community leaders (to) unite behind a formal Regional Economic Development Strategy to effectively reverse the effects of years of apathy, bias and neglect."

One other difference was that Durkan mentioned, in passing, the role of trade unions. But in the course of a 2,000-word dissertation, McLaughlin didn't acknowledge trades unions' existence.

Neither suggested any role for working class people themselves. All their proposals involved lob-

bying governments, civil servants and economic planners. The notion of workers resisting jobs losses by sit-ins or preventing the removal of machinery, for example, didn't occur to either man.

In the context of conventional Irish politics, there is nothing unusual or distinctive here. Fian-na Fail, Fine Gael, the PDs, the two major Unionist parties in the North, could all comfortably go along with the basic approach. Calls for all parties and interests in a particular region to come together to fight that region's corner, and for the working class to sing dumb about its own interests in order to sustain "unity", are par for the course in Ireland, North and South. There is an implicit promise of a quiescent working class if the economic overlords choose this region over others.

Meanwhile, the same parties in other localities will be making exactly the same pitch.

It scarcely needs saying that there isn't a glimmer of socialist thought in any of this. Sinn Fein rank-and-file might wonder what's become of the policy proposed by the Derry delegation and formally passed at last year's ard feis committing the party to "actively oppose" State aid for companies which fail to recognise trade unions or agree to compensation for workers and the local community in the event of closure or which refuse to pledge no involvement in the arms trade.

This policy was reflected in not one word of McLaughlin's article. And yet we can confidently predict that there will be no clash within the party as a result. Sinn Fein leaders regard the rank-and-file's leftism as a laugh, and the rank-and-file is required to accept the insult in silence.

A socialist who remains within Sinn Fein isn't serious.

This is no war for democracy

THE WAR on Iraq was originally justified by "weapons of mass destruction". But none have so far have been discovered.

It was then claimed to be part of the war on "terrorism" because of alleged links between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaida.

But Bush's gang have been unable to come up with any serious evidence to support that claim.

Now Bush and Blair have found a new gloss to justify their war for oil and power. Saddam Hussein is a brutal dictator so the US needs to bomb and invade Iraq to depose him. After that they promise to bring freedom and democracy to Iraq.

But the real intentions of Bush's gang are in stark contrast to this humanitarian rhetoric.

US plans will mean US General Tommy Franks being appointed military governor of Iraq, perhaps for years.

Key US officials, including Colin Powell and the CIA, are afraid that any democratic arrangement in the country would fail to safeguard crucial US oil and strategic interests.

Prominent Iraqi oppositionists, in whose name the war is to be fought, have condemned Bush's plans. Kanan Makiya, of the Iraqi National Congress dubbed the plans an "unmitigated disaster".

Iraq's opposition parties met recently in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq where President George Bush's special envoy to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad, told them how America would rule the country after the war.

Iraqi author and academic Kanan Makiya claimed that for all the talk of bringing "Western-style democracy" to Iraq, the US Administration was looking at ways to leave Iraq under the control of President Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party.

Clamp Down

The US administration reckons that Saddam's brutally repressive Ba'ath party, purged of Saddam and his circle would be able to clamp down on any genuine democratic movement and keep the area safe for US interests. The infrastructure of Saddam's Ba'ath party would remain largely intact, with the top two officials in each Iraqi ministry replaced by US military officers.

"The plan is bizarre. It is Ba'athism with an American face," said Makiya.

The chairman of the Iraqi National Congress, Ahmad Chalabi, who expected to be made president of Iraq by the Americans, condemned plans to have "US military officers three deep in every ministry."

Most of the country's 23 million inhabitants are Shi'ites, but have been ruled for decades by the Ba'ath party dominated by the minority Sunnis. Chalabi denounced the plan which would leave the Shi'ites still dominated by the Sunni elite.

Iraq's neighbours, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, are also vehemently opposed to



■ Kurdish refugees from 1991 war

WAR WILL BRING REFUGEE CRISIS

Iraq faces an enormous refugee crisis when war begins. According to expert Gil Loescher, 60 percent of the population depends totally on food rations from the UN oil for food programme for basic nutrition. While the programme is administered by the UN in northern Iraq, in the centre and south it is in the hands of the Iraqi government. When the war begins even this perilous life-line will be cut.

Following Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, some two million foreign nationals fled Kuwait and Iraq, flooding into nearby countries like Jordan and Yemen.

Turkey initially accepted some Kurdish refugees but quickly closed its border to them. The UN Security Council approved a resolution permitting a US-led military intervention to prevent the refugees fleeing to Turkey.

A crisis of even worse proportions now looms. But the US has prevented serious preparations to deal with the issue. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is the body in charge of dealing with the crisis.

But under US pressure, Secretary-General Kofi Annan prohibited discussion of any UN-wide plans to prepare for a refugee crisis while the Security Council was debating Resolution 1441.

any federal arrangement that gives autonomy to Iraq's Kurds or Shi'ites.

In their efforts to secure use of military bases in Turkey, the US has given the green light to the Turkish army to pour thousands of troops into northern Iraq.

Turkey, with its own disaffected Kurdish population, wants its military to occupy northern Iraq to prevent Kurdish groups from seizing the oil-rich northern city of Kirkuk and proclaiming an autonomous Kurdish homeland.

Two Kurdish parties have controlled a mountainous enclave of northern Iraq since 1991 and are demanding a regional government of their own. America and Turkey have made it plain that this will not be allowed to happen.

FF HYPOCRISY ON SADDAM

FIANNA Fail spokespersons are regularly denouncing the tyrant Saddam and his brutal regime in Iraq.

Ahern and his fellow cabinet Ministers have been quick to back the US/UK push for war, arguing that the Iraqi people have suffered so much under Saddam that "regime change" would provide liberation for the Iraqi people.

But in the past Fianna Fail and their big business backers have had a long and profitable relationship with Saddam.

1978 In the months prior to Saddam's grab for power Fianna Fail in opposition were building links with Iraqi business.

FF leader Charlie Haughey visited Iraq and

befriended some of the Iraqi leadership.

Saddam's rise to power did not call a halt to this burgeoning friendship and Ireland began to import oil, in increasing volumes, from Iraq under Saddam.

1982 The Irish Government establishes an official trade commission with Iraq and Fianna Fail ministers and their chums in big business travel to a trade fair in Baghdad in May 1982.

Meanwhile Saddam begins his crushing of internal opposition and builds his power base.

1983 PARK, a subsidiary of Aer Lingus opens the most prestigious hospital in Baghdad.

The hospital is staffed by large numbers of Irish nurses and specifically caters for the leadership

of the Iraqi regime as well as the top brass in the Republican Guard. Saddam himself visits the hospital on a number of occasions to avail of Irish hospitality.

1984 While it is confirmed that Iraq have used banned chemical weapons during their war with Iran, the Fianna Fail government establishes a Government Export Credit Insurance Scheme which allows Saddam to buy now and pay later.

Saddam takes advantage of this and begins to purchase Irish Beef, thus beginning the links between the Iraqi leadership and the Goodman Beef Industry.

The beef is used by Saddam to feed his elite Republican Guard.

1986 Ireland opens an embassy in Baghdad, as trade rela-

tions between Ireland and Iraq deepen.

Saddam continues to use weapons of mass destruction against the Iranians.

1987 Saddam uses chemical weapons on the Kurdish opposition in the North of Iraq.

But the Fianna Fail government re-issues the credit insurance scheme.

1988 Fianna Fail doubles the export credit fund, as America openly backs Iraq in the conflict with Iran.

1991 Gulf War, Saddam is no longer a US ally, and thus Fianna Fail ends its close economic ties with the Iraq regime.

FF policy regarding Iraq has always closely followed that of the US, and only 'ended' when the US turned against Saddam in 1991.

Remember the 'liberation' of Kuwait?

WHEN THE Kuwaiti ruling family and their hangers-on were abroad during the Iraqi occupation 12 years ago, they promised that a free and democratic society would be put in place when the US led forces drove out the Iraqi troops.

But with the defeat of Saddam

Hussein's forces in 1991 the old emir and his circle simply resumed their rule. Democracy is still completely off the agenda.

Laila al-Othman, who is a Kuwaiti writer whose books have been banned by the regime and who was convicted of seditious writing three years ago, commented, "We realise now it was just rhetoric...Nothing has changed in this country."

Kosovo and Bosnia, both subjected to Western "humanitarian" intervention, are as far away from democracy as ever.

Both are ruled by colonial-style UN governors.

NORTHERN IRAQ:

No example of liberation

ONE OF the sickest and most dishonest arguments of supporters of Bush's war is that it is about liberating the people of Iraq, especially oppressed groups like the Shi'a Muslims and the Kurds.

Commentators say that the Kurdish area of northern Iraq, which has been free of Iraqi government control since 1991, shows the kind of democracy and human rights the US will bring to Iraq.

Northern Iraq is far from peaceful. The Turkish army has repeatedly invaded the area over the last decade.

And it will be worse if there is a war. It has bombed and shelled villages in an effort to destroy supporters of the PKK-a guerrilla group fighting for the rights of Turkey's Kurdish minority.

The US did a deal with Turkey two weeks ago to allow Turkish troops to occupy the Kurdish area of northern Iraq during war against Saddam Hussein.

Turkey's rulers do not want any move to set up an independent state in northern Iraq.

This would encourage similar demands among Kurds in Turkey. Turkish capitalists have their own interests in Northern Iraq.

The UN gave permission for the Turkish Petroleum Company to drill two dozen wells near the city of Kirkuk two and a half years ago. Turkish foreign minister Yasar Yakis repeated the Turkish state's longstanding claim for control of Kirkuk and the city of Mosul.

They are in one of the biggest oil-producing areas in Iraq.

Northern Iraq is currently controlled by two rival Kurdish factions-the KDP and the PUK.

They have pursued a bitter struggle that has resulted in repeated bouts of civil war. This erupted in 1994 in the so called international safe haven in northern Iraq.

At stake was control of smuggling through the border with Turkey which provided the groups' two leaders, Jalal Talabani and Masoud Barzani, and their supporters, with enormous revenues.

Divided

The US brokered a peace deal in 1998. But the territory remains divided into PUK and KDP controlled areas.

Each group is vying for favour with Bush.

Last October the CIA set up two field offices in northern Iraq-one in each of the two areas.

Each group's militias have arrested human rights activists, newspaper editors and other dissidents.

The mass of people live in appalling poverty, while a handful around the Talabani

and Barzani clans have enriched themselves. Turkey has enlisted the support of the KDP and PUK in its war against the Turkish Kurds.

Both groups oppress an ethnic minority called the Turkomans, and have tried to crush Islamic groups and other oppositionists.

One of the most absurd pro-war arguments is that the presence of the radical Islamist group Ansar al Islam in northern Iraq shows the Iraqi regime is linked to Osama Bin Laden. Ansar al Islam is a tiny group that operates in the areas controlled by the PUK and KDP.

Ansar came out of a group which was allied to the KDP in the 1990s.

Offering Turkey a slice of Iraq is not the first time Western powers have used the Kurds for their own ends.

The US and its client regime in Iran encouraged the Kurds of Iraq to launch military operations against the Iraqi government in the early 1970s.

Then Iran and Iraq came to an agreement over disputed territory and Iraq began moving closer to the US and away from Russia.

The Shah of Iran and the US government stood back while Iraqi forces butchered the Kurdish opposition.

Supporters of the war point to Saddam Hussein's use of poison gas against the Kurdish villagers of Halabja in 1988.

Yet Western governments supplied the gas and the Iraqi regime continued to enjoy US support as it was at war with Iran.

The Kurds have ended up being victims of every outside intervention in the Middle East over the last 80 years, whether directly at the hands of great powers or local regimes.

Another round of bloodletting by the US and Britain will bring them further suffering.

The USA is blocking a deal to give cheap AIDS drugs. CHARLIE KIM

BUSH'S WOMBOMBS AN

GEORGE BUSH and his business backers are sentencing millions of people to death by withholding drugs required to combat HIV infection and AIDS.

Bush has worked alongside the world's biggest pharmaceutical firms to defend the patents that keep up the prices of anti-HIV and anti-AIDS medicines.

Last month Bush's US trade negotiating team smashed up an agreement that could have made the drugs available to millions of people in the Third World.

They blocked changes to an agreement known as TRIPS (Trade-Related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) that would have allowed countries to buy or make cheaper drugs when demanded by a health emergency.

Bush's decision means millions of orphans, economies wrecked, families destroyed, and a mound of corpses. Last year 6,000 people died every day in Africa from AIDS. Bush's policy has guaranteed it will be even worse next year.

This is what US power means. It is the global force to squeeze debt repayments from devastated countries, to enforce economic policies that clear the way for the multinationals, to deal out certain death because people are too poor to afford care.

Protests

Campaigning against the war in Iraq is about opposing US power. Many protestors are demanding that US government control is broken and that people should come before the multinationals' profits.

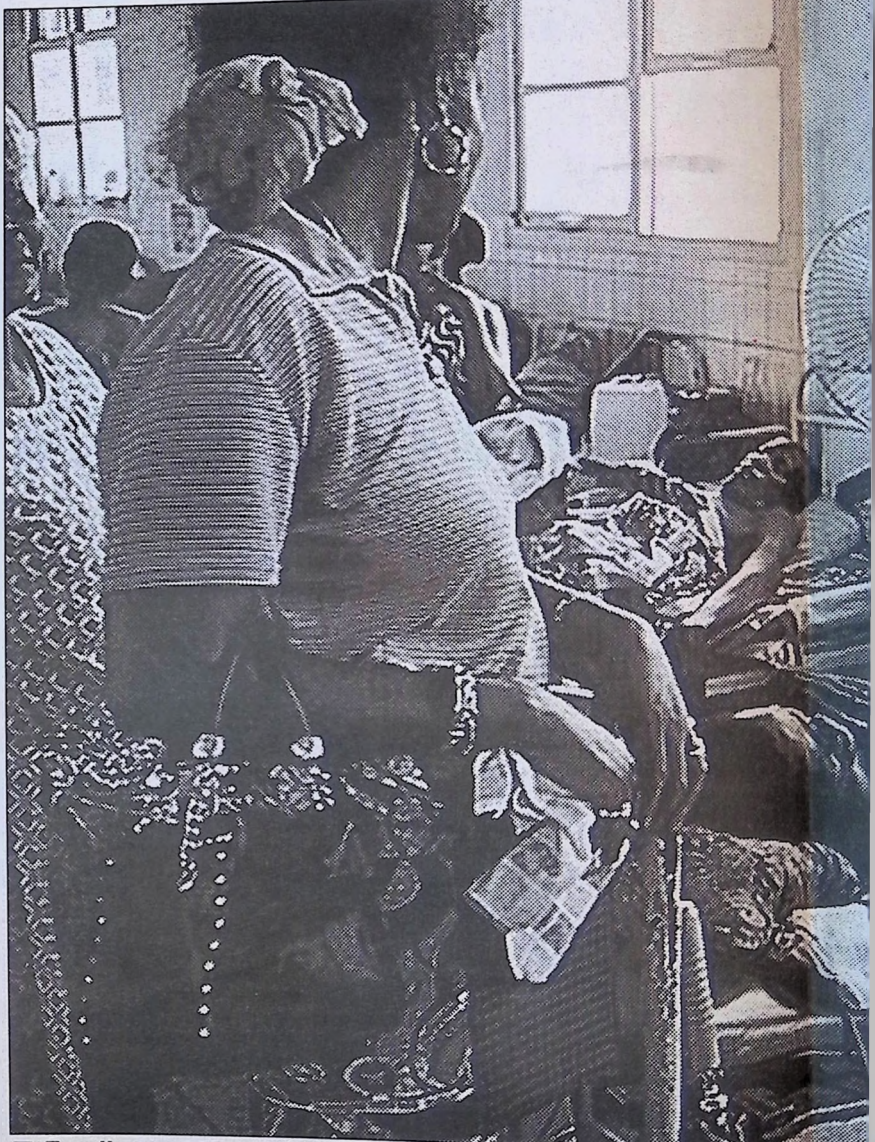
World leaders are comfortably presiding over a system where 3.1 million people died last year from HIV/AIDS, 40 million will die soon, and thousands of millions are at risk.

Yet they have only pledged \$2 billion to the major world initiative to combat this devastation.

Richard Feachem, head of the United Nations Global Fund to Fight AIDS, says, "The HIV/AIDS pandemic is not going to peak until 2050 or 2060. We're very early in something that is very devastating."

"A few billion dollars to take action against that threat are paltry. But also what about a war with Iraq?"

"That would cost somewhere between \$100 billion and \$200 billion, so if you make that comparison this is small change."



Family members visit a patient at the main hospital in Kinshasa

Major companies have patented the most appropriate combinations of drugs for AIDS in 37 out of 53 African countries and almost all of Asia and Latin America.

This means the prices stay high. A true comparison would be asking someone in Ireland to pay €450 a day to get crucial treatment.

The US government has forced a rule through the World Trade Organisation that makes it impossible for poor countries to import cheaper ("generic") versions of these drugs even if companies do relax patents. Trade ministers promised to remove this lethal clause last year, after intense pressure from people all around the world.

The US government last month blocked a deal to make drugs, including anti-retrovirals,

cheaper.

Anti-retroviral drugs inhibit HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, and boost the immune system's ability to fight infections.

They have led to a dramatic reduction in HIV-related illness and death in countries where they

have become widely available.

But the vast majority of people with HIV/AIDS live in poor countries and are too poor to get the treatment.

The US keeps a list of countries called Special 301. If these countries step out of line over

PRICES KI

IN 2001 the four giant pharmaceutical firms grabbed over \$27 billion in profits.

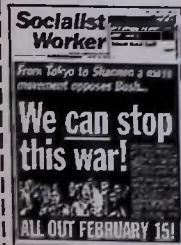
The 2002 figure will certainly be over \$30 billion.

These companies do not make huge profits from AIDS drugs in the Third World.

Very few people can afford them. They protect the

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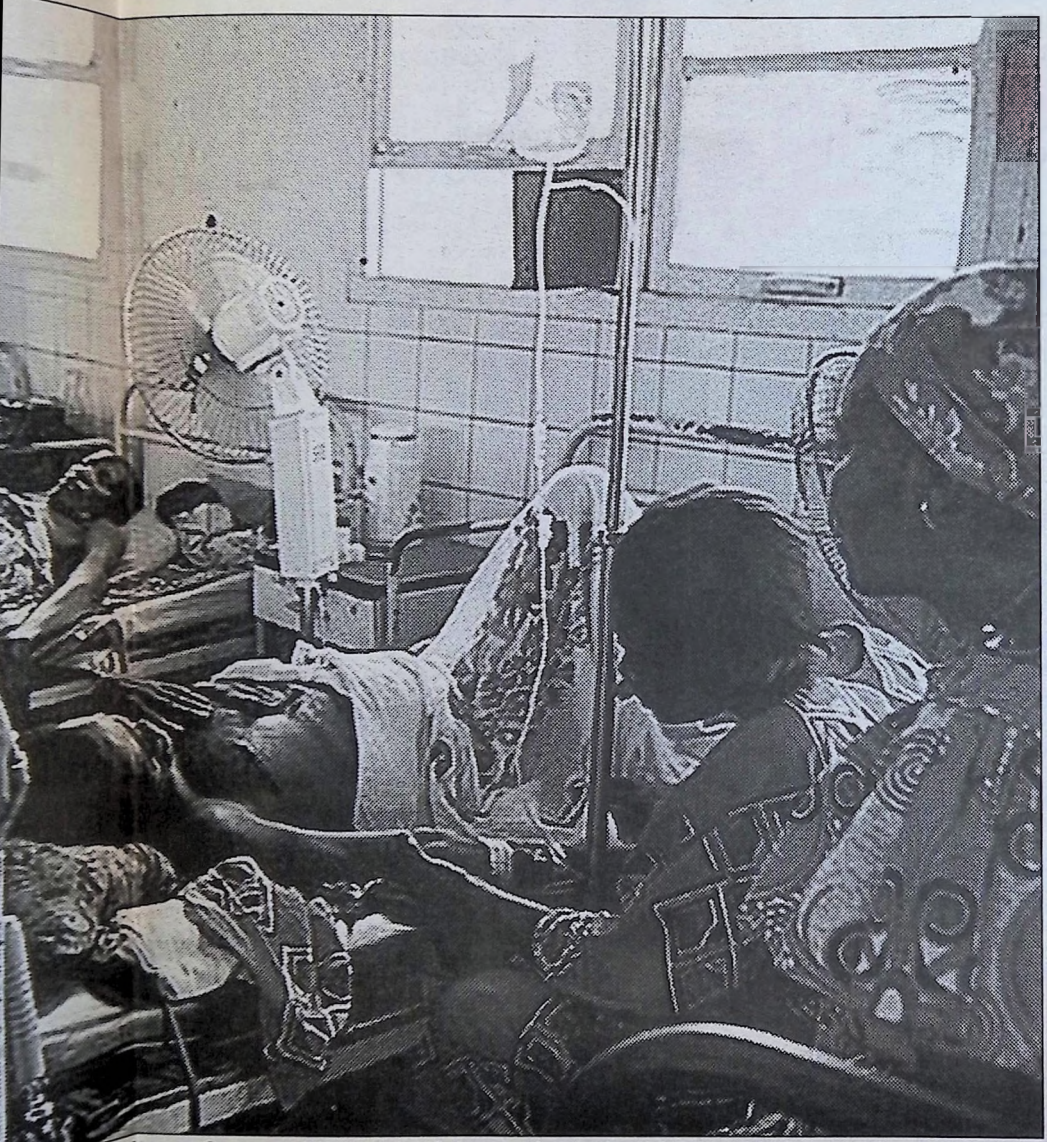
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Give Third World countries access to
WORLD OF
AND DISEASE
MBER says this is a war on the poor

WORLD OF AND DISEASE



hospital in Kinshasa, Congo. Almost half the patients in this ward have AIDS.

Poverty is death

HIV-POSITIVE people need a combination of drugs to keep the HIV levels low in their blood.

The simplest combination is zidovudine (AZT), lamivudine (3TC), and either efavirenz or nevirapine.

The multinational drugs company GlaxoSmithKline sells Combivir (AZT plus 3TC) for \$620.50 a year to the poorest African countries.

Boehringer Ingelheim sells nevirapine for \$438 a year.

The total price of treatment is \$1,058 a year. Indian generic drugs company Cipla sells a pill called Triomune, which combines all three drugs, for \$304 a year.

This is less than a third of the multinationals' price.

Abolishing patents and the drug companies' stranglehold would be a step forward. But it would not be nearly enough to save everyone. Around 15 per cent of people in Malawi in Africa are HIV positive, 1.7 million people. The entire health budget is \$52 million.

Even if the whole budget was spent on anti-AIDS drugs it would cover only 49,149 people if bought at the multinationals' price, or 171,052 at the cheaper rate. Nobody gets the drugs unless they pay for treatment themselves. Most people live on around 50 cents a day or less.

The humane policy would be to make treatment free, to cancel the debt which pumps money away from health and education services in poor countries, and to pour money into research to combat AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.



become widely available. The vast majority of people with HIV/AIDS live in poor countries and are too poor to get treatment.

issues such as drug patents they will face trade sanctions.

Develop

The poorest countries, which will never develop their own drugs industries, are left off the

list. Countries that might export generic medicines are kept on. The terror of falling foul of the US's diplomatic, economic and military power is enough to bring most into line.

A recent report from the charity Oxfam says, "Special 301 is a

big stick widely feared by developing countries—not just because of the threat of sanctions but because of the associated political pressures."

The power to bully and inflict carnage—that is what Bush wants to reinforce through war on Iraq.

IS KEPT HIGH

ese companies do make huge profits in the AIDS drugs in the World. Every few people can d them. they protect the

patents in order to keep prices high in Europe and the US, and to defend the system where they control the cost of medicines that could benefit everyone.

GlaxoSmithKline sells the drug Combivir in Africa at \$620.50 a year.

It sells the same drug in Britain at \$6,638 a year, making massive profits.

WHAT SOCIALISTS SAY

What kind of Direct Action?

THE PROTEST at Shannon on March 1st opened up a huge debate about the nature of direct action.

One relatively small organisation, Grassroots Network, posted a message on Indymedia proclaiming their intention to tear down the fence at the airport.

They also offered the divide the people who took part in this action into different colour codes ranging from white for those who would physically tear down the fence to pink for those who were observers.

Not surprisingly, not a single strand of fencing was torn down as the police had been forewarned and had moved riot squads into the area.

In the end the 'direct action' consisted of standing in a line in front of the same police.

Not very different in fact from the Irish Anti-War Movement protest that took place on the same day at the airport—except it was much smaller.

Lessons

Over 1,000 people joined that protest whereas 200 went with the Grassroots Gathering.

In hindsight the whole incident may appear relatively trivial. But it did contain important political lessons for the movement.

Firstly, it showed the weakness of the response of the parliamentary left, Labour, the Greens and Sinn Fein.

As soon as the Indymedia message appeared, the *Irish Independent* picked it up and ran the story on the front page.

A virulent press campaign followed which sought to scare people from going to Shannon.

Sadly, the Greens, Labour and Sinn Fein buckled under the pressure. Labour Party spokesperson, Michael D Higgins, held a press conference to advise their members not to attend.

The Green Party expressed fears about violence.

Bizarrely, Sinn Fein, instructed their members to pull out of the Shannon protest for similar reasons.

They called on their members to turn up to an alternative protest in Dublin, at the Department of Foreign Affairs.

But despite widescale media publicity, only 150 people turned up.

Contrary to what the media think, the whole incident does not represent a 'split' in the anti-war movement.

All organisations, for

example, are calling for the same programme of mobilisation if war does break out.

But the incident reveals the tensions that reformist parties have in relating to a dynamic social movement.

The central strategy of these parties is winning votes.

They therefore subordinate everything else to electoral considerations. But winning votes also means courting the media to some extent.

As the media is owned by the likes of Tony O'Reilly parties like the Greens, Labour and Sinn Fein are regularly pressurised to show respect for the institutions of the state and the system of corporate domination.

To be deemed fit to enter government, they are repeatedly asked to demonstrate 'responsibility'. Hence their withdrawal from Shannon in a manner which temporarily damaged the movement.

Second, the incident also showed that there are differences about the nature of direct action.

The Socialist Workers Party is for direct action, particularly as Ahern has refused to listen to the vast protests.

But direct action is only effective when it involves masses of people rather than when it is conducted by small groups who are engaged in 'propaganda by the deed'.

Poll Tax

The poll tax protests in Britain are one form of this action. So too were the wave of protests that swept Ireland in the wake of the X case.

This involved thousands taking to the streets, defying school authorities that tried to block gates.

Everyone knew that if the 14 year old X case had not been allowed to go to Britain for an abortion it would have escalated into even more militant action.

In none of these cases, did any small group issue patronising suggestions for 'colour codes' based on different degrees of bravery.

Direct action was not simply a matter of individual conscience but rather flowed out of the needs of a mass movement.

There was no elitist notion that more 'politicised people' need to take specific actions to demonstrate lessons to the less politicised masses.

All of this is quite important for the anti-war movement today. The movement needs to move on to forms of mass civil disobedience.

But this means activists building genuine grassroots anti-war groups in their areas and workplaces to win the argument now for the solidarity stoppage and occupations.

by KIERAN ALLEN

SYLVIA PANKHURST:

The Suffragette who fought war



International Women's Day, on March 8th, has always been an occasion to oppose war. The Russian Revolution of 1917 began with a women workers' march on that day.

Today as war again looms it is worth celebrating the life of Sylvia Pankhurst, a feminist and socialist whose efforts made an enormous contribution to the achievement of the right to vote for women in Britain and Ireland.

Sylvia was born into a well-to-do Manchester family who were extremely active in politics.

In 1903 her mother Emmeline and sister Christabel set up the Women's Social and Political Union, an organisation that grew to lead the struggle for women's suffrage.

The movement rapidly gathered support and in 1906, when it moved to base its headquarters in London, Sylvia began to get deeply involved. By 1910 she was working full time at promoting the WPSU.

But with the growth of the suffrage movement two questions had to be faced, questions which have always surfaced in the women's movement.

To what extent should the women's movement align itself with the labour movement? And what tactics should it utilise?

All women's movements contain two wings, conservative and radical, an inevitable feature of the fact that they organise across classes.

In the case of the WPSU this division found reflection in the Pankhurst family itself, for Sylvia's response was very different to that of her mother, Emmeline, and her sister, Christabel.

Sylvia recognised that for all the sexist features of the labour movement, there was enormous potential in approaching trade unions to support the goal of votes for women.

The years from 1910 to the outbreak of the Great War were years of revolt by unskilled workers.

In Ireland this 'great unrest' saw the explosive growth of the revolutionary Irish Transport and General Workers Union, led by Larkin and Connolly.

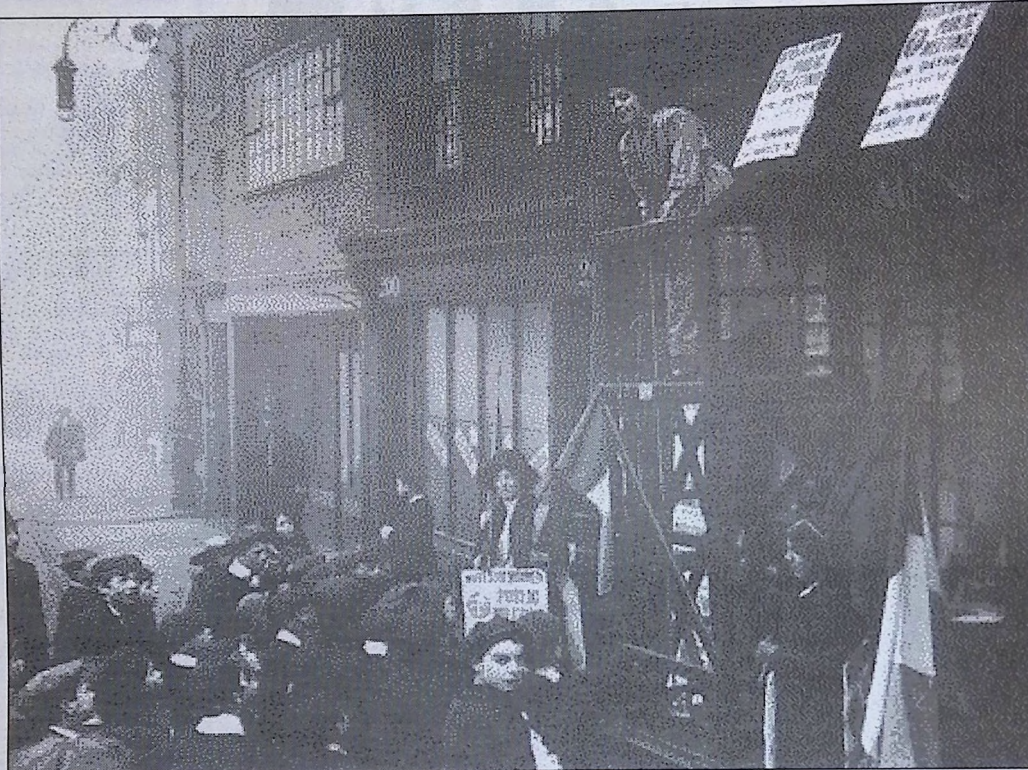
Working women played their part in the great strikes of the day, and the whole labour movement began, albeit slowly, to move towards acceptance of the demands of the women's movement.

By 1913 the British Labour Party had been won over to accepting the argument for women's enfranchisement. In July 1915 an equal pay campaign for the women being brought into wartime production was supported by the Independent Labour Party and several major trade unions.

But the WPSU was not in favour of pursuing this alliance, for fear of alienating support from potential conservative supporters.

In 1907 Christabel had issued a press statement which asserted that her organisation made no distinction between the Conservative, Liberal and Labour parties.

Christabel had insisted from the outset that the WPSU must be "independent—non-party, non-class".



■ Sylvia Pankhurst speaking in London's East End and an issue of the Workers Dreadnought she produced.

Emmeline Pankhurst, responding to the idea that the WPSU should concentrate on organising working class women, had said that, "such women were the weakest and thus of no value to a movement which had, perforce, to be based on the strongest and most intelligent."

Despite their shared background, Sylvia fundamentally disagreed with this patronising attitude. In 1913 she founded the East London Federation of the suffrage movement, with specific orientation towards women workers.

To help organise her movement she launched a newspaper, *The Women's Dreadnought*, which rapidly grew into a major success, mainly in London but with a growing distribution all over Britain.

In the first issue of the paper Sylvia responded to her mother's conservative outlook and wrote, "some people say that the lives of working women are too hard and their education too small for them to become a powerful voice in winning the vote. Such people have forgotten their history."

The question of tactics had also divided the Pankhursts. Although having a conservative approach to class politics, the WPSU advocated militant tactics such as property damage, courting arrest and hunger strike once imprisoned.

But this militancy did not contradict having an elitist view with regard to organising a mass movement, as it left the initiative for action in the hands of a small number of women activists.

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

For International Socialism.
Vol. VI.—No. 6 SATURDAY, MAY 3rd, 1919 Price Twopence.

THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION



Sylvia loyally played her part to the full, as her harrowing memoir of force-feeding testifies:

I felt a steel instrument pressing round my gums, feeling for gaps in my teeth... Then something gradually forced my jaws apart as a screw was turned; the pain was like having teeth drawn. They were trying to get the tube down my throat. They got it down, I suppose, though I was unconscious of anything save a mad revolt of struggling, for they said at last: 'That's all!' and I vomited as

the tube came up.

But all the time she had her doubts about some of the suffragette tactics. "Secretly planned militancy was a method of desperation adopted in the hope of shortening the longer struggle..."

"I must confess that these particular tactics never appealed to me... I did not then and I do not now express one word of censure upon the brave women who were secret militants."

The problem with the tactic of property damage, in her view, was that it discouraged those wider numbers who for the first time were beginning to show a willingness to protest on behalf of the suffragettes.

In 1913 a monster meeting of some 10,000 people was held in the Albert Hall in support of the workers of Dublin who were engaged in the epic 'lock-out' battle with William Martin Murphy.

Despite instructions to the contrary, Sylvia spoke on the platform alongside her friend James Connolly.

This brought to a head a conflict that had been developing within the WPSU and Sylvia soon found herself expelled from the WPSU and the social circles of her mother and sister.

Left to implement her own strategy of appealing to women workers and encouraging the building of a mass movement by supporting working class struggles, Sylvia was extraordinarily successful. The East London Federation won a huge working class following, of both men and women, while always maintaining a focus on women's rights.

The organisation ran two co-op restaurants, a toy factory, a day nursery and a mother and baby clinic. *The Women's Dreadnought* grew in circulation to reach 10,000 copies an issue.

A campaign demanding that the Prime Minister meet with a delegation of six East End working women embarrassed Asquith into attending the meeting, and soon after he bowed to the strength of support for women's suffrage by announcing that there would be legislation introduced to give women the vote.

It was the Great War that exposed just how deep the division in the women's movement was. For the WPSU now moved quickly to an extreme nationalist position by trying to chase upper classes that were hysterical with war fever.

Emmeline and Christabel mounted a white feather campaign, trying to put moral pressure on men to go to war. They renamed their organisation the Women's Union and their paper from *The Suffragette* to *Britannia*. They called for compulsory national service for women.

By contrast Sylvia opposed the war in the name of international solidarity between working people. In this regard her principles lifted her head and shoulders above most of the political activists of her day.

Sylvia very skillfully exploited the need of the Government for women workers by launching a campaign for equal pay, and their unwillingness to concede the demand began to undermine propaganda about 'national unity'. She thus carried her organisation with her in an anti-war direction.

The Russian Revolution came as an enormous inspiration to Sylvia Pankhurst, and she fully gave herself over to the cause of international socialism, seeing it as the answer for women's liberation.

She renamed her paper *The Workers' Dreadnought* and joined in the formation of a Communist Party in Britain in 1920.

The life of Sylvia Pankhurst should nevertheless be celebrated for her courage, principles, and the mass movement she built, which played a huge part in the achievement of votes for women.

Truth is the first casualty

AT THE height of the First World War, British Prime Minister David Lloyd George told *Manchester Guardian* editor, CP Scott "If people really knew the truth about this war, it would be stopped tomorrow. But of course they don't and can't know".

It epitomised the attitude of our rulers in time of war. In the nineteenth century, the Prussian monarch could, with some truth, proclaim that the average peasant barely knew their country was at war.

Wars were fought between small bodies of men who occasionally wreaked horror on cities they conquered.

But with modern capitalism, the civilian population became a definite target. Bombing was aimed at breaking 'morale' and undermining enemy armies from the rear.

This meant that control of the civilian population was more vital.

If people were to know the real reasons behind war, they would never accept it. So spurious justifications had to be devised.

WW1 was supposed to be about defending "brave, little Belgium from the brutality of the German Kaiser".

War criminal, Henry Kissinger

The fact that Belgium was one of the most brutal and murderous imperialist powers in Africa was barely mentioned. Instead the Germans were presented as 'Huns'—an evil nation which was a threat to world peace.

Similarly the facts behind the Second World War, regarded as possibly the only just war in history, have to be hidden from view even to this day.

How many British and French soldiers knew that Hitler had been appointed to power by the German ruling class in 1933 to crush socialists and that he had the backing of giant US companies such as IBM and Ford?

The Allied powers claimed they were outraged at Hitler's treatment of the Jews.

But Churchill and Roosevelt knew of the "final solution" as early as 1943 and yet refused to bomb the train lines to the concentration camps as they would be needed in the occupation after the end of the war.

They also refused (as did the Irish government) to allow more than a handful of Jewish refugees into their countries, thereby condemning many more to death.

During the cold war (when Stalin was no longer "Uncle Joe" as he was portrayed in WW2) every progressive, national liberation movement was characterised as "communist" and therefore a threat to all people with "decent, western values".

This allowed the US to act with virtual impunity in Korea, Vietnam and indirectly in dozens of countries such as Angola, Nicaragua, Iran, Iraq, and Guatemala.

The initial justification for an American military presence in Vietnam was the "Gulf of Tonkin Incident".

President Johnson went before Congress and told them that the North Vietnamese had attacked an American vessel.

Self-Defence

Senators promptly voted to give the White House a free hand in Vietnam with the result that 3 million died over the next decade.

The truth, as later revealed, was that the American battleship had opened fire on the Vietnamese and they had responded in self-defence.

For four years Nixon and Kissinger organised the "secret" bombing of Cambodia, where the deaths of 500,000 civilians went unreported in the Western media.

During the debate in the American Congress on sending troops to the Middle East for the first Gulf War, following the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, a young Kuwaiti girl made a speech in front of senators telling how Iraqi soldiers had thrown babies out of incubators and left them to die.

What the senators didn't know was that the girl was the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador, and had been coached to tell the, completely untrue, story by a PR company, Knowton Hill.

The senate vote to send troops to the Gulf was won by just five votes. Many senators later admitted they had been influenced by the piece of propaganda.

The corporate media always support the government at a time of crisis for the simple reason that those who own and run the media are the same as those who own and run the country.

This is why we can expect truth to be the first casualty as Bush's war gets nearer.

by ROY HASSEY



Venezuela: The coup that was televised

by DAVID LYNCH

IT IS rare that an hour-long programme, with little in the way of pre-publicity, screened late on a Monday night causes anything more than a ripple among the general public.

However the "The Revolution will not Be Televised" a feature length documentary on Hugo Chavez, President of Venezuela screened as part of RTE's 'True Lives' series has had an amazing impact since it was screened three weeks ago.

Caller after caller to Joe Duffy's Liveline programme raved about the documentary with many pointing out the role of the US administration in the coup against Chavez exposed in the film.

Over the course of seven months, from January to July 2002, the Irish filmmakers Kim Bartley and Donnacha O'Brien secured unprecedented access to film Chavez in his daily life.

During this time, there was a coup (backed by the US) and the filmmakers were the only crew inside the presidential palace at the time.

Combining both brav-



Chavez: Deposed and re-instated in the two-day coup

ery and a nose for journalism, the Irish filmmakers created an amazing record of this coup.

Top Brass

On the 11th April 2002, the world awoke to the news that President Hugo Chavez had been removed from office and had been replaced by a new self-appointed "interim" government full of military top brass and oil

barons.

News report after news report carried stories of the mayhem in Caracas, where 11 people had been killed in what were alleged to have been bloody street battles between Chavez supporters and an opposition march.

Viewers all over the world were led to believe that Chavez had ordered the killings, and had therefore been forced to

resign. What had in fact taken place was the first coup of the twenty first century, and the world's first media coup.

People Power

Colin Powell and the American regime backed the coup supporters, and the undemocratic overthrow of Chavez.

The film shows how people power brought Chavez back to office

within 48 hours and the plotters were chased from the Presidential Palace.

"The Revolution Will Not Be Televised" is a thrilling insight into President Chavez and the power of media while also exposing the role of American foreign policy in Latin America. The film is sure to be repeated and it is a must see for anyone who failed to catch it first time around.

obituary

Understanding the history of these islands

by PAUL DWYER

CHRISTOPHER Hill, who died last month aged 91, was one of the most famous Marxist historians of his generation.

He was a professor at Balliol College Oxford from 1965 to 1978 and wrote many books on 17th century England.

Many students and socialists will have been very aware of his voluminous output, particularly regarding the English Revolution.

Hill became politically active in the 1930s when, like many socialists in Britain of the period, he joined the Communist Party.

At the time the CP seemed to present the best alternative to fascism and mass unem-

ployment. In 1935 Hill spent a year in the Soviet Union, believing it to be a socialist society.

In 1940, he wrote his first major essay on the English civil war. He showed how the 'civil war' was really an attempt by the rising capitalist class to wrest power from a feudal aristocracy.

Crushed

Hill was part of a brilliant Communist Party Historians Group which included other writers such as Eric Hobsbawm.

He eventually broke from the Communist Party after the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 was crushed by Soviet tanks. This exposed Stalinism as having nothing to do with the tradition of genuine socialism epitomised by the revolution in October 1917.

Hill continued with his studies of the English Revolution of the 17th

Century in the years after he left the CP.

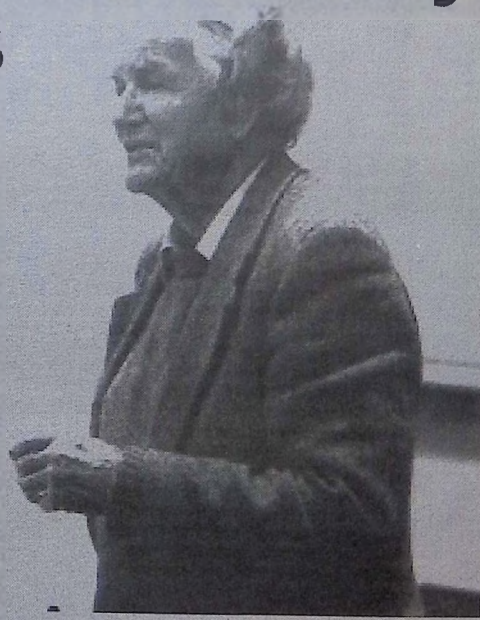
He looked in great detail at the more progressive elements of that revolution such as the Levellers and the Diggers who wanted to hold land as 'a common treasury for all'.

His book *The World Turned Upside Down* which was written in 1972 is a brilliant account of how many of the radical groups used the words of the Bible to convey a revolutionary message.

He showed how a Marxist method was not just about 'reducing' everything to economics but could take religious ideas seriously and show how they were linked to class struggle.

His account of Cromwell is vital reading for Irish socialists who have been brought up to see him through nationalist eyes.

Hill shows how Cromwell was a radical bour-



Christopher Hill

geois revolutionary who tried to buy the Levellers with the conquest of Ireland.

Some of his most famous works included *God's Englishman*

(1970), the textbook *The Century Of Revolution* (1961) and the hugely successful Penguin economic history, *Reformation To Industrial Revolution* (1967).

Build the anti war movement

IF A war on Iraq begins we must move quickly to build large protests everywhere.

Protests are already planned across the country and across the world in the

event of war.

What to Do if War Starts

On the evening of an attack on Iraq. Protest in your City/Town/ Village centre at 6pm.

(In Dublin at the US

Embassy, Ballsbridge.)

Midday on the day following an attack. 10 Minute Solidarity Stoppage - Bring the country to a standstill. (Stop work, walk out of class, college, protest where you are, wear a

white ribbon or arm-band.)

On the Saturday following the outbreak of war. Mass protests in Major Cities and Regional Centres.

Get involved in the anti war movement in your area:

Anti war groups in your area

NATIONAL:

Athlone: 087-6329511;
Carlow Anti War Movement 085-7210108;
Castlebar/Westport: 098-42868; Charleville: 087-6329511; Clonakilty: 086-3080459; Clonmel: 087-6329511; Cork Anti War Campaign: 087-1258325, corkantiwar@hotmail.com
Dingle for Peace: 066-9155863; Dundalk: 087-9213200; Drogheda: 087-9213200; Galway: 091-521373; Donegal Alliance Against War: 086-3773913; Letterkenny:

086-3773913, dlgreen@eircom.net; Maynooth College: 087-6329511; Maynooth Anti War Movement: 086-3849882 davidmartinlynch@hotmail.com; Midwest Alliance against Militarism & War: 086-8228032 also contact 086-8403782 in Limerick or 087-6261679 in Shannon; Mullingar: 087-7970139, pickarsgill@eircom.net; Sligo: 087-6329511; Thurles: 087-6329511; Tralee Anti War Movement: 086-3176921

traleeantiwar@yahoo.com ; Tullamore Anti War Movement: 087-7624327, oawm@eircom.net; Waterford: 086-3274015 ; or 086-1963134; Wexford: 087-2419852; Writers Against War: 01 4911529, kostick@tcd.ie

DUBLIN:
Ballyfermot: 087-9090166; Ballymun/Finglas: 086-3616159 or 086-3074060; Blanchardstown: 087-6273581; Bray/Wicklow: 2867980; City Centre: 087-9032281; City Centre

South: 085-7158567; Dundrum: 087 6650442; Dun Laoghaire: 2304621; Dun Laoghaire IT: 087-6406431; Fairview Against War: 087 6811687; Lucan: 086 3849882; NUI Maynooth: 086 1640538 Rathmines Against War: 087-7955013; Rialto: 086-1523542; Tallaght: 086-8107508; North County Dublin: 087-2400331; Trinity: 087-7455475; UCD: 087-2839964; DCU: 087-6329511.

OTHER AREAS INCLUDE:

Community Workers against the war; Health workers against the war; School students against the war; Performers against the war; Surgeons against the war, Transport workers against the war and more ... contact 087-6329511 for information

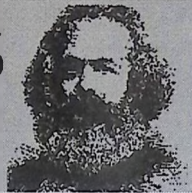
NOT ON THE LIST?

Contact 087-6329511 or 087-7955013 for advice on setting up a local group.



Marxist Forums

Big ideas discussed in informal settings



Ballyfermot:

Video Screening: Venezuela: Can Chavez survive? Thurs 13 March 8pm Ruby Finnigans Pub, Ballyfermot, Speaker: Peadar O'Grady

Ballymun:

Truth: The 1st casualty. War and the Media, Thurs 13 March 7:30pm Axis Centre, Ballymun

Belfast Central:

Details to be announced

Belfast South:

Details to be announced

Belfast West:

Details to be announced.

Blanchardstown:

Details to be announced

Bray:

Details to be announced

Cork:

The grand strategy of the US Empire, 3pm Saturday 8 March, The Roundy House

Derry:

Women, Globalisation and War 4pm Sat. 8 March, upstairs @ Sandino's, Water St. Speaker: Goretti Horgan

Dublin Central:

Women and Globalisation 8pm Tues 11 March Kings Inn Bolton St 087:9032281 for info

Dublin South City:

Womens Liberation; Has it been achieved? 7pm Wed 12 March, Beanery Cafe Burgh Quay

Dundrum:

Details to be announced

Dun Laoghaire:

Advertising and the body: Can we end sexism? Tues 11 March 8pm Farrels Pub, Marine Rd, Dun Laoghaire, Speaker: Vivien Tomet

Fairview:

Womens liberation:has it

been achieved? Tues 11 March 8pm Smyths Pub Fairview

Galway:

Womens Liberation; Has it been achieved? 8pm Wed 12 March, Java's Cafe, Abbeygate Street

Tallaght:

Advertising and the body: Why sexism sells, Wed 12 March 8pm Jobstown Community Centre

Rathmines:

Advertising and the body: Can we end sexism? Wed 12 March 8pm The Kylemore Cafe, Swan Shopping Centre, Rathmines

Tallaght I.T.:

Advertising and the body: Can we end sexism? Thurs 13 March 1pm Room 144

Waterford:

The Bloody History of the United Nations, Thurs 6 March 8.00pm Olde Rogue, Michael Street, Speaker: Kieran Allen.



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 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.

OUT NOW!

Out now the new **Socialist Worker** pamphlet **Stop the War on Iraq**, €2.50 (£1.50) post free from SW Books, PO Box 1648 Dublin 8

A Socialist Worker pamphlet 51

Join the Socialists

Fill in this form and send it to: PO Box 1648 Dublin 8

Name _____

Address _____

TU/college/school _____

Email: _____

Opposition grows to Partnership deal

Reasons to Vote No

AS TRADE unionists around the country begin to ballot on the new partnership deal, "Sustaining Progress", opposition is building in many unions and the community platform now looks set to reject it when they meet at the end of March.

The deal delivers for no-one except the government and if the ICTU had any respect for its membership this deal would not even go to ballot.

Chorus

The government, with Peter McLoone and Joe O'Toole joining the chorus, say there is no alternative because there is no money available.

Yet the banks are still making record profits. Last year's budget surplus was over €5.4 billion.

The government is choosing to spend it on long term capital projects like road building instead

of on health, education, housing services, and decent wage increases. The trade union cam-

paign against the partnership deal is encouraging workers all over the country to campaign for a no vote.

Leaflets are available. Contact Owen at 087 2858388 or Des at 087 6229686

- 1 Pay rises less than inflation—your wages are being cut
- 2 No pay increases in the public sector in 2003
- 3 No union recognition
- 4 Compulsory binding arbitration
- 5 Restrictions on the right to strike
- 6 Benchmarking (and the 7% in the pay deal) dependent on major changes in work practices. Money may not be paid in full until 2005
- 7 No investment in public services or in alleviating social exclusion.

SIPTU Conference divided on deal

SIPTU, the largest union in the country has held a consultative conference on the new partnership deal.

It was the first time this had occurred—and it showed deep divisions among the core union activists.

Traditionally, SIPTU has seemed like a monolith with the leadership carrying its way on most subjects.

But suddenly the union finds itself in ferment as traditional supporters of partnership came out strongly against the deal.

PHILIP MYLER from Waterford reported on a shop steward forum where representatives from the public sector expressed outrage at the pay pause.

CON HACKETT from the

Chemical Branch warned that if the union accepted compulsory arbitration it could become a permanent feature of industrial relations.

Shackle

PADDY BEHAN from the Security branch said 'Workers are facing double taxation with the service charges which are due to rise. The right to withdraw our labour is fundamental. Yet this deal will shackle SIPTU with binding arbitration'.

LIAM QUINN, from local authorities, echoed a feeling of many delegates when he said that 'the deal is being rushed to a vote'.

'Members have barely received the full document yet they are being asked to vote on it the following Monday. And we

do not yet know the figure for the parallel benchmarking awards.'

PAUL HANSARD from the Building branch said he got a copy of the deal just two days before the conference.

He was sceptical of the promises on affordable housing. 'The union should be pressing for housing for the poorest of workers' he said.

JACK KELLY from the Health Services Branch also criticised the speed with which the deal was being put to a vote.

Ruled Out

His members were concerned about an analogue payment and if even the possibility of industrial action was ruled out, their negotiating power would be weakened.

KIERAN ALLEN from the Education Branch attacked the idea that it was the best deal that was on offer. 'There is a pay pause for six months, which is a third of the period of the whole deal.'

'How could workers do worse if they looked for alternatives to this deal?'

No vote was allowed but one activist calculated that 17 speakers spoke for the deal and 15 spoke against.

Most of the speakers were branch presidents or prominent figures in their branches and would normally have been close to the leadership line.

Yet despite the huge opposition, the National Executive Committee recommended the deal.

Voting in SIPTU takes place in the first three weeks of March.

NIPSA ELECTIONS: Left needs change of strategy

"WE DIDN'T get more votes because we didn't deserve them". That is how one 'Time for Change' activist reacted to the news that five seats had been lost by 'Time for Change' (TfC) in the NIPSA General Council elections.

NIPSA is the main union for paid local public sector workers in Northern Ireland.

There is huge anger over pay and over attempts to cut pension provisions. But the left did not do well in the recent elections.

Last year TfC activists took 13 of the 25 seats on the ruling body of the largest union in the north. The change in fortune has resulted in the need for a serious rethink of strategy.

Some activists have blamed the result on the efforts of a group of loyal supporters of the union leadership to undermine and discredit TfC.

There may be an element of truth in this but there is a much more important point to reflect on.

Only around 3000 of over 40,000 NIPSA members returned a ballot in the elections.

On that basis even if the results had been more favourable it would still not leave TfC members on the General Council in a position to take on serious struggles on pay and against privatisation with any confidence.

Issues

The low return is the legacy of years of conservative union leadership and a top down approach to fighting on the issues most important to members.

It is this history which gives us the key to how we can really make NIPSA a fighting union which is controlled by, and acts in the interest of the workers whose collective strength has been rarely expressed in recent years.

One of those involved in TfC, Branch 8 Secretary Peter

McGarrigle, told *Socialist Worker*, "TfC needs to be organised at grassroots level. In every Branch we must be organised and be actively involved in fighting on all the issues if we want to change this union for the better".

There is no question that it is necessary for TfC to fight elections, but it is essential that we have no illusions as to how real struggles are won.

Time and again we have seen trade union members form broad left groups within their union. They have then campaigned in elections, won control of the union and failed to really change the conditions of their members or challenge job cuts."

The reason for this lies in the failure to organise at a rank and file level in the workplace.

With no real active base and organisation the new "left-wing" union leadership have no confidence that if they can call on workers to take industrial action they can win.

Time for Change now need to tap into the thousands of NIPSA members who are angry at their low pay and poor conditions but have no confidence in NIPSA to effect real change. We must be winning arguments on every major issue, from war to wages.



Ringsend residents protest against plans for an incinerator in the area.

ANTI BIN TAX MEETINGS

A SERIES of anti bin tax public meetings have taken place across Dublin city.

In Raheny, where a number of local residents have received court summonses, over 50 people attended the

meeting.

To date anyone represented by the campaign in court has had their case put back pending the outcome of a high court case on the issue.

The campaign is now considering how to oppose the proposal for a change in the law which would give councils the right not to collect refuse from households who have not paid their bills.

Contact The Dublin Campaign Against the Bin Tax on 087-9090166

GOOD LUCK, CARRICKMINDERS!

THE LONG running campaign to defend the archaeological heritage of the Carrickmines Castle site appeared to be close to victory after the Supreme Court issued an injunction preventing any more destruction of the site before a full court hearing in three

weeks time.

This comes after an occupation of the site by activists between August 2002 and January of this year. One of the Carrickminers who took part in the occupation and campaign, Hugh, spoke to *Socialist Worker*.

"The burden of proof is now on the council to show that the site is not a national

monument.

"They will find that very difficult because any substantial find over four hundred years old is legally a national monument and the Carrickmines site is of huge archaeological importance.

"Hundreds of artefacts have been recovered as well as remains of the castle structure and lesser struc-

tures such as wells.

"Human remains have also been found on the site. Our campaign involved about a hundred people all together and we had huge support in the area.

"We stood our ground because this road will be irrelevant in a few decades time but what is under the ground will be relevant for all time"

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MASS ACTION CAN STOP THIS WAR

IN THE wake of the huge march of February 15th the IAWM has called on anti war activists to deepen the opposition to the war by organising anti war groups in their neighborhoods, workplaces, schools and colleges.

Richard Boyd Barrett said "February 15th proved that the vast majority of Irish people are against this war and the huge show of opposition has put the pro-war politicians and media on the back foot.

"But the troops are still moving through Shannon and the government is still supporting the Bush-Blair axis. On the day of the massive protest, 19 US planes arrived at Shannon carrying troops and munitions for the Gulf.

"Instead of listening to the people, Ahern pretends that we were all marching in support of him.

"We have to build on the success of the 15th by deepening the anti-war movement and continuing our protest until we are listened to. The key to this will be building local anti-war groups in the coming weeks."

Activists are establishing local and workplace groups to organise opposition to the war.

In the West Cork town of Clonakilty a showing of an anti sanctions video attract-

ed an audience of twenty and a local anti-war group was established.

Inspired

Chris, one of the organisers of the meeting, said: "A few of us attended the big Dublin demonstration and were inspired, so when we got back home we contacted the local press and put posters up for a meeting.

"We were very happy with the turnout. People were shocked by the effect of the sanctions and saw that war could only worsen the situation of the Iraqi people.

"We had a good discussion afterwards and decided

to support anti-war activities happening around the country"

In County Donegal the movement against the war has mushroomed.

Frank Gallagher, a local Green Party activist, told *Socialist Worker*, "The vast majority of people in Donegal are against this war. A survey the other day on the popular Highland Radio had 84% of locals against the war.

"We have won support from across the board—from political parties, trade unions and women's organisations.

"There are three groups around the county—Mount Errigal, Letterkenny and

South Donegal. In the small village of Falcarragh we held a vigil that got fifty people along. There are plans for vigils, protests and other activities across the county."

Strength

Groups in Dublin also continue to grow in strength. "In Fairview-Artane we have a very active group with about twenty people involved. We have had a big presence on all the protests and locally we have run a lot of anti war information stalls.

"We have gained a lot of publicity locally and have got onto local radio three

times"

Dun Laoghaire against the war has groups set up in three local colleges as well as a local group.

Dave Lordan said "There are also school students in a couple of local schools who are trying to set up groups.

"New people are joining our information stalls every week and have collected thousands of signatures against the war.

"We are going to organise a local protest on March the 8th and we are going to picket the clinic of government TD Mary Hanafin."

The anti-war movement had a huge success in Belfast on February 15th when it pulled together 15,000 people to protest against war. The protest started with feeder marches from West Belfast and from Derry.

Now activists are working to deepen the roots of the movement in local areas.

Ryan McKinney is a NIPSA shop steward who is active in the South Belfast anti-war group.

"We have really only got started organising in local areas after February 15th.

"We now have nearly twenty people coming to our local group. Next Friday, we will be calling our own protest in Shaftsbury Square.

"We want to get local people involved in giving voice to their anger against war."

MOBILISING FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

MANY of the local groups are organising protests for International Women's Day, March 8th.

Here are some of the main ones:

DUBLIN: Protest at the US Embassy, Assemble 2.00pm Saturday March 8th at the US Embassy, Ballsbridge

GALWAY: Peace Vigil: 5,000 Candles for Peace. Assemble: Pedestrian area, Galway city centre, 7.00pm

DUNDALK: Protest, March and Rally: Assemble: 2.00pm Louth Hospital, Dublin Road followed by Rally at the Square: Speeches and Music.

CORK: No to War in Iraq, US Military Out of Shannon: March, Rally and Music: Assemble 1.00pm Daunt Square

WATERFORD: Assemble 2.30pm, The Glen marching to Rally at Red Square. Supported by the SWP, Sinn Fein, The Green Party, Waterford Council of Trade Unions, ATGWU Waterford Crystal branch, WIT Students Union, Globalise Resistance, Waterford Against Racism, local arts community.

ALSO: Belfast, Derry, Dingle, Mullingar, Tralee, Tullamore and Westport. Phone 087-6329511 for details.

HOW TO BUILD A LOCAL GROUP

■ Contact the Irish Anti War Movement for information and names of anti war activists in your area.

■ Organise a public meeting with a speaker from the IAWM and trade unions, political parties, community groups opposed to the war.

■ Get on local radio, in the local press, put up posters to advertise the meeting.

■ At the meeting encourage everyone to join in the discussion.

■ Encourage people to set up a local anti war group. This should meet regularly and everyone involved should contribute to activities and making decisions.

■ Affiliate to the Irish Anti War movement to get connected to national and international events.

AND IN THE WORK PLACES

IF YOU are in a workplace try to organise a lunchtime meeting or an after-work meeting in a nearby pub or café.

Busworkers recently got together in Dublin to establish Transport Workers Against The War.

Taxi drivers, bus and train workers were represented at the meeting which was addressed by Chairman of the Irish Locomotive Drivers Association, Brendan Ogle and CIE worker director, Billi McCamley.

The meeting agreed to draw up an open letter to be sent to rank and file transport workers around the country seeking support for the anti-war stoppage.

Brendan Ogle refuted allegations of Anti-Americanism saying "The only American I am against is George Bush".