

Socialist Worker

(01) 8722682 <http://www.swp.ie> info@swp.ie

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY €1.00 / £0.70p

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Dublin
2004
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Possible



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STOP BUSH

End the Occupation of Iraq

Permit man slams referendum

A FORMER United States congressman, Mr Bruce Morrison, who secured 48,000 work permits for Irish people living illegally in the United States in the 1980s, has condemned the Government's proposed citizenship referendum as "dangerous".

Describing the Republic's asylum and immigration system as "hopelessly inefficient", he said:

Under the Government's proposal, citizenship would not be granted to a child unless one of its parents had been "legally" resident on the island of Ireland for three of the four years prior to its birth.

Gaeltacht links to US arms

TIMONEY Technology has been designing armoured personal carriers in the Meath Gaeltacht over the past 30 years.

According to the *Phoenix* magazine the company has drawn over €1m in Udasas na Gaeltachta grants.

The company is currently involved in a \$100m US Air Force contract to supply air crash trucks.

Economic apartheid at Intel!

IN a sickening attempt to "cut costs" Intel management at their plant in Leixlip have decided that now only "blue-badged" wearing employees will be able to purchase the subsidised meals at their canteens.

Subcontract workers, who includes cleaners, security staff and builders will no longer be able to avail of this service. Contract employees will have to pay full-whack for meals (almost 33 percent more).

Because of the location of the plant on the outskirts of Leixlip, contract workers will have no option but to pay up because there is no other canteen in the area.

You must be thinking that Intel must surely be doing badly if they have to carry out such a cut. Are they hell!

Last Friday Intel reported a sharply higher quarterly profit than expected. In the period Intel reported a profit of \$915million or 14 cents a share on revenue on \$6.75 billion.

Fewer doctors in working class areas

ACCORDING to figures released by the IMO last week the Northern Area Board of the Eastern Health Authority (one of the poorest areas of the country), has only one GP per 2,500 people.

That is well in excess of the national figure of one GP per 1,600 of the population and double the UK average.

Spending on the poor is the lowest in Europe

THIS Fianna Fail and PD government spends the lowest amount in Europe, as a proportion of national income, on social supports for the disabled, elderly and other disadvantaged groups, the CORI Justice Commission has said.

This is the clearest evidence yet of the priorities of this government for the rich and powerful.

Citing "substantial deficits" in infrastructure and social supports, the commission said: "The Government's current policy focus will ensure that substantial numbers of people are condemned to live in social exclusion and substantially larger numbers of people will be forced to accept a poor quality of life for the foreseeable future."

The 187-page report, entitled *Priorities for Fairness*, found that the Irish allocation to social expenditure was the lowest in Europe as a percentage of both GNP and GDP, two measurements of national income.

"There remains a consid-



■ Irish poverty depicted in Angela's Ashes—still no nearer eliminating poverty

erable gap between Ireland and the next-lowest country, Spain," it added.

Social-protection expenditure, as defined by the EU statistics agency Eurostat,

includes spending on health-care, housing, and benefits for the disabled, elderly, families and children. According to CORI, Ireland's spending on social

protection as a proportion of GDP was 13.2 per cent below the EU average, and 6.9 per cent behind Spain.

In other shocking figures the report claims that the

budgetary priorities of the FF/PD government over the past seven years has led to a "further increase in income inequality."

National social spending

as a percentage of GDP is a full 13 percent below the national average.

The figure is an amazing 18 percent below that of the top country Sweden.

However when it comes to the rich this government pulls out all the stops. Minister for Finance, 'Cut Back' McCreevy is the main man behind the Punchestown Equestrian centre in his home constituency. For funding this centre McCreevy is now the hero of the rich "horsey set" in Kildare.

He personally approved the funding, including a doubling in its cost to €13.8 million in the space of six months in 2000, and a further €1.5 million top-up in January 2002.

He also met the Punchestown racecourse management on at least two occasions to discuss the project.

A recent PAC report found that the "need for the centre was not properly evaluated" by the Department of Agriculture and criticised the centre for being a waste of tax payers money.

Stormont Anti Poverty Strategy: more of the same

A DRAFT, new Anti Poverty Strategy for Northern Ireland has been published by the Targeting Social Need Unit at Stormont.

A Strategy is long-overdue. There are more people living in poverty in the North than in any other part of these islands.

However, the draft Strategy offers little but more of the same - more of the policies that have left so many people living on the breadline.

So, the document tells us that increasingly the poorest households 'are made up of lone parents (92% of whom are women), people with disabilities and working households.'

In other words, the poorest are those who are either working already, who are unable to work or who can work outside the home only if state-funded childcare, decent accessible transport and other services are provided.

In spite of this, the anti-poverty strategy continues to see 'employment and employability as a key focus for future policy'.

This ignores the facts. It also ignores what research has shown will work in reducing poverty among lone parents and people with disabilities --- better public services and higher wages for those who do work outside the home and

higher benefit levels for those who cannot work or cannot find employment.

It also ignores the fact that many lone parents do not want to work outside the home until their children are older.

It seems sometimes that lone parents cannot win: they are forced out to work by low benefit levels, then criticised for not spending enough time with their children.

One of the most insulting parts of the new Strategy must be the Anti Poverty Forum.

This is to be made up of 'the great and the good' - all kinds of people EXCEPT those actually living in poverty. Imagine a forum on Women that had no women on it? It is only in relation to poverty that they could get away with this sidelining of those most affected.

Why is the Anti Poverty Forum not made up mainly of people living on low incomes?

Probably because every consultation with people who are actually living in poverty produces the same result - a plea for higher benefits for exactly those people who are unable to work for whatever reason.

And, despite the evidence that it is needed, an increase in benefits is not part of New Labour's plan for ending poverty.

Event Guide May Day Weekend 2004

Friday April 30th - 7.30pm - Liberty Hall (SIPTU Buildings)
Another Europe is Possible

Public meeting
Speaker- Susan George (Debt Campaigner, organiser World and European Social Forums/Autor/Vice-President ATTAC France)

Saturday May 1st - 12 Noon Central Bank, Dame Street, Dublin
CARNIVAL FOR A BETTER WORLD- SAY NO TO RACISM, WAR AND CORPORATE GREED

Speakers (including Susan George and others), street theatre & music. Bring colour, noise and messages of welcome for immigrants, peace; public services not private profit!

1.30 PM: Carnival leaves Dame Street to go to Phoenix Park where the 25 EU heads of state (including Ahern, Blair and Berlusconi) are meeting


2.30PM Carnival of Diversity begins at Phoenix Park- Irish and World Music

Including Don Baker, Kingsativa, Soukous Allstars, Afrikico, Gospel Choir, Jinx Lennon, Happy City Samba School, Subtitles & many more....plus very special guest!

MAYDAY

CÉAD MILE FAILTE to all people of the world

NO TO RACISM
WAR AND CORPORATE GREED



Main speaker: **Susan George** (World Social Forum)

Carnival, March & Music

12 Noon May 1 Central Bank, Dame St, Dublin

Another Europe is possible

<http://www.freewebs.com/anotheruropeispossible>

■ Why join the Carnival on May Day?

Celebrate diversity- Give Cead Mile Failte not just to new EU accession states but to people from all over the world- It is hypocritical to call May 1st a day of welcomes when the government is pushing this racist referendum and deporting

asylum seekers.... No to EU Warmongers Ahern, Blair and Berlusconi- End Occupation of Iraq and Palestine, End militarisation of EU, Preserve Irish Neutrality..... May Day- Workers Day- No Privatisation The EU and Irish

government are pushing de-regulation and privatisation -across all public services. Stop sale of public housing, health, education, bin tax, break-up of CIE, Dublin Bus and Aer Rianta. We can unite on May Day- Workers Day - to oppose the corporate agenda of neo-liberalism and profit.

Socialist Worker
Paper of the Socialist Workers Party
Published fortnightly
For circulation or editorial contact:
Socialist Worker,
PO Box 1648 Dublin 8
Tel: (01) 872 2682 Fax: (01) 872 3838
Email: socialistworker@swp.ie
Web: www.swp.ie

Tesco 'Value' rip off

A SURVEY published this month that Tesco "Value" range of cut-price products are up to twice as expensive as identical products in Tesco's British stores.

Tesco claim the Value own-brand line is the cheapest in Ireland, but when the survey compared the same product in Britain and adjusted for the currency difference, Tesco was consistently charging Irish buyers a higher price.

Pan cleaners are sold for €0.34 in Tesco in Britain but come in at €0.68 in its Irish outlets.

Tesco group pre-tax profits rose to €2 billion in 2002.

editorial

ISRAEL RACKS UP THE TENSION...**Bush backs Ariel Sharon's land-grab**

JUST DAYS after George Bush embraced Ariel Sharon's plans for grabbing the West Bank, Israeli troops killed Hamas leader Abdel Aziz Rantissi. IDF helicopters fired rockets at his car in the Palestinian city of Gaza.

Others in his car were killed and bystanders injured. This act of state terrorism provoked only mild criticism from EU leaders, and silence from Bush.

Sharon, like Bush, is a war criminal. He was the army commander that even an Israeli inquiry found personally responsible for the massacre of up to 3,500 Palestinian civilians in Lebanese refugee camps at Sabra and Shatila in September 1982.

A month ago Israeli forces assassinated the spiritual leader of Hamas Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.

Sharon claims that Israel will withdraw from the Gaza strip and remove the settlements there, but will remain in the West Bank and maintain its settlements there. None of the Palestinian refugees, ethnically cleansed when Israel was established in Palestine in 1948 will have the right to return to home to what is now Israel.

Bush backed the Israeli move and declared this was the basis of a settlement of the conflict. Irish Foreign Minister Cowen, speaking on behalf of the EU, said this could mark a return to the Peace Process in the Middle East.

As Palestinians quickly pointed out, it is no such thing.

Occupation

All the Jewish settlements have been created following the occupation of these lands in June 1967 Arab-Israeli war. In international law they are illegal. The Geneva Convention prohibits the moving of civilians to colonise land occupied by war.

The settlements in Gaza have about 7,000 inhabitants. They control 40 percent of the land and water while hundreds of thousands of Palestinians live in abject poverty.

Policing this small strip is proving an irritating headache to Israel. Withdrawing from Gaza and relocating the settlers will cost Israel practically nothing. The West Bank is altogether more important to Israeli expansionism.

In the West Bank more than 100,000 armed settlers are protected by the Israeli army, Sharon has effectively declared that these lands will be annexed permanently.

The US has bankrolled the state of Israel from the beginning—it is the largest recipient of US aid, both military and civilian. US troops are now employing the same techniques of assassination of suspected militants in Iraq that Israel has perfected in Pales-

tine.

Israel is an important component of America's domination of the Middle East. Its nuclear arsenal and US-supplied military strength make it a watch-dog for US interests throughout the region.

Even before Bush's endorsement of Sharon's plan, the "Two-State Solution" – the possibility of a viable Palestinian state surrounded by Israel's military might and criss-crossed by special Israeli roads – was wildly improbable.

Socialists have argued that a single secular state in Palestine where Jews and Arabs enjoyed equal rights was the only solution with any prospect of long term peace.

Bush and Sharon's plans have set their faces against any peaceful settlement that offers even a crumb of justice to the Palestinians. Thousands of Palestinians will be driven further into desperation and denied the means to fight on equal terms with their oppressors, some will join the suicide bombers.

If you want to know where terrorism comes from, look beyond the militants of Hamas and Islamic Jihad and see the brutal hand of the American Empire and its dependent allies.



■ Sharon and Bush

IRAQ AFTER JUNE 30:**Will the UN step in?**

THE US has said that after June 30 it will hand over "sovereignty" to Iraqis.

But elections have been ruled out for the foreseeable future. US Pro-Consul Paul Bremer has declared that 100,000 US troops will remain in a string of bases across the country and no Iraqi government will have the power to tell them to leave.

And the US embassy will be swelled to 3,000 personnel as US interests move in to dominate the economy.

The new government in Spain at first pledged to withdraw its troops unless plaed under the authority of the United Nations (UN). They have announced a pull-out.

Even voices in the White House have said they see some role for the UN after June 30.

If Bush and Blair are

forced to take the UN option, it will only be to relieve the pressure on their forces and to maintain a cover for their pillage of Iraq.

Nor could the UN be the pacifying force some hope for.

Supervised

It was the United Nations that supervised ten years of sanctions on Iraq before the invasion. It is estimated that at least one million Iraqis died as a direct result of these sanctions that denied them necessities including basic medicines and medical equipment.

As Salim Lone, a former communications director at the UN, pointed out this month, UN general secretary Kofi Annan backed the US decision not to hold elections in Iraq.

So, Lone says, "The UN

ended up intensifying the crisis, appearing pro-US, anti-Iraqi and anti-democratic. The UN image has fallen to abysmally low levels in the Arab and Muslim worlds." There are three simple measures that could bring peace

to Iraq:

- (1) Immediate free elections.
- (2) The handing back of the wealth stolen from Iraq.
- (3) The withdrawal of all foreign troops, mercenaries and military advisers.



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!

To join the Socialist Workers Party or for more information:

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comment



**Eamonn
McCann**

Questions US Congress Commission will not ask

MANY in the United States and beyond have been transfixed by the hearings in Washington of the September 11th congressional commission.

Appearances by Bush's former top terrorism expert Richard Clarke, national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, FBI and CIA chiefs and other high administration officials have attracted widespread rapt attention. Bush and Cheney are also set to appear.

The point has commonly been made that, irrespective of one's views on Bush and September 11th, or on the decisions which led to the Iraq war, it's a tribute to the democratic spirit of the US system that a commission of this sort is able publicly to interrogate the highest in the land.

But the one thing people won't learn from the hearings is the thing which it is most important to know: why did the suicide bombers attack the Twin Towers on September 11th?

To say this is not to suggest that the killing of thousands of innocent people can be justified by reference to the reason it was done. But no understanding of what happened can mean much if it doesn't include some understanding of the motive behind it.

If you read through reams of the commission's proceedings you will discover a great deal about the failures of the FBI and/or CIA to detect the Al Qaida plot in advance. You will find lengthy and engrossing discussion of the extent to which the administration's focus on Iraq might have blinded it to warnings which the intelligence agencies passed on. Or, alternatively, the extent to which warnings weren't passed on because the agencies knew the administration was blind to any threat which wasn't related to Iraq.

What you will not find is discussion—scarcely a word—of why Al Qaida did it.

It is inevitable, then, that the commission's report, expected at the end of July, will have nothing to say about the reasons the mass slaughter was perpetrated. The commission will then be wound up. No other formal US investigation into September 11th is planned. From the point of view not just of the Bush administration but of US government generally—the matter is a bi-partisan affair—the matter will be closed.

Debate

The commission's report will inevitably draw attention to this or that inefficiency or "structural defect" in the intelligence agencies and in the pattern of relationships between the agencies and the administration. There'll be lengthy debate on television about how particular points in the report will play in the presidential election campaign. What the report won't do, however, is offer an opinion on the possibility that US foreign policy, particularly in the Middle East, played a part in generating the circumstances in which the idea of the atrocity formed in the minds of the people who did it. The report can have nothing to say about the desirability of a change in policy.

The banal "explanation" of the atrocity regularly offered by George Bush, and repeated at his unnervingly incompetent White House press conference—that the reason the perpetrators set out to kill themselves and thousands of others was that they are "evil" and "hate freedom"—will not be challenged.

This doesn't mean the commission must be accounted a failure. Far from it. On one reading, it will simply have fulfilled its function. Former CIA analyst Bill Christon told the radical website Counterpunch: "The commission was designed from the start to do nothing that mattered. It can recommend all the reorganising it wants. But no organisational changes will accomplish much if they are not accompanied by changes in present US policies that generate legitimate hatred against America and thereby perpetuate terrorism against us."

The appointment of the commission had nothing to do with a democratic spirit. Its purpose was to divert democratic scrutiny away from the aspects of the issue which matter. The millions of Americans who want the truth will have to look outside established political structures to find it.

PFI lessons not learnt on schools

THERE was celebration in parts of the North before Easter after an announcement by the Dept. of Education that several schools across the region are to be refurbished or rebuilt.

As the reality of where the funding is coming from for this building programme sank in, ancillary staff in the schools concerned stopped celebrating and started complaining.

Once PFI is used in a school or hospital, all the ancillary staff is 'transferred' and instead of being public sector employees, become employees of the private company.

The staff in schools which are to be rebuilt or refurbished in the Bangor and Comber area decided not to take this lying down.

Cleaning, caretaking and catering staff, all Unison members, picketed the Department of Education during the Easter school holidays in protest at their jobs being privatised.

They are right to protest. The effect on low paid workers, particularly women, of transfer from the public to the private sector is disastrous for the workers involved.

It means lower pay and poorer working conditions.

Terms and conditions

The Department of Education insists that 'Transfer of Undertaking Protection



■ **Potters Bar rail crash: Jarvis maintained the track**

of Employment (TUPE) Regulations mean that their current terms and conditions of employment should be protected.

But on the ground, these assurances mean nothing.

The workers at Derry's Tech, for example, were guaranteed no change to their pay or conditions for at least seven years under the TUPE rules negotiated by their union, the ATGWU.

However, once the cost of the PFI operation soared and the Tech got into financial difficulties, the workers soon found the TUPE agreement torn up by their

new private employer.

Despite having the evidence from the Tech, there has been no reaction in Derry, outside of socialist circles, to the fact that the two new girls' schools - St. Mary's and St. Cecilia's - are to be built using PFI.

It's possible that the workers at the Bangor and Comber schools were jolted by the realisation that the notorious Jarvis is the "preferred bidder" for building of two new schools and is, therefore, likely to be their new employer.

Among the company's other schemes in the North

is a University of Ulster project to provide 398 student rooms in Derry.

Jarvis

Jarvis is currently under investigation for the Potters Bar rail crash, having been responsible under a PFI scheme for maintenance of the track where the crash happened.

The company's share-price has collapsed and its finance director resigned recently.

Jarvis chairman, former Tory minister Steven Norris, says that its university sector is "not performing well" and that "substantial" restructuring is under way.

There must be no question of the University of Ulster renegotiating the deal so as to bail Jarvis out.

If there are problems, the company should be dismissed and the contract taken back where it should always have been, into the public sector.

The same should go for all other Jarvis projects.

The disarray of Jarvis illustrates the mess PFI is making of public services. Much of the pressure for PFI is coming from the privatising agenda of the EU.

As far as the public sector is concerned, the EU now operates in close coordination with the World Bank and World Trade Organisation, pushing for "liberalisation."

Oppose PFI

Eamonn McCann, Socialist Environmental Alliance candidate in June's European election sent a message of support to the protesting workers saying "They provided leadership for the rest of us."

"Only an active campaign to mobilise the people affected holds out hope of reversing the privatisation tide."

"I send the Unison members involved my total support."

"The more support the workers receive from the political arena, the more confident they are likely to be about carrying the campaign forward", he said.

"Everyone, trade unionist or not, has a role to play."

"Together, we can defeat privatisation, reject profit as a basis for organising our education and health services, and defend and restore the public sector."

Monitoring Commission not so independent

THE REPORT of the Independent Monitoring Commission set up by the British and Irish Governments to report on the paramilitary ceasefires, "security normalisation" and the operation of the Agreement institutions can hardly be seen as 'independent'.

The IMC was not supposed to report until June at the earliest.

However, following the abduction of Bobby Tohill, the British government saw an opportunity to suck up to the DUP by having the IMC put the boot into Sinn

Fein.

What is really amazing is that the IMC was encouraged - indeed harassed - to report on an incident when four men are in prison, awaiting trial on charges arising from it.

In relation to the murdered solicitor Pat Finucane, the fact that charges are pending against Ken Barrett have been cited by the same British government as a sufficient reason for refusing an independent inquiry.

Before the report was published, Mitchell

McLaughlin described the IMC as "a British tool to be used in an attempt to put pressure on Sinn Fein."

There are many outside the ranks of Sinn Fein who will agree with this analysis, since the report will have nothing to say about the Cory report's findings and its call for an immediate inquiry into Pat Finucane's murder.

Meanwhile, there has been little comment about the background of Richard J. Kerr of the IMC, a man who has some kind of brass neck to pronounce judg-

ment on anybody else's commitment to peaceful methods and adherence to international agreements and law.

Kerr is a retired spy ("intelligence operative") who first came to the notice of CIA chiefs during the 1962-'63 Cuban missile crisis. His biography details a subsequent steady rise through the ranks.

By 1989, he had become number two at the agency and, on occasion, acting number one.

Upon retirement in 1992 to become an "international

security consultant," George Bush senior presented him with the Citizen's Medal, the US's second highest honour for civilian service in war, for heading up the CIA's input into Operation Desert Storm—the first US-Iraq war.

Currently, he's leader of the team appointed by Bush junior to review the CIA's pre-war performance in relation to Iraq's WMD.

And he has the cheek to lecture anyone about commitment to peaceful meth-

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Instead of a Europe of Racism, Profit and Military Violence...



European Social Forum in Florence in 2002

by DAVID LYNCH

THE joining of the accession states to the European Union on May 1, in Dublin will be celebrated by some as a coming together in a continent that has seen much bloodshed and dark days over the centuries.

However Europe is being created in the interests of the capitalist classes of Europe. As one left wing economist has written, "The European Union is an attempt to turn the interpenetration of its different national capitalism into full-blooded integration, and to create a single European capitalist class with a proto state to project its interests worldwide."

When the people of Europe have said no, as the Irish did in the Nice Treaty the first time around, their wishes are ignored and the project just continues.

Despite all the talk of 'freedom of movement' and 'closer cultural ties' the European Union is built upon the deliberate policy of keeping people from the rest of world, out. (See page 8)

Militaristic Europe

Calls for a strengthening of the European military have been made particularly in France and Germany. Worried at the marshalling by the US of support from the rulers of Eastern Europe, Italy, Spain and Britain for their war in Iraq, many mainstream European politicians have been drawing the conclusion that Europe needs a united and militarily strong voice to compete with the US.

Last year former French Prime Minister Laurent Fabius said "Europe was unable to make its voice heard in the US because it was divided and lacked a unified defence force."

Some weeks after Fabius comments journalist Andrew Moravcsik wrote in the *Financial Times* "For some years politicians have found the arguments for higher European arms spending convincing."

"The logic is irresistible if the US respects only military power, then a European army will surely command respect."

The EU constitution currently being worked on by Ahern and

Another Europe is Possible!

the other European leaders has a strong military dimension.

The draft EU Constitution would oblige all member states to make civilian and military facilities available to the EU's com-

mon defence; and to improve the military facilities the EU can use. It also has a 'solidarity clause' that requires joint action from all members, which the EU could invoke on the basis of a perceived

threat of terrorism – a security blank cheque. The draft Constitution would advance the militarisation of the EU, expand an EU army, and further undermine Irish neutrality.

★ **THE DRIVE** towards a neo-liberal Europe and all the cut-backs, job losses and "deregulation" that went with it has fed into a growing class polarisation across Europe in recent years.

This has led to a number of European wide fight backs on the part of the working class.

In March 1997 the French car multinational Renault announced that it was shutting down its works at Vilvoorde in Belgium at the price of over 3,000 jobs.

Some 20,000 car-workers reacted by going on strike across Europe, in France, Belgium and Spain, and the French paper *Liberation* called it "the day of the first Eurostrike."

Some days later 70,000 demonstrators-Flemish, Walloon, French, Italian and Dutch-marched through Brussels in support of the car workers.

In more recent years the anti-capitalist

and anti-war movements have fed into this anger at the neo-liberalism pushed by Europe's leaders.

As the Assembly of the Social Movements in Paris declared in October 2003, "We are struggling for another Europe - a Europe where no one is afraid of losing their job."

"We are fighting for a viable agriculture controlled by the small farmers themselves - an agriculture that defends water, land and seeds as public assets."

"We want to open Europe to the world - with the right to asylum, free movement of people and citizenship for everyone in the country they live in."

"We want real equality between men and women."

"Our Europe will respect cultural diversity and the right of peoples to self-determination - and allow all the different peoples of Europe to decide their future democratically".

Privatised Europe

The drive to privatise is coming from the Irish government, the EU and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), a secretive part of the World Trade Organisation which seeks to open up all public services as business opportunities for private companies.

We see this in Ireland with the privatisation of Eircom, the plan to break up and privatise Aer Rianta, the de-regulation and break-up of CIE, of An Post, of waste services, and the sale of social housing. Benchmarking and outsourcing in education and health are preparing the ground for the opening of trade in these services. Instead of being able to use public services as a right, we are being turned into consumers – who only get what they can pay for. The winners in the GATS are the trans-national service companies. The losers are the service-users – especially women and people on low incomes – and the people who work in the services.

The draft EU Constitution advocates more trade in services. And it would allow the European Commission to negotiate international trade deals in a public services on behalf of all the EU states through the GATS – including health and education – even if a minority of countries were opposed to this.

The EU wants Third World countries to import European goods and services, but is restricting what they can sell in Europe – agricultural products, etc. So European business profits, while Africa goes poor and hungry.

Neo-liberalism undermines environmental protection, such as the use of GM crops and increased car use due to inadequate public transport. And the draft Constitution would continue the EU's full support for the nuclear industry by incorporating the Euratom Treaty, whereas it merely 'aims to promote' renewable energy.

In conclusion the Europe vision by Ahern and co. is a highly centralised, undemocratic federal state under the political hegemony of the bigger states (mainly France and Germany). At the heart of this Constitution is the prioritisation of neo-liberalism and militarization as the twin driving forces behind the EU project.

Could EU be a progressive alternative?

LEFT wing thinkers such as George Monbiot and Jurgen Habermas have argued in favour of the euro and European Constitution respectively as a way of 'taking on' American global power.

Particularly since the Bush invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq many have argued that a strong, united and militarily confident EU can put the breaks on growing US hegemony.

In 1988 the President of the then European Commission Jacques Delors spoke in front of the British Trades Union Congress and outlined his vision of a "social Europe". This vision was one where relatively high levels of intervention in the economy would go hand in hand with decent welfare provisions. His vision was a direct attack on Thatcherism which was ruling the roost in Britain at the time. A Labour movement demoralised following the Miners Strike defeat, a series of elections losses to the Tories and despairing at the working classes ability to support real progressive social change- now became champions of Europe.

If the British working class could not be convinced of left wing arguments than the vehicle of change was to the bureaucracy in Brussels.

This retreat from socialist principles and class politics was replicated in Ireland. A Labour Party unable to break out of a political ghetto and with little ambition beyond being a junior partner in a right-wing led (either FF or FG) government, also viewed Brussels as a way of getting "progressive" legislation passed in Ireland.

In the run up to the last Nice Treaty Referendum former Labour Party leader Ruari Quinn told Today FM that Europe (ie the Brussels Bureaucracy) had "supported liberal legislation" that the Irish people would never had, he said approvingly.

These beliefs have grown steadily especially since the election victory of George Bush in the United States. It is now believed that a more "liberal" "caring" and "progressive" superpower in the form of some European super state can stop the global march of American military expansion.

However this is a flawed argument.

Firstly the main players in the European Union have significant imperialistic designs of their own, and have played far from "progressive" roles in foreign adventures.

Britain, is currently the United States' 'junior partner' in the bloody occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan. France also has a bloody imperialist history

Many of the most prominent members of the EU are also members of the US led military club-NATO.

A European military superpower would just be as bad as an American one. It would still follow the dictates of the ruling class and their desire to accumulate profit.

Those on the left who argue that the bureaucracy in Brussels brought in the "liberal agenda" in Ireland are also wrong.

The "liberal agenda" was mainly introduced after the large scale mobilisation and widespread revulsion following the X-Case in 1992.

The EU is not the vehicle for major progressive change. The only agency that can stop US military power, or bring about real social changes is what the *New York Times* termed following the huge worldwide antiwar protests on February 15th 2003, "the new superpower- people power."

What the SWP stands for How was the Russian Revolution defeated?

THE RUSSIAN Revolution of October 1917 was greeted across the world with enormous popular enthusiasm. In the midst of the bloody slaughter of the First World War the workers' and soldiers' councils had taken control of the country.

by COLIN BARKER

The new soviet government took Russia out of the war, instituting far-reaching reforms. Factory committees took over enterprises. The peasants won the land. Legislation gave women the most advanced freedoms anywhere in the world.

The new government called on workers and oppressed peoples all across the world to join their revolution. No genuine socialist could fail to support this brilliant endeavour.

From the beginning, however, the infant socialist regime faced immense problems. The White armies launched a brutal civil war, backed by every major capitalist government. Russia had lost more soldiers in the First World War than any other power. Now, in the civil war, the death toll was even higher. Poverty stalked the land. Five million people died of typhus.

The very working class that had led the 1917 revolution was decimated, as Russia's cities depopulated. Many of the best and most committed working class activists died defending their revolution, leaving others to run the new social organisations.

In the very process of winning the civil war, the regime was inwardly corrupted. Bosing replaced popular democracy in more and more spheres of life. Surveying the scene in 1920, Lenin, who was brutally honest, said, "ours is a workers' and peasants' state suffering from serious bureaucratic degeneration."

If the revolution did not spread, Lenin and his comrades repeated again and again, they would be defeated. Russia's revolution remained isolated.

Within Russia the "bureaucratic degeneration" Lenin had described deepened. In the mid-1920s Stalin, who was by then the ruling party leader, abandoned the Bolsheviks' previous internationalism. Now, he declared, "socialism in one country" was possible and desirable.

Until the late 1920s Lenin's description fitted Russia more and more precisely. But at the end of the 1920s Stalin set an entirely new course. It was necessary, he declared, for Russia to "catch up and overtake" the major capitalist countries.

The new policy was enshrined in the Five Year Plans. This programme of crash industrialisation involved a ferocious assault on the people's conditions. Where real wages had risen during the 1920s, now they were slashed. Where the peasants had won the land in 1917, now forced collectivisation of agriculture meant it was seized back from them. Egalitarianism was officially declared an anti-socialist policy.

In the name of "socialist construction", Stalin led a counter-revolution from above. Every remnant of the popular democracy of 1917 was systematically expunged.

Forced labour camps were set up, with millions of slave workers. In the purges of the 1930s Stalin's political police arrested and mur-

dered every significant communist who represented the real memory of 1917. Tragically, many communists and even Labour Party members around the world believed Stalin's lies, defending the disastrous conditions in Russia as socialism. On the left, those who opposed Stalin struggled to make sense of what was happening. Stalin's most prominent opponent, Leon Trotsky, still held on to Lenin's 1920 formula, calling Russia a "degenerated workers' state". For Trotsky, the existence of state-owned property meant Russia retained something socialist, even in a highly perverted form. Trotsky denied a new ruling class had emerged in Russia.

Others, like the American Max Shachtman, allowed that Stalin's Russia was a society resting on class exploitation, but could not explain Stalin's drive to industrialise, or the stress on heavy industry and armaments at the expense of popular consumption.

The problems were compounded in the wake of the Second World War. Now Stalin expanded his control across Eastern Europe, putting his own stooges in charge of brutal copies of his own regime. Were these workers' states? If so, that would mean socialism no longer needed workers' revolution.

In the late 1940s Tony Cliff finally offered the best Marxist theory of Russia and of its East European satellites. Stalin's Russia, he insisted, was in no sense a workers' state, not even a degenerated form.

The fact of state property in no way made it socialist—any more than nationalised industries did in Britain, like the Coal Board that fought the miners in 1984. Capitalism could involve state property, as Marx and Engels had argued in the 19th century.

In subordinating Russian society to the imperative of "catch up and overtake", Stalin had followed a specifically capitalist path. Stalin's Russia was clearly a class society, where intense exploitation of the working class provided the means for the rapid economic growth in the 1930s.

But capitalism involves not just class exploitation, but also competition. It was impossible to make sense of Russia "on its own". It was part of a competitive world economy.

The main mechanism of competition in Russia came in the shape of military competition. That was why guns and not butter were the priority in economic growth. As part of world capitalism, Russia and its satellites also experienced economic crises. These lay behind the huge revolts that occurred in East Germany, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia from the 1950s.

Finally the whole edifice of Stalinism was brought down in 1989-91, often with huge popular revolutions.

From the whole tragic experience two things stand out. First, socialism must be international, or it will be destroyed from within and without. Second, socialism and the most widespread democracy are indissolubly linked.

Iraq: Empire in flames

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

Since the beginning of April, Iraq has been in the grip of an intifada as the US sought to crush Iraqi resistance.

Shias and Sunnis declared they were uniting to fight the occupation as US troops took serious casualties—at least 100 killed—more than in the invasion itself.

As Socialist Worker went to press US marines were massed outside the holy city of Najaf in the Shia south of the country, pledged to capture or kill radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr and smash the guerrilla army of followers.

Elsewhere US fuel and food convoys to supply their troops lay burnt out on the side of the highway, helicopters shot out of the sky as the mujahideen resistance fighters attacked the occupiers with Rocket Propelled Grenades.

Burnt Out

In Fallujah, a city of 300,000 west of Baghdad, US tanks lay burnt out as US troops battled mujahideen. Unable to crush the guerrillas, the US forces tried to break the resistance of the population.

Helicopter gunships dropped 500 lb bombs on poverty stricken residential neighbourhoods. US Marines took up positions on rooftops and shot at anything that moved. Ambulances taking the dead and injured to makeshift hospitals without power or ferrying food and water to neighbourhood's cut-off by US snipers were deliberate shot at by US forces.

Locals had to hurriedly bury more than 200 bodies in the football stadium and risked being shot themselves if they stayed too long.

In Fallujah alone more than 600 Iraqis, mostly women, children and old men were killed by US troops. Thousands were injured and over 60,000 refugees fled the city. US troops prevented men of military age from leaving the city.

Two days later US troops fired on a crowd demonstrating against that incident, killing Mosques organising food aid

US snipers target ambulances



During the so-called "ceasefire" during the siege of Falluja, US snipers continued shooting at anything that moved. Here they targeted the driver of an ambulance bringing dead and wounded civilians. Note the bullet holes on the drivers side.

for the besieged city and arranging accommodation for the refugees were ransacked by US military. The mosque of Abu Hanifa, has stood for 1250 years in the Aadhamiya quarter of Baghdad. It is the most important (though not the largest) Sunni mosque in Baghdad, and a site of pilgrimage for Muslims the world over. At 3:30 am on Sunday morning, 100 American troops raided the mosque starting by smashing in the gates with tanks and then

'Civilian workers' were US mercenaries

The US claimed the attack on Fallujah was in retaliation for the killing and mutilation of the bodies off four US "civilian contract workers". But some key facts have not been well reported in the West. On May 5 2003, 18 civilians, including children were killed by a US attack on a school in the city. In November the US launched an attack on the city codenamed "Operation Iron Hammer", dropping

500 lb bombs. Late in March they repeated the operation. Following these attacks, four US "contract workers" were killed and their bodies mutilated. But even this is misleading. The US strategy has involved privatising tasks that would normally be done by troops. It appears the four were not "construction workers" but armed security personnel, former US Navy employed by Blackwater under

contract to the US military — effectively mercenaries. The deaths of the four and the mutilation of their bodies was certainly a horrific and received saturation coverage in the Western media but no less horrific that the deaths of thousands of Iraqis. FACT: Blackwater is the US company that boasted it would become "the biggest private army in the world." It provides protection to Pro-consul Paul Bremer.



Resistance fighters by a burnt out US convoy near Fallujah

driving Hummers in. The Hummers ran over and destroyed some of the stored relief goods more was destroyed as soldiers ripped apart sacks looking for rifles.

The mosque was full of people, including 90 down from Kirkuk with the Red Crescent, arranging for further aid to Fallujah. They were all pushed down on the floor, with guns put to the backs of their heads.

The Americans smashed in dozens of doors, broke windows, ripped apart and sprayed with bullets, walls and ceilings. The way the soldiers searched for illicit arms in the ceiling was first to spray the ceiling with gunfire, then break out a panel and go up and search.

This was the third time that the mosque has been raided since the war.

Undaunted

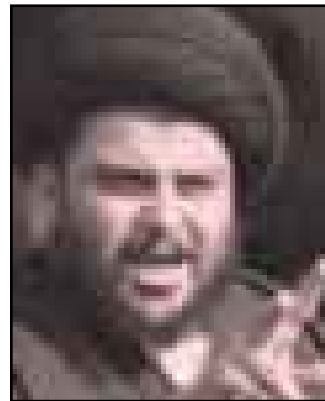
But the resistance is undaunted. As Aaron Glantz told *DemocracyNow!* From the besieged city, "Fallujah is in full revolt."

The siege of Fallujah, has ignited a nationalist reaction. From Iraq, Patrick Cockburn reported, "It has made it easy for the insurgents to recruit young men in the villages and towns, many of whom are armed and were formerly in the Iraqi army."

"The fighting spread from Fallujah and Ramadi, 30 miles up the main road, to the fringes of the capital as Iraqis opened fire on the US convoy of armoured vehicles and petrol tankers with light machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades just as it drove past us on the main highway to Fallujah.

"Everywhere in Abu Ghraib, a Sunni Arab district, there are freshly painted anti-US slogans. One reads: 'We shall knock on the gates of heaven with the skulls of Americans'."

Moqtada Sadr and the Shias



AFTER the end of "major combat operations" last year, the US was still faced with resistance. The strategy adopted was to concentrate troops to mount aggressive punitive actions in areas of resistance and largely withdraw from relatively quiet areas, as the Shia south of the country then was.

Although not in open armed revolt, the Shia religious leaders and the militias that followed them maintained hostility to US control. Also with the country's infrastructure still in chaos, the Shia militias filled the gap. From December to March, as Michael Schwartz reported in *TomDispatch*: "They were the principle organising force with southern cities ... keeping order and suppressing hooliganism; the Sharia courts, run by the Shia clergy, became the key judicial institutions ... adjudicating all

matters from personal disputes to major crimes; and there arose a lively press, most notably Sadr's Baghdad newspaper, *Al Hawza*."

With the announcement by Bremer in late March that US troops were to be permanently based in Iraq regardless of the wishes of any new Iraqi govern-

ment, the delicate truce was broken. The US banning of Sadr's *Al Hawza* and the announcement that the US intended to kill or capture Moqtada Sadr announced the US offensive. But the Shia rising immediately overwhelmed the US.

Sadr's Mahdi Militia and other resistance forces took control of five cities with few casualties, including Kut where Ukrainian troops retreated from the city.

Thousand of troops now surround Najaf but with overwhelming popular support the mujahideen will be likely to be able to melt back to regroup for more uprisings when the US attacks.

With the growing unity between Shias and Sunnis, the US is facing a Vietnam situation where its forces are pitted against a popular armed resistance movement.

June 30 'handover' fraud

June 30 has been set by the US and Britain as the day for the "handover" of "sovereignty" to Iraq.

But this does not mean democracy in Iraq or even the departure of US troops.

US troops to stay: In a little reported development, Paul Bremer, head of the US administration in Iraq stated in late March that the US had "found a legal basis" for US troops to continue their military control over the security situation in Iraq even if the Iraqis ask them to leave after June 30. The *New York Times* reported, "Top aids to Mr Bremer have said in recent days that the American troops will act as the most important guarantor of American influence."

US to control Iraqi army: The newly formed Iraqi army "shall at all times be under the operational control of the commander of Coalition forces," Bremer stated

Permanent US military bases: Bremer stated that there will be 14 US military bases in Iraq housing over 100,000 US troops, regardless of the wishes of any incoming Iraqi government.

Control over the economy: The US Embassy is projected to house 3,000 staff. It will disburse the \$18.4 billion voted by Congress which will be used to award contracts to mostly US firms to modernise electricity, communications and transportation systems, giving the US long-term policy control over Iraqi infrastructure.

SOUTH AFRICA: Ten years of liberation: What's changed?

by STEVE GREEN

SOUTH African celebrates ten years of liberation on April 27. But the festivities are likely to disguise the fact that for millions of black South Africans the African National Congress (ANC)'s concessions to big business and the neo-liberal policies it has implemented have seen precious few real improvements in their lives. In fact for many, things are getting worse.

Official unemployment has doubled from 16 percent in 1994 to 32 percent in 2002. Activists point out the true proportion is nearer 43 percent.

In the 1970s and 1980s a rising tide of black militancy forced the South African Apartheid state to open talks with the then-banned ANC.

Concession made by the ANC paved the way for "majority rule". South African author Patrick Bond recently wrote, "The deal represented simply this: black nationalists got the state, while white people and corporations could remove their capital from the country, and simultaneously remain domiciled in South Africa with, thanks to economic liberalisation, still more privileges.

"Trade, credit, cultural and sports sanctions ended; exchange controls were lifted; luxury imports flooded in; while people's incomes rose by 15 percent during the late 1990s; taxes were cut dramatically; and the corporate pre-tax profit share soared during the late 1990s, back to 1960s-era levels associated with apartheid's heyday.

"Hence inequality soared during ANC rule, state statistics show. Black 'African' South Africans suffered an income crash of 19 percent from 1995-2000, with every indication of further degeneration in subsequent years."

In response to privatisation pressures, the state has raised water and electricity prices. In 2002 they consumed 30 percent of the income of those households earning less than \$70 per month.

An estimated 10 million people had their water cut off, according to two national government surveys, and 10 million were also victims of electricity disconnections.

The system of migratory labour, enforced by pass laws during the apartheid era, has only changed in form.

The migrant (rural-urban) labour system, is still subsidised by women stuck in the former bantustan homelands.

Underfunding and privatisation has seen public service decline. Bond notes, "Infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, diarrhoea, cholera, malaria and AIDS are rife, all far more prevalent than during apartheid."

"Most South Africans with HIV

still have little prospect of receiving antiretroviral drugs to extend their lives. Only last week - in time for the election — did the medicines finally begin to make their way to hospitals and a few clinics."

But ANC President Thabo Mbeki has seen his way clear to spend \$6 billion on sophisticated weaponry from European corporations. Corruption and sleaze scandals have forced the resignation of several leading ANC politicians and officials caught in plots.

Land hunger has scarcely been addressed. A World Bank-style neoliberal land reform policy was adopted just after liberation, and less than 3 percent of arable land was redistributed, as against a 1994-99 target of 30 percent.

But South Africa has seen the rise of militant social movements, demanding the decommodification of water, electricity, anti-retroviral medicines and healthcare, education, and even a Basic Income Grant.

Mbeki's regime has responded with repression. Protests in August 2002 against the UN's World Summit on Sustainable Development faced state violence, anti-privatisation activists in the black townships of Johannesburg and Cape Town are repeatedly harassed and detained by police for resisting evictions and disconnections. Treatment Action Campaign members were savagely beaten in early 2003 during a non-violent civil disobedience campaign to acquire medicines.

Challenge

In the face of this it is all the more disappointing on the political front, the ANC has seen no large scale challenge from the left.

In the April 14 national elections Mbeki's ruling (ANC) won roughly 70 percent.

The United Democratic Movement and Pan Africanist Congress, standing to the left of the ANC, did badly and the black-consciousness Azaanian Peoples Organisation and its breakout Socialist Party of Azania were set to win no seats.

Johannesburg township activists called for spoiled ballots in protest, while the Landless People's Movement (LPM) called for a boycott.

Turnout was substantially down 1994 and 1999, but even so more than 75 percent of registered voters turned out.

The main trade union federation endorsed the ANC as the only party with 'the workers' interests at heart.'

Trade unionists, community activists and participants in South Africa's burgeoning social movements need to create a coherent left-wing political opposition to the ANC and neo-liberalism.

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Citizenship, racism and McDowell's referendum



KIERAN ALLEN, the author of a new pamphlet on citizenship and racism, spoke to Socialist Worker

On June 11th, Justice Minister Michael McDowell wants to run a referendum on citizenship. What changes does he want to make?

There is one progressive article in the Irish Constitution. Article 2 states that 'it is the entitlement of every person born in the island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, to be part of the Irish nation'. It came in as part of the Good Friday agreement and gives citizenship to anyone born here.

McDowell has suddenly discovered a problem. He claims that hordes of women are coming here just to give birth. Like a tabloid editor he calls them 'citizen tourists'.

So he wants to limit citizenship to people, who have one Irish parent or people who have been here legally for three years. The last bit is deceptive. Most work permits are for a year – so it is actually quite hard to stay in Ireland for three years and be completely legal.

McDowell says that the changes are needed because there is a crisis in our maternity hospitals.

The whole thing is nonsense. Women who are seven months pregnant are not supposed to get on planes according to IATA guidelines – so how could they just be coming to Ireland to give birth!

And how could there be a crisis when Ireland has a falling birth rate – with 17,919 thousand less babies born here than in 1981. There is pressure on the three main maternity hospitals but that is because governments have closed down local maternity units and are discouraging home

births.

McDowell says that 20 percent of births are to non-nationals. But most of these are EU or US citizens. Why would these groups want Irish citizenship. Only 12 percent of all immigrants come from outside these areas.

The whole argument is particularly disgusting because the Irish health service could not run without 5,000 Filipino nurses and 1,600 immigrant doctors.

In recent weeks McDowell has shifted his ground. He now says that the referendum is necessary to protect the integrity of Irish laws on citizenship. Ireland is supposed to be the odd man out on European citizenship law. Is he on stronger ground here?

Ireland may be unique in Europe but there are 40 other countries including the US, Canada and most of Latin America that grant citizenship on the basis of being born in a country.

European citizenship laws are in a mess – they are designed to keep people out. So many European countries have switched to granting citizenship on the basis of blood lines.

This is mystical nonsense. To see why you have only to look at Germany. Here a Russian who claims his forefathers originally came from German decent back on the 19th century can get free access to Germany – but a Turkish worker who has been in the country since the sixties is denied citizenship.

The whole idea of citizenship came with the rise of capitalism. It conferred rights on people who were members of a nation.

Before that there were different legal rules for different subjects.

Citizenship was not even linked to passports originally. The early French revolutionaries opposed passports because they saw them as a restriction on liberty. They granted citizenship to anyone living in France who supported the revolution.

But with the growth of imperialism, citizenship was linked to descent by blood. Passports became common only during World War 1 when each imperialist power tried to mark out its population from 'non nationals'.

Socialists want to live in a world where there are no passports – where there are not different levels of rights according to whether you come from the EU or Africa.

In the meantime, we need to fight to ensure that McDowell does not deprive immigrants of their rights.

Why is this referendum being introduced now?

It's obvious isn't it. This government is deeply unpopular. They are frightened of a swing to the left whereby Labour, the Greens and Sinn Fein will make gains in the Euro and local elections.

So as the *Sunday Tribune* journalist, Stephen Collins put it, they have created a 'trapdoor' to undermine the left.

It is a dangerous game and even some sections of the establishment are worried about the consequences of playing the race card.

But the desperate move by McDowell also shows the weakness of this government.

The referendum, however, is also part of a wider strategy by

this government. They know that from here on in, immigration is going to be feature of Irish life. In the past few years, the numbers of work permits has jumped by 600 percent – and that is even after the decline of the Celtic Tiger boom.

However, every ruling class tries to pretend that immigration is temporary. They want to be able to treat people as 'guest workers' so that they can deprive them of their rights. They also consciously push a section of workers into a state of illegality so that they can super-exploit them. The US is the prime example here – there are a staggering 8 million illegal workers in the US.

So McDowell is also trying to help his wealthy friends keep immigrants under their thumb. By depriving them of rights, by granting work permits to the employers and not the employees – it is hoped to create a docile workforce.

Is there a high level of racism among Irish workers. Isn't McDowell going to tap into this feeling?

Every socialist opposes racism because it divides workers. But to win, you cannot dismiss individual workers because they hold racist views.

Racism is not a matter of individual psychology. It is manufactured from the top and spread through society. You have only to look at how the Independent group of newspapers attacks 'welfare spongers'. It is a deliberate strategy to deflect attention from the real sponger – the newspaper baron, Tony O'Reilly.

To defeat racism, you have to show workers why it is directly in their interest to oppose it.

And the argument is not difficult. Just look at the worker permit system. Here thousands of immigrant workers are being taken on in the building industry or in the meat plants who have been deliberately deprived of their rights. They are frightened to join unions – because they do not have the same rights as Irish workers.

If these workers were fully legal, they would be better able to stand up to their employer – and everyone would gain.

At the recent Labour Party conference, Pat Rabbitte sounded very ambiguous on the question. He even claimed that McDowell was opening up more loopholes. How do you think that campaign will be fought?

If you want to see an Irish Tony Blair in the making – just watch Rabbitte. Every Labour Party panders to racist arguments because they are primarily an electoralist party that does not argue with workers on the basis of encouraging a real fight against the employers.

But this is not the whole story.

The campaign against the referendum can win if it taps into the anger in Irish society. It has got to direct that anger against the spongers at the top.

The richest people in Ireland are virtually all tax exiles. They literally rob money that should be used for public services to further their own greed. They are the real spongers – while the Filipino nurses who staff our hospitals are our real friends.

BOOK LAUNCH MEETINGS

Cork: Wednesday May 5th 8pm
An Spailpin Fanach, 8.00pm

Dublin: Thursday May 6th,
8pm Wynns Hotel, Middle
Abbey St

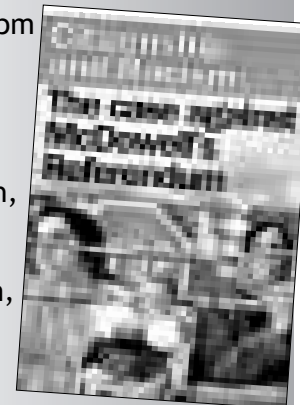
Drogheda: Thursday May 6th,
8.00pm Westcourt Hotel,
West St Drogheda

Gorey: Monday May 10, 8pm,
Coachhouse

Swords: Thursday May 13,
8pm Swords Youth &
Resource Centre

Waterford: Thursday May 20, 8pm ATGWU Hall,
Keizer St

Copies available price €4 from Bookmarks Ireland, PO
Box 1648 Dublin 8



book

ERIC HOBSBAWM:

A Twentieth Century life

by DAVID LYNCH

"I LOOK forward to an American world empire, whose long-term chances are poor, with more fear and less enthusiasm than I look back on the record of the old British Empire, run by a country whose modest size protected it against megalomania. "Still, let us not disarm, even in unsatisfactory times. Social injustice still needs to be denounced and fought. The world will not get better on its own."



■ Eric Hobsbawm

So ends the final and most satisfactory chapter of *Interesting Times* the autobiography of 87 year old left wing historian Eric Hobsbawm now out in paperback.

Hobsbawm has not led the life of the 'typical' historian. Years spent in academic isolation pouring over primary sources in dusty libraries was not the career road travelled by this almost life long member of the Communist Party.

Hobsbawm is well known as the author of classics such as *Age of Revolution* and *Age of Capital*.

But his new personal book is far from perfect. Looking back over the wide spread of his life since 1917, Hobsbawm unearths many interesting pen-pictures of people he knew, situations he was in, and historical events that he was present at.

Hobsbawm has almost been like a Forest Gump type figure present at some of the most exciting and worrying political moments of the past century. He was an active member of the German Communist Party in the months before Hitler's rise to power, he was in Paris during the student and worker rebellion of 1968, he met Che Guevara in Cuba in the same year, was briefly in Spain during the Civil War and he was also present in Latin America during some of the most tumultuous events in that continent's history.

Communist Party

His stated reasons for joining the Communist Party in the early 1930s is something many socialists could sympathise with even now: a desire to rid the world of gross inequality and, particularly in the 1930s, to fight fascism.

Although politically active in Germany in the period before Hitler's rise to power, the description of that time is a little disappointing. As one reviewer has written,

"His account of the 1930s is heavy on the politics, and mentions so many of his own relatives you cannot possibly keep track of who's who. But it dismisses in a sentence the possibility of successful working class resistance to Hitler in the years 1930-33 if the Communists had tried seriously to force the Social Democrats into a united front."

However after 1956 when the worst excesses of Stalinism were exposed, unlike many of his fellow Communist intellectuals, Hobsbawm did not leave the party. His continuing commitment to the Stalinist Communist Party means that much of the political conclusions reached in this book are marked by the rotten politics of that party.

Hobsbawm proudly says that much of his politics come from the Communist Party's belief in a Popular Front which saw the Stalinist Parties standing alongside supposedly "progressive" representatives of the bourgeoisie. In Ireland this led to the Irish Communist Party calling for vote transfers to Fianna Fail as the "progressive" party of the Irish capitalist class.

For Hobsbawm it meant him supporting the expulsion of the Militant Tendency from the British Labour Party in the 80s while also partially supporting, in his words, a "junta of reformist militarists" in Peru. His politics also lead to his belief, (that hangs heavy like a nightmare over the whole text) that socialism is now dead.

Of course what Hobsbawm refers to by "socialism" is the Stalinist system which survived until 1989. But his inability to distinguish the genuine legacy of the Russian Revolution, represented by Trotsky and others, means he thinks that socialism "is now dead... and it now must be obvious that failure was built into the enterprise from the start."

Despite these faults the book has much to recommend it. In terms of the study of history he provides a rigorous defence of social and labour history in the face of post-modernist attack.

He is scathing about the oppression of the Palestinians. He remains firm in his opposition to US imperialism and argues that US Empire despite its supposed unassailable hegemony is as vulnerable to collapse as all the other empires that have fallen through the centuries.

While interesting in parts, most people who admire the Hobsbawm of *Age of Revolution* and other titles will be disappointed with his *Interesting Times*.

■ *Interesting Times* by Eric Hobsbawm (Abacus)

music

Films that examine the torture of child abuse

by DAVE LORDAN

CAPTURING the Friedman's is a documentary while **Monster** is a gritty biopic.

Both show how the family form forced upon us by the legal and ideological machinery of capitalism leads to severe distortions of sexuality and large scale tragedy.

The nuclear family was born during the industrial revolution when the ruling class realised that they needed women to stay at home and rear children to be the next generation of factory fodder.

At the same time homosexuality was outlawed and pushed to the margins of society.

Today the family remains the site of the vast majority of rape and abuse of women and children.

The Friedman's are an all American middle class family safely ensconced in leafy suburbia on Long Island.

Their idyll dissolves overnight when police accuse their father and one of the three brothers of sexually abusing a number of young boys who attend a computer class in the Friedman's home.

The tabloid media whip up an atmosphere of hysteria against the family



■ All-American family idyll dissolves over allegation

and the witch hunt atmosphere in the neighbourhood places the family under virtual house arrest.

Slowly but surely the Friedman's disintegrate under the pressure

What is so depressing about this movie is how it is clear that no-one is telling the whole truth about what happened.

But the biggest and the dirtiest liars (surprise surprise!) are obviously the

police who clearly had their own agenda in marking the Friedman's out for public sacrifice

Lee was repeatedly raped by a family friend from the age of eight. When she told her father he beat her up.

Desperate

At thirteen Lee's family broke up and she was forced to prostitute herself

in order to provide for her younger siblings.

After years of prostitution and abuse she begins an intense, desperate lesbian love affair with the nervous and naïve Selby, who has also run away from a family that refuses to accept her sexuality.

She murders a number of clients and uses their dollars to pay for her and Selby's upkeep.

In the end she is

caught, ritually denounced in the tabloids, and sentenced to death.

Monster makes it clear that in a society which allows horrific abuse of children- not least by state and religious institutions, - to go unnoticed, it is no more than the grossest hypocrisy to demonise those driven to desperate acts by the extent of their abuse.

book

The horrors and triumphs of death

by LISA WALLEN

THIS BESTSELLING novel is not a cheesy romance or hard-boiled thriller. It is a historical novel that tells the story of Irish immigrants fleeing the potato famine of 1847 in which millions died.

It gives a devastating picture of the horrors inflicted on the Irish by British landlords, Irish profiteers and laissez-faire capitalism itself.

The *Star of the Sea* is a ship carrying immigrants from Ireland to America. On board is a bankrupt aristocrat, Lord Meridith, his family and his maid Mary Duane.

Along with them are Pious Mulvey, ballad writer, thief and murderer, and left wing American journalist Grant Grantly Dixon.

They carry with them secrets that lead to revenge, murder and redemption. Their gripping story is at the centre of the novel, which gives a searing

account of class differences.

The book weaves together fact and fiction, polemic and drama. Real characters, including Charles

Dickens, rub shoulders with Joseph O'Connor's brilliant cast of characters.

■ *Star of the Sea* by Joseph O'Connor STG £6.99

journal

International Socialism out now

THE banning of the wearing of the Muslim headscarves in French schools has sparked a debate way beyond France.

Most of the French left supported the ban on the basis of protection of secularism and the values of the republic.

Many outside France have supported similar arguments. A French socialist, Antoine Boulangé argues against abstract ideas of equality above the civil rights of Muslims in an Islamophobic post 9/11 world.

Francois Chennais of ATTAC France presented a paper 'Globalisation Against Development' to the World Social Forum in Mumbai. He describes the devastating effects of neo-liberal policies on the Third World and explores the role of the state in a globalised world.

While not written in a Marxist framework, the piece is a call to arms for academics to throw off the dead weight of Washington consensus orthodoxy and begin to develop a radical critique of capi-

talist globalisation.

Chris Harman explains why and how capitalism developed. Why did the great feudal empires of the Middle East and Japan stagnate and fall behind and Northern Europe leap ahead of the rest of the world?

Also included in the Journal is an interview with Fausto Bertinotti, leader of Rifondazione Comunista in Italy. ■ For copies contact your local SWP branch or by post from SW Books, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8. Price €6 plus €1.50 pp.



■ Emigration or starvation

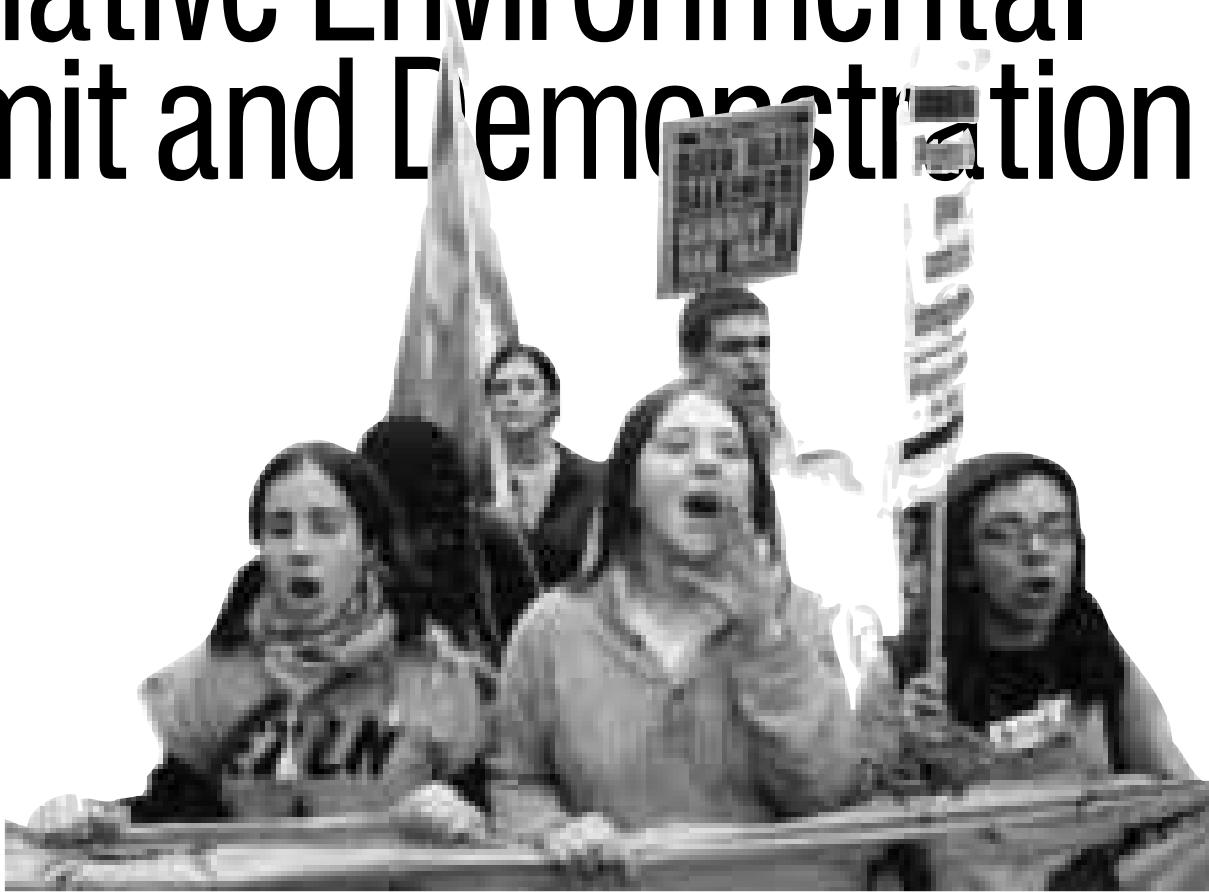
South East Social Forum: Alternative Environmental Summit and Demonstration

The South East Social Forum is to hold an Alternative Environmental Summit and Demonstration on the weekend of May 14th, 15th, 16th.

The Alternative Summit and demonstration are being organized to coincide with the meeting of the EU environmental ministers meeting which will occur in Waterford over that weekend.

The Alternative Environmental Summit, under the title of 'People and Planet Before Profit: Another Europe is Possible', will be held over three days in four different venues. Topics under discussion at the summit include:

- 'Global Climate Change, Environmental & Economic Sustainability, Genetically Modified Organisms'
- 'Yes to Irish Neutrality - No to a Europe of War and Militarization'
- 'Yes to a Europe of Worker and Social Rights - No to a Europe of Profit and Privatization of Public Services'
- 'Waste Solutions'
- 'Our Marine Environment'



Bring the spirit of the European Social Forum to the South East

The opening meeting of the summit ('People and Planet Before Profit: Another Europe is Possible') will be held in the Granville Hotel on Friday 14th May at 7.30pm.

Speakers at this meeting will include Patricia McKen-

na MEP (Green Party), Jean Somers (Debt and Development Coalition), Dick Roche (President Waterford Council of Trade Unions), Daithi Doolan (Sinn Fein) and Brid Smith (Dublin Bin Tax Campaign & Socialist Workers Party).

Further meetings will take place on the morning of Saturday 15th in the Forum Theatre and The Showboat, both in The Glen.

There will also be meetings on Sunday 16th in the Granville Hotel and the Grand Hotel, Tramore. Representatives of over twenty organisations will be speaking at the summit including: Sustainable Ireland, ATGWU, FEASTA, Irish Anti War Movement, Zero Waste, SIPTU, Coastwatch Europe, Waste Study Group, AFRI, GM Free Ireland, Busworkers' Action Group, Irish Doctors Environmental Association, Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign, DAPSE, Stop Esso Ireland, Down to Zero, and Another Europe is Possible.

Speakers will include: Karin Dubsy, Mick O'Reilly, Deirdre de Burca, Richard Boyd Barrett, Dr. Elizabeth Cullen, Mike Jennings, Jack O'Sullivan, Rory Hearne, Michael O'Callaghan, Eoin O'Brion and several more.

There will also be music and entertainment throughout the weekend, the Jenkins Lane market with organic and fair-trade goods, an ENFO and Sustainable Ireland exhibition on sustainability and a workshop and field trip on the marine environment.

The demonstration will assemble in The Glen, Waterford at 2.45pm on Saturday 15th May.

Participate

All groups and individuals who wish to express discontent at the policies of the government and the EU are invited to participate in the Alternative Summit and the demonstration which will be organized as a family day out with a carnival atmosphere.

The SESF sees this alternative summit as a platform to deliver information to the public, create debate and provide an opportunity for disparate groups and movements to come together to provide alternatives to the current model of development, and to help promote a society where human and environmental rights take precedent over profit and greed.

The South East Social Forum is a plural and diverse

organization modeled on the World and European Social Forums.

The purpose of the forums is to bring together people who share a common cause to create a more equitable society and a more sustainable, healthier planet.

The Social Forum Movement has attracted millions of people worldwide, who wish to create an alternative to a society based on profit, greed, war and commodification.

The SESF believes that another world is possible through solidarity and the access of information, which can lead to better policy decisions.

Social Forums are born of grass roots social movements dedicated to ensuring that human rights are promoted, protected, and fulfilled by governments, inter-governmental organisations, companies and other non-state actors.

The forums are for anyone who wants to challenge the principles that the market is more important than the people who live on this planet.

■ Contact: Roy Hassey: 086-3274015 or Paul Flynn: 086-8581915
www.freewebs.com/sesf; southeastsocialforum@yahoo.com

Dates for your diary

EDUCATION FOR PROFIT



IRISH UNIVERSITIES AND THE THREAT OF PRIVATISATION

A public seminar in Liberty Hall, Dublin
Saturday, May 22, 10am-1.30pm

HOSTED BY THE EDUCATION BRANCH, SIPTU

For details contact: educationbr@siptu.ie or marnie.holborow@dcu.ie

BOOK LAUNCH MEETINGS

Cork: Wednesday May 5th 8pm An Spailpin Fanach, 8.00pm

Dublin: Thursday May 6th, 8pm Wynns Hotel, Middle Abbey St

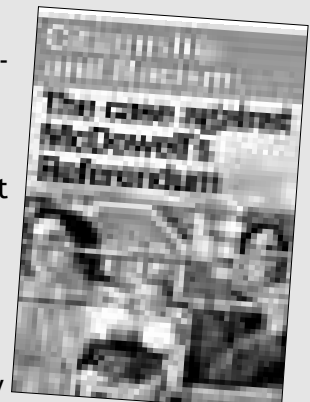
Drogheda: Thursday May 6th, 8.00pm Westcourt Hotel, West St Drogheda

Gorey: Monday May 10, 8pm, Coachhouse

Swords: Thursday May 13, 8pm Swords Youth & Resource Centre

Waterford: Thursday May 20, 8pm ATGWU Hall, Keizer St

Copies available price €4 from Bookmarks Ireland, PO Box 1648 Dublin 8



Public Meeting
"The Colombia Three: The Truth Behind the Case"
ATGWU Union Hall, Keyser Street, Waterford
Thursday 22nd April

Speakers:
John Connolly - Brother of Niall Connolly
Jimmy Kelly - Socialist Workers Party
Des Bonass - Bring Them Home Campaign

SWP Fundraiser
Quiz Night, The Showboat, The Glen, Waterford
Tuesday 27th April

May Day Social
Rockabilly and Roots Night with the Wayfaring Strangers & Guests
Thursday 29th April, 9.00pm til late
Tap Room, Ballybricken, Waterford

Public meeting:
Mayday: "Why You should protest."
Saturday 24/ April @ 3-00pm
Signal Arts Centre
Navarra Avenue
Bray sea front
Ph: 087 780 7838

Bray SWP, Election Fundraiser
For Joyce Power & Catherine Kennedy;
An evening of Ballads and Blues w/ Dermot Byrne and John Kennedy
Thursday 22/ April
Katie Gallagher's
Bray sea front
Doors 8pm
Tickets €5/ €10
Spot Prizes raffle on the night
Ph: 086 34 16 398

MAY DAY

CEAD MILE FAILTE to all people of the world

NO TO RACISM WAR AND CORPORATE GREED



Main speaker: **Susan George** (World Social Forum)

Carnival, March & Music

12 Noon May 1 Central Bank, Dame St, Dublin

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Teachers vote to support Coca Cola boycott

DELEGATES at the Teachers Union of Ireland conference over Easter voted overwhelmingly to support the international boycott of Coca Cola products and agreed to support the Colombia Solidarity Campaign.

The Coca Cola boycott is in support of trade unionists in Colombia fighting the strong arm tactics of the local bottlers in an effort to smash trade unionism in the company.

One delegate told the TUI conference in Galway that eight members of the Colombian trade union Sinaltrainal had been killed by Colombian paramilitaries since 1990.

Organise

"This motion speaks to the notion of international solidarity and the very grave difficulties some workers still have to organise in trade unions," he said.

Since the intimidation of Colombian Coca-Cola workers began, there has

been a 50 percent reduction in union membership.

The conference was urged to boycott Coca-Cola products "just like workers

had boycotted South African products during the apartheid regime."

One Executive member argued against the boycott

claiming it was not supported by ICTU and that workers in Coca Cola plants in Ireland had no difficulties. The majority of delegates

rejected this argument.

An amendment to refer the motion to the TUI executive was defeated and the boycott motion was passed.

Row at INTO Coke promotion

THE ISSUE of Coca Cola was a hot issue at the National School teachers union (INTO) conference in Tralee too.

Outside of congress doors a row brewed over the INTO leadership's decision to allow Coca Cola, a stand outside the doors of the meeting hall.

The booklet provided to every delegate on arrival by the INTO organising committee listed Coca Cola as a sponsor of the conference.

The stand offered school children tours of Coca Cola bottling plants in Dublin and cynically exploited cuts in funding by providing teaching resources, such as an Irish poster with the words: "Agam, Agat, Aige, Aici, Againn, Agaibh, Acu, A Coca Cola...Everyone needs a refresher course!"

Handwritten posters calling for a boycott of Coca Cola products in Irish schools quickly appeared and a number of delegates

took up a petition demanding the immediate withdrawal of the stand and the end to all sponsorship links with Coca Cola.

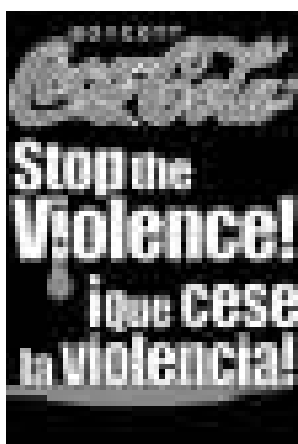
The issue was raised by a number of delegates from the floor of the conference and a debate was sought but refused by the Chair.

As pressure grew the INTO General Secretary, John Carr was forced to respond to the growing controversy.

In a disgraceful speech, he opposed the international boycott. He also revealed that he had written a letter to Coca Cola informing them that he believed the boycott was "wrongly conceived".

Unfortunately the fact that trade unionists have lost their lives for the fundamental right to organise seemed lost on him.

His gentle plea to Coca Cola to take "overall responsibility for guaranteeing workers rights" was completely meaningless.



Many delegates felt it was a sad reflection on trade union leadership in this country when simple solidarity takes second place to sponsorship and when workers rights and lives take second place to respecting the "sensitivities" of global business interests.

Given that a call for the issuing of a generalised boycott by the INTO had not even been sought by dele-

gates who spoke on the issue, Carr's failure to even recognise that it may not be suitable for companies with questionable practices to be so fundamentally involved in a trade union event was astounding.

The broader issue of sponsorship and the encroachment of big business into our education system however won't go away.

Delegates expressed concern at the fact that young children were being exploited by commercial interests, which used the education system to run promotions.

Delegates passed a motion that called on the INTO to instruct its members not to support any promotion that involves the purchase of a specific product.

A number of INTO members are now in the process of establishing a network of teachers to campaign against the commercialisation of our education system.

Teachers' Conferences round-up

INTO

AS negotiations begin on a new pay deal, delegates expressed their anger at the changes in work practices that have been forced through under benchmarking.

Speakers criticised the real deterioration in teachers working conditions and criticised government attempts to end cost of living related pay increases.

Delegates voted unanimously to instruct their leaders to deliver substantial pay increases without a pay pause or linkage to further changes in work practices. Against the advice of the General Secretary, John Carr, they also instructed the INTO leadership to refuse to accept the inclusion of a "no strike" clause in any new agreement.

Delegates also called for the immediate reversal of the decision to make all new entrants to teaching work until they are 65.

Deep resentment and anger at the treatment of teachers by the Minister for Education was obvious throughout. His announcement that nothing would be done in relation to reducing class sizes met with an angry

response when a motion was later debated prioritising the issue for the INTO in the run up to the local and European elections.

Concerns about lack of resources to ensure that children with special needs can achieve in Irish class rooms were vociferously articulated.

The announcement

of 350 extra posts in the area was seen as a welcome but inadequate response to the wide-ranging resources needed. Teachers were also angered by the decision by the Department of Education to withdraw an allowance paid to teachers who have gained a qualification in the area of special needs

and delegates called for its immediate reinstatement.

In other motions delegate voted in favour of a motion instructing the leadership to refuse to accept the inclusion of a "no-strike" clause in negotiations on Phase Two of "Sustaining Progress" pay deal.

Teaching Dempsey a lesson

By NIAL SMYTH (St. Pats Drumcondra & INTO member)

Students in St. Pats College Drumcondra have been campaigning against the privatisation of teacher training

Despite the best efforts of the INTO leadership at conference a motion condemning the cutbacks in state funded teacher education and the privatisation of teacher training with the introduction of a private online course by Hibernia College was passed.

The motion despite its importance was initially not included on the final draft of motions being discussed at the union conference. Students from St. Pats teacher training college organised a fringe meeting, attended by over 40 people; including delegates, the media and members of the teacher training colleges.

The meeting expressed its anger at the attempt to privatise teacher education.

The Head of Mary Immaculate College Limerick spoke from the floor of the privatisation agenda being pushed through by the present government and being driven by the WTO and GATS agreement.

One conference delegate commended the students in organising the fringe meeting and pointed to the fact that students had shown the way forward by taking to the streets last November.

The motion, which was formulated by the Tallaght and Drogheda branches, made it to congress floor and was unanimously passed.

Hibernia Director Sean Rowland seemed to indicate later in the press that the company had little intention of continuing with the private teacher-training course in light of the developments at the union conference.

This is a major victory, but the union must immediately demand the Department sanction state funds for the provision of modular courses in teacher training colleges.

ASTI

THE Minister for Education received a cold response from delegates who heckled him throughout his speech to the ASTI Conference.

The in-coming President, Susie Hall, received a standing ovation for her speech in which she challenged him on funding for education and rejected his calls for school league tables as damaging to Irish education.

Patricia Wroe, the woman who initiated the investigation into alleged bogus expense claims by Charlie Lennon, former general secretary, retained the

position of Treasurer. Sheila Parsons, a vocal and active participant in the ASTI pay campaign three years ago, was elected vice President.

Delegates discussed a wide range of topics from lack of resources to discipline problems.

The issue of pension rights and in particular the right to early retirement featured prominently with delegates threatening industrial action if the requirement on new entrants to work until 65 was not reversed and early retirement schemes were not retained.

TUI

THE TUI Conference in Killarney was concerned at cut backs in education.

Over the past while the sector has been squeezed, for example DIT has seen cuts in part-time lecturers

Conference called on the Executive to launch a campaign for more

resources.

Delegates also agreed that only TUI members should vote on changes to their conditions.

In the current Sustaining Progress agreement, TUI members are having change imposed on them without their agreement.

★ On the Anti-War front, fringe meetings were held at both the INTO conference in Tralee and the ASTI conference in Killarney. Both meetings were lively and concentrated on beginning to network among union members to ensure maximum participation by teachers in demonstrations against the visit of Bush.

NIPSA +

PCS =

VICTORY!

ONE hundred thousand members of Britain's civil service union, PCS, took part in a two-day strike last week.

The success of the strike was evident in the way government Ministers and civil service management went out of their way on the one hand to play down its success while on the other hand blaming striking civil servants for causing severe difficulties to the most vulnerable sections of society! The fact is that the large majority of civil servants supported the action.

However the strike did raise serious questions for activists involved in the civil service strike in Northern Ireland.

For example, while Child Support Agency staff in Britain were on the picket lines their colleagues in Belfast who are NIPSA members were back at work after the Easter break.

Unfortunately the NIPSA leadership has made no attempt to call action on the same days as PCS members are out.

Pay cuts

This is despite the fact that the two disputes are about the same issues.

Civil servants in the North and in Britain have had 'deals' equivalent to pay cuts imposed on them, their wages are equally poor and both groups of workers are expecting the same again, or less, this year.

Both sets of civil servants are faced with a management intent on demoralising them and sidelining their unions before cutting jobs and imposing new terms and conditions.

On top of that both groups of workers are also faced with new computer systems (supplied by the same companies in each department) which don't work.

Essentially the disputes are about pay and staffing. Poverty pay and the cutting of jobs are all about saving money for the government and reducing services to working class people.

But if it is to stop the government, NIPSA needs to step up its action. The support for the strikes, both here and in Britain shows this issue is not going to go away.

Angry

Civil servants in the North are just as angry as their colleagues in Britain and yet the opportunity to take part in action right across the UK has not been given to them.

We are now 19 weeks into the dispute. Many workers are saying that what this shows is a need to seriously escalate the industrial action.

Small groups of workers have taken part in 'selective' strikes across Northern Ireland. They have shown that they are determined to win.

As *Socialist Worker* goes to press 100 Child Support Agency staff are taking to the picket line at offices across the north. However their 1400 colleagues will not be joining them, and neither will the other 22,000 civil servants involved in the dispute.

It is now becoming crystal clear that if we are to force management and New Labour to retreat from their offensive against civil servants then a serious escalation involving all NIPSA members in the civil service and coordinated with PCS in Britain is the only way we can do it.

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**IRAQ:EMPIRE
IN FLAMES**

- PAGE 6 & 7

**Bush backs
Sharon's
Terror**

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**THE CASE AGAINST
McDOWELL'S RACIST
REFERENDUM - PAGE 8**
**REPORTS FROM TEACHERS'
UNIONS CONFERENCES**

PAGE 11

inside:

Mayday ... May 1st Dublin 2004 ... Mayday

No to Racism, War & Capitalism

Another World is Possible
**Why we should keep
Mayday a day of protest**
**OPPOSE RACISM - NO
TO THE REFERENDUM
THE GOVERNMENT is calling May
1st a 'Day of Welcomes' for the ten
EU accession states.**

This is sickening hypocrisy for the Government to claim to be welcoming immigrants when they are deporting hundreds of immigrants (many from the countries that will be part of the EU on May 1st!).

When they are refusing to allow asylum seekers the dignity to work, and when they are bringing in a referendum that is attempting to scapegoat immigrants for FF/PDs failure to provide properly funded schools, housing and hospitals.

OPPOSE WAR

BLAIR, AHERN and Berlusconi have been to the forefront of supporting Bush's bloody occupation of Iraq and 20 of the EU countries have troops in Iraq.

We should take to the streets to tell Ahern and the EU leaders that we want US military out of Shannon, we do not want to be part of an EU army and we want the billions of euros being wasted on armies and weapons to be spent on schools and hospitals.

OPPOSE CAPITALISM

WHILE ALL protests planned for May Day are completely peaceful the government at the highest levels are ordering the 4000 gardai to be in Dublin on May Day with 1,200 in full riot gear.

Rapid reaction teams of soldiers will also be

available. This is a clear attempt to intimidate and frighten the tens of thousands of people who are sick of the corruption, war and corporate greed from protesting on May Day.

This is the sick priority of our Governments under capitalism. They are spending millions on security and creating a state of fear while they cut-back funding and privatise vital services like public housing, health services and schools and universities.

**A NEW MOVEMENT TO
CREATE A NEW WORLD
THE ANTI-CAPITALIST movement
has grown and deepened since it
burst on to the scene and shut
down the WTO in Seattle 1999.**

Since then we have seen huge protests at the G8 Summit in Genoa, at the EU summits in Barcelona, Gothenburg and Brussels and the failed WTO summit in Cancun.

The magnificent anti-war movement that mobilised millions against the Iraq War on the global days of action on Feb 15th and March 20th grew out of the World and European Social Forums.

We are witnessing a new movement that unites trade unionists, environmentalists, third world campaigners, anarchists, socialists and concerned individuals in their opposition to war and corporate greed.

It is vital we make the May 1st Carnival and March organised by the Another Europe is Possible alliance as big as possible in order to build that new movement in Ireland.



THE 25 EU heads of state will be wined and dined by the Irish Government at our expense in Farmleigh house on May 1st for the signing in of the 10 new accessions countries to the EU.

While they will be discussing their policies of racism and war surrounded by thousands of riot police and barricades we must take to the streets demanding a world where people come before profit and war.

May Day weekend events

**Friday April 30th
7.30pm Liberty Hall
Susan George from
the European and World
Social Forums speaks
about Globalisation and
Resistance**

**Saturday May 1st
12 noon Dame St, Central Bank;
CARNIVAL (with World and Irish Music)
and March to Phoenix Park - against
Racism, War and Corporate Greed. Supported
by various political parties, trade
unionists, community groups and anti-
capitalists**

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