

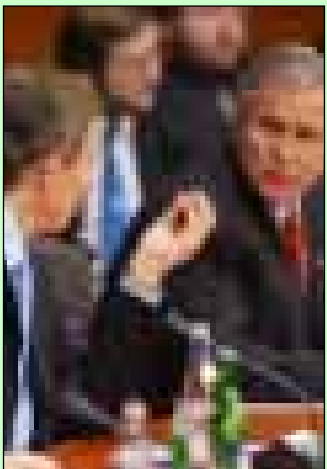
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An Post Unions reject insulting pay deal



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G8 Hypocrisy and lies exposed

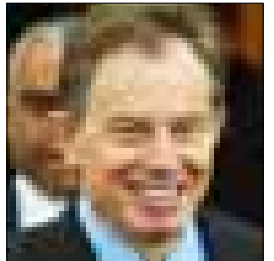


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G8: LETS MAKE THEM HISTORY



BUSH, BLAIR AND AHERN FAIL ON PROMISES

Bob Geldof's brilliant call last week for one million people to protest at the G8 summit in July has focused attention on the demands for 100 percent Third World debt cancellation, trade justice and more and better aid.

Bush and Blair are feeling the heat. Their pronouncements on 'action' on debt relief show this. But their rhetoric should not fool anyone. The debt that they are talking about cancelling is a tiny part of the total debt of poor countries (see Page 12 for details). Bush and Blair are warmongers who have no interest in tackling world poverty. It is their war policies, their neo-liberalism and their multinationals that are causing global poverty.

Take global military spending, which in 2004 was just over \$1 trillion. US military spending accounted for almost half of this figure. The US will spend \$200bn on the Iraq war by the end of this year. This is equal to three times

Drop the Debt Make Poverty History protest: June 30th 6.30pm Parnell Sq., Dublin. Protest at the G8: July 2nd-6th Scotland

the global aid budget.

If they stopped dropping bombs they could drop all the poor countries' debt immediately. It is important that there is large anti-war contingents on the protests.

The call to make Ahern, Bush and Blair history should be central to the mobilisations.

There will be a large 'drop the debt' rally in Dublin on June 30th which will focus on Fianna Fail's obligation to fulfil its promise on reaching the 0.7% aid spending

target

Build up for Scotland

There has been a huge build up in momentum for the protests in Edinburgh and Gleneagles.

Dave Moxham, assistant secretary of the Scottish Trades Union Congress, said "The Scottish Trades Union Congress will be supporting Make Poverty History and G8 Alternatives demonstrations surrounding the G8 summit at Gleneagles."

Local residents have also been getting involved in the preparations. John Wight lives in Edinburgh and is involved in G8 Alternatives. He said, "Geldof's call for a million on the streets of Edinburgh has lit a fire under the whole thing. We need to get people here—but not just for the Make Poverty History rally on the Saturday. There will be a week of events—protests and discussions and cultural events. This is a brilliant opportunity to learn about the political, social and environmental results of the actions taken by the G8."

"People should come for the whole week if they can. It's going to be an amazing event. The idea that these eight men will come to Scotland and deal with the problem of poverty in between champagne receptions is ludicrous. That is why it is so important for people to be in Edinburgh on Wednesday 6th July. To make them hear our demands."

(For details on buses to Dublin and Scotland, G8 events and G8 hypocrisy over corruption and aid see Pages 11 and 12)

McBREARTY'S MESSAGE FOR McDOWELL:

'I won't let go until you tell the truth'

Frank McBrearty Jnr and Mark McConnell were disgracefully framed by Gardai for the murder of Richie Barron in 1996.

The recent findings of the Morris Tribunal exposed Garda and state corruption at the highest levels.

It showed how the Gardai mishandled the investigation and tried to frame innocent people. Inside Rory Hearne interviews Frank McBrearty Jnr.

Following on from tribunals and scandals which have involved every

section of the Irish establishment from big business, politicians, to the judiciary and clergy, the turn of the Gardai has arrived.

The force is rotten to the core. The Morris Tribunal is just another example in a long line of events.

There was the May Day scandal and countless cases of Garda brutality and cover ups. In 2002, out of court settlements in cases involving the Gardai cost the tax payer €1 million.

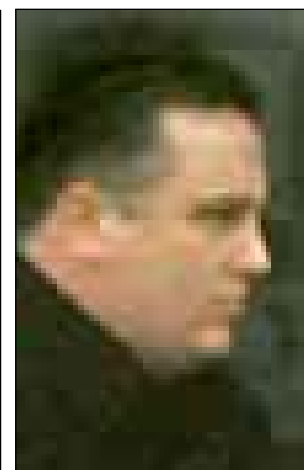
According to RTE the

Morris Tribunal itself has cost the state €16 million, the payout to the McBrearty's and others as a result of the state's admission of liability could be in the region of €20 million and the McBrearty family themselves could be due up to €6 million in damages.

All this because of the actions of our 'guardians of peace'.

Now the state wants to hand even more power to the Gardai in the form of the Garda Bill and the Criminal Justice Bill.

In the interview inside



Frank McBrearty Jnr

this issue of Socialist Worker Frank McBrearty Jnr. claims that...

"The Garda Bill will make this country worse than it was for people under the Iron Curtain. No one will have any rights.

"The Gardai will do what they like.

"The Bill will give them more powers without even an ombudsman..."

"As Martin Luther King said 'injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere'.

"If they pass this Bill it will be a serious threat to justice in this country."

See inside on Page 9 for the entire exclusive interview with Frank McBrearty Jnr.

Quotes of the fortnight

“Personally I think the French will say Yes. I just have this gut feeling”

Dermot Ahern, Minister for Foreign Affairs, gets it wrong

“One of the good guys”

Bob Geldof describing George Bush on BBC also gets it wrong!

“After several more months of hearings into Garda corruption in Donegal, the spirit wearies at the lies, obfuscations, concealments and conspiracies to destroy the truth..”

Justice Morris on Garda evidence and explanations to the Morris Tribunal

“Our argument is that charges have now been declared by two judges as unlawful and anyone who paid bin charges in those years is entitled to their money”

Solicitors who represented non-payers in the successful case taken against Dublin City Council

“The people who suffer elder abuse don't have time on their side. We bury them in the graveyard. They don't get a chance to recover from it. We need action on this”

One of the contributor's to Prime Time shocking expose of Leas Cross nursing home

“In the run-up to a general election, to a certain extent, political parties are trying to outdo each other in how strong they are on law and order. I think there's a huge amount of that going on.”

Pat Carey, Fianna Fáil TD for Dublin North West feels the heat from the anti-ASBO campaign. ...And then suffers a momentary loss of memory that it is FF who has been under funding services over the last 7 years:

“There is enough legislation in place. There are agencies to deal with the problem - the HSE, Department of Education, juvenile liaison officers, social workers. The big problem is they are not funded. If they were funded, they would be able to engage with families in difficulties and we wouldn't have nearly the problem.”

“We have it in our power to make or break Fine Gael so why don't we break them”

Labour TD Tommy Broughan puts the case against Labour's electoral pact with Fine Gael

“Being raped, whether by military or civilian, is not viewed here as a reason to leave a country or to fear persecution”

Spokesperson from Mayo Rape Crisis Centre where 10% of clients are asylum seekers, but not one was given refugee status in the past two years

“I think I'd get the Americans out of the way. They shouldn't be in charge of anything that has to deal with the psychological dimension of how to bring people on board. They isolate people. They are too aggressive.”

Fianna Fail Senator Ann Ormond on the US role in Iraq

An Post Unions reject 'insulting' pay deal

By BRID SMITH

Unions at An Post have rejected the latest insulting offer from the Labour Relations Commission (LRC) aimed at settling their dispute with the company.

Postal workers are owed an average of €4,000 each from unpaid national wage deals. They are due 8.75% back dated to January 2003. But An Post management have said they can only afford 5% from January 2004. This amounts to a shortfall of almost €3,000 per worker

The An Post CEO earns over €1 million a year yet they cry poverty when it comes to basic entitlements for their workers. Earlier this year all of the top management got big bonuses. For example the honorary Chairperson of An Post received an increase of €50,000 this year alone.

To add insult to injury, the company is expecting a blank cheque for changes in work practices. The pay-out of 5% is conditional on workers accepting changes which have not even been outlined to them in advance.

The unions are now talking of re-balloting their members for industrial action. But shop stewards who spoke to Socialist Worker take a different view.

“There's a lot of anger amongst workers. We don't think the unions are pushing ahead hard enough.

“We have already given them an overwhelming mandate for industrial action and if we go down the road of voting all over again, it could bring us right back up to Christmas before we are ready to do anything and just lose more money.

“We have gone through



Flashback: An Post workers take to the streets of Dublin at the end of last year

all the legal channels – it's time to go out the gate.”

Frustration

There is considerable frustration in some depots with union inaction. One of the shop stewards explained, “There is very little direct communication from the CWU and notices we get are all written in legal-speak.

The feeling here is that we have gone back cap in hand too often. We need to take action.

We need to make the Union represent us, not do

what the company tells them.”

Workers know that you don't need a PhD to see what's wrong in An Post. It is down to mismanagement and a determination by the government to privatise the postal service.

As one shop stewards told SW, “The Minister wants to spend over €50 million of public money on Zip codes just to help out the big companies and computer mail. Why doesn't he go in now to the company and tell them to pay us.

“There is no need for this change. We need more staff to deal with the extra mail and we need our pay rise.”

The unions will only respond to the workers' anger if they feel the pressure from below. An Post workers and shop stewards need to organise in each depot a strong rank and file workers' group.

These groups can then insist that the union carry out their instructions to push harder for their pay and protect their jobs and conditions.

The fantastic mass demonstration last December sent shock waves through An Post and scared the Government. It is only by taking such action that workers will get results.

Resigning from the unions at this crucial time would be a mistake.

Rank and file groups in companies like Dublin Bus have shown that it is possible to force the unions to act on behalf of workers' interests and halt government and management privatisation plans.

INSIDE THE SYSTEM

By DEIRDRE CRONIN

☠ The most recently published NESC report shows social problems getting worse despite economic success. Despite unemployment falling, the low paid nature of many of these jobs means dependence on means tested social welfare has actually increased.

The proportion of low birth weights has actually risen, especially in socio-economically deprived areas. 38% of male students in Dublin are not doing the Leaving Cert.

It recommends developing our public services as a

matter of urgency.

☠ The US army had to shut its 1700 recruiting offices for a day recently to verse recruiters in new instructions about ethical behaviour.

It followed revelations from a 17 year old who posed as a school drop out with a drug problem.

He was helped by recruiters to forge a high school diploma and advised of products to help pass the mandatory army drugs test.

☠ A1 Waste, owned by Fianna Fail contributor, Tony Dean, had a 23% rise in profits this year.

Dean has a date in the High Court early next year to face accusations of illegal dumping in Wicklow.

☠ The Jeannie Johnston famine replica ship, built with taxpayers' money at a total cost of €15 million, will be sold to the Dublin Docklands Development Authority for the knockdown price of €2.7 million.

Residents of the Tralee area in particular will feel aggrieved that council money went to this project while they faced privatised bin services.

☠ The number of lives lost in workplace accidents is rising rapidly.

According to most recent statistics from the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) 50 people were killed last year while 26 people have already lost their lives this year - a 40% increase from last year.

For every ten premises visited by the HSA one is not up to scratch.

The number of inspectors urgently needs to be increased to force employers to provide basic protections for workers

☠ Twelve people have died while on waiting lists for the only dedicated obesity clinic in the country.

Meanwhile it has emerged that an increasing number of credit union loans are being taken out to cover the expense of medical treatment.

☠ Last year there was not a single GP serving the 10,000 people resident in the Mulhuddart area. In the North inner city of Dublin there is just one GP for every 2,500 people. The national average is one for every 1600. In the UK it is one for every 1200

Northern Ireland:

We need unity to fight education cuts

The second 1 day strike of education workers in the North against the £30 million cuts, is set to take place on Friday, 17th June.

The action follows on from last month's strike and will take place two days after classroom assistants, who voted 90% in favour of strike action are due to walk out.

The anger is massive with all political parties condemning the cuts. The campaign so far is being led by NIPSA, who organise the bulk of non-teaching staff.

The teachers' unions have been conspicuous by their absence.

The NASUWT, the largest teachers union, are quick to take strike action against disruptive pupils. It's a pity such resolve is not shown against the real disruptors of education. With classroom assistants, canteen workers, caretakers, cleaners and even teachers jobs on the line, it is clear that it is the New Labour direct rule ministers who are the biggest danger in our schools.

The mood is there amongst teachers to take action. The main Northern newspapers regularly contain letters from those in the classroom urging action. In St Louise's Comprehensive on the Falls Road, the biggest school in the North, the NASUWT members strongly backed a motion for strike action and unity with the other unions such as NIPSA and the INTO. A petition signed by 500 pupils backed their stand. The same motion, proposed by rank and file teachers, was unanimously backed by the Belfast Association of the NASUWT and is now being circulated, along with a petition in every school in Belfast.

This is exactly the sort of pressure needed on the teacher's union leaders in order to get them to act.

However the campaign can go beyond the workplace, crucial though that is. The bitterness at the education cuts pours into every community and estate as libraries, homework clubs, school crossing patrols, etc face the axe. Next week a public meeting uniting education workers, community leaders, parents and pupils is to take place in St Louise's to launch a united campaign against Blair's project of pruning the education services. A victory for us will have massive implications for the water charges campaign, and what New Labour can get away with in its review of public administration.

Unity can win.

Mark Hewitt (NASUWT school rep, personal capacity)

Workers in Northern Ireland are beginning to stir

Days lost due to workers taking industrial action last year was double the number of the previous year. 904,000 days were lost in 2004 compared to 499,000 in 2003.

In fact the average for the decade up to 2003 was 560,000, and higher than anywhere else in the UK. The numbers of workers involved also doubled to 300,000. Central to these figures was the mass walkouts by thousands of civil servants against job cuts and poor pay.

ANTI RACISM NETWORK HAIL ASBO AS DEEPLY RACIST

On June 10th a court in Larne imposed an Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) against two travellers, barring them from entering the entire town and other pieces of land where they have previously camped. Larne Council applied for the Order after consultations with the PSNI and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE).

Far from protecting the most vulnerable members of the community, ASBOs will be used against them, with potentially lethal consequences. Larne Council, the PSNI and NIHE have sent out a message that is clearly designed to be interpreted that travellers are an anti-social and therefore unwelcome part of our society.

Only a few months ago a family of travellers, one adult and six children, escaped with their lives after they were petrol bombed in Belfast.

Support the protest against anti-traveller racism by the NIHE outside the Housing Executive building on Adelaide Street this Friday 17th at 4pm.

contact Mark Hewitt of South Belfast ARN on 02890593225 or email antiracism_ni@hotmail.com

Protest Reports

Housing protest to restart in Dun Laoghaire

As Socialist Worker went to press it was looking likely that Margaret Watson would have to restart her 24 hour picket of Dun Laoghaire County hall after the County Council went back on promises to house her and her daughter in a short time.

Margaret and her supporters had spent two weeks outside the town hall collecting over 6000 petitions in support of her campaign.

The protest was ended when the council agreed to house Margaret. She said "I am not looking

for anything only a roof over myself and my daughter's head.

The council gave me a commitment and now they are breaking it. I will put my tent back up and stay as long as it takes to get what I deserve".

-Dave Lordan

Bin Tax campaign keeps the fight going in Dublin

The bin tax campaign in Dublin South West is alive and well. In response to non-collection of bins, public meetings organised by the campaign in Drimnagh, Crumlin, Walkinstown and Ballyfermot drew hundreds of local people.

Far from being intimidated by Dublin City Council upping the ante by leaving bins behind (and collecting most next day), the meetings showed people more determined than ever to continue to resist the double tax of charges for waste disposal.

Being involved in the campaign has made people more aware of how privatisation of public services is what all pro-capitalist governments right across Europe want and the important lessons of international solidarity.



Part of the Anti Bin Tax protest in Ballymun

At the Drimnagh campaign meeting of over 300 people, word came through of the result of the 'No' vote in the Netherlands.

Whether it's the Netherlands or Drimnagh privatisation is being resisted, and people can see the connection. The result was cheered to the roof.

Over 100 rallied on Thursday at local marches to the council offices in Drimnagh and Ballyfermot. Early morning visits by campaign members to the council depots across Dublin ensure the goodwill is maintained with council workers. Campaign activists are preparing for the next battle in the war with the council. Nearly five years on and the campaign is still fighting and not paying.

Bin Tax protests also took place on Thursday in Ringsend, Dundrum, Dun Laoighre and Coolock.

- Mary Smith

Palestine: Time for the international isolation of Israel

On June 5th global demonstrations marked the 38th anniversary of Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. In Ireland, over 1,000 people used the occasion of the Ireland/Israel World Cup qualifier on June 4th to march to the Israeli Embassy demanding justice for Palestine.

Despite so-called 'peace talks' illegal settlers are still being housed in the West Bank and the completion of the Apartheid Wall will see East Jerusalem completely cut-off from the rest of the

West Bank.

The Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign (IPSC) is part of an international coalition calling for the political, economic, cultural and academic isolation of Israel until such a time as Israel ends its illegal occupation of Palestinian lands and abides by its international human rights obligations.

John Gormley (who was held at gunpoint by Israeli soldiers in Hebron last week) remains the only Irish TD to raise this urgent issue.



Palestine Solidarity demo

The IPSC will be organising a series of events on this issue, beginning on June 20th with a discussion on how Irish students

and academic staff can support the Palestinians. For information visit: www.ipsc.ie

- Siofra Ní Chonghaile

Hundreds march against McDowell's ASBO proposals

Hundreds of people marched through Dublin last week protesting against Government plans to introduce draconian anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) as part of the Criminal Justice Bill. Organiser of the protest

Rory Hearn, Union of Students in Ireland (USI) deputy president and SWP member, said "These measures if introduced will seriously impinge on young people's freedoms and the civil liberties of everyone. The government should tackle the root problem of anti-social behaviour such as inequality in education and the lack of recreational facilities in certain areas. Politicians in FF, PDs, FG and Labour are supporting Asbos - which could be used against children as young as ten - for electoral reasons.

"46 per cent of local authorities do not provide playgrounds, while there are twice as many golf courses as playgrounds in the country. Youth clubs are closing because of a lack of funding while alcohol free entertainment venues are virtually non-existent."



Demonstrators say No to ASBOs

A number of FF TDs have come out publicly against ASBOs. McDowell wants to get ASBOs through before the summer but the pressure from the campaign is forcing him to push it

back until after the summer break. This gives us time to build the campaign across the country. "

The protest was organised by the Campaign against ASBOs and the Criminal Justice Bill (includes

USI, USS, ICCL, Hotpress, Sinn Fein, SWP, Labour Youth, Green

Party and others). For more on the campaign contact 086 1523542

GAMA dispute: workers unite to fight 'race to the bottom'

By BRID SMITH

The GAMA dispute received national attention and brilliantly highlighted the super-exploitation of migrant labour in this state.

The workers demonstrated the farce of partnership and showed how strikes are essential in order to win the struggle for better conditions.

Last week the Turkish workers accepted the Labour Court recommendation to settle the dispute. All of the workers involved in the dispute have now returned to Turkey. The company managed to single out their leaders in advance of the settlement and convinced them to persuade the others to accept. While some gains were achieved the deal falls far short of what their entitlements to overtime payments actually were.

But the exploitation of migrant labour continues. However the Gama struggle has shown that migrant workers are not just victims but are capable of engaging in militant struggle to fight for their rights.

It was hugely popular among Irish workers too because it challenged the undercutting of migrant workers' wages as a means of forcing down unionisation and the pay and conditions for all workers.

Socialist Worker interviewed the carpenters who first highlighted the issue of the GAMA workers by occupying a crane on the Gama site in Balgaddy. They are members of the BATU union.

"On the site you get talking to the Turkish lads, in bits of broken English and we discovered that their pay was way too low and that they weren't getting overtime. SIPTU were told about this. But obviously they ignored it or thought we were wrong.

When we occupied the crane in Balgaddy last November, we had selfish motives too. We hadn't been paid for three weeks and the company wanted to let us go.

So our protests were about the exploitation taking place in Gama - worse for the Turkish workers than us - but affecting us too.

After 36 hours in cold weather with four high powered spotlights on us, the Gardai eventually shouted us down. So we picketed the place for 10



days. This was when the injunction was served on us. It prevents us three and others unnamed from going near any Gama site.

When Socialist Party TD Joe Higgins highlighted the Gama issue in the Dail it hit the headlines. We thought the Turkish workers would think they could only get justice through us. But they were fantastic and fought very hard. We never thought it would generate so much publicity and support.

They should have got their overtime payments in full but their hands were forced into accepting less. We would do it all over again and probably will have to. There are loads of sites where this sort of thing goes on with workers from Poland and Lithuania. It was great what happened and could happen again."

The BATU workers believe they are being blacklisted from sites. They are skilled workers with a wealth of experience but are turned down for work all over Dublin. They are still



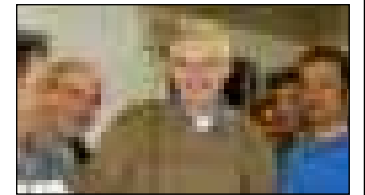
Top: Gama workers on strike; (above) Supporters in Ballymun

owed pay by Gama and may have to put pickets on the company in the future. They deserve all our support.

Their solidarity has cost them but

they have shown that Irish and migrant workers together can fight for justice and unite against the "race to the bottom" agenda of the employers.

Socialist Party TD defends workers' rights



The scandal of exploitation of workers at GAMA was broken by the Socialist Party T.D., Joe Higgins. His action and leadership clearly demonstrated what an elected socialist representative should do; support workers' struggles.

GAMA was invited to Ireland after union activity grew on building sites in the late 1990s. Mary Harney, personally, visited Turkey to invite GAMA here. In September 2003, BATU the Bricklayers Union informed Mary Harney that GAMA workers were being underpaid.

Her officials subsequently claimed that there was no basis to this allegation. Since April 2003, no work permits were supposed to be issued to building workers. Yet special arrangements were made for GAMA whereby they got a further 1,000 work permits.

Fianna Fail and the PDs have created a special work permit system where only the employer can hold the work permit.

This means that workers can be intimidated, silenced and prevented from joining a union - because of the fear of being thrown out of the country.

This system was used by GAMA to undercut the wages of other building workers - and to weaken trade unionism generally in the building industry.

If you know of any other instances of workers being exploited in this way, contact your local socialist representative immediately - and we will take up the case.

Nursing home scandal: private sector profiting from misery

By Deirdre Cronin

The treatment of residents of Leas Cross nursing home was shocking and distressing. Just as disturbing was the failure by the authorities to enforce standards on behalf of a very vulnerable section of society.

It appears that there are many more Leas Cross scenarios waiting to be exposed. The enormity of this scandal becomes clear when the extent of public money that these private institutions receive is factored into the equation.

The taxpayers of Ireland are subsidising this grotesque abuse.

Since tax breaks were introduced in 1997 for the private nursing home industry, hundreds of millions of euros have been handed over, though the Department of Finance is unable to give an exact figure.

There has been a 70% increase in private nursing home beds in ten years while the number of public beds has remained static.

850 new public beds prom-



ised two years ago by then Minister for Health Micheal Martin never materialised, which is hardly surprising when so much public funding was being siphoned off to the private sector.

The private nursing home industry benefits from state money in two ways.

Firstly it receives tax breaks on building, refurbishing and extending premises.

Secondly the government subvention scheme subsidises patients staying in these institutions who can't afford to

meet the full costs themselves.

A bed typically costs between €800 and €1000 a week.

Despite all the public money they receive it is clear that there is no effective monitoring of staffing ratios, amounts spent on food or training and conditions for staff.

There is no effective protection of patients' rights.

This drive to privatise is evident across the health service. Public investment in publicly owned and operated nursing homes is vital yet across

the country public land and buildings are being sold off.

A proposal if it ever came to fruition, to move the Dundrum Mental Hospital to North Dublin would see the Dundrum site sold off for private housing development.

Likewise the proposals to sell off the site of Crumlin's Children Hospital, and relocate the hospital to South Circular Road, would see the old site go for private housing.

The possibility of retaining these sites for meeting other health needs is ignored. Leas Cross raises the urgency of dealing with the care of the elderly in our society.

After years of reducing or limiting services - whether it is home helps, mobile libraries, disability grants or community employment run schemes - governments have made the prospect of growing old in Ireland a frightening one.

This latest scandal deserves a serious response from communities, trade unions and older people themselves.

Robbing Ireland's elderly

The Leas Cross scandal comes shortly after revelation that over successive governments the state was robbing thousands of old people in nursing homes.

The response to the illegal docking of pensions by Minister Mary Harney was to try and alter legislation to deny the right to claim back what had been stolen.

This sums up the contempt for old people from those with power in this country.

A quick look at a range of recent reports brings home the message that Ireland is not a place in which to grow old. With 2000 pensioners a year at risk of premature death due to inadequate heating in their homes, Ireland tops the list for fuel poverty.

With a miserly €9 a week

fuel allowance provided from September to mid April, it is little wonder that people die. A new Pensions at a Glance report from the OECD reveals that workers in Italy, Greece and Luxembourg can expect post tax pensions to be worth just under 70% of earnings after tax.

In Ireland, at the bottom of the table this time, they are worth just 40%. The OECD average is 59.4%. Last year a study commissioned by the National Council of Aging and Older People showed Ireland once again at the bottom of the European table when it comes to life expectancy and second from the bottom when it comes to healthy life expectancy. The lower the income group a person belongs to of course the greater their risk of dying and ill health.

Mayo residents take on corporate giant Shell



Photo: INDYMEDIA

By KIERAN ALLEN

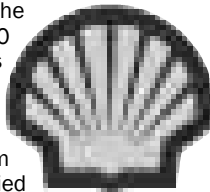
Three of the biggest oil and gas companies are involved in a major battle with people in North Mayo.

Shell, Marathon and Statoil have formed a consortium to take Corrib Gas from the coast of Mayo on terms which bring little benefit to the people of Ireland as a whole.

Tax on oil and gas production in Ireland has been reduced to 25 percent, which is one of the lowest in the world. The companies were also allowed to write off all costs going back for 25 years. By way of contrast, tax on oil profits in Norway is set at 78 percent.

The Shell led consortium has also benefited from considerable state help. The state owned forestry company Coillte sold off land for a refinery at a price which they refuse to disclose, for reasons of 'commercial secrecy'.

The state owned gas company, Bord Gais, is building a special pipeline to the Corrib field at the cost of €200 million. Special legislation has been put in place to allow for the compulsory acquisition of land. Even more bizarrely the 'independent' consultancy firm that was hired to do a quantified risk assessment on the proposal is part-owned... by Shell!



The pipeline which Shell will build is unique. It is 9 kilometres long and will transport gas and other trace elements such as mercury, cobalt, selenium and zinc to an inland refinery.

Normally the processing of gas is done off shore but to cut costs Shell is transporting it inland.

By doing so, the company will save €360 million in capital costs and reduce its operating costs by 40 percent a year.

Local people who will become the neighbours of this pipeline are, however, more than a little concerned.

The unprocessed gas will travel at pressures that are far higher than that found anywhere else on the national grid. Gas pressure is normally measured in bars and pressure in the national grid ranges from 16 to 70 bars. Pressure on the Mayo pipeline could, however, reach a maximum of 340 bars.

As the pipeline travels over a boggy surface and makes 90 degree turns, they are concerned about the risk of accidents. On health and safety grounds, they want the proposal revised.

To voice their concerns, local people from the area are looking for support in their campaign and will travel to Dublin on Monday 20th June for a public meeting.

PUBLIC MEETING

JUNE 20th

**8pm Wynns Hotel
Abbey Street Dublin**

Speakers:

Denny Larsen (co-author the Other Shell Report),

Padraigh Campbell (SIPTU Offshore Committee),

Sister Majella McCarron (Campaigners against Shell in Nigeria) and

Maura Harrington (Principal local primary school)

INTERNATIONAL:

No vote to the EU Constitution in France: a vote for a new left

By SINEAD NI BHROIN

An article by Murray Smith in this month's edition of International Viewpoint notes the demographic breakdown of the French EU Constitution No Vote. These facts give a true analysis of the vote (see below).

They dispel the lie that this campaign was as Lara Marlowe expressed, in the Irish Times on 30, May

'The campaign muddled France's traditional right/left divide. The extreme left and Extreme right formed a de facto alliance'.

The truth is that 40% of the vote was a rejection of neo-liberal social policies driven by European elites and implemented by national Governments. Marlowe has continuously dismissed the political representatives of the No Campaign as they 'are not part of establishment politics'.

Although she did state on the Eamon Dunphy Show that the establishment left were 'no longer driven by ideology'.

This was the very essence of the No Campaign, and underlines the need for a political alternative to social democratic parties throughout Europe, including here at home.

Who voted no to the EU Constitution in France:

81% of manual workers, 79% of unemployed, 60% of white collar workers

59% of 18-34 year olds, 65% of 35-49 year olds



Anti EU Constitution posters in Paris

59% of Socialists, 64% Greens and 61% non-aligned voters

With unemployment at 10% in France and 5 million people living below the poverty line (1 million of which are children) the current project of the EU elite is clearly not working for ordinary people.

The establishment in France is trying to increase the 35 hour week. State provision of pensions has been attacked as has education and healthcare through liberalism.

The No campaign involved over a 1,000 local committees across France. They brought together the social movements against war, racism and for social justice. The Communist Party, Ligue Communiste

Révolutionnaire (LCR) and a majority from the CGT (despite the union leadership's original position on the treaty) engaged in an energetic and united campaign.

The French No vote was a significant victory for the alternative left which has emerged from this campaign. 59% of Socialists and 64% of Greens voted against their party leadership.

1 in 10 French people read the constitution treaty document so ordinary people have not only rejected the constitution but they clearly rejected the EU ruling classes' liberalised vision for Europe.

It was a victory for French workers who have suffered under neo-liberalism.

It shows that when social democratic parties refuse to take on the struggles of working class people that they are going to start seeking political alternatives.

This has been the spirit of the anti-capitalist movement since Seattle in 1999.

This exciting development cannot be squandered.

This is a model for the creation of an alternative left. It shows what happens when we politically educate ourselves, mobilise, and most importantly, unite on the left.

The French have shown us that it is not only the fragments of the radical left that reject profit before people policies.

After the vote ATTAC, the LCR and the Communist Party have been issuing statements with 'key demands' for an alternative Europe. CGT activists are planning use this opportunity to pressure the union leadership away from the Socialist Party. Also

The European Social Forum Preparatory Assembly has called for international meetings on a united Euro/Global response to the French victory.

What should the radical left here take from the French No Campaign?

We should follow their lead and make the building of the alternative left a central perspective for all of us on the left.

Bolivian uprising forces President to resign

Four weeks of strikes, protests and blockades have thrown the South American state of Bolivia into turmoil, and forced the President Carlos Mesa to resign.

The head of the Supreme Court, Eduardo Rodriguez, has been sworn in as the new president. In a bid to calm protests he promised to call a presidential election soon.

He is Bolivia's third president in less than two years. Senate Speaker Hormando Vaca Diez (seen as a representative of the business elite) was due to take over from Mesa after his resignation but protesters blockaded the parliament session to prevent his appointment. Coro Mayta, a miner union leader, was shot dead by a soldier at the protests.

The recent wave of struggle began in mid-May when Bolivia's congress approved a new law governing the country's huge reserves of natural gas.

The law increased taxes on gas exports, but failed to nationalise the reserves — a long-standing demand of Bolivia's mass movements and trade unions.

Protesters responded by blockading the streets, piling rocks and logs onto roads.

Dynamite

James Lehrer, in La Paz, wrote in the Australian Green Left Weekly magazine, "On 30 May, behind the banner of the El Alto regional workers' federation 10,000 workers and street mer-



Bolivian masses on the move

chants descended on La Paz, their determined approach announced by dynamite blasts.

The next day, as congress met, numbers swelled to about 50,000.

Miners threw sticks of dynamite at riot police outside the congress building and the presidential palace.

Students from the Autonomous Public University of El Alto tried to break through barricades. Police retaliated with teargas, water cannon and rubber

bullets.

A police officer from the capital called a radio station saying that his regiment had decided to stop going into the streets "to gas our women and our own children".

Two thirds of the country's highways were blocked, effectively closing off seven of Bolivia's nine regions.

Powerful "neighbourhood organisations" called a general strike across El Alto.

"To the rhythm of saya (African-Bolivian) music, the workers summed up their answer to the government's actions — 'Now there will be civil war.'"

By Monday of this week there were about 500,000 on the streets of the capital. Bolivian state television reported that Mesa had left the presidential palace. In a late night television broadcast he offered his resignation.

The coca farmers' leader, Evo Morales, who narrowly lost the last presidential election in 2002, ought to be the main beneficiary of the latest wave of struggle in Bolivia.

But Morales is barely keeping pace with the movement, and has tried to keep the movement within narrow constitutional channels.

The Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), which he leads, has not demanded the nationalisation of gas reserves.

Bolivia's grassroots protest movement is unlikely to receive the kind of support George Bush offers to those demanding the US version of neo-liberal democracy elsewhere in the world.

But in Bolivia it is neo-liberal measures—felt by most Bolivians to run against their interests and democratic wishes—that have sparked the mass protests.

www.socialistworker.org.uk
http://www.greenleft.org.au

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN DUBLIN:

Is planning an issue for working class communities?

Charlie Hammond, a lifelong community activist from Dublin's Liberties, answers in the affirmative.

"It certainly is. While it might not be the first thing to come to people's minds, planning is an issue that affects everything."

People in working class areas will

always suffer at the hands of the planners and developers and "unless they concern themselves with it, its like lying down and letting them walk all over you."

He believes that most working class communities are unaware of the significance of the planning decisions being taken in respect of their neighbourhoods and communities.

Until recent years he would have

included himself in this category. He would not have had a clue what the City Development Plan was.

He didn't know what tax incentives were - Section 23 meant nothing to him. Part V of the 2000 Planning and Development Act was one more official abstraction.

But the content and intent each of these government plans, polices and

legislation are 'vital' to people in country towns and communities a

He makes the reference to people who own property interests

By PAULA BRUDELL

One man's experience of planning and urban renewal in Dublin's inner city.

Charlie Hammond has lived virtually all of his life on Cork St. in Dublin's Liberties.

His interest in planning was prompted by the physical dereliction which had accumulated across the Liberties in the decades since that area was first 'red-lined' for a road widening scheme in the 1940s.

He saw in this physical dereliction the opportunity and the potential to recreate the vibrant society and economy that had once characterised this very old quarter.

In the late 1990s, it became clear that the Department of the Environment had also understood the potential vested in the landscape of the Liberties.

Under the Government's 1998 Urban Renewal Scheme, Dublin City Council produced and published what it called an 'Integrated Area Plan,' for the Liberties/Coombe in the same year.

The promises.

This Integrated Area Plan (IAP) followed on a series of 'developer led' developments along the Quays and North Inner city in the 1980s. Developers had at that point been free to avail of tax incentives without any obligation to contribute anything to the host areas.

The 1998 Urban Renewal Scheme was to be 'radically different' from its predecessors. It would be about much more than just the property renewal of an area.

IAPs prepared under this scheme provided for (1) the attachment of a 'community gain' development levy to key sites designated for tax relief; (2) the imposition of a 15% social affordable housing obligation on certain incentive sites; (3) the securing of employment for local people through the imposition of a local labour clause.

And for those with concerns about the type of development that would take place, there was the assurance of design specifications to which developers would be obliged to adhere if they wished to avail of tax incentives.

"Those benefits were spelt out over and over again to us as members of the community. It sounded like a great idea."

While previous engagements with the local state had been informed by suspicion and a lot of misgivings about the way that people living in housing estates had been treated, "this sounded like a new beginning and a local state which was prepared to treat people in an entirely different manner."

On that basis Charlie and his community were happy to set adversarial relations between it and the local authority aside and enter into partnership in the implementation of the plan.

The actuality.

If the commitments to that inner city community were very promising, the actuality was rather different. "From the very beginning, the promises given were broken."

The community was informed very quickly that the commitment to 'local labour' meant anyone within the European Union – and so did not confer any particular advantage on local unemployed people.

Developers challenged the 15% social housing obligation in court and secured a ruling that freed them from this obligation.

And while the government responded with the much-vaunted Part V of the 2000 Planning and Development Act (the 20% social/affordable housing provision), it has yet to yield one social housing unit in the Liberties.

The third significant commitment related to the community gain fund. At the last inquiry, there was less than €500,000 in the fund.

While Charlie has been advised that this figure is expected to reach €2,000,000 by the summer of 2005, he describes this as a dismal outcome after five years. "Two million euro would buy maybe six apartments in this area."

That is to be the sum total of the community's gain from the extensive private residential development which has taken place on the back of government approved tax incentives.

Meanwhile the physical complexion of the Liberties has changed beyond recognition.

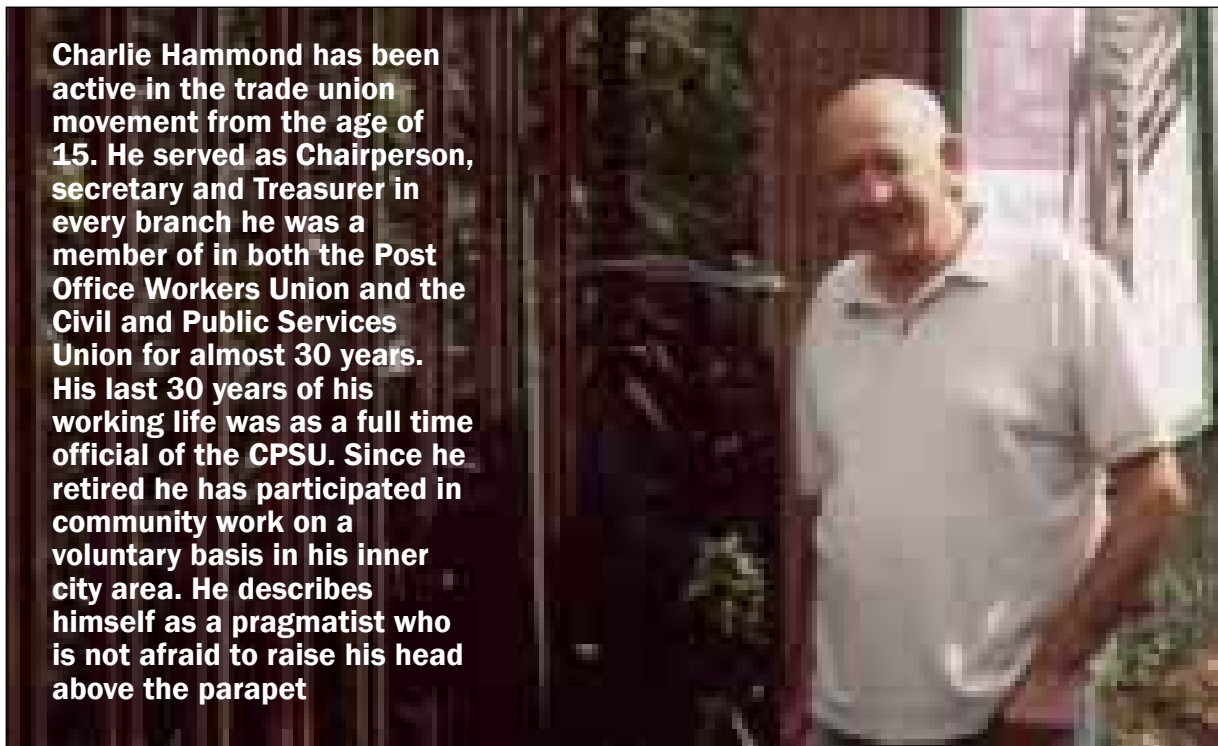
Developers have been granted permission for planning applications in breach of the densities and heights outlined in the Liberties/Coombe IAP – and more significantly in breach of sworn evidence given by council officials before Compulsory Purchase Order Hearings.

If it had become clear that the plan was not going to yield any significant social and economic gains, Charlie was adamant that the plan would not damage the existing physical environment of the area.

Informed by this imperative he

Charlie was adamant that the plan would not damage the existing physical environment of the area and he took on the might of the private developers and the state's planning system.

Charlie Hammond has been active in the trade union movement from the age of 15. He served as Chairperson, secretary and Treasurer in every branch he was a member of in both the Post Office Workers Union and the Civil and Public Services Union for almost 30 years. His last 30 years of his working life was as a full time official of the CPSU. Since he retired he has participated in community work on a voluntary basis in his inner city area. He describes himself as a pragmatist who is not afraid to raise his head above the parapet



took a decision to take on the might of the private developers and the state's planning system.

In practice, this entailed the lodging of objections to planning applications in breach of the IAP. As each successive application was granted permission, he responded by lodging appeals with An Bord Pleanála.

The latter necessitated not only the investment of very scarce community resources in an appeals system heavily laden in favour of those with the means to purchase expensive professional expertise.

It also required Charlie's community to remain stalwart in the face of repeated attempts by private developers to 'buy the community off.'

And when An Bord Pleanála finally delivered its judgements, Charlie was faced with what he concludes to be the final injustice.

Its inspectors have in number of cases recommended upholding some or all of the grounds on which he has lodged his appeals while the executive board of An Bord Pleanála has overturned its own inspectors' recommendations to rule in favour the developers without any indication of its reasoning.

The refusal to be incorporated.

Charlie sat on the Monitoring Committee of the Liberties/Coombe IAP for almost three years. He resigned his seat when it became clear to him that his presence was functioning only to provide a semblance of democracy and consent to what was clearly a private development sector agenda.

It became clear to him that his presence was welcome only while he was prepared to coalesce uncritically with the implementation of a plan, which he had come to view as seriously injurious to his community.

Dublin City Council has never engaged with the substance of his criticisms. The Department of the Environment has similarly declined repeated attempts to engage with very clearly stated concerns on this matter.

Local and national politicians have listened to his case but with a small number of notable exceptions have done little more than listen.

Charlie now sees the local authority and the Department of the Environment as being pro-developer. He describes how he was forced into a position of constant conflict with City Council officials – mainly those in the Planning Department.

He has lost all faith in the Department of the Environment on planning matters.

"At a stage in my life when the mellowing that comes with age should be taking place, I find I am more hostile than ever to the right wing parties who are exercising a huge influence over the planning system and what happens in this country."

Resisting the agenda of the private development sector.

Charlie chose to resist the agenda of the private development sector by pursuing the developers doggedly through the Irish planning system. But there are other options available to working class communities when faced with the might of private developers.

Some will accept piecemeal gain from developers in return for abandoning any form of resistance to their plans.

"And this is unfortunately what working class communities have tended to do when professional assistance hasn't been available to them – band together, make a few noises and then make a deal with a developer, thinking they've won."

Meanwhile the developer covers any expense incurred in placating local opposition by upping the cost of his apartments and proceeds regardless.

In such a manner inner city communities have gained a little, but ultimately conceded the larger landscape and long-term interests and assets of their communities to the developer.

For Charlie, this is "the worst of all scenarios." He would rather see some form of demonstrations outside development sites, outside City Council – some attempt to highlight and resist what is happening. If you could get enough people to picket development sites you could use that kind of collective power to bring about a change."

He would rather "go down fighting than gain a little through pragmatism."

Charlie's preferred route of resistance is contingent on building a critical degree of unity across working class communities in similar circumstances. In making this point, he looks to the structures through which people in inner city communities might marshal their collective resources. The single most significant resource available to many of these communities are community development organisations.

It is they who have the resources and structures to ensure that people are made aware of the significance of proposed developments and assisted in exercising their right to object and appeal.

But many of these organisations are dependent on state funding and can only go so far before their funding will be called into question – a dependency which provides the government with a ready made brake on any organisation who would move from a 'development' to a 'resistance' agenda.

Without denying the obstacle which lack of funding poses for work-

RESISTING THE PRIVATE PROFIT AGENDA

Example of how to fight councils and developers: POLITICIANS IN A PANIC OVER SAVE OUR SEAFRONT CAMPAIGN

now understood to be living in inner city areas, – in fact, anywhere where to safeguard their environments.

is point with particular people who are not property in areas where speculative investments are gathering.

ing class communities, Charlie insists that it must be possible. “Jim Larkin had no money from the state, but by God he shook this city to its foundations.”

And he is impatient with the pragmatism of community development organisations in the face of a growing onslaught by private developers as they return in their droves to previously ‘undesirable’ areas.

They are not the only party to be curtailed by funding. Attempts to engage the mainstream media have proved futile.

Charlie refers to an incident in recent months when he asked a prominent print journalist about the media’s steadfast refusal to be outraged by the behaviour of the private development sector.

The answer to that question was remarkably forthright. The dependence of newspapers on advertising revenue from private development and construction industry interests renders them silent on all such criticisms.

“There is a crying need for an alternative press in this country which is not dependent on revenue from big business” – a press that is free to take a critical stand on the very lucrative private sector agendas being pursued through purported partnership structures.

Such a media would be a crucial tool in effecting the kind of working class unity necessary to resist these agendas.

As socialist worker went to press 1000s were expected to attend a protest organised by Save Our Seafront (SOS), the group campaigning against plans to build an 8 storey apartment block and shopping complex on the site of Dun Laoghaire baths.

Over 1,200 people attended a recent SOS march on the issue and 200 people protested at a closed council meeting this week where councillors and officials discussed plans for the baths.

SOS says the overwhelming public opposition to the plans is already putting huge pressure on local political representatives. Cllr. Niamh Breathneach (Labour), Clr. Gearoid O Keefe (Indp.), John Bailey T.D.(FG) and Barry Andrews T.D. (FF) all initially welcomed the plans. Since the protests the Green Party, Minister Mary Hanafin (FF), Eamon Gilmore (Labour), John Bailey and others are opposing it!

Bob Waddell (Sandycove & Glashule Res Assoc) said:

“People are furious at this blatant attempt to privatise a major section of the seafront, obliterate our public sea views.. Almost ten thousand people have now



signed a petition opposing the plan. Residents groups, environmental and heritage organisations, political parties and thousands of ordinary people have come together in an unprecedented

coalition to oppose this plan. Incredibly, County manager Derek Brady, has now suggested to councillors the 20 per cent affordable housing element of the proposal be dropped to generate more

cash and the equivalent number of houses be located elsewhere.

The Council used taxpayers’ money to distribute tens of thousands of copies of newsletters promoting the

development in the Sunday Independent. Disgracefully, they are bringing school groups into the town hall to view a presentation of the plan that plays up the amenity value of the development but says nothing about the reasons people are protesting. Of course, these kids would not be old enough to remember the broken promises of amenities in the pavilion development. All this propaganda is for a development that has not even been approved by the council. This is an insult to democracy and shows their talk about public consultation is a sham.

We stopped the plans for a 19 storey office block on the baths through protest a year and half ago through people power. We can stop this too and get the amenities we all want if enough people take to the streets. People power is working but we must keep it up.

Richard Boyd Barrett of the Socialist Worker’s Party who is Chair of the SOS campaign said “We have been fighting this from the start when everyone else was silent. The protest three weeks ago was the biggest protest in Dun Laoghaire in recorded history. It appears that the councillors will try to fudge the issue. They are panicked with fear because of the mobilisations. This campaign shows exactly how people should oppose the privatisation agenda”.

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

Whether it’s nurses protesting against under-funding, asylum seekers on hunger strike against their deportation, campaigns against the Bin Tax or support

for the Iraqi resistance and opposition to the US use of the Shannon ‘Warport’, Socialist Worker is giving the real opinions, the real voice of those movements.

The lack of a political alternative both North and South to oppose privatisation, war and

racism has never been more obvious.

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

in 2005 than ever before.

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

In order to fulfil the potential that exists in this current period and build support for the projects outlined

above we need a higher quality paper and ultimately much higher sales.

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Socialist Worker

Editorial

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

Fianna Fáil collapse

According to the latest Irish Times poll support for Fianna Fail has fallen by 6% to its lowest rating for almost two years.

This is as a result of the public outrage over a number of scandals, particularly the Leas Cross scandal and the treatment of old-age pensioners in nursing home, the revelations of corruption within the Garda Síochána, the disgraceful disability bill and the disaster in the health services.

Fine Gael, the other right wing establishment party have been given a new lease of life by the Labour Party.

They have obviously benefited the most, with their support up by 3 %.

Now is an opportune time for the left to the fight the right wing agenda. People want to fight back. Just look at the Dun Laoghaire Baths protest over privatisation, the Gama workers or the momentum behind the anti-ASBO campaign.

We need to begin to build a left alternative to help advance left opposition in Ireland and begin to break the stranglehold of the right and an ineffective Labour Party.

Make Capitalism History

With mounting pressure from the anti- G8 and Make Poverty History (MPH) campaigns Bush and Blair have been forced to act. However, the debt relief announced was well short of reaching the demands set by MPH.

It is not surprising. Their words of 'concern' for poverty and for Africa are hypocritical and aimed at de-mobilising the movement.

Corporations supported by Bush, Blair along and other big powers are engaged in a scramble for Africa's resources. Big Western corporations and banks facilitate corruption and provoke instability in order to obtain Africa's resources like oil, diamonds and logging.

For example, Britain's HSBC bank has been accused by a US Senate committee of helping the Angolan President to move cash from the country's oil revenues into financial "black holes" in Luxembourg and Cyprus. Furthermore, the French oil company Elf has been accused in corruption investigations of having paid kickbacks and of encouraging regimes to run up debts as part of a deliberate "African strategy".

Congo-Brazzaville, the fourth-largest sub-Saharan oil producer, was dominated by Elf, and now has the highest per capita debt in the world.

People, although they may not use these terms, are becoming increasingly aware that it is corporate greed and imperialist war that are the main causes of poverty.

A recent cartoon in the Irish Times for example depicted Africa being boiled alive in a cauldron which is being heated by burning logs entitled 'Unfair Trade, Arms Sales and CAP'.

Bush and Blair are standing at the burning logs sprinkling water from tiny cans entitled 'Debt relief' and 'US Aid'. This is the reality at the heart of global capitalism. Poverty will not be history until we make Bush, Blair and capitalism history.

COMMENT

Response to Andy Storey: Time for a 'New left Alternative'

By RORY HEARNE

Seamus Healy TD (Ind), Cllr. Joan Collins (Ind) and Des Derwin (Dublin Council of Trade Unions), announced plans recently to work towards setting up a new left-wing political party, in response to Labour's decision to enter a pre-election alliance with Fine Gael. The SWP welcomes this new initiative.

A subtle political radicalisation has taken place in Ireland in recent years. Many people now feel that social democratic parties are no longer working for them. They are looking for alternative political representation that will seriously oppose the right-wing FF/PD agenda.

Contrary to those who argue that the conditions are not right here in Ireland for the emergence of a new left alliance, we believe that it is very possible in the short term. The votes at recent local and by-elections demonstrate this. In Andy Storey's recent article in Socialist Worker he questioned the motivation behind such votes. Stating that "it is probably, in part, a simple protest vote devoid of any necessary commitment to left-wing politics and is overshadowed by the numbers not voting at all". However, Catherine Murphy in Kildare stood for real action on public services, quality of life; clearly 'left' issues.

Important steps in the process of creating a new left are as Andy noted "meetings, discussions, participatory practices, trust and openness". The Trade Union forum, the Campaign Against the EU Constitution, and local community campaigns amongst others are opportunities to move this forward. Public 'new left alternative' forums would be another step.

Andy also argued that the enormous

mobilisations failed to stop the Iraq war. However, the strength of the anti-war movement changed the attitude of the Irish people to a position where a majority now opposes the use of Shannon by US troops. Abroad, the fall of Aznar and the withdrawal of Spanish Troops from Iraq, the election of George Galloway, the strength of the resistance in Iraq and the reluctance to attack Iran are to a large part a result of the size of the anti-war mobilisations.

Vision

Our vision is of a new 'left alternative' that is an alliance (on a local and national level) similar to new alliances emerging across the world such as Respect and Left Block in Portugal. This new left alternative would be open to everyone who agrees with the principal aims of the alliance e.g. anti-privatisation, anti-racism, pro-peace. It would involve all those currently unrepresented by mainstream politics such as anti-capitalists, migrants, women, community workers. This new left alternative would have the politics of the 'anti-capitalist movement' and 'social forums' at its heart. Its simple aims to further campaigns that build the confidence of ordinary people (the working class) and politically represent them.

It cannot be just an amalgam of the (often small and inward looking) existing left but as Andy correctly pointed out "we have to connect with a large swathe of popular opinion, to convince significant numbers of people that change is indeed possible and victories realizable". We should be aiming for 20% of the vote and much bigger social movements.

Andy is also completely correct when

he says "central to this is changing the language and presentation" of existing organisations. This is essential. For if we are to reach outwards and involve new sectors we must change behavior that alienates such new comers.

As important as the radical left changing its language and methods (e.g. changes in this paper) is the new left fighting and leading united campaigns. Particularly campaigns such as those based in local communities and workplaces (anti-war, bin tax, ASBOs, development etc) that draw in the new layers who can become actively part a new left political formation. These campaigns should create the space for those who are currently alienated from traditional politics.

Currently the Healy initiative does not include the SWP, and whilst we are disappointed at this decision we hope that it is one that will be reconsidered in the near future. We share the belief that the creation of a new left alternative is essential and therefore the SWP will continue to work towards the creation of such a left alternative, alongside our colleagues within the Healy initiative.

The election of Galloway and the No vote in France showed that political earthquakes are possible right now in Europe. Such left unity and vision brought about the mobilisations against the bin tax and the Iraq war. What was missing was a left alternative to represent the varied thousands who came out to reject those neo-liberal and imperialist policies. We cannot let this happen again. Now it is time to take bold and imaginative steps and apply that unity and vision to create a new left alternative in Ireland.

Rory Hearne is Editor of Socialist Worker



http://www.zmag.org/cartoons/show_toon

LETTERS

Letters: email to swped@eircom.net Or Mail SWP, Po Box 1648, Dublin 8

Unions and Aer Lingus privatisation: Silence of the Lambs

ICTU and SIPTU have learned some lessons from the Telecom privatisation disaster, where bosses and union officials raked in millions at the expense of workers; don't bother campaigning against privatisation in the first place.

A month since it was announced, there is still no indication of a campaign against the governments biggest neo liberal project in decades.

SIPTUs official statement says that the sell off is a "grave strategic error". But no protests, no strikes or meetings are planned.

The inactivity of the union movement is incredible.

The leadership have demoralised their members in the airport by their manoeuvres over the last year. Jack O'Connor cancelled a planned strike at the airport aimed at stopping the break up of Air Rianta, over the heads of the workers and their elected officials, promising that their conditions would be safe in any new set up.

Within a year workers at the three newly independent airports face demands for more productivity and work changes.

In the meantime SIPTU have flirted with the McEvaddy brothers, millionaire

businessmen and war profiteers, in an attempt to secure union recognition at the second terminal.

It is widely believed by Aer Lingus workers that O'Connor accepted the privatisation of Aer Lingus in return for government guarantees of union recognition at the second terminal.

The case against privatisation is strong

Nursing home scandal

Regarding the appalling treatment of our elderly people in private nursing homes as revealed in the recent RTE "Primetime" programme on the Leas Cross private nursing home in North County Dublin; without impugning the excellent work that many nursing home staff do; there have still been unfortunately too many reports of appalling practices in private nursing homes to allow them to continue to be in private hands.

This is an issue that affects us all; as we will all hopefully grow old and retire someday.

We need to put pressure through our Unions; as they are the ones who are supposed to be looking after our interests.

and could win a majority of the public.

Those in the trade union movement opposed to this should campaign in the coming months along with Aer Lingus workers. As the French referendum showed, the neo-liberal agenda can be fought. It is time for the trade union movement to get off its knees.

OWEN McCORMACK, Busworker, Dublin

Therefore as an active Trade Unionist myself I would like to propose that All Union members press to have the following motion passed by their Branch Committee; and then by their Head Office; onto to the various Trades Councils such as the Dublin Council of Trade Unions (DCTU); and ultimately onto the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) so that pressure can be put on this Government to act; "That this Branch/Union calls for all private nursing homes to be brought under Government/State ownership ASAP."

Email: paulkinsella53@yahoo.com

PAUL KINSELLA, Member CPSU
An Post Branch Committee

Interview with Frank McBrearty exposes Garda and state corruption

'I won't let go until you tell the truth'

Everyday, we are led to believe by the Minister for Justice that asylum seekers pose a bigger threat and cost to us as tax payers than millionaires such as Denis O'Brien who scam millions as tax exiles.

FG, Labour's bedfellows along with the government parties want to criminalise youth through Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) yet the Minister for Education skimps on school funding to accommodate continuing tax breaks for the blood stock industry and people like John Magnier and JP Mc Manus. Which is the bigger crime?

The role of the Gardaí is supposed to be protecting the interests of society as a whole. If this were true, people like Hanafin and Cowen would be dragged kicking and screaming to Mountjoy and not the bin tax protesters or people who can't afford their TV licence.

Rory Hearne: How were you treated by the Gardaí?

Frank McBrearty: When I was arrested in 1996, I was treated like the Jews were treated by the Gestapo and like Irish men and women were treated by the Black and Tans.

The Gardaí used oppressive tactics not dissimilar to those used under the Iron Curtain [Eastern Europe under Stalin]. I was abused, called a 'murderer', dragged down corridors, poked in my ribs and my head banged off a chair. It was a nightmare.

The worst of it was that when I was in Garda custody I was thinking to myself, "I am being charged for something that I didn't do. I am going to be put in jail and taken away from my young family".

R.H: You have been writing to Michael McDowell since he was Attorney General about this. Why didn't he act? Who else know and didn't act?

F.McB: I wrote to the previous Attorney General David Byrne and I have been writing to the Dept. of

'The fact that we had money meant we could stand up. I would hate to think of how many people out there who can't fight because they don't have the money.'

Justice and Garda Commissioner since early 1997.

It fell on deaf ears until the Morris Tribunal in 2002. In the end, that was rushed. Many gardaí were not called to give evidence. McDowell wanted it rushed so that my High Court case would not expose what the tribunal hadn't done. McDowell wanted the credit.

I got an injunction against the murder charges in April 1997. In May 1997 the Rainbow government left office.

They did what they could in that short time. The FF/PD government have had ample opportunity to correct this mess.

They denied my family legal aid despite knowing that I was innocent. The Minister for Justice granted the Garda Commissioner and the Garda legal team their costs. The Garda legal team has received €2.9 million of taxpayers' money.

R. H: You are highly critical of Mc Dowell. Should he resign?

F.McB: McDowell should resign now. He misled the Dail. In February 2002 the Garda Commissioner, the Department of Justice, Michael McDowell (Attorney General at the time) and John O Donoghue (Minister for Justice) were informed that the murder of Richie Barron (of which I was accused) had been redesignated as a dangerous driving incident and I was no longer a suspect.

Six weeks afterwards on the 28th of March 2002 the Morris Tribunal began its investigations and asked me did I kill Richie Barron.

Those four people knew that I was innocent, that I wasn't a suspect any more and yet they didn't give that information to the Tribunal. I didn't find out for three years after that.

In response to a Dáil question tabled by Joe Costello in 2004 McDowell stated that the death of Richie Barron had been redesignated a dangerous driving incident in November 2002.

Therefore, McDowell deliberately misled the Dáil to cover his own backside. As I said, it had been redesignated in February 2002. To this day, McDowell has not corrected the record in the Dáil.



Frank McBrearty Jnr and Snr and (below) Judge Frederick Morris

They knew for three years and didn't tell me or Mark McConnell. We suffered for three years longer than we should have.

R. H: The Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern said recently that the Garda Síochána Bill currently going through the Dail dealt fundamentally with issues of accountability within the force. He said that when the bill is enacted we will have a better Garda force. What is your opinion?

F.McB: The Garda Bill will make this country worse than it was for people under the Iron Curtain. No

resources or finances?

F.McB: My family come from a working class background. My dad worked himself to the bone to survive.

That is what gave him the strength for this struggle. The fact that we had money meant we could stand up.

I would hate to think of how many people out there who can't fight and who can't get up in the morning and fight because they don't have the money.

There should be a charity set up to deal with people who can't fight cases against miscarriages of jus-

their land who were victimised as part of all this.

The four Donegal Fianna Fail politicians are a disgrace to the people of Donegal and the people of Ireland.

Those who have helped us were my legal team, Brendan Howlin, Jim Higgins and my father. Only for my father his family would be in jail for crimes that didn't happen.

R.H: Likewise there are some who would suggest that the Gardaí are there 'to protect and serve the whole of society'. Do you think this is true or are Gardaí more interested in protecting the privileged few? Why are they not arresting criminals like corrupt politicians and super rich tax evaders?

F.McB: Gardaí themselves are too close to the political system. They are too political; they have too much influence on politics.

The Tribunal didn't tell the public that there were people paid to kill me.

The gardaí never told me of these death threats on my life. The first job of the Gardaí is supposed to be protecting the citizens. I haven't seen any evidence of this protection. I've been treated as a second class citizen in this country. Politicians in the FF and PDs forget where they came from. They have forgotten who put them into power.

R.H: How do you intend to get justice?

F.McB: At the European Court of Human rights. This state has done everything to prevent the full truth coming out. There hasn't been one Garda prosecuted and there won't be any Gardaí prosecuted. I will have to get my justice in Europe.

Thomas Jefferson the former US president once said "we have the wolf by the ears and we can neither hold him nor safely let him go. Justice is on one scale and self preservation is in the other."

I would describe McDowell as the wolf. So Mister McDowell the message to you from the McBrearty family is "I won't let go of your ears until you tell the truth".



one will have any rights.

The Gardaí will do what they like. The Bill will give them more powers without even an ombudsman. It will reduce human rights. James Connolly and Michael Collins died for this country— they would turn in their graves if they knew what the present government was up to.

As Martin Luther King said "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere". If they pass this Bill it will be a serious threat to justice in this country.

R.H: Many working class people, who are regular victims of Garda brutality don't have large resources at their disposal. What could you have done if you didn't have the

tice and corruption.

R.H: Some would suggest that the Gardaí are part of the establishment - like the church was- and that politicians won't criticise them. Has this been your experience?

F.McB: My family were staunch Fianna Fail supporters.

My grandfather lit bonfires to celebrate their victories in the 50s and 60s. However, not one member of Fianna Fail has opened their mouth for us in Donegal.

Even Blaney (Ind. Fianna Fail) voted against the proposal to have a public enquiry into the affair, as did Independent TD Tom Gildae. Gildae stood on opposition to masts yet it was those who had a mast on

REVIEWS

Celebrate Bloomsday 2005

FILM:

Private

One of the highlights of the Dublin Film festival earlier this year was the Irish premier of *Private* by Italian director Saverio Costanzo film.

Private is one of a few films that have attempted to bring the reality of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into sharp focus. Costanzo brings his audience directly into the battlefield and allows us to look at the conflict through the eyes of one Palestinian family.

The family are middle-class and well educated but one night their lives are suddenly turned upside down when Israeli soldiers arrive unannounced and occupy their home for use as an observation post, effectively turning its inhabitants into prisoners.

Costanzo uses the family as a metaphor for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The family members are all divided about what they should or should not do. Mother, Samiah, is understandably concerned for her children and wants to leave, but Mohammad her husband insists that they remain in their home.

Costanzo film is a chilling and complicated portrait of the tensions that underline this struggle, reducing it to something all of us can relate to: a family, a house, a nocturnal invasion by strangers.

The film offers no simple solutions and this is what makes the film so compelling. *Private* has a limited release in the Irish Film Institute, Dublin from June 24- 30. It should not be missed.

POEM:

A Brief History of Those Who Made Their Point Politely And Then Went Home

On this day of tear-gas in Seoul and windows broken at Dickins & Jones, I can't help wondering why a history of those, who made their point politely and then went home, has never been written.

Those who, in the heat of the moment, never dislodged a policeman's helmet, never blocked the traffic or held the country to ransom. Someone should ask them: "Was it all worth it?"

All those proud men and women, who never had the National Guard sent in against them; who left everything exactly as they found it, without adding as much as a scratch to the paint-work; who no-one bothered asking: "Are you or have you ever been?", because we all knew damn well they never ever were.

KEVIN HIGGINS

Taken from collection of poems, "The Boy With No Face", which was published in February by Salmon Poetry. (For full details see <http://www.salmonpoetry.com/showcase.html>)



Alex Callinicos debates John Holloway on the question of power ★ Inside the Bolivarian revolution ★ Reviews: City in Revolt ★ Tracy Emin ★ The Scottish revolution and more... To order: info@swp.ie or phone (01) 872 2682

By SINEAD KENNEDY

Hundreds of thousands of people from around the world turn up in Dublin on June 16 every year to celebrate 'Bloomsday' - the day in which the fictional Leopold Bloom of James Joyce's *Ulysses* wanders the streets of Dublin musing on lunch, sex and his various bodily functions.

2004 was the Bloomsday centenary, and as part of the celebrations, the National Library launched its 'James Joyce and Ulysses' exhibition, which would be well worth including in your Bloomsday celebrations this year.

Ulysses, published in Paris in 1922, was voted as the best book of the twentieth century by readers across the world. The novel charts the passage of one day, 16 June 1904, as depicted in the life of an Irish Jew named Leopold Bloom -representing Homer's Ulysses- as he wanders through the streets of Dublin. *Ulysses* examines the relationship between the modern man and his myth and history, focusing on contemporary questions of Irish political and cultural independence, the effects of organized religion on the soul, and the cultural and the moral decay produced by economic development and urbanisation.

Ulysses

Ulysses is a difficult novel to read, a little like sitting an exam in a language you don't understand. This is partly because of what Joyce was trying to achieve. Joyce was radical because he was writing about thinking. Thinking is the main activity that all the characters engage in. Joyce was trying to move his text as close as he could to the lived experience of life. He shifts the action inside the character's heads into a series of interior monologues. These monologues are a character's dialogue with the world, a dialogue with their own self, a cornucopia of the bits and pieces, the mental fluff, mental observations and whimsy that fly about constantly inside everyone's heads. All over Europe at this time people were thinking about thinking - Freud's theory of the subconscious was all the rage. Joyce held Freud in complete contempt saying that it was a way of thinking about not thinking. Joyce's use of interior monologue, which can be difficult to get to grips with, mirrors this new age of self-consciousness.

But more than anything else *Ulysses* is about the ordinary person. Joyce returned to classical mythology, to Homer's *Odyssey*, but deconstructs the Greek warrior into a parody. Leopold Bloom is no mythical hero, he is an everyman who must suffer the emotional traumas of betrayal and loss, while combating the anti-Semitism of 1904 Dublin. In place of Greek stoicism and power, Joyce set a flawed and endearing human being. And while Homer's *Odyssey* only touched upon "epic," dignified themes, Joyce devoted considerably detailed passages to the most banal and taboo human activities.

He includes everything that the neatness of nineteenth century literature had excluded, every random detail of life is located in Joyce's epic structure. There is



James Joyce; top Joyce's Dublin, Grafton Street from a contemporary picture

no body beautiful in *Ulysses*. It is wonderfully obscene. We watch Bloom as he masturbates, he farts, he urinates, he defecates. Joyce celebrates the body, saying what a wonderful extraordinary thing it is. *Ulysses* is an encyclopedia of human life, not a historical account of a day.

It is a map of the human body, therefore everything that occurs in human life and the body has to be included given the exact amount of space, proportionately, as it would have in human life.

Molly Bloom

It has not just the descriptions of bodily functions that shocked people when the novel was published. The character of Molly Bloom also provoked outrage. Molly was shockingly liberated for a woman of her time. Molly is one of the most powerful portraits of a female character in literature.

Joyce gives 25,000 unpunctuated words to Molly as she nods off to sleep in one of the most erotic, explicit and life affirming monologues in the history of literature. Molly talks about sex, menstruation, farting, love in a way never seen before and never since matched.

Ulysses is an imperishable monument to the human condi-

tion, an open book of utopian possibility.

It holds a mirror to the colonial capital that Dublin was in 1904 and prefigures many of the horrors of the twentieth century but most importantly it offers a redemptive glimpse of a future world in which transformation is possible.

What better book to carry along with you into the twenty-first century.

Catch this exhibition

The 'James Joyce and *Ulysses*' exhibition is running at the National Library, Kildare St until Spring 2006.

It is a celebration of the novel *Ulysses* and the enduring legacy of its creator, James Joyce.

The exhibition uses a variety of innovative multimedia displays, including film and computer simulation, alongside manuscripts from the National Library's collections.

Suitable for all ages - Open Monday to Saturday - Free guidebook available Guided tours every day at 11am & 3pm, €3 per person. For more information see <http://www.nli.ie/joyce>

Ulysses on film

In 1967, when the American director Joseph Strick was filming *Ulysses* in Dublin, a notice appeared in a reputable bookshop:

"There are over 8,000 books banned in Ireland. If by chance we have one on display, please inform us and it will be destroyed."

Oddly James Joyce's novel *Ulysses* was not one of them. Contrary to popular myth *Ulysses* was never banned in Ireland.

As it had never been published in Ireland, it had never been censored, and under-the-counter copies were available. However when Strick's film was submitted to the Irish film censor's office

the following year, it was rejected outright.

In 1968, a civil servant considering *Ulysses* on behalf of the then prime minister Jack Lynch reported that if the film was cleared for showing to "any class" of Irish audience, it would bring "discredit" on the government. It remained banned until 2001.

In 2004, Sean Walsh completed a second film adaptation of *Ulysses*, called *Bl;im*.

The fortunes of the two film can be seen as a measure of the enormous distance that Ireland has travelled in the last 30 years from what Brian Moore called "a nation of masturbators under priestly

instruction". It is also worth remembering that Joyce was also a great cinematic writer and many of modern cinema techniques can be attributed to *Ulysses*.

Joyce was a great lover of cinema and founded the first Dublin cinema, the Volta.

He had also worked with the Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein (maker of *Battleship Potemkin*). Neither film really succeeds in getting fully to grips with Joyce's text but both are brave attempts and provide useful introductions to the novel.

Both films are available in local video store and are worth checking out.

G8 policies that make poverty

By ALEX CALLINICOS

The simple message of the Make Poverty History Campaign cuts through the trivial chatter of the main parties that bore everyone senseless. It points to the real obscenity of a rich world where 18 million people die of poverty every year.

The global campaign against poverty is capturing the imagination of people everywhere. I was talking a few days ago to an activist involved in the Coalition Against Privatisation in Ghana. Ghana's government is neo-liberalism's poster boy in Africa. But its efforts to privatise water have encountered massive resistance.

As part of the build-up to the G8 government ministers' summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, in July, there was a Global Week of Action on Trade on 10-16 April. A demonstration in Accra, Ghana's capital, saw hundreds of people turning out wearing home-made versions of the MPH white wristband.

The demonstration called by MPH in Edinburgh on Saturday 2 July looks set to be on the scale of the great Genoa protest at the Italian G8 summit in July 2001. Trains and coaches are already booked from all over the country and there will be contingents coming from the rest of Europe as well.

There will be a difference from Genoa, however. The government of Silvio Berlusconi — now, happily, on its last legs — treated the protesters as enemies and unleashed ferocious state violence against them, murdering Carlo Giuliani.

Beaming Bill

A massive police operation is also planned for the summit at Gleneagles. But the government is projecting itself as being on the same side as the protestors.

But all this is unbelievably hypocritical. As Mark Curtis of the World Development Movement points out in a new book, Arguments Against the G8, the New Labour government has been extremely active in pushing states in the global South to privatise their services and open their markets.

There is thus an enormous contradiction. Blair and Brown pose as fighters against global poverty to help hold their political base together, while forcing on the Third World the very policies that create the poverty in the first place.

Unfortunately, the mainstream non-governmental organisations that dominate MPH have shown themselves far too willing to go along with New Labour's "anti-poverty" remake. This is reflected, for example, in MPH's decision not to allow the Stop the War Coalition to affiliate.

The war in Iraq isn't, as MPH claims, a distraction from the campaign against world poverty. It reflects the real priorities of the great imperialist powers, which spend far more on defence than would be needed to eliminate extreme poverty. War and poverty are the two great nightmares inflicted on us by global capitalism.

The MPH leadership's attitude is a pity, but it shouldn't stop anti-war activists, socialists and anti-imperialists from putting their backs into getting as many people as possible to Scotland—not just for the 2 July demo, but also for the G8 Alternatives counter-summit on 3 July and for the protest at Gleneagles itself on 6 July.

The G8 summits are when the mis-rulers of the world get together—George Bush, Tony Blair and the rest of the grubby gang. Let's make sure that the world itself is there in force to demand an end to poverty and war.

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Saturday 2 July
MAKE POVERTY HISTORY
DEMONSTRATION EDINBURGH.
For more information see
www.makepovertyhistory.org
Stop the War rally in the evening

Sunday 3 July
G8 Alternatives counter summit,
Edinburgh www.g8alternatives.org
Stop the War demonstration
Monday 4 July
FASLANE NUCLEAR BASE
BLOCKADE

Fight Poverty not war: Respect MP George Galloway to speak at anti-war rally in Edinburgh
Anti-war and anti-globalisation campaigners from around the world will speak at the anti-war rally on July 2nd in Edinburgh. Leading figures from the British movement like Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn, Respect MP George Galloway, CND chair Kate Hudson and Stop the War Coalition convenor Lindsey German will speak.

The Stop the War will hold a procession through Edinburgh city centre on the evening of Sunday 3 July.

This will march down Princes Street around 6.30pm and end with a "naming of the dead" ceremony on Calton Hill.

G8 Alternatives summit: Outlining a better world

The G8 Alternatives summit will take place in various venues in Edinburgh on Sunday 3 July. From 10am to 9pm speakers from all over the world will present a serious ideological challenge to the corrupt and bankrupt policies of the G8 in eight plenary sessions and over 30 workshops.

The plenary sessions will feature Willie Modisha, the president of the Confederation of South African Trade Unions, Ken Wiwa, the son of Ken Saro Wiwa who was executed by

the Nigerian government, Dita Sari, the president of National Workers' Struggle in Indonesia, and George Monbiot, the radical journalist and author.

Bob Crow, the general secretary of the RMT transport union will speak on Globalisation and Privatisation. Susan George, the vice president of the anti-globalisation group Attac France will discuss Aid, Trade and Debt with Mark Curtis, the author of Web of Deceit.

Other speakers include the former UN weapons inspector Scott Ritter, former Guantanamo Bay prisoner Moazzem Begg, Green Party MEP Caroline Lucas, Scottish Socialist MSP Tommy Sheridan and George Galloway MP.

The final rally will hear speakers from Italy, Indonesia, France, Venezuela, Scotland and England outline our "Visions of a Better World". **For tickets go to: boxoffice.admin@usherhall.co.uk www.g8alternatives.org.uk**

Fight poverty not war: Be part of the anti-war contingent on the protests contact 087 6329511 or 00447742531617

Book place on bus to G8: Short trip. Leaving Friday morning, July 1st Back in Ireland late on Sunday 3rd July. Price @ €100 For Dublin buses ring Dave on 087 270 3564 Buses

from Northern Ireland- Contact Gordon at 00447742531617 To book a seat on Students against Poverty bus call Sean on 0771 712 3462 or email student_against_poverty@hotmail.com.

Other events:
National Day of Action Against Racism
Let us stay! Let us work!
JUSTICE FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS
Saturday 18 June, 12.30 pm
GPO, O'Connell Street, Dublin
Organised by RESIDENTS AGAINST RACISM

Public meeting: Stop Shell exploitation in Mayo
Monday 20th June, Wynn's Hotel, 8pm
Denny Larsen (co-author the Other Shell Report), Padraigh Campbell (SIPTU Offshore Committee, Sister Majella McCarron (Campaigners against Shell in Nigeria) and Maura Harrington (Principal local primary school)
Marxism 2005: 7-11 July Central London: Ideas to change the world
Tony Benn | George Galloway | Salma Yaqoob | Lindsey German
Trevor Ngwane | Walden Bello | Winston Silcott | Bob Crow
Louise Christian | Harold Pinter
www.swp.org.uk/marxism

EVENTS

Notify us: Email swped@eircom.net Tel (01) 872 2682

Make Poverty History-Drop the Debt Rally

Thursday 30th June
6.30 pm, Parnell Sq, Dublin.

Protest at G8 summit, Scotland

Saturday 2-6 July

SWP Branches

WHAT THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STANDS FOR

Capitalism is wrecking the lives of millions and endangering the planet.

A new society can only be constructed when the workers take control of the wealth and plan its production and distribution for human need and not profit.

REVOLUTION

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

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

greater political and economic democracy.

AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND WAR

War is a constant feature of capitalism today as the imperialist powers try to dominate the earth.

Bush's "War on Terrorism" is a crude device to attack any country which threatens US military, strategic or economic dominance.

END RACISM AND OPPRESSION

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

working class.

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

We oppose immigration controls which are always racist.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

We stand for workers unity against the Assembly politicians and Blair government.

Like great socialist James Connolly, we believe that partition has brought about a 'carnival of reaction'

We want to see an Irish workers republic where all

workers gain.

Our flag is neither green nor orange but red!

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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

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

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

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

Join the Socialists

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

Name.....

Address.....

Email.....

Phone.....



Socialist Worker

Blair crumbles as Bush rejects aid for the poor

THE TRUTH BEHIND THE 'HISTORIC' DEBT CANCELLATION

Tony Blair completely caved into George Bush over the key issues of debt, aid and climate change — even before the G8 leaders flew in to Scotland for their summit.

Bush and Blair's deadly embrace on Iraq now means that there is "no money" to save lives in the Third World while the US has spent \$165 billion so far on the war in Iraq.

The sums involved in the debt relief proposal are tiny - with the US, for example, expected to contribute just \$175m a year over 10 years. In 2004 the US spent just 0.16 percent of its GNI on overseas aid. It is likely that the US and other governments will fund their additional contributions by reducing their aid budgets.

Debt

The proposed debt deal will cancel the debt of only 18 countries. Many of the poorest but biggest countries in the world, like Nigeria, Indonesia, and Bangladesh, have always been excluded from the debt relief initiative. Nigeria alone is renegotiating debts worth \$25bn with its creditors at the moment. This figure represents half of the total debt held by the 27 countries being offered help. There are many more impoverished countries which are repaying debt to rich creditors with the health, welfare and even lives of their people.

Jean Somers of Debt and Development Coalition said that "Mr. Bush and Mr. Blair are clearly feeling the heat from the world wide campaign to Make Poverty History and from Live8. But they

must go further and cancel all the unpayable debt

of all impoverished countries." Action Aid UK spokesperson, Romilly Greenhill said "This is very good news for the 18 poor countries that are immediately getting debt relief but there are many poor countries that won't be eligible and of course it's done nothing to commit additional aid."

Aid

The debt deal is worth around \$1.5bn - critical money to some very poor countries - but only 3% of total aid flows of \$50bn per year.

The UN has suggested that the amount of aid needs to double to \$100bn per year if the Millennium Development Goals to cut poverty in half by 2015 are to be met.

Romilly Greenhill, of the charity Action Aid, said: "What is very disappointing is the lack of any substantial concrete commitments on aid.

G8 leaders should announce an increase in aid to 0.7% of national income by 2010, and commit to stop forcing poor countries into failed policies such as privatisation."

Trade

There was no action to reduce the agricultural subsidies enjoyed by large scale farmers in the EU and the US. Steve Tibbett, of the Make Poverty History campaign, said "Trade is the biggest issue, where there is the deepest unfairness- it is the root of the problem"



Blair and Bush: Feeling the heat

A 'Stop the War demo' as part of the anti-G8 protests

"Activists need to make the anti-G8 summit protest in Edinburgh a huge demonstration against poverty and war," says Chris Nineham of the Stop the War Coalition.

The anti-war movement scored a big victory in Scotland. It overturned a decision by Scottish police to ban a Stop the War Coalition rally set to take place after the Make Poverty History march in Edinburgh on 2 July.

We said that protests would take place with or without police permission. The police dropped all objections to our event and Edinburgh City Council agreed to cooperate.

At the end of the demonstration there will be two Make Poverty History stages and one organised by the Stop the War Coalition headlined "Fight Poverty Not War".

It is important to connect the themes of poverty and war during the anti-G8 protests.

World Bank figures show that just one quarter of the US annual military budget would be enough to eradicate poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa. Tens of thousands are coming to the G8 demonstrations not to plead for crumbs for the poor, but to demand a real change of priorities.

The Stop the War Coalition and the Irish Anti War Movement will be campaigning for the maximum possible turnout for all the protests from the 30th June Dublin Rally, the 2nd July demonstration in Edinburgh to the Gleneagles demonstration on 6th July.

G8 hypocrisy over corruption and aid

The argument from the Daily Telegraph that "The problems of Africa are very complex. Aid just gets swallowed up in corruption" has been repeated in various forms in the last week.

It is hypocritical nonsense. The G8 countries never worried about corrupt dictators when they were useful to them.

Mobutu in Zaire, Suharto in Indonesia, Pinochet in Chile, Houphouet-Boigny in Ivory Coast, Eyadema in Togo, Marcos in the Philippines — every one of these brutal rulers survived in power for decades on the basis of Western aid and support.

The issue of corruption gets raised now to provide another fake excuse for not cancelling debt and not providing aid.

The G8 are ensuring that 'the slaves' shall not be free until the rich have satisfied themselves that they will do as they are told.

And the media and G8 rulers never speak of the corruption at multinational corporations such as Enron or WorldCom, or the other US businesses that are in a stratospherically different league of corruption to that of any African country.

There is even less mention of

embezzlement, links with business and political graft in the White House itself.

Of course there are very real questions about African rulers who connive with the IMF, the World Bank, the G8 leaders and the multinationals at the expense of their own people. That is why we support Africans fighting back in such situations — as you can read on page 5.

And there are searching questions to be asked about aid.

In particular it is a scandal that aid is tied so closely to market "reform" and that so much of it goes to "consultants" who are simply conduits for privatisation policy.

Socialist Worker argues for:

Unconditional cancellation of all developing countries' debts, whether held by banks, governments, or multinational institutions such as the IMF.

A trebling of the aid budget, but with aid transformed into a straight grant as compensation for the slavery, colonialism and pillage perpetrated by multinationals.

Fighting throughout the world against war and imperialism, and for democracy that serves the interests of workers, peasants and the poor.

Protest

June 30th Dublin Drop the Debt Rally 6.30pm, Parnell Sq.

July 2nd-6th G8 protests and alternative summit in Edinburgh.

See Page 11 for Details on buses to Scotland.

www.irishantiwar.org
www.g8alternatives.org
www.makepovertyhistory.ie