

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

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WAR

★ 3,800 Afghan civilians killed by US bombing—more than died on Sept 11.

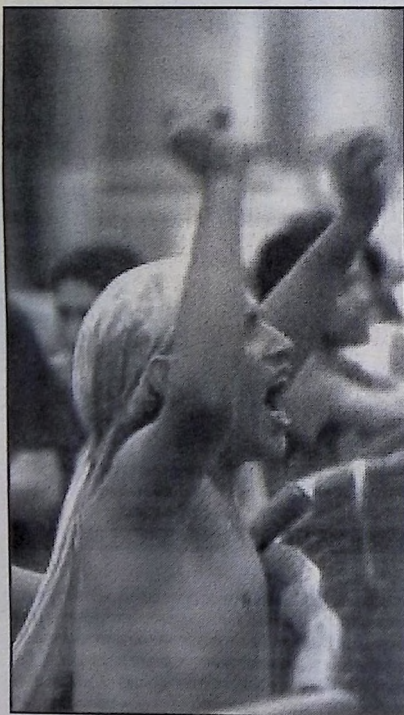
★ Armed with nuclear weapons India and Pakistan head for all out war

HUNGER

★ 30,000 children die every day across the world because of malnutrition and disease.

RECESSION

BUILD THE RESISTANCE



Protesting against the system in Argentina

LAST YEAR ended with the third war in ten years involving the US and Britain. The New Year started with the threat of war between India and Pakistan.

The US bombing of Afghanistan has already killed over 3,800 Afghan civilians.

It has also created between three and four million refugees, according to the World Food Programme. One of the poorest countries on earth is now home to the world's biggest refugee

camp.

Global capitalism has slid towards a new slump. In the US 800,000 workers have been sacked in the last two months, and things are getting worse.

In Africa global recession—on top of the crushing burden of debt—means over 7,000 people a day are dying from Aids.

But alongside such horror the past year has also seen signs of hope.

The global movement against capitalism has grown and spread. There have been massive protests at various summit meet-

ings of the global capitalist institutions.

There was Quebec in April, Gothenburg in June, and most impressively of all Genoa in July, where 300,000 people marched. The war has not halted this movement, as was shown by the size of the demonstrations at the European Union summit in Brussels.

In some of the countries hardest hit by the global recession, workers' anger at what the system has done to their lives has exploded. In South Africa a wave of strikes has shaken the bosses

in recent months.

A few decades ago Argentina was one of the world's ten richest countries. The devastating economic crisis has seen workers revolt and bring down the government after taking part in eight general strikes last year, each involving millions of people.

Furious workers occupied banks in the capital, Buenos Aires, and pickets blocked roads with burning barricades.

This year will bring more horror, and hope. The resistance to war, recession and capitalism must continue and grow.

SELLAFIELD: Shut it down

Six nuclear reactors, including four in the Sellafield complex, were shut down before Christmas after a malfunction within a reactor in Scotland.

The revelation comes after an investigation found that plans to clear up the controversial Windscale nuclear reactors—which house one of the world's most unstable concentrations of radioactive material—have been scrapped.

Reactions

The heat generated in the plants during nuclear reactions is controlled by a series of rods, which are dropped into circular slots in a graphite core covered by a metal "charge" plate.

One of the rods failed to

drop cleanly, prompting fears that either the charge plate or core has distorted after years of nuclear reactions.

The incident at Chapelcross plant comes after a serious accident at the plant last July when a basket containing radioactive fuel fell 25 metres.

This took place two months after another accident.

In 1967, meltdown almost occurred at the plant.

The plants, which were built in the 1950s, are of similar technology to the ill-fated Windscale reactor which went on fire in 1957.

Some 100 people from Ireland protested at the opening of the MOX plant at Sellafield in December.

The protestors blockaded the main entrance to the plant forcing the police to divert traffic to another entrance.

Tim, a protester, explained, "MOX fuel is produced from nuclear

waste and is three to eight times more dangerous than conventional nuclear fuel.

"It is completely unviable economically, the only customer is Japan. MOX is also easier to convert to weapons grade plutonium."

Sellafield is the biggest nuclear dump in the world, there are 70,000 tonnes of plutonium stored on site.

The protest generated a lot of media attention and the organisers of the protest promised to return with even greater numbers to shut the whole plant down.

Government slammed for ignoring environment

According to An Taisce, Ireland may have the worst record of any country in the world on climate change, with an increase of at least 30 per cent in its greenhouse gas emissions since 1990.

An Taisce, which sees itself as Ireland's leading environmental organisation, noted the Government faces 27 legal actions by the European Commission for infringements of EU directives on a range of environmental issues.

There may be 300 illegal dumps across the State, including possibly as many as 100 in Co Wicklow alone.

And of the 327,000 tonnes of haz-

ardous waste generated annually, 98,000 tonnes is unreported.

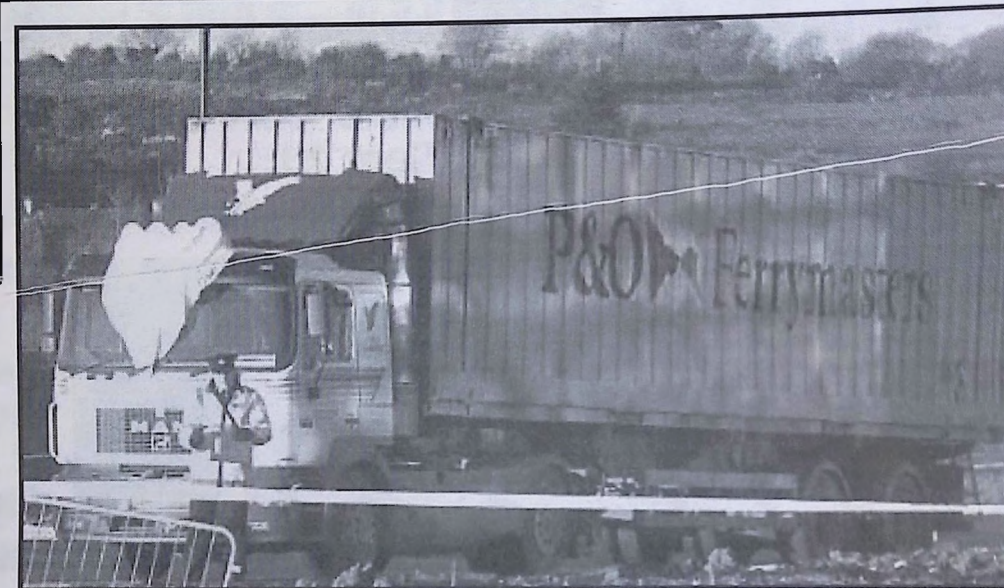
"Only 60 per cent of group water schemes are within acceptable safety levels," the report complains.

Sprawl

Meanwhile, local authorities in the Greater Dublin area continued to allow the capital to sprawl into its hinterland in breach of statutory planning guidelines.

"There is next to no enforcement by local authorities of the planning laws". An Taisce says.

Dublin Corporation, for example, was "failing to deal with hundreds of properties which are fire traps", many of them occupied by Eastern Health Board tenants.



Eight refugees died trying to enter Ireland last month

As Fortress Europe claims more victims...

Refugees revolt

ASYLUM seekers were met with brutal police repression during protests against their internment in France at Christmas.

French police arrested 130 asylum-seekers after they broke down a fence, stormed past Eurotunnel guards and invaded both bores of the Channel Tunnel, interrupting trains for 10 hours.

Another group of 400 refugees from the Sangatte holding camp close to the tunnel entrance were beaten back with tear gas when they attempted another mass invasion a few hours later.

The first crowd of refugees—mostly young men but also women and children—broke down a security fence and then overwhelmed the guards.

They ran into the twin bores of the tunnel, but iron security gates were rapidly closed inside the

tunnel and none of the invaders penetrated very far.

There are 1,200 refugees in Sangatte, mostly Afghans, Kurds and Iranians.

The centre was opened two and a half years ago to house 600 people.

Freight

In December, a week before EU leaders met in Brussels to tighten security on Europe's borders, thirteen people travelled

across Europe in a freight container.

Eight of them are now dead and the other five remain in hospital in Wexford, Ireland.

Those travelling in the container were Turkish, Kurd, Algerian and Albanian—all fleeing persecution, poverty and crisis.

Within minutes of leaving port in Belgium they became unconscious because of a lack of oxygen.

One of those who died tried to attract attention by banging the inside of the container before falling into a coma.

One of the families were the Pancars from Turkey.

Their ordeal began seven years ago when their small grocery shop went bankrupt after half of their village's 1,000 people migrated to find jobs.

Exodus

The family joined the exodus and went to Istanbul where Hasan Pancar worked as a driver

and his wife Kadriye worked in a factory.

But the two lost their jobs two months ago as a result of the latest economic crisis and they decided to try their luck in Europe.

Hassan died in the container and Kadriye lies in hospital.

Irish politicians went to Wexford to express their sympathy.

After shedding a few crocodile tears the Irish government announced that it is pushing through the deportation from Wexford of the

Kolesnikov family from Tajikistan.

Chaos

The chaos of the system forces people to migrate then criminalises them for doing so.

Fortress Europe has yet more blood on its hands.

Over the past two years alone, more than 120 refugees have died in containers, lorries and trains all over Europe in desperate bids for a life in the prosperous west.

'Smartkill' cash-in

One Irish company to gain from the Afghan war is e-learning firm, SmartForce. The company has signed multimillion dollar deals with the US defence forces.

The company has just added a mega contract with the US army to a recent contract with the US navy.

Under the deal with the army, US soldiers will learn combat techniques using SmartForce products.

SmartForce boss, Greg Priest, said the deal came at a "critical time" for the US

army and its approach to technology. The army deal followed the highly lucrative contract with the navy, which saw SmartForce take a chunk of a \$7 billion contract.

NASA

It also counts the US air force and NASA among its clients.

Meanwhile, SmartForce is involved in a Public Private Partnership with Dublin City University and, co-incidentally, its chief executive was recently elevated to Vice President of the college.

★ ENGLISH FOOTBALL mascots are threatening strike action over the Football League's decision to impose a code of conduct on them.

The touchline cheerleaders are demanding better pay and conditions in return for accepting the code, which has been proposed because of several episodes of "overexuberance".

"If they're going to give us some guidelines on our behaviour we have some demands of our own," said a defiant Yorkie the Lion, York City's mascot.

"Some clubs you go to treat you like crap. At Darlington we even had to pay to get in!"

★ AT THE end of last year, around the country, women went to the Garda stations to lay charges against Bertie Ahern.

The women accused Ahern of aiding and abetting the U.S.-led state terrorist war by allowing the use of Irish airports and airspace and thereby perpetuating the violence against Afghan and Irish women.

Protestors laid charges in Limerick, Galway, Cork, Dublin, Kerry, and Sligo. In Cork and Limerick, protestors held a sit-in at Garda stations until their statements were accepted.

★ Even in the most prosperous times, 31 million people, including 12 million children, in the United States did not have access to enough food for an active healthy life.

They were often forced to choose between relying on emergency food sources or going hungry.

Spare a ha'penny

Dublin Councillors were thick on the ground at the opening of the Ha'penny Bridge after a £1.8 million refit.

Gardai were on duty to ensure that beggars were moved on out of sight of the cameras so that actors dressed as beggars could take their place and the great and the good could sing Molly Malone!

Masochism or murder?

WE have a "culture of masochism" in the construction industry here, says the head of the Health and Safety Authority, Tom Beegan.

Twenty-two people, including four children, were killed in construction accidents in 2001 and five adults were killed in the mining/quarrying sector.

Deaths

Between them, the two sectors represent 38 percent of all workplace deaths, across all sectors.

Not so much masochism as a case of putting profit before people's lives in the building sector.

Socialist Worker Appeal



Give a voice to the millions... not the millionaires

Socialist Worker represents the best most consistent source in Ireland for alternative analyses and views about current issues. It casts new light on and makes new connections between, all kinds of subjects. It is invaluable for campaigning groups."

— Andi Storey, Chairperson, AFRI

"At a time when much of the Irish media are beginning to resemble the notorious "Tory Press" during the right wing Thatcher years, the *Socialist Worker* provides an alternative view on issues affecting the real wealth creators – workers, and the inequality in the distribution of that wealth by an increasingly arrogant establishment."

— Brendan Ogle, ILDA

THERE HAS never been a greater need for a strong socialist voice—the world we live in is dominated by wars and poverty. We have seen the devastation of war on Afghanistan and an escalating international crisis. The world is increasingly more unstable and barbarous.

Here in Ireland we are facing a deep economic crisis which has already seen thousands of workers lose their jobs. We can expect massive and savage attacks on the conditions and standards of working class people as we head towards recession.

We are constantly being told that there is no alternative to the "free market" as our rulers push through an agenda of privatisation of our services. Everything from our hospitals to our refuse collection is being ripened for the fat cats of industry.

But we have also witnessed the birth of a new resistance across the Globe. From Seattle to Genoa, to the streets of Buenos Aires, millions have taken to the streets in huge anti-war and anti-capitalists demonstrations.

Socialist Worker has been at the heart of building the movement in Ireland. The paper has been at the centre of resistance and plays an important role in putting forward alternative arguments and telling the truth about the issues affecting millions of people today.

Socialist Worker does not receive the support and finances of rich backers like the mainstream press. It is not owned by big business. Instead it relies entirely on readers and supporters like you.

The scale of the crisis today means we urgently need to build a bigger and stronger socialist movement. That is why we are launching this appeal to raise €20,000.

We need more resources for *Socialist Worker* to become the voice of resistance in Ireland. We need to print posters, leaflets and fact sheets for workers in struggles and campaigns against poverty and injustice.

You can help by making your contribution to this appeal and by getting involved in *Socialist Worker*. Your paper seller will deliver donation sheets and answer any queries you have. You can also order more copies of *Socialist Worker* to get around your work-mates, friends or fellow students.

Please give as generously as you can to the paper of resistance and give a voice to the millions instead of the millionaires.

"*Socialist Worker* provides us with information and news on environmental campaigns and the anti capitalist movement which both guides and inspire us on how to fight back today."

— Anita Villa, Derry Socialist Environmental Alliance

"*Socialist Worker* plays a key role in informing and building the working class movement. It is an invaluable paper for workers and especially for shop stewards today. *Socialist Worker* gives concise news of workers struggles throughout Ireland and indeed the world that we don't get to hear of anywhere else. And this can help to build solidarity between workers North and South. I think it will be a huge asset to us in the fight against privatisation."

— John, T&GWU, Shop Steward for Belfast CityBus

"Alternative and left wing views are being excluded more and more from the mainstream media and it is important that there are sources of information which provide the public with alternative views and opinions. The *Socialist Worker* newspaper has been fulfilling this task with great consistency and reliability."

— Patricia McKenna, Green Party, MEP

"The *Socialist Worker* is an essential source of alternative and radical views on Ireland and the world. An important counterpoint to the bland neo-liberal orthodoxies of much of the mainstream press."

— Dr. Colin Coulter, NUI, Maynooth, Treasurer of the Irish Anti War Movement

STOP THIS
BLOODY
WAR

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Appeal

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Collusion, murder and cover-up

THE UDA murder of solicitor Pat Finucane in front of his wife and three children in February 1989 shone a bright light into the dark world of collusion between loyalist paramilitaries, the RUC and the British army.

But amid the welter of detail and denial that has poured out since, it's easy to lose focus on the obvious—damning—facts.

■ One of the weapons used in the attack had been stolen from a British Army barracks in 1987 by a serving member of the Ulster Defence Regiment.

■ The UDA unit that carried out the killing was C Company, based in the Lower Shankill.

■ The commander of the unit was Tommy "Tucker" Lyttle, an informer for the RUC Special Branch.

■ The intelligence officer was Brian Nelson, an informer for the British Army's Force Research Unit (FRU). The unit's quartermaster was William Stobie, an informer for the Special Branch. Stobie supplied the murder weapon and disposed of it afterwards.

■ Stobie later told two journalists that his Special Branch handlers had not only been told in advance that the killing was to happen but had actually witnessed the handing over of the murder weapon.

Weapon

Moreover, Nelson, simultaneously UDA intelligence officer and FRU agent, had been supplied with military intelligence on Finucane and had cased the solicitor's home in the company of a British Army officer.

■ This wasn't a once-off. Nelson was able to provide the UDA with intelligence files on a number of individuals to be assassinated.

When brought to trial in the early '90s as a result of the first outside probe into the collusion allegations, his handler, "Colonel J.", explained that the aim was "to persuade the UDA to centralise their targeting ... and concentrate on known Provisional IRA members".

Nelson, having served a short sentence, has been "resettled" by the security forces under a new identity.

■ Both lawyers and former loyalist paramilitaries have claimed that during this period UDA men being questioned by the RUC Special Branch were told to forget about indiscriminate sectarian killing and concentrate on three solicitors [Pat Finucane, PJ McGrory and Oliver Kelly] as the "brains behind the IRA".

■ Days before the Finucane murder, a British Tory minister, Douglas Hogg, made a



Murdered informer William Stobie

speech in parliament complaining about "lawyers who give comfort to terrorists".

■ Retired Det. Sgt. Johnston Brown claims the identity of Finucane's killer, who "boasted and gloated" about the murder, has been known since 1991.

In November last, Brown told UTV that a taped confession to the killing held by the RUC "disappeared" within a week and was replaced by a tape that did not include the confession.

■ Shortly after Stobie was killed in December, leading UDA man, Ken Barrett disappeared from the same area of Belfast.

Barrett may have extremely intimate knowledge of the Finucane murder. Stobie did, which is why

he is dead.

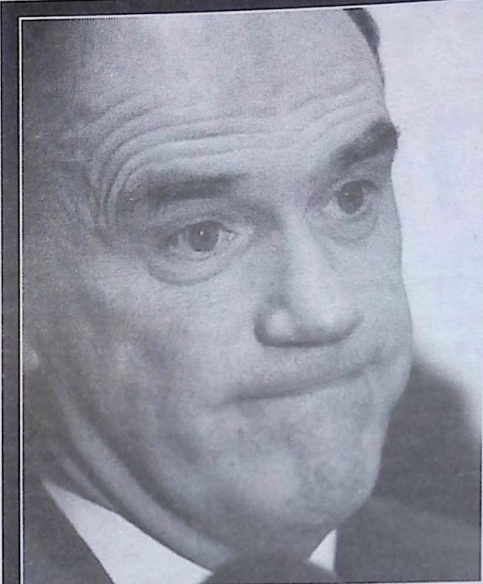
Special branch, and their allies in British intelligence, have shown over the years that they will go to any level to protect their interests.

All the talk of government investigations amounts to nothing.

The inquiry into Brian Nelson was carried out by John Stevens, now head of the racist Metropolitan Police.

Stevens has supervised cover-ups of police killings, for example in the shooting dead of Harry Stanley in September 2000.

Despite his "reliability", an army intelligence team burned down Stevens' office in Belfast to destroy papers about the Nelson investigation.



Ronnie Flanagan

Just what does Flanagan know?

RONNIE Flanagan insists that he knows nothing of any collusion. But he is lying.

The details of Flanagan's time in the Special Branch are, like so much else in this area, very sketchy.

What we do know is that he became head of the Special Branch in 1993.

He will at that time have read himself into the job, and have had access to all Special Branch files and information.

In other words, Flanagan knows what role the

Special Branch played in the Finucane killing.

And he knows the details of the cover-up and the systematic efforts to pervert the course of justice.

The notion that he has asked for inquiries to be made and calmly awaits the results is farcical.

The evidence suggests that Flanagan himself is guilty of collusion, if not of being an accessory after the fact to murder.

Despite the evidence, this is not a view that the British Government will ever endorse.

Nor will it be urged on them by the Irish Government.

This shows the extent the secret state will go to to prevent democracy intruding into the areas it regards as its own.

This will continue until the Special Branch and the rest of the secret "intelligence services" are disbanded.

DEFECTIVE AND DANGEROUS

★ IN JANUARY 1988 Loyalist paramilitaries received a huge haul of South African weapons—200 AK47 assault rifles, 90 Browning pistols, 500 fragmentation grenades, 30,000 rounds of ammunition and 12 RPG 7 rocket launchers.

In the six years before the arrival of the weapons, from January 1982 to December 1987, loyalist paramilitaries killed 71 people. In the next six years from January 1988 to 1 September 1994, they killed 229 people.

Brian Nelson was a key figure in the arms transaction. Another was Dick Wright, an employee of the South African arms company Armscor.

Wright visited the UDA in Belfast in 1980 and made an offer of arms for cash or missile plans or parts from the Shorts missile factory.

Nelson passed on all the details to his handlers. No action was taken.

★ FORMER BRITISH soldier Ginger Baker was sentenced to 25 years for killing four Catholics in the early 1970s.

Baker claimed that even at this early stage, RUC members drove paramilitary weapons through checkpoints, regularly gave RUC files to the UDA and tipped off loyalists to prevent the seizure of their weapons.

Baker claimed he could

name RUC officers who passed information to loyalist paramilitaries. There has been no investigation of these allegations.

★ THE MURDER OF Rosemary Nelson brought the same suspicions. She had complained on many occasions that she had been threatened by the RUC.

She had been prominent in voicing suspicion about security force collusion in the Finucane murder.

★ "THE PARALLELS between my wife's murder and the bombings in Dublin and Monaghan in 1974 are obvious. I believe the Special Branch of the RUC, together with other agents of the state, are try-

ing to destroy any possibility of anyone being prosecuted for murdering my wife."

So says Laurence Rushe, whose wife Libbie died in the 1998 Omagh bombing. He was commenting on the police Ombudsman report into the RUC investigation and the role of the Special Branch before and after the killings.

The report accused Ronnie Flanagan of "defective leadership, poor judgement and a lack of urgency."

The report claimed that the Special Branch had received warnings of the pending attack but chose to ignore the information.

Eamonn McCann

What Gerry Adams didn't say to Bush's man about Castro

RIGHT-WING politicians in the US have been joined by the usual suspect commentators in Ireland in denouncing Gerry Adams for allegedly endorsing the Castro regime by visiting Cuba last month.

Bush's special advisor on Northern Ireland, Richard Haass, told RTE on December 23rd that Castro and Cuba "clearly represent the past." Sinn Fein was associating with "a government and an individual that's simply on the wrong side of history...the one country in the western hemisphere that is not remotely democratic, is not at all free-market." (It's worth noting in passing Haass's casual conflation of democracy with the "free market".)

Haass drew in the issue of the Colombia Three, explaining that, "What we have also really emphasised is our strong hope and expectation—and I emphasise the latter word—that any relationship between the IRA and the FARC or any other terrorist group will simply not happen again."

The proper response to this nonsense by any party with a half-ounce of socialist integrity would have been to tell Haass to stick his expectations where the sun doesn't shine.

The IRA hasn't been slow in the past to tell British Governments that it is an independent organisation with its own principles and tradition, that it won't be ordered about or have deadlines imposed on it. But it hasn't talked back to Haass in that tone of voice.

Sinn Fein might have made the point that the US's 40-year bully-boy blockade of Cuba has been a prime factor in the problems which confront the country.

It might even have taken the opportunity to demand an end to the blockade—the position of, for example, the British TUC.

But in current circumstances, Sinn Fein doesn't choose to adopt as radical a stance as Mr. John Monks, OBE, gen. sec. of the TUC.

This attitude might surprise anyone impressed by the radical rhetoric which Sinn Fein specialises in when seeking the votes of the discontented. SF candidates in working class areas are generally well pleased to be presented as left-wing campaigners. On the ground, some SFers have eagerly been pointing to the Cuba visit and the disapproval of Haass as evidence that they haven't really sold out, that despite the long flirtation with corporate interests, the heart of the movement is still with the dispossessed.

But in politics it is by their deeds and not their words that we know them.

In practice, in government, in the North, from the point of view of conventional bourgeois ideas, Sinn Fein has been as good as gold. The privatisation of the health and education services proceeds apace under Sinn Fein ministers. The entire Sinn Fein Assembly Party voted for a Programme for Government which followed the dictates of New Labour in every detail and which contained not a single proposal which could remotely be labelled left-wing. This, far more convincingly than any electoral pitch the party might make, tells us how Sinn Fein will behave if it realises its main strategic objective for 2002—enough Dail seats to secure coalition with Fianna Fail.

Thus we might have Sinn Fein ministers closing hospital wards in the North and the South simultaneously, and—this is not meant as a joke—citing this as an example of all-Ireland politics in practice. A long, long way from the "hard-line Castro-style socialism" attributed to the party by the *Sunday Independent*.

The main reason Adams went ahead with the Cuba visit had to do with the expectations of his party's rank and file—which are in sharp contradiction to the expectations of Richard Haass.

As to whose expectations will be fulfilled—a reasonable test would be whether Adams belatedly tells Haass to fuck off. But would he SF president, neat, clean and well-advised these days, use a rough phrase like that?

To socialists who insist on charting his party's long march away from anti-imperialist politics, maybe.

But to an accredited representative of George W. Bush?



news of the world

India and Pakistan on the brink of war

AS Socialist Worker went to press tens of thousands of Indian troops were massed along the border with Pakistan as the two countries, both talking of peace, wound up their historic quarrel to the brink of war.

Bush's war in Afghanistan has destabilised the region and given the green light for other rulers to launch their own spurious "wars on terrorism."

India put its armed forces on a high alert, cancelled all leave for troops and dispatched soldiers, artillery, battle tanks and long-range missiles to the border.

On the border hun-

dreds fled their homes in villages as renewed gunfire broke out.

Pakistan banned all Indian cable and satellite news programmes and began withdrawing troops from its western frontier with Afghanistan, where it had deployed several extra battalions to deal with the conflict there.

This has the making of a fully fledged war between the two nuclear-armed nations.

Partition

The two rivals have fought three wars since 1947, two of them over Kashmir, which is partitioned between them.

The conflict has cost the lives of over 30,000 people in the last eight years.

Over 150,000 Indian and

Pakistani soldiers face each other along the 450 mile long border.

Both India and Pakistan tested nuclear devices in May 1998 and then in April 1999 test fired missiles in efforts to perfect delivery systems for their nuclear weapons.

Both countries are in economic and political crisis. Since independence, Pakistan and India were played off against each other by the superpowers. Now they are vying for Western backing.

Pakistan's economy is virtually bankrupt. With a foreign debt of \$36 billion, two thirds of its budget is devoted to debt servicing and defence expenditure. It was only bailed out by American funds after September 11th.

Not counting the nuclear programme, India spends over \$10 billion annually on defence, twice as much as it spends on health, education and social services put together.

In recent years the US had backed India and imposed sanctions on Pakistan. However the attacks on Afghanistan made Pakistan an ally of the US.

More than 60,000

Pakistani troops are deployed along Pakistan's frontier with Afghanistan. A further 35,000 Pakistani soldiers are guarding the American troops and equipment at three Pakistani air bases.

With India continuing its military build up along its 3,300km long frontier with Pakistan, Islamabad is reported to have begun transferring some of these troops to its eastern border with India.

The war in Afghanistan has brought chaos to the region, and encouraged India to start its own "war against terrorism".

And the people of Kashmir look set to become latest "collateral damage" to Bush's war in Afghanistan.



Refugees fleeing Kashmir

Kashmir: Divided and exploited

THE ORIGINS of the dispute lie in the British fostered partition of India after independence in 1947.

The 8 million Kashmir population is 65 percent Muslim, but Hindus and Buddhists are an integral part of the culture.

Kashmir was ceded to India by Britain. A war broke out over the

region. The big powers intervened in 1948 and drew the "Line of Control"—the contested border where the fighting takes place.

India has ruled over Kashmir with an iron fist.

Throughout the last two decades India has imprisoned various leaders in Kashmir and Amnesty International has documented the Indian forces involvement in wanton killings of hundreds

of Kashmiris.

The problem is that the independence movement is under the control of Pakistan.

Pakistan wants to incorporate the Indian part of Kashmir and has been fighting a proxy war through Islamic militias.

Since 1990 over half a million Kashmiri Hindus abandoned their homes and are now living as refugees in other parts of India.

The US has killed more than 3,800 Afghans... more than died in World Trade Centre

GEORGE W Bush and Tony Blair have murdered more innocent civilians in Afghanistan than were killed in the 11 September attack on the World Trade Centre.

That fact is the stark conclusion of an authoritative investigation by US professor Marc Herold.

The study on the civilian death toll came as the bombing continued. Marc Herold is based in the US University of New Hampshire's School of Business and Economics.

He has meticulously investigated reports of civilian casualties of US bombing in Afghanistan.

He writes, "Afghanistan has been subjected to a barbarous air bombardment which has killed an average of 62 civilians per day since Sunday 7 October.

When the sun set on 6 December at least 3,767 Afghan civilians had died in US bombing attacks."

The detailed cataloguing of each incident, and the zealous caution with which Herold treats figures, make his report all the more convincing.

All deaths after 6 December are excluded, as are any reports which

Herold has not been able to corroborate.

He says, "Our tabulation represents a serious underestimate of actual civilian casualties."

A few examples illustrate how, day by day, incident by incident, Herold builds up a picture of the civilian death toll caused by US bombing.

■ 11 October: "The farming village of 450 persons of Karam, west of Jalalabad in Nangharhar province, is repeatedly bombed, 45 of the 60 mud houses destroyed, killing at least 160 civilians."

■ 18 October: "The central marketplace, Sarai Shamali in the Madad district of Kandahar is bombed, killing 47 civilians."

■ 25 October: "A US bomb hits a fully loaded city bus in Kabul Gate in Kandahar, incinerating ten to 20 passengers."

Not a single mainstream newspaper has seen fit to report Professor Herold's study.

■ Full report ("A Dossier on Civilian Victims of United States Aerial Bombing of Afghanistan: A Comprehensive Accounting") is available at <http://pubp.ges.unh.edu/~mwherold/>

Brussels:

Tens of thousands say NO to bosses' Europe

AS EUROPEAN Union (EU) leaders discussed more market "reforms" and privatisation of services in the Belgium capital, Brussels, 100,000 trade unionists marched last December in protest at "neo-liberal" Europe.

There were two demonstrations outside the EU summit. Trade unionists demanded a "social Europe" with public services and workers' rights on the agenda.

Thousands of young people protested for "global peace and justice". The demonstrations were important for the anti-capitalist movement. They showed the growing anger at governments' neo-liberal policies of privatisation.

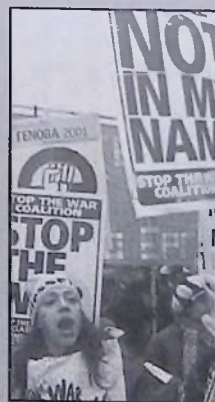
Trade unionists from Belgium made up the biggest group on the demonstration.

Some 20,000 workers came with the French CGT union, and thousands came with the IG Metall union from Germany. The march included public sector workers, such as a delegation of rail workers from Lyons in France.

"We want to defend our public services," said Florantain Carty. "A private company is more focused on getting money than providing a good service. We have seen what has happened to the railways in Britain.

"There have been bad accidents. We say if there is a problem with funding the service that is a problem for the government, not the workers."

A number of marchers came from Eastern European countries, where people were told the free market would bring increased prosperity. "Privatisation has many different faces. But none of them are good for workers," said Krzysztof Wika, a teacher who marched alongside factory workers



Anti-war voices in Brussels

from his local area in Poland.

The young people who filled the streets the day after the trade unionists' march brought the spirit of Genoa to Belgium, despite temperatures that fell to minus five degrees.

Adam Jeromin, a student from Ghent University in Belgium, marched in the

delegation of the anti-globalisation group ATTAC. He said, "After Genoa everything happened in my college. Before I felt I was alone and after Genoa I thought, 'Wow, there are so many of us.'"

Two delegations of Belgian workers from the Thursday demonstration also joined the anti-capitalist march.

Workers

They were the Sabena Belgian airline workers who have faced 12,000 redundancies after the company went bankrupt in October.

The pilots and airline staff in uniform marched in a lively delegation behind a mock airplane. Their placards attacking Sabena read "Stop economic terrorism".

A delegation of Belgian postal workers fighting privatisation also marched. One of the workers, Jef Bossuyt, said, "As trade unionists I think we have a

duty to be on this march as well."

Ghent University student Theun Vonck explained his home-made banner "The capitalists are the terrorists": "The government gives a specific definition of terrorism, and I want to turn it round and say they are the terrorists."

"Capitalism has brought war to the countries of Africa that we have been studying at college.

"They should stop dropping bombs and bring about change instead."

Many of the demonstrators were local young people. "I rushed to finish my psychology exam to come on this march," said school student Dina Gardiner.

"I wanted to be here to demand a better world, and also for the fun and the shouting. I think it is brilliant. In the 1960s there was a revolutionary movement of young people.

"Obviously I wasn't around then! But I think you can see that spirit of the 1960s now."

What is the answer in Palestine?

Palestine is currently under the worst siege in the country's tragic history.

People are unable to move between Palestinian villages and towns, and goods cannot be transported.

Large parts of many cities and villages are under 24 hour, or dusk-to-dawn curfews; tanks and armoured personal carriers sit in the streets, outside homes.

A shortage of supplies is being reported in some areas, including gas and food.

Vaccinations and primary health care systems are paralysed, and epidemics are now feared.

While more than half the population is unemployed, many employed people are prevented from getting to their places of work.

During the past 14 months the Israeli army has killed 924 Palestinians and 25,000 others have been injured - 1 percent of the population. 2,000 people have become permanently disabled.

Homeland

Israel was born in blood in 1948 by Zionist terrorists killing hundreds and "ethnically cleansing" around 750,000 Palestinians from their homeland.

The Palestinians driven out of Israel settled in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

Israel then invaded and occupied these areas in 1967 and has controlled them, in defiance of international law and United Nations resolutions, ever since. It has brutally repressed Palestinian rights and any form of resistance.

The US has backed up Israel as its client state in the oil-rich Middle East, pumping in \$92 billion worth of aid since 1967 alone.

Israeli leaders, supported by the US, consistently refused to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) led by Yasser Arafat throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

Israel and the US described the PLO as "terrorists" for leading the challenge to Israeli occupation. It was only the first Palestinian Intifada or uprising, which began in 1987, that forced the US and Israel to negotiate with the Palestinian leadership.

Negotiations were always on Israel's and the US's terms. Because of the backing of the US, Israel is the most economically and militarily powerful state in the Middle East. It used this power to force Arafat to make huge concessions.

In the negotiations the Occupied Territories were no

longer seen as areas under illegal Israeli control, which they should leave, but areas to be haggled over.

Under the original agreement the new Palestinian Authority (PA) would control only 3 percent of the West Bank and 60 percent of Gaza. By 2000 that had increased to at best 17 percent of the West Bank.

Palestinians would be forced to live in enclaves surrounded by Israeli-controlled areas protecting the 400,000 Israeli settlers in the Occupied Territories.

Israel would continue to overshadow and dominate a weak Palestinian state. The four million Palestinian refugees would not be given the right to return to their homes in Israel that were stolen from them in 1948.

The peace process offered no hope to ordinary Palestinians. That fact was rubbed in when Ariel Sharon, now Israel's prime minister, deliberately bought a house in Arab East Jerusalem and insisted on visiting the Dome of the Rock in a move he knew would infuriate every Palestinian.

That, coupled with life getting worse for ordinary Palestinians, and the corruption and repression of the Palestinian Authority, sparked a new intifada in September of 2000.

Israel has tried vicious repression to put down this new uprising, killing over 900 Palestinians. Around 250 Israelis have been killed. There can be no even-handed equation of two sides in this situation.

The solutions offered seem hopeless. On one side Arafat and Fatah seem more and more isolated as each concession from the PLO is met with violence and arrogance from the Israeli state.

On the other the resistance and suicide bombings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad cannot liberate Palestine.

There is a force across the Middle East that is strong enough to liberate Palestine. Across the Middle East literally millions of workers are oppressed by imperialism and the corrupt rulers of the Arab states. These workers hold the power strong enough to bring a liberated Middle East.

Israel is the oppressor, and it is using savage violence to try and crush the resistance of the oppressed. Socialists stand shoulder to shoulder with the oppressed in that conflict.

We do not urge them to stop their resistance, but rather to fight to build the widest solidarity possible with that resistance. What is needed in place of the racism of the Israeli state is a secular Palestine with equal rights for Arabs and Jews.

Revolt against the IMF

SHOUTING "We're hungry! We want food!" demonstrators gathered in several places in Moreno and San Miguel, two densely populated suburbs of western Buenos Aires with high rates of poverty and unemployment.



Protests at government buildings

One protestor covering his face with his shirt told a television reporter, "We broke into a supermarket, took all the food, but not the booze."

"We don't want money. We're not thieves," other protestors shouted from behind.

A general strike and mass protests brought down the government of Argentina at the end of last year.

Despite a state of emergency and severe police repression that saw 25 people dead, thousands took to the streets.

Attacks

The unrest followed government attempts to check an economic free-fall with attacks of the living standards of the poor.

This was a desperate bid to avoid defaulting on its \$132 billion foreign debt, after 43 months of recession.

The IMF and Western banks have destroyed Argentina's economy and forced its once-prosperous people into poverty.

This is just one more way globalisation "helps the poor." It helps them dispose of market obstacles such as jobs, decent incomes, health care and enough food to feed their families.

Estela Carlotto, the president of the Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, a group which spearheaded protests against the military regime in the 1970s, said: "No one can stand it anymore."

"No one can be indifferent any longer."

In Buenos Aires, protes-

tors fought pitched rock-throwing skirmishes with riot officers, who swung truncheons and fired round after round of tear gas into

the crowds. Water cannons roared across the Plaza de Mayo, directing their jets against scrambling demonstrators.

How the IMF trashed Argentina

On December 6th the IMF blocked a promised loan of \$1.3bn to Argentina, immediately plunging the country into a massive crisis.

The aim of the tiny group of unelected bank officials was to force the Argentinean government to implement policies which they have determined - policies which favour the giant global corporations and investors.

Argentina, an industrial country that once boasted a living standard as high as that of Italy, has been hit by an economic crisis.

Unemployment has shot up to over 20 percent, and production from the country's car factories is half what it was a year ago.

Poverty

Some 40 percent of people live below the poverty line, the government has imposed wage and pension cuts of 15 percent, and many public sector workers have been paid with coupons rather than real money for months.

Argentina has a massive \$132bn debt. Even in a good year this debt soaked up the country's resources - it represented about half of the country's GDP. But for the last two years Argentina has been in recession, making the required interest payments a much more difficult task.

Over a year ago the IMF

who then counterattacked. "A people united will never be defeated!" they chanted.

"I'm not leaving here! They've already kicked me out 10 times but I will come back," said Alicia Fernandez, a 51-year-old jobless woman who was beating a metal saucepan.

"This is terrible. Where's our democracy gone?"

Demonstrator Jose Luis Anicas, who has four children and has been jobless for six months, said: "People are fed up."

"They don't want any of these politicians anymore."

But the world's bankers and industrialists have been doing their utmost to prevent Argentina's government cancelling even a small portion of this debt.

Confrontation

ARGENTINA'S working class has a long history of struggle, and has not responded to the crisis lying down.

The protests coincided with the eighth general strike in two years.

Workers' anger was rallied by the trade unions into a massive and successful general strike headed by transport workers on December 13th.

Residents of the cities slammed their pots and pans against balcony railings in solidarity with passing trade union marchers.

As the deafening clatter resounded in the capital, shopkeepers closed their stores for half an hour to join the workers.

The small local capitalists also face ruin from the IMF demands.

Farmers, too, came to show that they were with the anti-government and anti-IMF marchers.

Striking

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RESISTANCE

Ireland's socialist magazine

- STOP THE WAR ● George Monbiot
- Eamonn McCann ● Abortion referendum
- How can we end sectarianism?

Against



Striking workers battle with police

Can the US be beaten?

THE bombing of Afghanistan showed what the greatest military power in the world is prepared to do.

In Iraq it killed 100,000 civilians and conscripts in 1991. Its bombing raids in 1998 and sanctions have killed half a million children.

The rigid division of the world during the Cold War ended over a decade ago. But this has meant "hot wars" breaking out as regional powers assert themselves militarily.

The US maintains its global reach through a network of political and military alliances with various countries. There are tensions inside this network.

The US faces what it calls "rogue states" that don't accept the US dictating to the rest of the world.

Saddam Hussein in Iraq, helped to power by the CIA, was until 1990 a client of the US.

He stepped out of line by invading Kuwait, a friend of the US.

Iraq became one of the leading "rogue states" that the US had to punish with bombing raids and is threatening to target again.

Challenge

Similarly Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic was a man the West could do business with until he too stepped out of line in Kosovo in 1999.

The US again reacted to this challenge through bombing raids, this time carried out through NATO.

The US also has to contend with rival powers such as Russia and China.

Russia is a much weaker competitor for the US since the collapse of its economy.

But it still has the world's second most powerful army and a massive nuclear arsenal.

The US is trying to maintain its global position at a time when its economic position is weaker than during the Cold War.

It is still the world's single biggest economy. But it is falling back from the dominant role it has played since the Second World War.

At its height 50 years ago it accounted for 50 percent of world output. Today that figure is around 25 percent.

It is still able to dominate economically partly because its rivals have been in a crisis.

Now it too faces an economic recession.

One sign of the depth of the crisis is US multinational Enron filing for bankruptcy late in 2001 after the biggest share collapse in corporate history.

The Japanese economy has been stagnating, but it is still the second largest economy in the world and a major competitor for

The US may be the superior economic and military power in the world. But it sits at the top of a system with rival competitors eager for their share of power, and that provokes seething discontent amongst the mass of people across the world.

the US. The US also has to compete with the economies in the European Union, which combined equal US output.

It is precisely because the US has not been able to assert its dominance across the world that it is drawn into more military conflicts.

In recent wars the US's greater military strength has secured it victories in Iraq and Kosovo.

But firepower alone didn't beat Saddam Hussein and Slobodan Milosevic.

They both headed corrupt and repressive regimes that did not have strong support amongst their people.

Milosevic had faced ten years of a rising movement against his rule.

Saddam had carried out vicious attacks on his own people and had attacked Iran, a symbol of opposition to US power in the Middle East.

The US bombs angered the people of both countries. But the mass of the people did not rise up to defend those regimes.

Iraq could have beaten the US if Saddam Hussein had appealed to wider forces to take up its fight.

This would have meant calling on the poor in countries such as Egypt, a key US ally, to rise up and overthrow their corrupt rulers.

But Saddam refused to unleash forces that could have turned round to oust him.

This meant a straight fight between the conscripts Saddam Hussein could muster, and the power of US forces and daily pounding from bombing raids.

It is no surprise that the US won the battle.

When the US picked a fight where its enemy had popular support, it faced far stronger opposition.

In Vietnam the US faced a peasant guerrilla army that was struggling for national liberation. That army had been schooled in the fights against its colonial oppressors, France and Japan.

The Vietnamese were determined to drive the

US out as well.

This meant the US took on the whole population—not just the guerrillas. The troops could carry out an attack on US soldiers and disappear into the villages where local people would hide them.

The US increased its brutality against Vietnamese civilians to try to break their resistance.

US planes dropped over eight million tonnes of bombs on Vietnam.

But the Vietnamese fought on.

This resistance became an inspiration to those suffering oppression across the world.

A small peasant army could beat a mighty economic and military power.

In the US itself it provoked a powerful anti-war movement that demanded the government end the war.

Since 1975 the US ruling class has been haunted by the "Vietnam syndrome".

It has not wanted to commit US forces to what becomes seen as a pointless war with high US casualties.

So even a small country, Nicaragua, was able to stand up to brutal US aggression for ten years.

The US relied on Contra death squads and did not feel able to deploy its own uniformed troops directly.

And it made one botched effort to overthrow the Cuban regime 40 years ago, but has not been able to go further than an economic blockade since then.

The US's most militarised ally, Israel, invaded Lebanon in 1982, but has been forced out of the country by popular resistance.

US rulers still fear that they could face a popular movement where superior military power would not be enough to win.

Tensions

The war in Afghanistan opened up tensions among the mass of people in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other countries.

A popular revolt against those corrupt regimes could become a beacon to millions of others living in similar repressive regimes across the region.

And such a movement in one of the advanced capitalist countries would provide an even deeper challenge to US imperialism.

The US may be the superior economic and military power in the world.

But it sits at the top of a system with rival competitors eager for their share of power, and that provokes seething discontent amongst the mass of people across the world.

That is a force that can break US imperialism, the number one defender of global capitalist interests.

Confrontation or 'partnership'

There have been widespread strikes of public sector workers. These have included key sectors like the power workers, as well as unemployed workers. They have used pickets to block roads and bring much of industry to a standstill for days at a time.

Weakness

But there is one great weakness. The bureaucracies that run the country's three rival union federations have historically seen the purpose of industrial militancy as being to force the employers to agree to "partnership".

This used to be expressed through the nationalist politics of Peronism. The name comes from the military leader who ruled the country in the late 1940s and again in the mid-1970s.

Today it means that union leaders will call for one-day general strikes. But they will not put forward any sort of programme by which workers

would take over industry and present an alternative—based on democratic planning—to the crisis. Some groups of workers seem to have been

moving in this direction. Ceramics workers in the Zanon factory in Neuquén occupied the plant and urged other workers to join.

Occupying to fight the bankers

Eye witness reports from Zanon workers' occupation.

ALMOST 400 ceramics workers, teachers, unemployed workers and students found themselves a spot between the porcelain production lines. The discussion was intense. There were almost 30 speakers from all of the attending organisations.

Finally the speakers approved the document signed by the ceramics workers, the unemployed workers and teachers, as well as several other organisations:

"With the country's grave crisis, layoffs and suspensions occur every month. In Cordoba thousands of government employees and municipal workers mobilise against budget cuts and privati-

sation. "In Neuquén the Zanon ceramics workers, who have been recently repressed by the police, struggle for the nationalisation and reopening of the plant under workers' control.

"We call for an immediate congregation of the National Assembly of Employed and Unemployed Workers.

"This is to end the division of the struggles against the unified plan of the government, bosses and bankers.

"Those struggles can democratically debate a plan of action aiming towards a general strike.

"We can also draw up an employed and unemployed workers' solution to the political, social and economic crisis that we are experiencing.

"We also declare our opposition to the imperialist aggression against the people of Afghanistan and the Middle East."

Seattle... Gothenburg... Genoa... Brussels...

Where now for the anti-capitalist movement?

The anti capitalist movement has achieved much. From the demonstrations in Seattle in November 1999, through to Genoa in July last year, the movement has grown spectacularly.

For the first time in thirty years a mass movement of opposition to capitalism has emerged around the world.

Wide-spread radicalisation has been expressed in hundreds of thousands of people taking to the streets in world-wide protests against the institutions of global capitalism.

It is a movement that is characterised by ideological diversity. Alongside trade unionists, ecologists, revolutionary socialists are anarchists, autonomists and pacifists.

Some have argued it is possible to engage institutions like the IMF, World Bank or World Trade Organisation in debate to shift their priorities and to ensure the adoption of social clauses to mitigate the effects of global capitalism.

Most in the movement have focussed on the global capitalist corporations, seeing them as cut adrift from any state or regulatory regime.

Naomi Klein, author of *No Logo* has even written that it is possible to "go round the state".

On the back foot

The terrible events of September 11th allowed our rulers to momentarily take the advantage and temporarily put sections of the movement on the defensive.

December's protests in Brussels at the EU Summit however, with up to 100,000 trade unionists and anti-capitalists on the streets, show the movement is finding its self confidence again.

As Bush launched his war in Afghanistan, the ideologues of the ruling class tried to equate anti-capitalism with terrorism.

Some in the anti capitalist movement felt that now was not the time to continue with oppositional activity and succumbed to "national unity in the face of terrorism".

But of course there was no

let up in the class war from our rulers. The captains of industry were not slow to seize their chance.

A major clear out of jobs has taken place in the aftermath although the signs of major global economic recession were clear for months before the attack on the twin towers.

The US economy has nosedived with over a million workers losing their jobs in the US in the last three months alone.

And September 11th became the excuse to implement restrictions on civil rights which the right wing had been itching to apply for years.

On the military front Bush launched a massive war in Afghanistan, using carpet bombing that killed thousands as he backed up the notorious warlords.

The USA government also gave the green light to Ariel Sharon to launch a massive attack on the Palestinians in the name of his "war on terrorism".

It would be wrong to see the war and its probable extension to Iraq and Somalia as something distinct from the corporate agenda that the anti capitalist demonstrators were protesting against in Genoa, Prague and Seattle.

Imperialism

SINCE the late 19th century capitalism and imperialism and war have been inseparable.

As Lenin pointed out during the first world war, the major capitalist monopolies had fused with the state and economic rivalry spilled into military confrontations as the imperialist powers fought over access to markets, sources of raw materials and workers to exploit.

Despite some important developments, the world is still dominated by capitalist-imperialism.

The last decade has seen the states of Eastern Europe and Central Asia – formerly under the state capitalism of the Russian empire – up for grabs. As NATO has moved its boundaries eastwards in Europe, US troops are based in the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan in Central Asia.

Central Asia is enormously important for the US. In the first place is the oil and gas in the Caspian – and the reserves there are enormous.

In addition to this is the

region's strategic importance.

A decade ago Japan was poised to overtake the US economically.

Since then its economy has been in slump and it has lost ground. But US planners cannot be sure this will always be the case.

And these same strategists worry that in twenty years China, with its 1.3 billion population could become a serious economic (and perhaps military) rival in the region.

These considerations – and not simply the millions in bribes from the arms, aerospace and oil companies – have determined Bush's and Rumsfeld's warmongering.

The State

Two conclusions follow from this.

First, it is not just the multi-national corporations that are the agents of capitalist misery.

At the centre of this are the state machines of the largest and most powerful capitalist – imperialist – nations. Any strategy with any hope of success must tackle the power of these armed enforcers of capitalism.

The second conclusion is that those who are prepared to insist that 19,000 children die every day in the Third World so that their governments pay out to Western banks interest payments are not going to be reasoned or negotiated into behaving better.

Those who cynically use the horror of the New York tragedies to launch a war that kills as many other innocent civilians in one of the world's poorest countries in order to gain strategic advantage

in the great rush for Eurasia have not made some simple mistake.

These people; their state machines and the institutions they have created and run cannot be negotiated with or reformed. They must be overthrown.

But how? With what force?

Working class

It is the working class which produces all the wealth. And it is from workers that the capitalists squeeze their profits. This makes workers potentially very powerful. A mass strike can paralyse not only the industries and stop the wheels of production. Strikes can also raise the question of power.

It was mass strikes and demonstrations in Bolivia last year which forced the government to retreat on water privatisation, imposed at the behest of the IMF.

But large scale strikes raise the question of organising essential services. Either the workers cede control of this to the government – the enemy – or they take steps to provide for these themselves through the elected strike committees. In this way what start out as simply committees or workers' delegates to link up and co-ordinate strike activity across plants and localities can become an embryonic alternative power.

In Russia in the revolution of 1905 it was the strike committees which grew with the strike movement to become soviets – work-



Anti war protest in Korea

ers councils – democratic institutions through which workers began to challenge the central power of the state.

In 1917 the soviets formed again and won the allegiance of the mass of workers and soldiers, giving the revolution the power to overthrow the capitalist state.

The working class today is the majority of humanity and infinitely more powerful than in Russia in 1917.

The working class alone represents a potential power stronger than the capitalist state.

The job losses in Aer Lingus, the IMF devastation of Argentina and the scramble to dominate the oil fields of the Caspian Basin are all different aspects of the same system.

That is why we should connect the anti war and anti capitalist movement with the day-to-day struggle of workers in factories offices and shops defending their wages and conditions or fighting privatisation.

That is why socialists fight the Social Partnership policies of the official leaders of the trade union movement and argue for rank and file control of the unions.

The creation of a strong revolutionary socialist presence in the working class movement fighting to raise these political questions is therefore a strategic requirement if we are to have any realistic hope of defeating global capitalist institutions.

A Political response

The SWP has been in the forefront of building the anti capitalist and anti war movements.

We have welcomed the diversity in the movement and sought to ensure there is a place for all who want to fight back within it.

It would be an act of crassest stupidity and sectarianism for socialists to seek to counterpose revolutionary politics or a party programme to the building of the movement.

We will, of course, continue to put our shoulder to the wheel to build the movement in the period ahead.

But that is not the end of the story. Under the impact of imperialism and wars, anti capitalists are faced with hard questions.

It is important that within the movement there is a sizeable force arguing for revolutionary ideas and pointing in directions that can take things forward.

We need a major force fighting for clear revolutionary politics. We believe we have the politics necessary to create that force.

We do not expect people to be convinced of this simply by us asserting it.

We invite any reader of *Socialist Worker* who would like to explore these ideas with us to contact us to discuss further.

JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

To join or find out more about the Socialist Workers Party, fill in this form and send it to: SWP, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

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in my
view

Pro-war postures

I FIRST came across Christopher Hitchens in a Channel Four Programme called *The Missionary Position*. It, and the subsequent book, was a devastating attack on the idea of Mother Theresa as a saint rather than the corrupt bigoted friend of dictators she clearly was.

At one time Hitchens was a revolutionary. He then emerged as one of the most eloquent representatives of the small and embattled American left in the Reagan and Clinton years.

Hitchens was especially effective as a critic of US imperialism. A recent book is a powerful indictment of Henry Kissinger as a war criminal.

His latest book *Letters to a Young Contrarian* is a series of somewhat pompous letters to a young person on how to be a radical.

In it he writes: "One of the hardest things for anyone to face is the conclusion that his or her 'own' side is in the wrong when engaged in a war. The pressure to keep silent and be a 'team player' is reinforceable by the accusations of cowardice or treachery that will swiftly be made against dissenters. Sinister phrases of coercion, such as 'stabbing in the back' or 'giving ammunition to the enemy' have their origin in this dilemma."

Yet since 11 September he has appointed himself as one of the chief recruiting sergeants for George W Bush's "war against terrorism".

Hitchens was always a maverick. He supported the Falklands War in 1982 and campaigned for American military intervention against the Serbs during the 1992-5 Bosnian war. Since 11 September he has crossed a line. In a series of ugly rants he has denounced left wing opponents of war as "soft on crime and soft on fascism".

Arguments

Hitchens' arguments really come down to endless reiteration of one point – the attacks on New York and Washington were wicked crimes that can't be explained away or justified. No one disputes this, but Hitchens rails on against the perpetrators as "fascists with an Islamic face".

This even degenerated to the slightly dotty attempt to prove that the hijackers chose for the date of their attack the day on which, in 1683, the Muslim armies of the Ottoman Sultan failed to capture Vienna. The point seems to be that this crime is so evil that we can't compare it with those committed by US imperialism.

Hitchens expends much effort trying to show that recent American atrocities were the result of negligence rather than the desire to kill.

This is a morally dangerous path to take. Many of the 20th century's greatest atrocities – for example, the famines in the USSR in the early 1930s and in China in the late 1950s – were caused by regimes that weren't (then at least) intent on murder, but nevertheless were pursuing policies that inevitably led to mass deaths.

Hitchens insists that we should forget about America's role in creating Bin Laden and the Taliban: "Do 'our' past crimes and sins make it impossible to expiate the offence by determined action? Those of us who were not consulted about, and are not bound by, the previous covert compromises have a special responsibility to say a decisive 'no' to this."

In other words, Hitchens is saying that we should trust the same gang – the Pentagon, the CIA, MI6, Pakistani military intelligence – who built up the radical Islamist network in the first place to root it out now without creating new monstrous alliances.

Hitchens's warmongering stance is bringing him into strange company. He reports without a trace of irony that a Bush official agreed with him in worrying there could be too little war when he asked, "So what you are telling me...is that the only ones apart from me who worry about under-reaction are wholly owned subsidiaries of the Ariel Sharon lobby?"

What Hitchens lacks, even at his best, is any engagement with actual struggle, proud to be a commentator not a doer, this means that his latest book contains no sense of the excitement of the anti-capitalist movement, though he and his publisher clearly see the movement as his "market".

Hitchens likes to be the left journalist with the Oxford pedigree who gets invited to the best hotels and then reveals how corrupt they are. Political positions are sometimes as much a matter of striking the desired posture as of arguing from the available evidence. But that posing has left him on the wrong side of the barricades.

by SIMON BASKETTER

film

Miller light among the dark

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

LEE MILLER was an extraordinary woman. Born in 1907 to a wealthy family as a young woman her beauty made her a successful model in New York and then Paris.

There in the 1930s she fell in with a bohemian set of artists and took up photography herself.

She lived with surrealist artist and photographer Man Ray and developed with him the technique of "solarisation". This involves re-exposing a photographic negative creating a striking partial reversal of the contrast range.

Haunting

Her pictures of this period are technically interesting with a haunting visual quality.

Influenced by the surrealist movement in painting, she had a knack of taking an everyday and otherwise unremarkable scene and by means of using the existing light, unusual camera angles and composition, producing arresting photographs.

As well as these "images trouvés" she photographed her acquaintances in the artistic world of the time includ-



Miller photographed the horror of war

ing Najinski, Magritte, Picasso, Max Ernst, etc.

Despite her enormous talent, her work at this time reflects a privileged, inward-looking

and self-satisfied world of artists cut off from the reality of the lives of most people and is unsatisfying.

She produced more

or less uninteresting stills for fashion magazines such as *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* and undertook photography for the advertising indus-

try.

It is when she took up news photography during world war two that her photographs leap off the bromide paper.

Here she produced with her Rolleiflex images of real people whose lives were devastated by war.

Vogue published her pictures of war-time London and later her shocking pictures of Europe toward the end of the war: Children playing in a burnt out car in a bombed out European street. In another, a long view down a railway line with a train of cattle trucks – at Buchenwald. Bodies lie littered on the side of the tracks.

And now US GIs opening a cattle truck and finding the decomposing bodies of hundreds of Jews who had been sent to the extermination camp piled up inside

Inmates

Another of freed inmates of the camps scavenging in the camp's piles of rubbish for scraps of food or anything to barter for a crust of bread.

A German boy soldier, both hands blown off, still with artery clamps to (unsuccessfully) stem the flow of blood, dead in the mud.

In the ruins of post-war Austria – the haunt of Graham Greene's Harry Lime, brought to life by Orson Welles in Carol Reed's *Third Man*. Miller photographed a skeletal infant in a hospital with no medicines and hardly any food fighting with its last breaths for a few more moments of wretched life.

And Lazio Bardossy, wartime fascist leader, facing a firing squad in a Budapest prison courtyard.

For a brief period Miller's art and life combined to produce something of enormous value. These pictures are extraordinarily powerful.

But after this there was no successful going back. Miller gave up photography, became depressed because she had lost her looks, took to the bottle and lingered on in bourgeois misery while the maid looked after her son.

Go and see the pictures – it's free.

The Lives of Lee Miller is at the Gallery of Photography, Dublin, until January 31st.

journal

Explaining the crisis

The new issue of *International Socialism* is a must for anti war and anti capitalist campaigners.

It is a special issue containing five important articles explaining the present world and the crisis and wars we face. The unifying theme is economic, political and military crisis, and how the existing order isn't secure, therefore, from revolt from below.

In "Imperialism, Globalisation, the State and War", John Rees examines how territories formerly under Russian dominance, are now being scrambled over for economic strategic advantage.

It's the old game of imperialism. Opened up to the world market since the collapse of the USSR, Western intervention to secure influence and to shut out potential rivals is the motor propelling the expansion of NATO to the countries of Eastern Europe.

Similarly this lies behind Western intervention in Ex-Yugoslavia, and now the war in Afghanistan with its prize of control over the oil and gas rich Caspian Basin and dominance in the emerging economies of South Asia.

Jonathan Neale writes, "The death toll in Afghanistan has now more or less reached that in New York. I was born in New York and have lived in Afghanistan. I've seen

OUT NOW

IMPERIALISM

Globalisation, the state and war
by John Rees

A special issue of
International Socialism

Also includes:
JONATHAN NEALE on Afghanistan, ANNE ALEXANDER on the Middle East, MIKE GONZALEZ on Plan Colombia and CHRIS HARMAN on the recession

£5.00 or £3.00 stg from Socialist Worker editors & bookstalls or SW Books, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8. Phone 01-872 2682

people cry for their dead in both countries. The pain looks the same. Yet there is one difference – the Afghans have had 23 years of war.

"Thirty years ago many Afghans put their faith in the Communists, and were utterly betrayed. Then many put their faith in the Islamists, and were betrayed again. Some of those who could still hope hoped the Taliban would be better, and were betrayed again." His article gives essential background free of Western demonology.

Palestine is in uproar and unrest builds up in Saudi Arabia as the oil economy is less and less able to bribe a restive population.

Anne Alexander's article on the crisis in the Middle East gives hard evidence for how shaky the corrupt local regimes are and vulnerable to upheavals from below.

Plan Colombia has no prospect of succeeding in its stated aim of curtailing the supply of drugs. Instead it is more about crushing opposition by the poor in the region. It is part of a piece with the recently concluded Free Trade Area of the Americas, which enlisted nearly the entire hemisphere to the priorities of the free market and global capitalism. Mike Gonzalez provides the detail and analysis.

Finally Chris Harman author of *The Economics of the Madhouse* and editor of *Socialist Worker* in Britain analyses "The New World Recession". For the first time in twenty years, Japan, Europe and the US are simultaneously in recession.

But the world's rulers are stuck with a huge problem. Trying to restore or maintain profit rates has meant attacking the living standards of workers, paying them less and working them harder.

But workers' consequently restricted spending power means that consumer spending is unlikely to provide the demand necessary to pull out of recession. —STEVE GREEN

International Socialism 93, £3.50 stg or €5.00 from SWP Bookstalls or SW Books, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

CIVIL LIBERTIES

The collateral damage of Bush's war

THE EVENTS of September 11th are being used as an excuse to crack down on civil liberties. The government is attempting to extend the definition of terrorism to include all sorts of legitimate protest.

The EU has now defined terrorism to mean offences committed with the aim of "compelling a government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organisation".

Calling for the dropping of third world debt and for the dissolution of the WTO are examples of demands that fall within this definition.

Anti-poverty campaigners, green activists and socialists all want to fundamentally alter the existing structures.

Oppose

But even though they oppose terrorism, this wide definition can be used against them. This new definition will criminalise many ordinary people in Ireland.

The use of the term "any act" in this definition is extraordinary as it virtually negates the right to protest.

Under this definition a major strike or an anti-globalisation protest could be labeled a "terrorist act".

Even John Rogers, the former attorney general, has expressed concern at this broad definition.

The government wants to impose of penalties of between two and 20 years in prison for offences that include "causing extensive destruction to a Government or public facility . . . a public

place or private property likely to . . . result in major economic loss".

Similar "terrorism legislation" was passed in Britain in the 1970's. This resulted in major miscarriages of justice like the cases of the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four.

The European court of human rights later ruled that the British government was guilty of "inhuman and degrading treatment" of the prisoners and that they suffered physical and mental torture.

The EU also plans to "speed up extradition arrangements between European member states".

A government faced with a demonstration like last July's protest

in Genoa against the G8 summit could demand a "terrorist" demonstrator is raced to its country to face charges.

Legislation to enact this new definition will also increase police powers to target demonstrators in Ireland.

Criminal

For instance it will now be a criminal offence to publish details of the movement of nuclear waste trains.

This will affect the work of groups like CND and Greenpeace, which have campaigned against the transport of dangerous nuclear material and for the closure of installa-

tions like Sellafield for years.

This crackdown on civil rights in Ireland is being matched across the world.

US president George Bush has introduced military courts which can be convened anywhere in the world and sentence suspected "terrorists" to death.

The convicted would only be able to appeal to Bush or his deputy defence secretary Rumsfeld.

The US government could prevent any evidence against the convicted person ever being disclosed.

This exposes the "democracy" the EU and the US claim they stand for around the world.



Trade unionists marching in Brussels — under threat from EU law

The crackdown in Ireland has begun

THREE EVENTS last year illustrate that the Irish state has already begun to try to crack down on protest.

On a Critical Mass cycle demonstration during an official European Car Free Day around 150 cyclists created their own car-free zone in Dublin's O'Connell Street.

They held a sit-down protest and a few people played football until they were attacked by gardai. One protestor said, "The guards were really aggressive."

"They tried to drag people off the road. They were pulling at the bikes and for a minute it seemed daft, but the first person arrested was an Indy media cameraman, videoing the protest."

"Nine arrests were made and bicycles were impounded."

US EMBASSY ARRESTS:

ON OCTOBER 13th the Irish Anti-War Movement held a protest at the US Embassy. After the Green Party TD, John Gormly pointed out that Tony Blair was playing as culpable a role as George Bush, the 250 strong contingent decided to proceed to the British Embassy.

But when it got onto the

road, Kieran Allen, from the Steering Committee of the IAWM was arrested. He was lining up the protest in a peaceful fashion.

Donal McCarr, another anti-war activist, was also arrested.

Despite this highly provocative mood, the march proceeded without any further trouble to make its protest at the British Embassy.

The trials of both these activists will occur on January 21st and January 8th respectively.

ATTACK ON ANTI-PRIVATISATION PROTEST:

ON OCTOBER 10th, Globalise Resistance called a protest at an international conference on privatisation at the Burlington Hotel.

Some 300 people took part on this protest, including delegations of busworkers and workers in Ballymore Eustace who are facing the threat of privatisation.

A number of protestors attempted to enter the Burlington Hotel but were repulsed by security staff.

Afterwards a small sit-down was held in the hotel car park.

As it was ending, Gardai drew their batons and attacked the protest, injuring a number of the protestors.

14 people were arrested

and charged under the Public Order Act. One of those who was injured and who needed medical help was subsequently charged with trying to steal a police radio! Gardai snatch squads were used to target prominent activists.

Among those charged were Grace Lally and Rory

Hearne, who led the Globalise Resistance delegation to the Genoa protests. Also arrested was Richard Boyd Barrett, a key anti-bin charges campaigner and Socialist Workers Party candidate in Dun Laoghaire.

The trials of the 14 activists takes place on February 2 1st.

What you can do

We need to organise to defend our civil liberties. You can:

- Take a petition calling for the dropping of the charges around you workplace, college or community
- Make a donation to the legal defence fund for both cases. Send donations to Globalise Resistance account number 35247134, Bank of Ireland, 34 College Green, Dublin 2.
- Attend the trials on the respective dates.

Globalise Resistance DEFEND THE RIGHT TO PROTEST

Tuesday January 8th, 7:30pm
Earl of Kildare Hotel, Dublin
Speakers: Ivana Bacik (TCD Law Department)
Speaker from Irish Council of Civil Liberties



**where
we
stand**

Workers create all the wealth in capitalist society. A new society can only be constructed when they collectively seize control of that wealth and plan its production and distribution.

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be reformed out of existence. Parliament cannot be used to end the system.

The courts army and police are there to defend the interests of the capitalist class not to run society in a neutral fashion.

To destroy capitalism, workers need to smash the state and create a workers' state based on workers' councils.

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST

The SWP welcomed the break-up of the USSR and the end of the East European dictatorships. These states were not socialist but were run by a state-capitalist class.

We are against the domination of the globe by imperialist powers and we oppose their wars. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women.

We stand for: free contraception and free, legalised abortion and the right to divorce; the complete separation of church and state, an end to church control over schools and hospitals; an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians; an end to racism and anti-traveller bigotry.

We argue for working class unity in the fight against oppression.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

Northern Ireland is a sectarian state, propped up by the British Army. Catholic workers are systematically discriminated against by the state. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers weakens the whole working class.

Workers' unity can only be won and maintained in a fight to smash both the Northern and Southern states.

We stand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. Violence will only end when workers unite in the fight for a workers' republic.

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Trade unions exist to defend workers' interests. But the union leaders' role is to negotiate with capitalism—not to end it. We support the leaders when they fight but oppose them when they betray workers. We stand for independent rank and file action.

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. The SWP aims to build such a party here.

news & reports/politics/industry/the unions (01) 872 2682 /fax (01) 872 3838 e-mail swp@clubi.ie / www.clubi.ie/swp

PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS

Servisair

Occupying to save jobs

JUST BEFORE Christmas baggage and cargo handlers at Servisair went into five day occupation to resist job cuts.

Workers occupied the canteen after Servisair placed over 272 employees on protective notice and issued 13 redundancies.

The workers appeared for duty then refused to do any work after a ballot and the collapse of talks at the Labour Relations Commission.

The company responded by suspending all the staff.

Workers were then told by management that if they left the airport they wouldn't get back in. So they stayed.

Immediately scabs were imported into the airport and were issued access permits by Aer Rianta.

Normally new employees have to wait between one and three weeks for an access, which includes the driving licence obtained normally after training.

The staff were flown in from Manchester, Scandinavia, America and Belfast and were put up at the Regency Hotel in Drumcondra.

Servisair showed a complete disregard for the health and safety of their staff and other workers in the airport.

After scabs were seen breaking various safety regulations on the ramp one SIPTU representative said "I am concerned for all the

workers and passengers safety in the airport, these people are putting everybody else at risk."

Despite the action being made official the Union leaders didn't call for any form of solidarity action.

They should have called out the rest of the airport in support. Workers in Aer Lingus, and the other airport workers coming under attack could shut the airport down until jobs are secured.

The need for action across the airport is clear.

Freeze

In Aer Lingus management want a pay freeze until 2004, are sacking over 2000 workers and 'out-sourcing' services such as catering and cleaning.

The unions should be telling the government that it must intervene to protect jobs.

The only way to deal with this threat is through resistance.

And the Servisair workers have shown that resistance works.

The sit in forced management to drop the protective notice on 272 staff and a restructuring of rosters although the 13 redundancies are still going ahead.

The Servisair workers have showed the spirit to fight, what is needed is for a unified campaign of action by the unions to save jobs.

Citybus

Unofficial action brings victory

BUS WORKERS in Belfast won a major victory after a two day unofficial strike last month.

The strike began on the Thursday after Christmas against company penny-pinching.

Word went around that four Citybus drivers who are off sick after being assaulted in the course of their work, were strapped for cash over the holiday.

As the unofficial strike spread from depot to depot, workers who are not usually subject to assault—like catering staff and cleaners—came out in solidarity.

Joined

On the second day, the Citybus workers were joined by Ulsterbus drivers who serve the Greater Belfast area.

Every driver in every depot in Belfast was out. "450 drivers across Belfast are on strike", John, an ATGWU shop steward told *Socialist Worker*.

"Thirteen years I've been driving with Citybus and this is the first time every bus in Belfast has been stopped by

unofficial action".

Drivers off work as a result of an assault are supposed to receive a special assault payment for up to ten weeks, as long as their doctor says they need to stay off work.

After ten weeks, if they're not able to return to work, they move to company sick pay—which is less than the assault pay.

However, the decision whether or not to give assault pay has been left to depot managers.

Increasingly over recent years, managers have seen the injuries resulting from assaults as physical only.

If a driver is attacked and has a black eye, he or she is expected to return to work once the black eye is better.

Managers ignore the trauma suffered by workers who are attacked.

The news about the financial hardship suffered over Christmas by drivers denied assault pay was just the straw that broke the camel's back.

ATGWU activists in Citybus, Ulsterbus and Translink generally say that management has been doing its best to undermine the union in

an attempt to soften up the workforce in preparation for privatisation.

For example, there has long been an agreement that unions and management meet once a week to discuss scheduling.

Now, management want this changed to just once a month. John says, "The meetings will be meaningless if they are only monthly. But that would suit those pushing privatisation."

A union-management task force on dealing with the growing number of assaults is to be established in the first two weeks of January.

Ballot

It is to report back within ten weeks and, if it does not, the union has agreed to ballot for official strike action.

Citybus and Ulsterbus drivers might want to look South and see the demands raised by bus workers in Dublin to protect themselves from assault.

But, says John, "the real fight ahead is to stop the Stormont government from doing what London never dared—privatising our public transport".

CPSU

Action puts manors on management

AFTER three months industrial action workers by staff at the Letterkenny offices of the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs came to an end just before Christmas.

The action, by 130 members of the Civil and Public Services Union (CPSU), was in protest at the lack of consultation on the introduction of a computer system and the recruitment of temporary staff.

The office processes applications for child benefit, optical benefit and dental benefit for the whole State.

The office was the first in the Department to have the New Service Delivery Model computer system installed and it will be extended to other offices this year.

Despite issuing threats of sacking for the action, management have backed down. Management have been forced to take seriously the demands of workers for fair procedures in the introduction the computer system across the country.

Management have been forced to take seriously the demands of workers for fair procedures in the introduction the computer system across the country.



OVER 50 people turned out to protest at US war planes and troops landing in Shannon in December.

Protesters from Cork, Limerick, Galway and Belfast arrived at Shannon at precisely the time US marines were stopping down on their way to Afghanistan.

Donald Rumsfeld had stopped over the previous day, held a press conference and drank Guinness with troops.

Two protestors were arrested during an attempt to enter the runway.

Socialist Worker forum

Women's Liberation



Why has it not been won?

- Dublin:** Wednesday January 16th 7.30pm Walton Theatre, Arts Block Trinity College
- Waterford:** Thursday January 17th. 8pm. in ATGWU Hall, Keyser St
- Drogheda:** Thursday January 17th. 8pm. in McHugh's Bar
- Derry:** Tuesday January 22nd, 8.00pm, The Junction, Bishops St
- Tralee:** Wednesday January 23rd, 8.00pm Abbeygate Hotel Tralee
- Cork:** See Posters for details
- Limerick:** See Posters for details
- Galway:** See Posters for details

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★ Where now for anti-capitalism? page 8

Citybus workers show...

STRIKE ACTION WORKS!

NOW IT'S

TIME TO

PRIVATISATION

THE MAGNIFICENT Citybus strike at the end of last year, shows just the sort of gains workers can make when they take action.

The unofficial strike united Catholic and Protestant workers. Further it drew solidarity support across jobs.

That is the sort of action that can stop New Labour's privatisation in its tracks.

Waste

Privatisation wastes millions of pounds of public money, reduces standards, puts public sector jobs at risk and puts profits before need.

The PFI schemes are an attack on education and health in particular.

Many school and college

ancillary staff have already been transferred to the private sector.

It's time it stopped.

A fight against privatisation would bring another important benefit—it would act as a counter to the growth in sectarianism.

The jobs of both Catholic and Protestant workers in the public sector are under threat. The services being privatised are used by Protestants and Catholics alike.

A united fight of Protestant and Catholic together in defence of our class interests would help to isolate the bigots in our communities.

The union leaders talk tough about fighting privatisation, but as the Citybus workers have shown it is action that gets results.

■ Turn to page 11 for full report of Citybus dispute.