

# Socialist Worker

inside:

Anti war coverage from around the world

HOW THE U.S. LOST VIETNAM

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism €1.00 / £0.70p

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**THE PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN**

**WITH OR WITHOUT U.N. BACKING...**

**NO TO WAR!**

**CLOSE SHANNON TO U.S. MILITARY**

# Don't count on the UN to stop war

**"THE demonstrators want the issue of Iraq settled through the UN."**

This is was the reaction of one "government source" to the 100,000 strong anti-war demonstration in Dublin.

## Majority

It was a complete misrepresentation. The vast majority on the march are against the war — whether or not the UN backs it.

Labour Party spokesperson Michael D Higgins received loud cheers when he said that a war, which was wrong today, would still be wrong if it got UN backing.

## Contracts

The Irish government wants to keep a focus on the UN because they know that Britain and France are likely to get backing from the UN Security Council.

The UN Security Council has five permanent members who have a veto — the US, Britain,

France, Russia and China. Russia has already been assured that its oil

contracts with Saddam Hussein will be honoured. Three Chechen groups

have also been added to the global terrorist blacklist. China wants to get

access to US markets and knows that a NO vote will rebound on it.

Up to now France has been intransigent in opposing war.

But the Chirac government have also sent its biggest aircraft carrier, the Charles de Gaulle, to the war zone.

It does not want to be cut out of oil contracts in a post war settlement and will play brinkmanship until the moment comes to vote Yes.

## Precedent

The US can also win support among the other ten members of the UN Security Council.

Bulgaria wants to join NATO and will not vote against the US. Spain is led by a very right wing government and will vote for war.

Countries such as Angola and Guinea have already been given big aid packages.

They all know about the Yemeni precedent where all aid was suddenly withdrawn from Yemen after it voted against the first Gulf War.

Instead of counting on the UN to stop war, we need to build on the global protest movement that took off on February 15th.

## TORTURED FOR BEING ANTI-WAR

**TONY BLAIR likes to quip that while people are allowed to protest in Britain, in Iraq opposition is brutally crushed.**

His fake concern for democracy does not extend to the pro-Western dictatorships elsewhere in the Middle East.

Ten Egyptian anti-war activists are in prison, held under a law that allows for indefinite detention without trial or even being charged. All have been tortured with electric shock treatment or beatings.

The police broke up an attempted anti-war march on February 15th. Activists fear the beginning of a major clampdown in preparation for the war.

## The picture that embarrassed Powell



**THOUGHTFUL** bureaucrats at the United Nations ensured that nothing would embarrass US Secretary of State Colin Powell when he gave his "evidence" against Iraq. While Powell was giving his speech UN officials covered up a tapestry of one of the most famous murals in the world—Picasso's *Guernica*—because it shows the reality of war.

The painting is a tribute to the people of the town of Guernica, who were blasted by fascist forces during the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s. UN officials were worried that Powell would arrive for his warmongering speech against a backdrop, which showed women and children shrieking in horror. The painting was donated to the UN building by billionaire Nelson Rockefeller. He knew a thing or two about covering up works of art.

He had a mural by revolutionary artist Diego Rivera sandblasted in 1933 because it included a portrait of Lenin.

## BAN ON PALESTINE

THE US Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has refused the Palestinian entry, *Divine Intervention*, for the Oscar nomination of Best Foreign Film.

The reason? The academy doesn't recognise Palestine as a nation.

Each nation is allowed to submit one film to represent its country.

Even the Bush administration was able to communicate with the Palestinian Authority, so recognising its existence.

And if Palestine does not exist in the movie world, why was the same *Divine Intervention* selected as a Palestinian entry at the Cannes Film Festival this year?

The academy does manage to accept that the film exists.

It describes its nationality as Israeli. Unsurprisingly, the Israeli government has not put forward the film, which deals with the intifada, as its official entry.

## DEATH THROUGH CUTS

AT LEAST 65 women a year are needlessly dying from breast cancer because the government will not extend the Breastcheck screening programme nationwide.

These are the calculations of Dr Jerry Crowley, the Independent TD for Mayo.

The Breastcheck programme only operates in half the country.

## Cost

The cost of extending it to the west of Ireland would be €13 million in capital costs and €12.5 million annually.

But that is too much for a penny-pinching government that wants to keep taxes on profit low.

# Military attaché on collusion charges

PROSECUTION papers are being prepared in relation to the involvement of Brigadier Gordon Kerr, the current British military attaché in Beijing, in relation to the murder of Pat Finucane.

Kerr was a former head to the British army's secret Force Research Unit. His present post of military attaché is also closely related to spying.

## Suspected

Pat Finucane was murdered by the UDA but it has been long suspected there was collusion from the

security forces.

One of the alleged killers, Ken Barrett said that a police officer that urged him to kill Finucane claimed he was the 'brains' behind the IRA.

He also said that a police roadblock near the Finucane house had been taken down and the route was 'all clear'.



Pat Finucane

## STILL FIGHTING FOR TRUTH

Victims of the Stardust relative are still fighting for the truth 22 years after a fire in the disco killed 48 young people from Dublin's North side.

A tribunal in 1985 concluded that the fire had been started deliberately. But the Stardust Victims Committee said, "The source of the ignition was never found. How then did he conclude

that the fire was 'probably started deliberately'?"

The owners of the Star-

dust were never prosecuted for breaching byelaws.

These included lock-

ing a fire exit, obstructing other exits and never holding a fire drill.

## No rights for temporary workers

The Irish government wants the most right wing policies in the EU.

It is now opposing

plans to give temporary workers who are recruited through employment agencies legal rights after six-week service.

There are now 600

recruitment agencies in Ireland — and the government wants to make sure they supply bosses with a 'flexible' staff with few rights.

## McDOWELL TARGETS SWP

MICHAEL McDowell has ordered a criminal investigation into the SWP, which he sees as one of the main organisations behind the February 15th protests.

A spokesperson for the Minister for Justice told the *Sunday Independent* that the gardai are investigating the SWP under the Incitement of Hatred Act for having anti-Semitic material on its website.

This is a ludicrous attempt to deflect attention away from the success of the anti-war movement and to portray the SWP as a sinister 'extremist' organisation.

The truth is that the SWP does not tolerate racism inside its ranks. It is one of the foremost anti-racist organisations in the country.

Unlike McDowell,

socialists say that all immigrants — whether Jew, Arab, Chinese or whatever nationality — are welcome here.

The SWP opposes Zionism as a political philosophy which advocates an exclusively Jewish state.

We are for a secular state of Palestine, which confers no privileges on either Jews or Arabs.

But opposing the state of Israel does not make you an anti-Semite. It simply means you are for equality of treatment.

February 15th is a watershed that will change the politics of the left in Ireland.

McDowell senses this and this is why in his crude way he has threatened the SWP with an absurd charge.

But tens of thousands already know what the SWP stands for — and will not tolerate any scapegoating.

## SEAN O CIONNAITH

THE BALLYMUN branch of the Socialist Workers Party was saddened by the sudden death of Sean O Cionnaith.

Sean, a leading member of the Workers Party, was a lifelong socialist and community activist.

Despite our differences we in the SWP salute the memory of a lifelong campaigner for a better world.—KEVIN WINGFIELD, Ballymun SWP

# AFTER FEBRUARY 15TH: Which way for the anti war movement?

**THE HUGE demonstrations in Dublin and Belfast showed that the majority of people are against Bush's war.**

If we lived in a genuine democracy, Shannon airport would be immediately closed to US war-planes.

Similarly Tony Blair would cease to give cover to Bush and so expose him before the American people.

Yet none of these things are likely to occur. Sunday Tribune correspondent, Stephen Collins, ran a story on the day after the magnificent demonstrations under the headline 'Aherne set to back war as the people say no'.

And Blair is openly risking a split in the Labour Party in the hope that a quick war will allow him to recover ground later.

Never before have the limitations of capitalist democracy been so blatantly demonstrated.

Our rulers are not answerable to the wishes of the people but to a military industrial complex that promotes the interests of corporate America.

They may talk about bringing democracy to Iraq – but they treat with contempt the wishes of their own people. Their only concern now is how to marginalize and defeat the anti-war movement.

One tactic will be to try and split the movement by going to the UN and twisting arms behind closed door so that they get some sort of resolution to sanction war.

## Activists

Anti-war activists must counter this by convincing that thousands who came out on February 15th that the UN is dominated by the big colonial powers and rarely acts against their interests.

Ahern and Blair are also hoping for a 'deflation effect' when war breaks out. When the bombs start going off, they will convey the message that 'nothing can be achieved' by marching and policies are 'inevitably' made only by the powerful.

The anti-war movement however can, however, respond to this by escalating their actions.

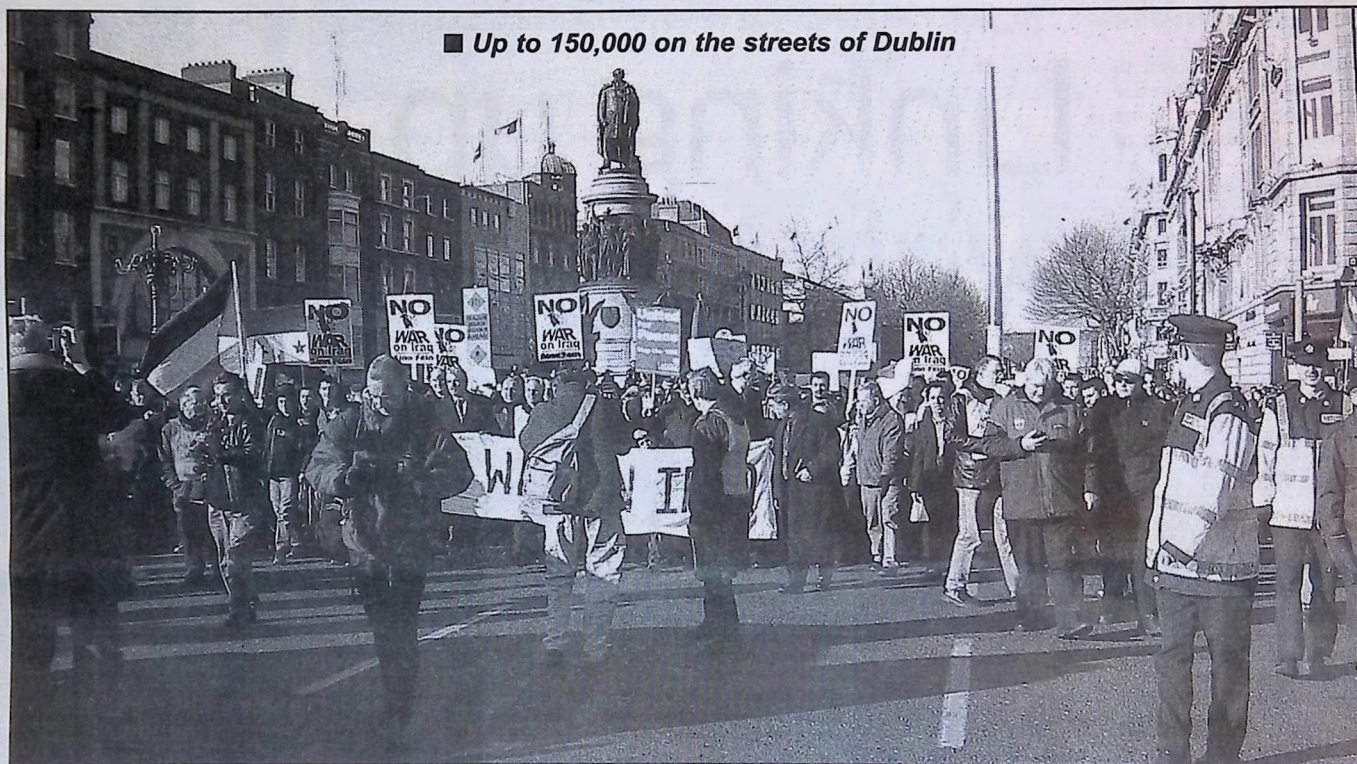
The Irish Anti-War Movement is asking people to do three things in the event of war breaking out.

■ At 6pm on the day of the outbreak of war, assemble at the US embassy in Dublin; the US consulate in Belfast or other specified venues in city centres.

■ At 12pm on the day after war breaks out, hold a 10 minutes stoppage. Walk off work, come out of colleges and schools – stop what you are doing and gather together to discuss further actions.

On the weekend war breaks out, hold marches in every main town.

■ Up to 150,000 on the streets of Dublin



## Get back to Shannon

**THE ANTI-WAR movement will return to Shannon airport in even bigger numbers on March 1st.**

Irish troops are being directly implicated in the US war effort by offering military protection for their planes.

Officially, the defence forces are supposed to offer protection to Irish people against foreign armies.

But instead they are protecting foreign soldiers against Irish anti-war protestors.

## Campaign

Ahern and Cowan have held meetings with US officials such as Richard Haas to assure them that their war operations in Shannon can continue.

They mounted a campaign of intimidation through the media and the courts to remove the Shannon Peace Camp from the area.

But the hundred thousand strong anti-war movement will not be cowed.

It is returning to Shannon to convey the message to workers at the airport that they have every right to refuse to re-fuel or service US troop

carriers.

It is calling on the leaders of SIPTU and the ICTU who spoke at the February 15th rally to come out publicly and

pledge union backing to any worker who takes action.

And it is bringing a direct message to the soldiers at Shannon that they are not

operating in the name of the Irish people.

Every anti-war group should mobilise quickly for the March 1st protest.

## Build a grassroots movement

**THE IRISH Anti-War Movement as the main driving force behind the February 15th demo. Its activists put up thousands or posters and distributed hundreds of thousands of leaflets.**

Now is the time to build it up as a major grass roots movement. Such a movement will be diverse and link together all shades of political opinion.

Conversely, it will also subject every political party to scrutiny to ensure they carry through on their pledges against war.

A mass social movement has arrived that is on a much larger scale than the radical sixties.

The challenge now is to sink roots in every workplace and area.

In the coming weeks, there should be:

A well publicised meeting in every area to garner together the thousands of new potential activists who joined the demonstrations

on February 15th.

Ensure there is a well-organised calendar of activities to allow everyone to participate at their own

pace.

Immediately publicise the March 1st demonstration and the action plan in the event of war.

# STOP WORK TO STOP THE WAR!

IF BERTIE Ahern will not listen to the 100,000 people who marched against war, then we need to move to mass civil disobedience.

The key to this is a call by the Irish Anti-War Movement for a stoppage at 12pm on the day after war begins. Work, study, shopping - everything should stop to protest at the brutality of war.

Activists should start to popularise that idea now. We should raise the idea of the 10-minute stoppage

in trade unions and student unions.

We should start talking about where to assemble together in the event of war.

We should get leaflets and posters about.

Remember the huge demonstrations on February 15th started with a call from anti-capitalist movement meeting at the European Social Forum.

We can make the stoppage a reality by organising now.

# What is behind the recent infighting within Loyalism?

**THE FEUD** inside the UDA seems to have come to a temporary end with the fleeing of Johnny Adair's supporters to Scotland.

The battle that raged in the UDA (Ulster Defence Association) can in some part be put down to that of a "turf war" — a war for control of a lucrative drugs and racketeering "market".

The age-old story of thieves turning on each other is nothing new.

However to view it solely in terms of a territorial wrangle would be to completely deny the political dimension that inevitably helps drive these very bloody power struggles.

## Aspect

The most telling aspect of the entire thing is the new found alliance between the UDA and the other main loyalist organisation, the UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force).

The UDA has always existed primarily as a ruthless anti-Catholic loyalist death squad.

The criminal element created a valuable sideline and the means to exercise complete control over their "own" people as well.

The UDA, despite professing public endorsement of the peace process, have never actively supported it.

Since the Good Friday the UDA have been responsible for numerous killings and thousands of pipe bombings and attacks on Catholic homes.

They have undoubtedly

been responsible for the vast majority of interface violence, including the four months of continuous attacks endured by the residents of the Short Strand last year.

In January last year they

were responsible for the murder of Danny McColgan a young Catholic Postal worker.

The murder sparked a strike amongst postal workers and the biggest anti-sectarian rally ever seen in the North.

## Linking up with the UVF

**THE UDA's** new found ally, the UVF, has always been a more disciplined and, in recent years, a contradictory organisation.

The Progressive Unionist Party, its political wing, has articulated working class demands such as better pay, an end to the 11+, and abortion rights for women.

However its failure to break from Loyalism has meant that these demands have always played second fiddle to its commitment to the "union", which inevitably involves a commitment to British imperialism.

Rather than looking to Catholic workers in the North and workers south of the border as their natural allies the PUP seeks to lobby to the

British ruling class.

So even though they opposed the 11plus, the only time they protested outside the office of Education Minister Martin McGuinness, was not to demand equal education, but to force him to fly the Union Jack.

## Inability

This inability to break with sectarianism has other implications.

Instead of seeing that resources are scarce because they are concentrated in the hands of a minority of the North's ruling class, they view the allocation of resources as a constant struggle between Protestants and Catholics.

Inevitably this competition helps breed rather than break the anti-Catholic bigotry that

has been a permanent feature of the UVF and the PUP.

When loyalist protesters were terrorising schoolchildren and their families at Holy Cross School last year, Billy Hutchinson was amongst the protesters.

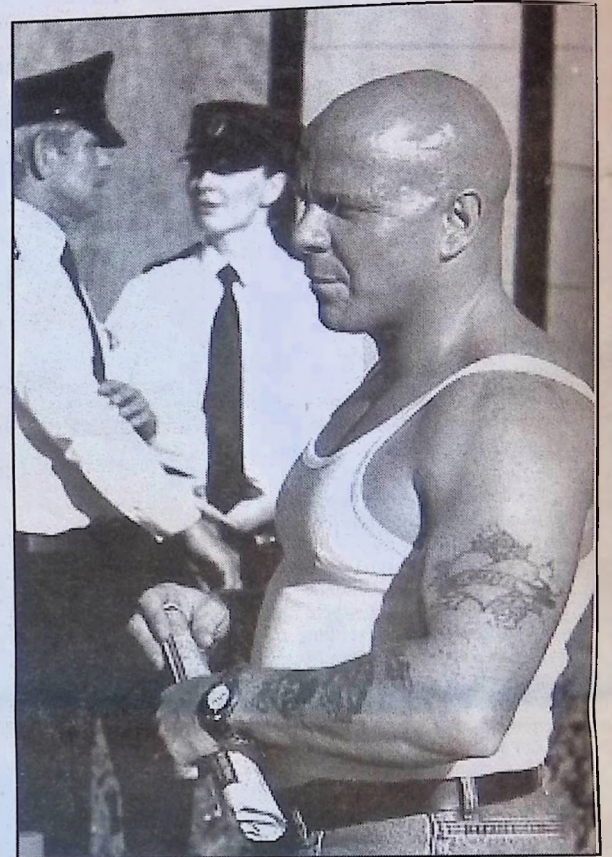
It is no surprise therefore that in the absence of the Good Friday Agreement delivering anything for working class people and the collapse of the Assembly, the UVF have merely regressed to doing what they do best — blaming Nationalists.

## Alliance

It is this that has spawned the unholy alliance that has been developing in recent days between the UVF and the UDA.

On the big question they now both agree, the Nationalists are the problem in the North.

Within days of the two



■ **Johnny Adair**

groups meeting for discussions about the formation of a united front, three Catholic postal workers received death threats.

Odd as it seems, it looks like the UDA had to deal with the fanatically anti-catholic Adair

and his "C" company not only as part of an internal power struggle, but also because it was felt that their gangster-ism might stand in the way of their latest plans to once again go to war against nationalists.

*the Eamonn McCann column*

## IRA disbanding? Will they... won't they?

Arriving at Hillsborough on February 12th for the latest round of talks between the pro-Agreement parties, Tony Blair's spokesman said, "This will not be Groundhog Day."

No more going round and round the same old circles. The time had come for "acts of completion."

Six hours later, Blair flew out after a day uncannily similar to many others over the past five years. Much chatter about the need for movement, confidence-building measures, restoration of trust, etc. And a date set, March 3rd, for the next session of the same saga.

But if nothing was definitively resolved, there was at least clarification of the most important issue remaining to be overcome: disbandment of the IRA has been identified as the key condition for

the restoration of the Assembly and Executive.

Maybe nobody's using the word—"They know that would be too humiliating for Republicans," observed Martha Kearney on "Newsnight"—but everybody's got the message. The SDLP and the Irish News may agree with Sinn Fein that Trimble has been half-hearted about implementing the Agreement and Blair and the British security establishment have been playing games of double-bluff. But the Nationalist mainstream now also accepts that if the IRA isn't wound up, the Agreement's a goner.

And since the Republican leadership has hitched its hopes of political advancement to the Agreement, they have little room for manoeuvre.

Danny Morrison says that the IRA will "never" disband, because that would signal acceptance of defeat. But Morrison told

us in 1998 that the IRA would "never" decommission arms. What really happened at Hillsborough was that the IRA was told to wake up to the fact that Never-never Land isn't for real.

The dreamy delusion that Republicans could play a full role in constitutional politics while maintaining a clandestine army will no longer be indulged.

No progress was apparent at Hillsborough because Sinn Fein wasn't able to deliver IRA acceptance of disbandment. But they have been let know they are going to have to deliver.

If the IRA disbands—whatever euphemism is applied so as to save Republican embarrassment—the major impediment to full DUP as well as UUP participation in the Institutions will have been removed. Essentially, disbandment of the IRA is all that the DUP has been demanding as the price for power-sharing. Paisley's difference with Trimble has

concerned Trimble's alleged gullibility or duplicity in believing that the Republicans were moving towards disbandment when, according to Paisley (echoing Morrison), "the leopard never changes its spots."

Hence the significance of the remark by Derry DUP Assemblyman Willie Hay at the beginning of February that he could envisage the DUP in government with Sinn Fein. Hay's clash with his party leader afterwards didn't reflect a political disagreement or, despite a great deal of media excitement, a split. It was just that Hay could see IRA disbandment coming, Paisley seemed still blind to the possibility.

Sinn Fein leaders are now cheerfully talking up the possibility of serving in an Executive with the DUP after a May election, smiling indulgently at Nigel Dodds as he blusters on television about his party "never" working with "unreconstructed

terrorists."

All sorts of things could go wrong. But the conventional wisdom is that rank-and-file IRA resistance to a settlement leaving the North constitutionally within the UK has been salami-sliced to the point where it's not a factor any more and that the deal which Blair and Ahern have in mind is now do-able.

Republicans have to ask themselves whether governing the North in association with the DUP and other parties is an adequate return on a strategy which involved the infliction of more than two thousand deaths and hundreds of volunteers lost. And, if it isn't, what are the factors which have led them to this unhappy denouement.

Most importantly, they should consider the possibility that it isn't the strategy of the current Republican leadership which has been found wanting, but Republicanism itself.

# LIES

## to justify

# WAR

**The US and British government are turning out lies to justify war. But they have been caught out.**

US Secretary of State Colin Powell recently showed a series of photographs, which he claimed, were Iraq's chemical weapons facilities. He said the Iraqis had cleaned the place up when they heard the weapons inspectors were coming.

But even UN Chief Weapons inspector Hans Blix said Powell got it wrong. Traces of the chemicals would have been in the soil if a factory for producing chemicals weapons existed.

Powell also said that there was a link between an Islamist group, Ansar al Islam, and the Baghdad regime. He showed pictures of the group's camp, which he said was a 'poison factory.'

But the Observer's Luke Harding was among 20 journalists who visited the same site. He wrote: 'The terrorist factory was nothing of the kind, more a dilapidated collection of concrete outbuildings. There is a bakery. There is no sign of chemical weapons, only the smell of paraffin and vegetable butter used for cooking.'

The British government produced a special dossier on the 'evidence' against Saddam Hussein.

But it turned out that it was plagiarised from an academic paper written about the 1991 Gulf War.

The author of the original article Ibrahim al-Marashi is an Iraqi exile who is now a postgraduate student in the US.

When he discovered what happened he said, 'This is wholesale deception. How can the British public trust the government if it is up to these sorts of tricks'

## NO CASE FOR WAR

**The exposure of deception by Britain and the US shows how weak are their arguments for war. Here are some of their most common excuses.**

**'Saddam Hussein is the new Hitler'**

IT'S A false comparison. At the start of the Second World War Germany was among the strongest of the world's powers.

They had a military machine that could conquer their neighbours.

In contrast, years of UN sanctions have left Iraq with a Third World economy.

Even if Iraq still possesses a handful of working Scud missiles their range would not go beyond eastern Turkey or the north of Israel.

The conventional missiles that Iraq does possess only have a range of 150km-roughly the distance between

Dublin and Belfast.

Years of sanctions have not only crippled Iraq's economy but also hindered its weapons development programme. Iraq has a military budget of \$1.5 billion per year.

The US dwarfs this, spending 264 times as much more than China, Russia, Australia, Japan, South Korea and all the other Nato countries combined.

**'This is a war for freedom and democracy'.**

**BUSH IS in no position to lecture the world about democracy.**

Bush won the presidency thanks to his brother disqualifying thousands of voters in the key Florida election, and then using Republican appointees on the Supreme Court to quash the recount.

The US arms repressive regimes around the world, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey.

The US assisted the recent failed coup in Venezuela. Democracy is not proposed for Iraq. General Tommy



Retreating Iraqi conscripts burnt alive by the US in 1991

Franks has been suggested as a military dictator by the US.

**'An attack on Iraq is part of the war on terror'.**

**THERE IS no credible evidence linking Iraq and Al Qaida. Bin Laden rejects the secular Ba'athist regime.**

The 11 September hijackers were from Saudi Arabia and Egypt. An attack on Iraq will multiply the anger at the imperialist control of the Middle East.

Terrorism will grow if a mass movement does not defeat US aggression.

**'Saddam has weapons of mass destruction'**

**THE UN inspectors team found no evidence of these weapons.**

Their main charge against Iraq was that it could not prove it did not have them. But proving a negative is very difficult because you can never show evidence.

The US has by far the largest arsenal of such weapons. It is the only state to have used nuclear weapons on civilians, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It covered half of

Southern Vietnam with the chemical weapon Agent Orange.

It was the US army which patented VX chemical weapons, and the Bush administration which scuppered the Biological Weapons Convention.

**'Saddam has flouted international law'**

**THE COUNTRY which has broken the most UN resolutions is not Iraq but Israel.**

It has been able to ignore demands to leave the Occupied Territories because of its role as the US's most reliable ally in the region. It is the highest recipient of US aid-at roughly \$500 per person per year-as a result.

Bush is adamant that international

law not be applied to the US-hence his refusal to endorse an International Criminal Court, the Kyoto climate change protocols or UN weapons inspections in the US.

**'This war is not about oil'**

**THIS IS a sick joke. Iraq has a proven reserve of 112 billion barrels of oil (second only to Saudi Arabia), and there is believed to be a further 100 billion barrels which is unproven. Iraqi oil is six times cheaper to extract than Russian oil, and is easier to refine.**

The oil lobby is at the heart of the Bush administration. Vice-president Dick Cheney, the former director of Halliburton, has arranged meetings with representatives of Exxon Mobil, ChevronTexaco (the company that named a tanker after former board member Condoleezza Rice) and ConocoPhillips.

The US is worried about the stability of the Saudi Arabian regime. This is why it wants Iraq as its oil colony.

US plans to seize the oil fields and hold them in a 'trust' until they are privatised.



Fadel, 7 years old, came from Basra. Depleted uranium and radiation, has damaged her liver and kidneys. A needle was injected into her body to draw out the abdominal dropsy. She died soon after the painful injection

## Israel: The rogue state armed by the US

**BUSH AND Blair say Iraq is the "rogue state" of the Middle East, which threatens its neighbours with weapons of mass destruction.**

After a decade of sanctions Iraq is a weak state which is not capable of seriously threatening anyone.

There is a rogue state in the region which does threaten its neighbours with weapons of mass destruction. It is Israel.

Israel has defied more United Nations resolutions than any other state. It still occupies the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza Strip in direct defiance of UN resolutions.

Yet neither Bush nor Blair suggest war on Israel to enforce UN

resolutions. Instead the US and Britain continue to arm, finance and support the Israeli regime.

Bush and Blair say Saddam Hussein is a mon-

ster who has invaded his neighbours. But Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon is a war criminal. He has repeatedly led military forces into almost all of Israel's neighbouring countries.

Sharon was even condemned by an official Israeli inquiry as "responsible" for the massacre of thousands of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps in Lebanon. The Belgium courts want to try him as a war criminal.

Israel is also the one state in the region which definitely does have nuclear weapons. It has 200 warheads aimed at every capital city across the Arab world.

The US and Britain dare to claim they are fighting to restore democracy in Iraq. That is the biggest lie of all.

The US and Britain supported, armed and financed Saddam Hussein for years in the 1980s. Bush and Blair care nothing for Israel trampling on the democratic and human rights of an entire people in Palestine.

# Worldwide millions

## DUBLIN: 'THIS IS WHAT DEMOCRACY LOOKS LIKE!'

**IN ONE of the biggest marches ever seen in Dublin over 100,000 people came to the capital city on February 15th to voice their opposition to any war in Iraq.**

Calling on the Irish Government to stop allowing the US military use Shannon, the massive size of the demonstration clearly showed that the Irish people are against the war.

"They cannot ignore this" was the general reaction from people as the march slowly slinked its way around the streets of Dublin. The guessing game of "how big is it?" began early on with seasoned political activists saying that Dublin had never seen anything quiet like this.

Over 100,000 people packed into the streets of Dublin, with the length of the march at one stage reaching from St Stephen's Green at its head while the end still remained at Parnell Square.

Drums, whistles, chants, street performers, young secondary school students, parents with their children, people from various nationalities living in Ireland all combined to create almost carnival like atmosphere.

This was an unbelievably good-natured event, where Irish people expressed their seething anger at the Irish Governments continued support for the American war machine by allowing the use of Shannon.

### Banners

The wide range of home made banners representing towns and cities from across the island spoke volumes of how the whole of Ireland had been involved in this amazing antiwar demonstration.

Waterford, Cork, Tralee, Ennis, Galway, Sligo, Letterkenny, Maynooth, Wexford, Dunshaughlin, Ballymun, Donegal Town, Limerick and many more areas were represented in the banners carried by the 100,000 plus turn-out.

Speaking at Parnell Square Anne-Marie Quinn from Mervue in Galway City said that she was in attendance because of her anger at the proposed war on Iraq and the naked greed behind it.

by **DAVID LYNCH**

"I think it is all so obviously about oil," she said. "And that is not a good enough reason to go bombing a country and killing people."

"I have been on a number of antiwar marches last year but this is by far the biggest."

Brian Kavanagh from Walkinstown in Dublin was on his first ever protest and he was hugely impressed with the size of the crowd.

### Effective

"I don't normally go on marches at all, but I think because this was taking place all across the globe it made me feel that it could be very effective."

"Sometimes I feel that one march in one city is not enough, but I think that this march was very effective because it was so global."

Katja Fedrowitz a German working in Wicklow town was also delighted at the size of the crowd, which had gathered in Dublin.

"It really is huge, I know back in Germany there are also protests and prayer vigils taking place across the country," she said.

Thomas O'Connor from County Clare had travelled up to Dublin on Friday to attend the demonstration in Dublin.

"It was definitely worth it coming all the way up here," he said. "I really don't think that Dublin has ever seen anything like this, a few people have mentioned the Tax Marches back in the eighties but that is almost twenty years ago."

"Bertie, and Cowen cannot ignore this anymore the people have spoken and they have to take notice. The American planes should not be allowed to use

Shannon and the Irish government should do all it can to promote peace."

Marie Murphy from Clontarf said that this was her first march for many years and she had brought her two young children.

"I have not been on the streets since I was a student, but this was so important that I had to come," she said "It seems to me a crazy position that the majority of the world is against the war, but Bush and Blair seem intent on having it."

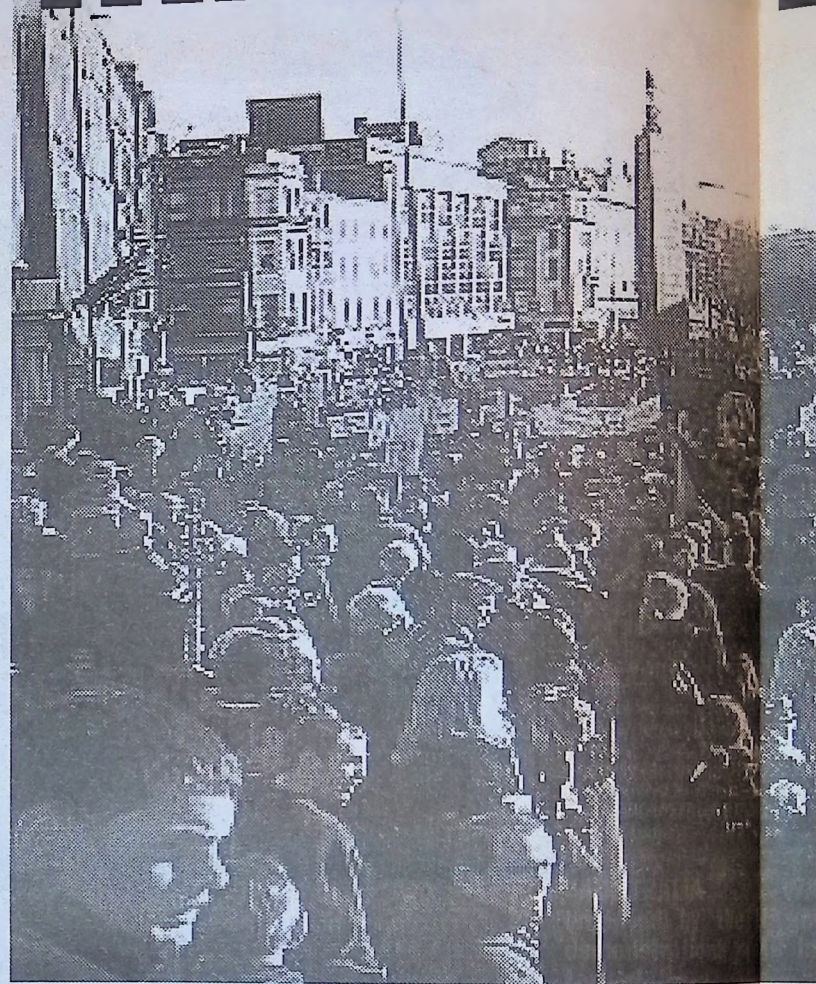
"People are talking about Europe being split over this, but I have many friends in Europe and they are completely against the war. The people of Europe are against the war it is only their leaders who seem intent on bombing Iraq."

Speakers from many different political and peace groups addressed the multitudes at points along the route.

The former UN Assistant Secretary General Denis Halliday told the crowds in Dame Street "The Irish Government is endorsing a moron being followed by a weasel. Tell Taoiseach Bertie Ahern that there is no Irish support for war on the people of Iraq. Not in our name." He was greeted by deafening cheers along Dame Street.

"I think that Bush is the guy who is the biggest threat to world peace," said Mark Conroy a secondary school student from Wicklow, speaking on Dame Street at the end of the march.

"He is the guy with the most



Over 100,000 protest in Dublin

weapons of mass destruction and he has no problem using them. Not only that, he also sells them to other countries."

"I don't think our government should be supporting Bush and going by the size of this march I think the majority of Irish people are against this war."

After the march someone was heard saying, "this must be what

the 1960's was like".

Everyone knew that something changed in Irish politics on February 15th. A political march of that magnitude in Dublin means that the anti-war movement is now truly a mass movement representing the majority opinion in Ireland.

February 15th was only the beginning and it is now all eyes on Shannon for March 1st.

## 'THE MOST BEAUTIFUL DAY IN BELFAST!'

**IN AN unprecedented demonstration in Belfast, 20,000 people marched against Bush's and Blair's war.**

It was one of the largest demonstrations on an international issue that Northern Ireland has ever seen.

The march, organised by the Stop the War Coalition, brought together whole diverse sections of northern Irish society.

Addressing the rally Eamonn McCann told the crowds "We have come here in a great cause to deliver a simple message - Bush and Blair can say what they will but Ulster says No"

In the run up to the march shops and bars declared they would close to allow staff to take part in the demonstrations.

Michael, a school student

by **DAN BUCKLEY**

from Bangor, said "I have to say I left the march inspired. It was brilliant to see so many people from so many sections of society come out on the streets for an extremely important issue."

### Inspirational

Richard, a student from Queens, agreed, "Its fantastic to see whole swathes of soci-

ety coming out against the war. I seriously couldn't say how many people were on it, the crowds just stretched down Royal Avenue and along to Great Victoria Street.

"For me the most inspirational thing was the internationalism of the whole thing, we were joining hands with millions of people around the world."

Joe, a charity worker from Newtonabbey, told *Socialist Worker*, "I think this is the most beautiful day in this city's history. Earlier I saw a five year old child waving an anti-war placard. I think this is what our democracy looks like, of millions of people on the streets, compared to their democracy of a small clique of middle-aged men deciding the fate of the world."

## A GL

**BRITAIN:** "IT WAS the march in Briti- and that's offici

Only once before bers have been streets-back in 19 lions parted to c end of the Second

Last Saturday up marched to protes beginning of another

From Piccadilly l Thames to St Pauls & Euston Station, there placards and banner

—SOCIALIST WOR

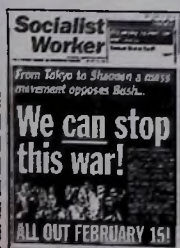
**SPAIN:** "MORE THAN lion people den in Spain on That is an inc percent of th tion.

In all there were marches that we k In Barcelona an marches were at le half million strong. quarter of the popu cities and the bigge their history.

There were als tions of hundreds c people in cities suc Seville, Zaragoza a —EN LUCHA (I Spain

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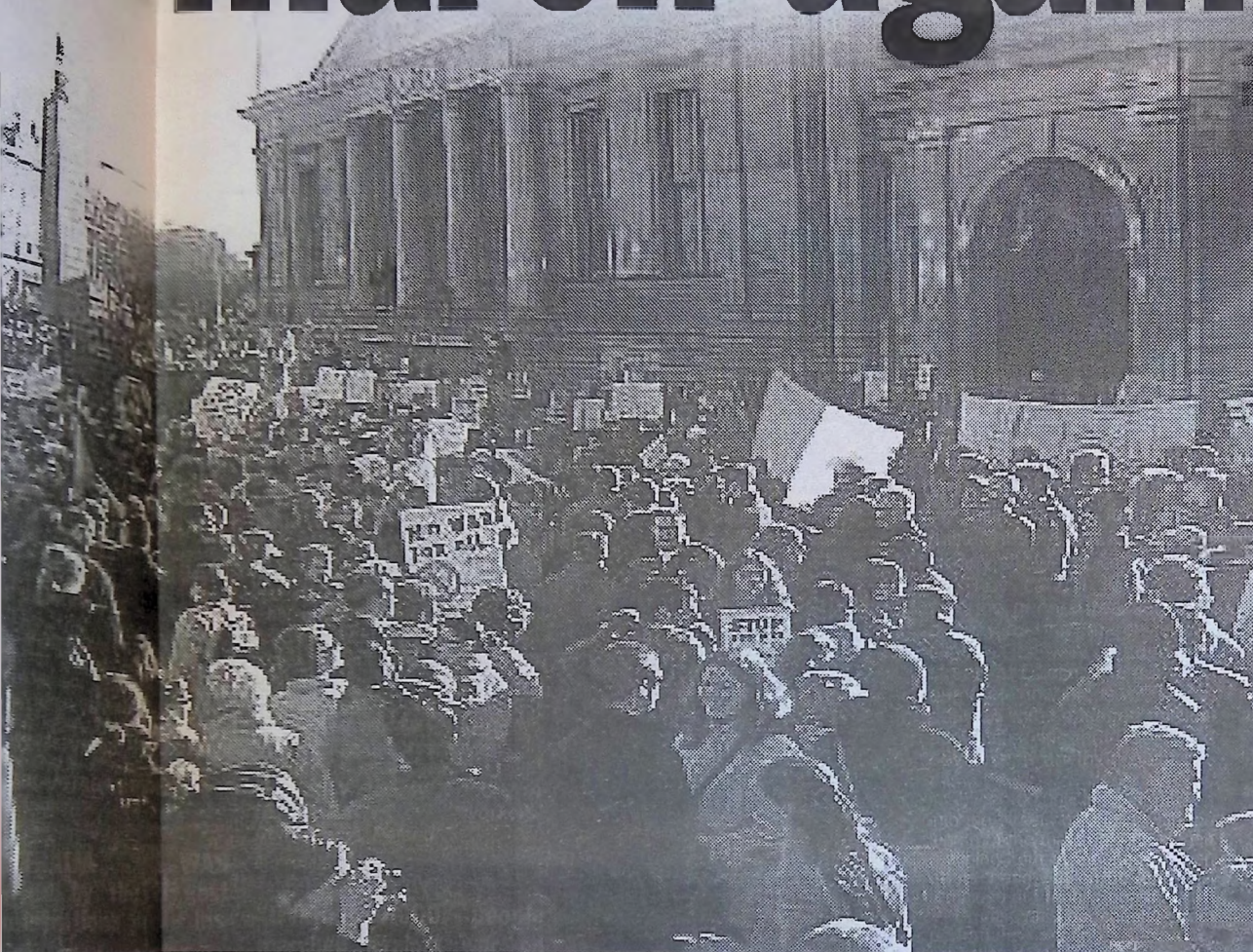
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# March against War



We all felt very powerful."  
—SEK (Socialist Workers Party), Greece

## TURKEY:

"IN TURKEY there were demonstrations in Istanbul, Adana, Ankara, Izmir, Zonguldak, Izmit, Antalya, Mugla.

In Istanbul thousands marched in a lively demo.

Around half the demo was made up of Kurds who were protesting at both the war on Iraq and attacks on the Kurds here, which have increased with the drive to war.

There were many arrests before the demo. [After the rally all the speakers on the platform were arrested, but later released. Those arrested included two stars of Turkey's most popular TV comedy show.

At the Turkey-Ukraine football match on Thursday a young unemployed man ran on to the pitch with a banner saying, 'War means unemployment - No to War'.

The prime minister and Foreign Minister were there and smiled uneasily as the ENTIRE stadium chanted 'No to War'.

—ANTIKAPITALIST, Turkey

## AUSTRALIA:

"AUSTRALIA WAS engulfed by the biggest demonstrations in its history.

Almost one million people protested in towns and cities across Australia—5 percent of the entire population.

There were four demonstrations of 100,000 or more. The largest was in Sydney, where between 300,000 and 500,000 took part.

The massive size of the protests has thrown the Tory government of John Howard on to the defensive.

Unions in Melbourne have agreed to walk off the job for a mass lunchtime rally if war goes ahead."

—JARVIS RYAN, International Socialists, Australia

## AUSTRIA:

"OVER 30,000 people took to the streets of the Austrian capital Vienna in our biggest anti-war march ever.

"This system is rotten' we heard over and over again. There was an overwhelming number of school students there. A new anti-capitalist generation shaped a historic day."

—LINKSWENDE, Austria

## NORWAY:

"THE BIGGEST demo ever in Oslo, the capital of Norway, more than 60,000 people.

On the streets on Saturday you couldn't see anyone that was not part of the huge anti-war demonstration.

They knew they were part of a global demonstration, they could feel they were making history.

—JON SANDVEN, Norway

## POLAND:

"TEN THOUSAND people marched against the war in Warsaw - that's twenty times more than the biggest previous anti-war protest and the biggest anti-war demonstration ever in Poland.

Poland is seen by the world's media as a place where everyone supports US presidents.

Prime Minister Leszek Miller visited Washington to promise his undying love for Bush. Poland's president Aleksander Kwasniewski is so servile to Bush he has been tipped as a possible future NATO secretary-general.

The demonstrators chanted "Miller, Kwasniewski - Bush's two little doggies" -this rhymes in Polish!

—P R A C O W N I C Z A DEMOKRACJA (Workers' Democracy), Poland

## NEW ZEALAND:

"OVER 20,000 people marched against war on Iraq last Saturday in towns and cities around New Zealand.

It was the biggest anti-war mobilisation since Vietnam, a huge leap forward for the movement.

Anti-war actions were held in more than 20 centres across the country, with massive marches in Auckland and Wellington.

After an anti-war concert in Auckland on Sunday, hundreds marched to the prime minister's residence to deliver a 30 metre long banner signed by thousands of people.

As they marched, tired but ecstatic, they were chanting "Send the MP's off to war. Give their houses to the poor!"

—GRANT BROOKES, New Zealand

## GERMANY:

"HALF A million people flooded the streets of Berlin in the biggest peace demonstration in postwar Germany.

Demonstrators carried self-made placards saying "No war" and "No blood for oil".

Willi is a pensioner from the east German town of Görlitz: "I'm very proud to be part of this global movement against war. I support Gerhard Schröder stance against the war. But he should not only talk against the war, but do something - shut down the US-military bases in Germany".

—LINKSRUCK, Germany

## A GLOBAL DAY OF PROTEST

### BRITAIN:

"IT WAS the biggest march in British history, and that's official.

Only once before such numbers have been on the streets—back in 1945 when millions paraded to celebrate the end of the Second World War.

Last Saturday up to two million marched to protest against the beginning of another war.

From Piccadilly back down the Thames to St Pauls and north up to Euston Station, there was a sea of placards and banners."

—SOCIALIST WORKER (Britain)

### SPAIN:

"MORE THAN four million people demonstrated in Spain on Saturday. That is an incredible 10 percent of the population.

In all there were 350 different marches that we know about.

In Barcelona and Madrid the marches were at least one and a half million strong. That's over a quarter of the population in those cities and the biggest marches in their history.

There were also demonstrations of hundreds of thousands of people in cities such as Valencia, Seville, Zaragoza and Bilbao."

—EN LUCHA (In Struggle), Spain

### ITALY:

"THE MARCH set off two hours early. An hour before the start time the square at the end of the march was already full.

It holds a million people. There were 30 specially chartered trains to get people to Rome. The whole of the city felt like one big demonstration with marches taking place down every side street.

Who knows how many

marched. It's impossible to tell when it's over three million.

Radical union groups have called for strikes if war breaks out. There is pressure on the equivalent of the TUC to do something. It's a real possibility."

—TOM BEHAN, Rome

### GREECE:

"THE ANTI-WAR rally in Athens was huge. The police talked about 100,000 to 150,000 peo-

ple.

There were probably many more. Some even talked about 300,000.

The demonstration was very lively, with chants, bands, slogans and hundreds of banners.

Most of the demonstrators were very young. There were many high school students carrying "Stop-the-war coalition" banners with the name of their school or district.

Older demonstrators said, "It is like the seventies", the period after the collapse of the military junta.

## THIS WAS NO ACCIDENT

THE 600 protests that took place on February 15<sup>th</sup> did not take place by chance.

"We first raised the idea of international action in the wake of the 400,000-strong anti-war demonstration in Britain on 28 September," says Chris Nineham of the British anti-capitalist group Globalise Resistance.

He is also part of the co-ordination of the European Social Forum, which brought together anti-capitalists and other groups at the huge event in Florence, Italy in November.

"We brought the idea up at one of the planning meetings for Florence," says Chris.

"There was considerable controversy. Some delegates were worried it would alienate the mainstream of the movement.

"We, alongside the Italian delegates, had to put up a strong fight to get it accepted.

"But at the forum itself opposition to the war had mass appeal.

"It was the main theme of the closing activists meeting, which issued the call for 15 February.

"European delegates raised the idea at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, last month.

"We organised an anti-war assembly and nearly 1,000 people came along. [It was from that that the protest on 15 February turned global."

There are sure to be further debates about how to take forward the movement to stop the war.

In Greece and Germany, the leading figures from the governing parties joined the protests but hope to curtail them if their leaders end up reluctantly backing Bush through the UN. But the international movement is growing, and becoming more radical and co-ordinated.

There will be a global anti-war co-ordinating meeting in London on 1 March.

# POWER TO THE PEOPLE

# How the US lost Vietnam

by **DAVE LORDAN**

**T**HE ANTI Vietnam war movement took off in the spring of 1965 when a series of teach-ins organised on a hundred campuses around America drew tens of thousands of students into debating about and campaigning against the American intervention.

These were organised by coalitions of students and staff, liberals and radicals, opposed to the war. At the teach-in Berkeley, the teach-in went on for thirty-six hours with thirty thousand students attending and twelve thousand in attendance at any one time.

Previous to this the numbers at demonstrations had been tiny but the teach-ins convinced a new generation of activists to organise opposition to the war.

By the end of 1965 demonstrations of up to fifty thousand people had been held in large cities across the United States and anti-war groups sprang up in hundreds of towns and cities across the States.

Opposition to the war began to gain ground, particularly among blue-collar workers and blacks in the inner cities. They could see it was a racist war and that it was only the children of the poor who were being sent to die.

Stokely Carmichael leader of the SNCC, the main radical civil rights organisation put this into words when he said the draft, which could be avoided by mainly middle class university students, was 'white people sending black people to make war on yellow people to defend the land they stole from red people'.

**M**ARTIN LUTHER King, under pressure from moderates in the Democratic Party had kept his opposition to the war private. But the burgeoning mass movement gave him the courage to speak out.

At a speech in the Riverside church in New York on 4 April 1967 he said 'I couldn't ever raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without first having spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today - my own government'

On 15 April 1967 300,000 people marched against the war in New York. On the 20 October 150,000 marched on the Pentagon in Washington. In November 1969 500,000 marched in Washington.

The American ruling class were scared. Thousands of troops ringed the Pentagon and snipers were placed on the roof. The demonstrations were directly effecting American war plans.

In late 1966 Pentagon whiz kids explained to Lyndon Johnson that they had fed numbers into a computer and proved they could save lives by carpet bombing Hanoi and the port of Haiphong and thus ending the war soon-

■ Anti Vietnam War demonstration in Sydney



er than otherwise.

Johnson replied 'I have one more problem for your computer - will you feed into it how long it will take five hundred thousand angry Americans to climb the White House wall out there and lynch their president?'

Massive demonstrations also legitimised dissent about the war. Every big demonstration sends home people who argue with renewed confidence for the cause of the demonstration and inclines people to listen to them.

**B**Y NOVEMBER 1970 a solid majority in the opinion poles thought the Vietnam war was wrong.

The size of the demonstrations also made possible forms of mass civil disobedience. After Nixon announced the invasion of Cambodia occupations and students strikes swept through the colleges.

In Kent State University a crowd of two thousand set fire to an army training building on campus. Two days later there was a protest of one thousand on campus. The National Guard was called in. They opened fire on the students expending sixty one rounds in thirteen seconds.

When the smoke cleared four students, Alison Krause, 19, Jeffrey Miller, 20, Susan Scheur, 20, and William Schroeder, 19, were dead. The movement exploded in anger.

Roughly 4,350,000 students marched and protested at 1350 colleges and 356 colleges went on all out strike. In Cali-

**Over two thousand US officers were shot by their own men, the majority after the beginning of 1970. Besides this there were mass desertions and AWOLs. Sabotage by navy anti-war activists put three aircraft carriers out of action.**

fornia the whole state university system was shut down.

Henry Kissinger wrote of those days that 'Washington took on the character of a besieged city. ... The very fabric of government was falling apart'

The final nail in the coffin for the US ruling class was the spread of the revolt from the campuses into the army. Small groups of Trotskyist soldiers were organising against the war from the beginning.

From 1970 onwards Vietnam Veterans against the war they were an important part of the movement.

They set up a peace camp near the congress. Two thousand veterans then threw their war medals over a metal fence that had been erected to stop them.

Each veteran said something as he stepped up to the fence. One example was: My name is 'Peter Brannigan. I got a purple heart and I hope I get another one fighting these fuckers. Second Battalion, First Marines- power to the people.' And so on for three hours.

About 300 anti-war newspapers were put out by rank and file soldiers in army bases during the war.

These included *FTA (fuck the army)* at Fort Knox, the *Pawns Pawn* at Fort

Leonard, *Voice of the Lumpen*, 'affiliated with the Black Panther Party' in Frankfurt.

**I**N VIETNAM itself soldiers opposition to the war was even more militant. It had to be. Soldiers who did not want to fight anymore knew they could be shot by their officers or imprisoned for long periods of time.

So they shot their officers first. Over two thousand US officers were shot by their own men, the majority after the beginning of 1970. Besides this there were mass desertions and AWOLs. Sabotage by navy anti-war activists put three aircraft carriers out of action.

Writing in the armed forces journal of June 1971 Colonel Robert Heintz said 'conditions in the American armed forces in Vietnam have only been exceeded in this century by the French Armies Nivelle Mutinies and the collapse of the Tsarist army in 1916 and 1917'

The army mutinies of 1917 preceded

the Russian revolution. Colonel Heintz was sounding a warning of revolution. The game was up for the American ruling class. Withdrawal of American troops began in earnest in 1971 but it was to be another four years before the bombings stopped.

The key thing to understand is that it was the mass demonstrations which made possible the large scale civil disobedience-or direct action as it is known nowadays- among students, activists and soldiers that put an end to the war.

The millions marching on the streets legitimised and powered the instincts of revolt. Our main task in Ireland and elsewhere is to build this type of mass movement so that when war breaks out we can escalate to sit ins, occupations, road blocks, mass trespasses and so on.

The anti-Vietnam war movement stopped the Vietnam war but it did not stop the war machine.

The biggest weakness of the movement was among the organised working class, even though opposition to the war was consistently highest among this group.

It is in the workplaces that the wheels of war can be stopped and capitalism overthrown.

We have many advantages over the anti-war movement of the sixties. One is the size of the movement. The other is that capitalism everywhere is in crisis with recession biting into the living standards of workers across the world.

Yet hundreds of billions are being spent on war. It will be much easier for us to link the struggle against war with the struggle against capitalism. If we can do that we will put an end to the obscenity of war forever.



tv

## Wishful dream ignores realities

THE NEW series of the extremely successful American political drama "The West Wing" has just begun on Channel Four and it is sure to carry on attracting large viewing figures, just like it has in the US over the past three years.

The series centres around the extremely liberal New Hampshire Democrat Josiah Bartlet who is played by Martin Sheen—an actor who incidentally is against the impending Iraq war. Bartlet becomes the U.S. President and exudes a country-lawyer charisma that belies his brilliance, his deep conviction and devotion to what he believes is right for the country.



■ Martin Sheen in 'The West Wing'

The First Lady Abby Bartlet is a dedicated doctor and mother who staunchly supports her husband. Bartlet's loyal staffers are a predictable crew of young educated Democrats with brains to burn and a social conscience to boot.

Considering the political make-up of the real life West Wing, this drama is very much a fictional creation. A soft focus liberal love in, where the President's heart bleeds for his citizens and his empathy with the rest of the world's population knows no bounds. An Oval Office scenario which is hardly reflective of Bush and his administration.

The series which began in 1999 almost acts as a wish fulfilment dream for liberal Democrats in the US who lost the last election and have been politically, confused and ineffective since September 11th.

The fact that George Bush is said to dislike the show intensely (whether Bush has the attention span to watch a hour long detailed political drama is questionable) is one reason to like the show. But sadly there are few others.

While the constant quick fire dialogues between all the President's Men seem to be concerned with the introduction of proper health care, a more equitable tax system, and the need for progressive social legislation, Bartlet's administration is strong on liberal bluster but weak on actual delivery. Just like all Democrat Presidents in fact.

### Big business

The West Wing, rather than showing a leftist President, fighting the reactionary right and bringing social reforms to the American system in fact shows the limitations of reform in the American political system because of the power of big business and capitalism.

Despite his rhetoric in his run up to his first election success, Bartlet has to win big business backing for his campaign thus compromising his position when he reaches office.

While in office, Bartlet breaks international law when dealing with "terrorists" for the "greater American good". Progressive social legislation is put on the back burner when the second Presidential election comes around and votes have to be garnered in "Middle America".

While it may be right (and fun) to burst the bubble of the Democrat "Dream President" represented in fiction by Bartlet, the "left" of the real life Democrat Party, despite its present weakness could make a comeback in the next two years.

Already the battle lines regarding the future Democratic nomination process have been drawn, with the Iraq conflict coming to the fore in the debate.

A Democrat candidate who is anti-war to a point, and who tries to make some noises in the general direction of the anti-capitalist and labour movement in America cannot be ruled out.

But supposed "left-wing" Democrat candidates who run for office have had to tone down their message to win support from American finance and capitalists. The American political system means that candidates need huge amounts of money to launch a successful campaign.

Despite "The West Wing" being viewed by some as a pristine example of liberal politics working, the true forces of political progress in America today hardly get a look in.

The followers of Ralph Nader, the anti-capitalist movement which started in Seattle in 1999 and the resurgence of a true fighting trade union movement is ignored by the producers of the "The West Wing".

In real life this is where the future of progressive politics lies in America not in the old pipe dream of a leftist Democrat President represented by Josiah Bartlet in "The West Wing".

by DAVID LYNCH

music

# Sing against War

by ROISIN CRONIN

**MUSICIANS are coming out against the war. Massive Attack have anti-war stalls at all their gigs. Blur's Damon Albarn took out adds in the music press calling for support for anti-war demos.**

Christy Moore, Mary Coughlin and Luka Bloom have identified themselves with the anti-war movement in Ireland.

From the times of the Napoleonic wars of the early nineteenth century right through to the wars of the twentieth century, song has been used as a tool by those who found themselves denied access to other means of communicating their message.

Some of the earliest anti-war songs which have survived came from the Napoleonic wars when many thousands were sent as cannon fodder to the fields of Holland, Belgium or Spain. One such song is "My Son Tim", an Irish anti-recruiting song (one of many) which finishes with the lines: "But it's now I'll cross the raging main/To Napoleon Bonaparte and the Queen of Spain/ and I'll make them rue the time/that they shot away the legs of a child of mine!"

Among the most poignant songs relating to this period are those told from the perspective of the grieving lover, for instance in the popular "Bonny Light horseman": "Broken hearted I will wander for the loss of my lover/ He is my bonny light horseman, in the wars he was slain".

By the outbreak of the

First World War a new form of anti-war protest song had sprung up in the US.

The International Workers of the World (known as the Wobblies) began to use folk song as a means of getting their message across to a much bigger audience.

They took the popular songs of the time and fitted new words to them.

These were opposed to everything the ruling class stood for. Songwriter Joe Hill vowed "should I ever be a soldier, 'neath the red flag I would fight, Should the gun I ever shoulder, it's to crush the tyrant's might".

### Powerful

Folk song continued to grow in significance, and new singers like Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger came to prominence.

By the time of the Vietnam War an entire protest movement had developed and anti-war songs no longer came solely from the folk musicians like Phil Ochs and Bob Dylan, although the folk songs were undoubtedly some of the most powerful and enduring to emerge at the time.

Take for instance Phil Ochs' "I Ain't Marching Any More" - verse after verse, it's as powerful an argument against war as you'll hear anywhere:

*For I stole California from the Mexican land  
Fought in the bloody Civil War  
Yes I even killed my brother  
And so many others  
And I ain't marchin' anymore  
For I marched to the battles of the German trench  
In a war that was bound to end all wars  
Oh I must have killed a million men  
And now they want me back again  
But I ain't marchin' anymore*

Anti-war musicians continued to produce their songs post-Vietnam, many of them in Britain, like Ewan MacColl, becoming heavily involved in anti-nuclear campaigns.



■ Phil Ochs singing at an anti Vietnam War demo in 1965

More recently the Falklands War gave rise to several anti-war songs, among them Elvis Costello's "Shipbuilding" while bands like Rage Against the Machine have joined with George Michael in raising questions about the status

quo.

This latest effort from Albarn and co. is a welcome addition to this tradition.

But meanwhile people will continue to sing the words of probably the best known anti-war song ever

written, from the pen of Pete Seeger:

*Where have all the young men gone  
They are all in uniform  
Oh when will you ever learn  
When will you ever learn?*

book

## Graphic tales of Gaza resistance

by SASHA SIMIC

**BETWEEN 1987 and 1992 Palestinian youth undertook a heroic uprising—the first intifada—against their Israeli oppressors.**

Towards the end of this period the journalist and artist Joe Sacco took himself to the West Bank and

Gaza to try to understand what was happening.

In Nablus a Palestinian man attempted to explain the level of suffering that he and his friends had endured.

### Arrested

Each person he introduced Sacco to had been arrested, or shot or imprisoned, or had had close relatives murdered by the occu-

pying Israeli forces.

"You write something about us? I showed you—you saw. You tell about us?" he begs.

This book is Joe Sacco's attempt to tell the story of Palestine and its people.

Throughout it Sacco expresses doubts about his project, partly because he chooses to tell the story in the form of a graphic novel—a comic.

On that count he needn't have worried. Palestine is a

brilliant and honest work.

The graphic form that Sacco uses is a perfect medium to transmit the kaleidoscope of experiences he comes across in Palestine.

It's not a pretty story because the plight of the Palestinians is not pretty.

But Sacco doesn't just see them as victims—he also tells a story of almost unbelievable endurance and resistance.

■ *Palestine* by Joe Sacco is available from SW Books PO Box 1648 Dublin 8

# 9/11 USED TO ATTACK CIVIL RIGHTS

# Clamp down on protest in 'anti-terror' legislation

**POST** September 11 a whole raft of anti terrorist legislation, with serious implications for civil liberties, has been introduced by western governments.

In Ireland the criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Bill has just gone into committee stage.

It is potentially a very dangerous piece of legislation that has been formulated to give effect to an EU framework decision on combating terrorism as well as a number of UN conventions.

The Irish Council for Civil Liberties has said that this bill "introduces a definition of terrorist activity that would include public order offences which occur during

legitimate protest.

"In so doing the Bill would undermine human rights values and the rule of law."

### State

Terrorist activity is defined as offences committed with the intent to seriously intimidate a population, unduly compel a government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing an act, or seriously destabilise or destroy fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a state or international organisation.

This definition would cover all kinds of protests and deliberately includes within its scope protest directed at the

WTO, EU, World Bank.—the institutions that have been a focus for anti capitalist demonstrations over the last number of years.

Offences listed in Part 1 of Schedule 2 include endangerment, endangering traffic, non-fatal offences against the person, property damage or obstructing railways.

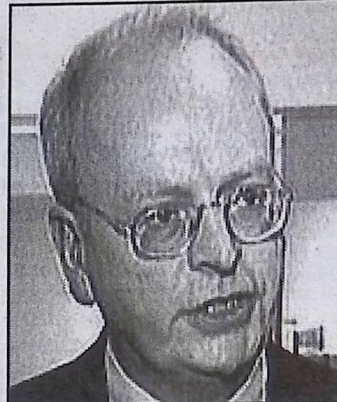
The protesters in Shannon could easily be branded as terrorists under this legislation.

### Outlaw

Many forms of protest action would fall within this definition.

This Bill is designed to outlaw protest thereby contravening a basic civil liberty.

The presumption of innocence is abandoned. Section 6(5)(b) states,



Michael McDowell

"The accused person shall be presumed, unless the court is satisfied to

the contrary, to have committed or attempted to commit the act with that (terrorist) intention."

This legislation is being introduced under the pretext of meeting our international obligations to combating terrorism.

### Agenda

But there is another agenda at play.

If this bill passes into law it will be used to restrict the right to protest and potentially could lead to long prison sentences for people who want to fight for justice and equality in this country.

Every anti war protester, every anti capitalist, every trade unionist and every bin charges activist should fight to ensure that this bill gets no further and our right to protest is protected.

## Marxist Forums

Big ideas discussed in informal settings



### Ballyfermot:

1917: How revolution stopped war, 8pm Thurs 27 Feb, Ruby Finnegans Pub, Lower Ballyfermot, Speaker:

### Donal Mac Fhearraigh

### Ballymun:

The fight for Women's Liberation Tuesday 25th Feb, 7.30pm, Axis Centre

### Belfast Central:

Details to be announced

### Belfast South:

The Bloody History of

the UN, 7.30 Peter Froggett Centre QUB Wednesday 19th Feb

### Belfast West:

The Bloody History of the UN, 7.30 An Cúl-turlann, Falls Road Thurs 20th Feb.

### Blanchardstown:

The UN: Can it be a Force for Peace? 8pm Castleknock Community Centre Thurs 20th

### Bray:

Details to be announced

### Cork:

The Bloody History of the UN, Wednesday 5th March at 8pm An Spailpin Fanach

### Derry:

1917: When Revolution stopped War, Saturday 22nd Feb, 4pm Upstairs Sandino's Bar

### Dublin

### IN THE COLLEGES

#### Maynooth College:

The Military Face of Globalisation 12 noon Tuesday 25th Feb The Venue, SU Bar Contact Kieran at 087 933 9844

#### Colaiste Dhulaigh

The Military Face of Globalisation 12 noon Tuesday 25th Feb 4pm SU Room Contact Barry at 085 6688 306

#### UCD

The Military Face of Globalisation 12 noon Wednesday 26th Feb 1pm Arts Block Contact Orla at 087 770 7027

#### DCU

The Military Face of Globalisation Thursdays 27th Feb 1pm Henry Grattan Building Contact Joe at 087 9032281

#### UCG Galway

The Military Face of Globalisation Wednesdays 26th Feb Contact Jamie at 086 3039787

#### Tallaght IT

War: The military face of Globalisation, 1pm Room 144 Thurs 26 Feb Speaker: Joe Carolan

### Central:

The Grand Strategy of the American Empire, 8pm Wed 26 Feb, The Vietnamese Centre, Hardwick St, Speaker: Kieran Allen

### Dublin South City:

The UN: Can it be a Force for Peace? 7pm Beanery Cafe Burgh Quay Wed 26 Feb

### Dundrum:

Details to be announced

### Dun Laoghaire:

Vietnam: When a mass movement stopped war, 8pm Tue 25 Feb, Farrells Pub, Speaker: Dave Lordan

### Fairview:

Is The US All Powerful? 8pm Smyths Pub Fairview Tues 25th Feb

### Galway:

The Bloody History of the UN, Wednesday 26th February, 8pm Jarvis Coffee House, Abbeygate Street

### Limerick:

The Bloody History of the UN, Thursday 27th February, 5.30pm, Room 4 The Students Union

### Rathmines:

War: The military face of Globalisation, 7.30pm Thurs 27 Feb, The Kylemore Café, The Swan Shopping Centre, Rathmines, Speaker: Richard Boyd Barrett

### Rialto:

1917: How revolution stopped war, 8.30pm Wed 26 Feb, St Andrews Resource Centre, Rialto, Speaker: Kieran Allen.

### Tallaght:

1917: How Revolution Stopped War, 8pm Wed 26 Feb, Jobstown Community Centre, Speaker: Deirdre Cronin

### Waterford:

Truth is the First Casualty, A history of war propaganda,

Thursday 20th Feb, 8.00pm, Olde Rogue, Michael Street, Speaker: Roy Hassey

## Waterford moves up

NEARLY 80 people attended the Irish Anti War Movement meeting in Waterford to organise the fightback against the war drive in the south-east and to organise for February 15th.

As a result a vibrant, broad-based anti-war movement in Waterford organises a weekly anti-war protest every Saturday with music and street theatre.

Around 150 people marched under the Waterford Against the War banner on the 15th February. So far the Waterford Council of Trade Unions and the local ATGWU union branch have affiliated to the IAWM and both SIPTU and the students union at the Waterford Institute of Technology sponsored members to attend the National Demonstration on 15th February in Dublin.

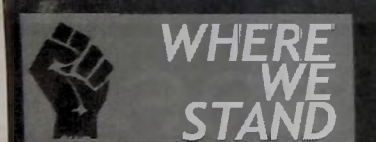
Members of the local Socialist Workers Party branch have been crucial in getting the movement off the ground.

### Appetite

Waterford SWP member Roy Hassey told Socialist Worker, "We are finding people coming up to us to get involved in anti-war activities. And there is now an extremely political atmosphere and a huge appetite for ideas."

"This is reflected in the success of our regular Marxist Forums. At the last two Forums in Waterford, 25 came to discuss the political background to the war in Iraq and 20 came to a discussion on Israel's role in the Middle East."

"As a result of this the party is growing locally. In the last week or so two more people joined the local branch. They were impressed by our integral involvement in the anti-war movement and several other campaigns. I think the fact that our Marxist ideas explain the situation and point to the way forward also influenced them."



Capitalism is wrecking the lives of millions and endangering the planet. A new society can only be constructed when the workers take control of the wealth and plan its production and distribution for human need and not profit.

**REVOLUTION**  
The present system cannot be patched up or reformed. The courts, the army and police exist to defend the interests of the wealthy. To destroy capitalism, we need to remove the present state structures and create a workers' state based much greater political and economic democracy.

**AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND WAR**  
War is a constant feature of capitalism today as the imperialist powers try to dominate the earth. Bush's "War on Terrorism" is a crude device

to attack any country which threatens US military, strategic or economic dominance.

**END RACISM AND OPPRESSION**  
We oppose all forms of oppression and racism. This divides and weakens the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women. We oppose immigration controls which are always racist.

### FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

We stand for workers unity against the Assembly politicians and Blair government. Like great socialist James Connolly, we believe that partition has brought about a 'carnival of reaction' We want to see an Irish workers republic where all workers gain. Our flag is neither green nor orange but red!

### FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party. This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system. We call for co-operation between left-wing parties and the formation of a strong socialist bloc. We stand for fighting trade unions and for independent rank and file action.

## Join the Socialists

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

TU/college/school \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



# Dempsey out to break ASTI

The Minister for Education, Noel Dempsey, is trying to break the secondary school teachers union, ASTI. He is using taxpayers money to organise meetings around the country to sell a deal which was unanimously rejected by the ASTI's 180 strong central Executive committee.

The deal is supposed to put an end to the long running dispute on supervision duties in schools.

Dempsey says the reason for holding the meetings is to give teachers the full information.

Yet the ASTI have published all the documents on the issue and its 56 branches are holding information meetings.

The real reason for Dempsey's action is to appeal over the heads of the ASTI leaders. It is a typical union breaking move - often practised by private sector employers.

He is targeting the ASTI because it has broken from the Irish Congress of Trade Union over the issue of social partnership.

## Grouped

The FF-PD government is also aware that some elements in the union grouped around the full time officials also want to break the new militancy and drag them back to the ICTU.

The ASTI has stood up to a press witchunt.

Union activists have also had to cope with full timers who constantly try to undermine democratically agreed policy.

## Tactic

Now they are facing a new tactic from this right wing Minister for Education.

As a result of Dempsey's intervention, the vote on supervision and substitution has taken on a new dimension.

It is about the right of the ASTI to stand up for itself and act as an independent union that is answerable to no one but its own members.

The vote on the super-

## Some elements in the union grouped around the full time officials also want to break the new militancy

vision and substitution deal begins shortly.

This is work that teachers did on a voluntary basis for years.

Now the government is offering to pay €25 million to get secondary teachers to do it.

Not bad you might think, but the untrained personnel who currently provide the service (ASTI have refused to do it following the govern-

# The truth behind Rhode ESB

**ESB workers at the Rhode power station are the targets of a nasty media campaign to portray them as idle layabouts.**

Typical of this campaign was a piece in the *Sunday Tribune* which described workers playing snooker all day and complaining that the seating at the station was too 'hard' for them.

The press is raging about the fact that the workers have turned down a €250,000 redundancy package.



Teachers in Shannon on strike in 2001

ment's failure to deal with its pay claim) are allocated €51 million a year!

Insulting and all as this is, it is the workings of the scheme which is most objectionable to teachers.

Teachers will be

required to be available for supervision for two class periods per week.

## Expected

If they are not required to supervise they will have to make up that time over the following

weeks.

In other words teachers will be expected to be on call but only paid when the service is actually required. This is ridiculous.

Teachers should resist the intimidation and vote no.

But the truth behind this story is very different.

ESB workers who retire at 48 are entitled to half pay for the remainder of their working life and a nine-week lump sum offer.

But the figure of €250,000, which the press is using, comes from adding this to the average pension they will receive. It is a propaganda tactic to discredit the workers.

## Procedure

Nor has the press highlighted the reasons why workers rejected the offer.

The ESB has long had a detailed procedure for dealing with asbestos. But in the Rhode station, the workers were not even informed by their management that there was asbestos in the boiler house. So the procedure

could not be put in place.

The result has been that several workers have contracted 'pluralpac' a condition whereby scar tissue appears on their lungs under X ray conditions.

Doctors have claimed that this will not develop into full-scale asbestosis - a deadly disease that causes terrible pain and is fatal.

Other medical experts, however, have pointed out that one fibre of asbestos, which enters the lungs, can be the cause of the terrible condition,

## Stress

The result has been that workers feel themselves to be under extreme stress and anxiety.

The failure of their management to tell them about

asbestos led to this condition.

The workers have also pointed to a precedent whereby an employee in Dail Eireann received a compensation package of €30,000 after asbestos was discovered in his work environment.

Quite rightly, they are demanding similar compensation for this stress and the eventual possibility that they may contract asbestosis after they retire.

The *Sunday Tribune* has never done a story about how one of their owners, Tony O Reilly, pretends he is not a resident of Ireland to avoid taxes. They far prefer to stick the boot into workers.

But then again that is how the corporate media always act!

## FIREFIGHTERS:

# 'Put back the action needed'

By KEVIN OVENDEN

**THE FIRE brigade employers showed that they have little intention of seeking compromise with firefighters and control room staff.**

The employers first reneged on a promise to the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) that they would extend the legal deadline for calling strikes while talks take place. But then they later retreated.

But their initial demand showed how contemptuous they are of the FBU, whose executive decided not to call more strike days and to enter negotiations instead.

It also confirms the feeling among FBU activists that it was a mistake not to call more strikes.

Two dates were already pencilled in, including a 39-hour strike coinciding with the February 15th anti-war demonstrations "There was genuine shock when we found out that there were to be no more strikes and, instead, four weeks of talks," one union activist said.

"I've a horrible feeling that this is now reaching an endgame, with a deal that will not be acceptable to our members. There's no doubt that the government was forced to step back."

"Prescott threatened to punish us for taking action and to change the law to impose a settlement. Then we struck for 48 hours over the weekend and the atmosphere on picket lines was more determined than ever."

"So he had to offer talks. That's a concession. But the great danger now is that we lose that concession by making concessions of our own. Putting the action back on is the way to avoid that. It's clear that with the coming war the government is not really up for a fight against us at the same time."

The feeling is similar across Britain and Northern Ireland. Linda Smith from the FBU in London says, "Our regional committee was not very happy about the decision not to call further strikes."

## Weakness

"My experience throughout this dispute has been that whenever we suspend or cancel strikes it is interpreted by the government and the employers as a sign of weakness."

"If you look at the memorandum from Prescott's office outlining the remit for the talks, you'll see there is just one mention of pay. The rest refers to discussions on so called modernisation."

"But we started out with a campaign over pay not linked to attacks on working conditions. We should stick with that."

"The government is clear that nothing has changed regarding their hardline position. And fire chiefs are already looking to push through the kind of cuts and attacks outlined in the Bain report."

Talks are scheduled to last four weeks. The FBU executive are meeting weekly to "review progress".

There are already strong calls for reinstating strike dates. Many activists know that the dispute is now at a crucial turning point. The government was desperate last week to avoid further strikes.

There were press rumours again last that the government could use emergency powers to ban fire strikes during war in the Gulf. But similar threats have evaporated when firefighters have faced them down and taken action.

And they have contributed to a deepening rift between trade unionists and the government.

There is still everything to play for in the dispute. But it will require concerted pressure from activists and the rank and file of the FBU to get the kind of action that can throw the government onto the defensive.

# Bin Tax boycott defies legal threats

**THE FIGHT** against the Bin Tax in the Dublin City Council area is stepping up. Thousands of households have entered a third year refusing to pay the double tax.

In an effort to break the campaign by intimidation Dublin City Council have sent threatening notices to

every household. In a further escalation they have recently sent out more Court summonses in selected areas.

Willie a bin tax activist from Dublin's northside commented, "This is a further attempt to scare people to pay. But the government is on the defensive. Fianna Fail Minister for Environment

Cullen proposed to change the legislation so that the councils would no

longer be obliged to collect the rubbish of those not paying charges.

"This is really an admission that the charges are not collectable ... and that they cannot bring everyone to court."

## Contact

The Dublin Campaign against the Bin Tax has been organising public meetings throughout the city to get the word out

and to encourage people to continue to refuse to pay. It is encouraging everyone to join up to a campaign.

Anyone who receives a summons to immediately contact the campaign who will supply legal representation. No-one who has been represented in court by the campaign has received a judgement against them.

Willie pointed out, "Cullen has also suggest-

ed that he thinks the Dublin rate is too low. He is talking of €600 as being more appropriate.

And there are noises emerging from government sources suggesting the reintroduction of water charge. It is important we keep our nerve maintain this fight."

To contact the campaign and for further details, leaflets, posters ring the campaign hotline on 087 2837989

# Socialist Worker

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**HOW THE U.S. LOST VIETNAM**

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**What's behind Loyalist feud?**

—page 4

## New Trade Union Campaign says:

# VOTE

# NO

# TO PAY CUTS!

**THE CAMPAIGN** against the new partnership deal, 'Sustaining Progress', is underway. Trade unionists from across a variety of unions have come together to produce leaflets to swing a No vote.

The proposed deal one of the worst ever foisted on workers. A number of unions are now campaigning for rejection. They include the CPSU, the IBOA and the TEEU.

The ICTU leadership is very keen to get it passed but is finding it difficult to whip up enthusiasm for the deal. It is hoping that a special SIPTU conference on 24<sup>th</sup> February will give them a block vote to push the deal through.

### Proposed

But the proposed new deal gives pay rises of 3.5 percent a year when inflation is running at 6 percent. That amounts to a pay cut.

It gives no pay increase for public sector workers throughout the whole of

2003.

And it ties the unions up in a system of compulsory arbitration while the employers have a right to 'ongoing change'.

Social partnership has already damaged the unions. At the recent launch of a trade unionist campaign against the deal, Mick O'Reilly the former general secretary of the ATGWU, described the trade union movement as a "three year referendum club" which "doesn't recruit, doesn't organise and doesn't campaign anymore".

Eddie Conlon, executive member of the Teachers Union of Ireland, slammed the deal as an "extremely ideological agreement that represents the employers world view". He said nothing had been delivered on union recognition while industrial action would be outlawed on issues covered by the agreement.

### Movement

The reference to a stable industrial relations environment particularly in health would take away from nurses the weapons to fight the spending cuts. According to Eddie, social partnership is tying the hands of the movement.

Marnie Holborow of President of the Education Branch of SIPTU said "The new deal gives IBEC what they wanted going into the talks - a pay pause in the public service and the introduction of binding arbitration. Disputes on any issue covered by the deal will have to be referred to the Labour Court and workers will be expected to sit tight and wait until a binding judgement was passed down."

Terry Kelleher from the CPSU said his union was recommending rejection of the deal and would be calling for an alliance with other unions to campaign against it. He said that under the new deal "the crumbs we got from the Celtic Tiger will be taken away from us". He outlined the implications of the deal for low paid civil servants. On top of derisory increases it would mean that it was easier to sack people, it would eliminate seniority over time, it would reduce promotional prospects and lead to the outsourcing of work.

The campaign has published fact sheets which outline a range of arguments against the deal. Members of all unions are urged to distribute them as widely as possible and to actively campaign for a no vote.

■ Leaflets can be obtained by phoning Owen at 087 2858388 or Des 087 6229686 or write to Trade Union Campaign against Partnership Deal 10 Comyn Place Dublin 9.