

Socialist Worker

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FALLUJAH:

DON'T LET THE U.S. ARMY MURDER A CITY

Iraqi mourners grieve during the funeral of a 50 year old man who was killed in an overnight US raid on Fallujah in October

FOR THE past few weeks US forces have bombed the Iraqi city of Fallujah. US aircraft drop 500-, 1000- and 2000-pound bombs which kill and maim indiscriminately. The hospitals are overflowing with the dead and injured. Thousands of families have been forced to flee.

More than 1,000 marines, supported by a few hundred US-trained Iraqi forces, are positioned less than a kilometre outside the city, poised for all-out assault.

The Asia Times reports that 'all shops are closed. And the city may be running out of food. Fallujah at the moment is still basically controlled by the Iraqi police and dozens of different mujahideen groups from different clans. They all fiercely coordinate the defence strategy among themselves.'

The Americans claim they are trying to flush out foreign jihadis — including of course their new Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. But Fallujans deny the presence of al-Zarqawi, or serious numbers of foreign fighters.

Fallujah's chief negotiator Khalid al-Jumaili, released after three days in US custody, said the hunt for al-Zarqawi was a pretext to attack the town, comparing it to US assertions that Iraqi president Saddam Hussein had Weapons of Mass Destruction before last year's invasion.

The US is targeting the population of the city in order to break the resistance.

The New York Times on October 12 quoted a Pentagon official: 'If there are civilians dying in connection with these attacks, and with the destruction, the locals at some point have to make a decision. Do they want to harbour the insurgents and suffer the consequences that come with that, or do they want to get rid of the insurgents and have the benefit of not having them there?'

When Iraq was invaded last year, Fallujah was occupied by the US army's 82nd Airborne division. In eight months their brutal tactics resulted in 100 civilians dead. It led to the rise of a resistance movement



which eventually gained control of the city.

In April 2004, US marines tried to re-take Fallujah. After three weeks of fighting and 800 deaths, the population of Fallujah forced the marines to pull back.

Now the US forces want to once again 'pacify' the city to destroy the resistance. The Pentagon has identified up to 30 cities in Iraq that must be subdued before the January elections.

But the resistance is strong and

popular. As The Asia Times reported, 'The guerrillas meanwhile are succeeding in mobilising the Iraqi urban masses, Sunni and Shi'ite, against the occupation.'

Control

'The Americans cannot even control most of Baghdad and the guerrillas are now systematically attacking the Green Zone itself.'

'All major roads around Baghdad are intersected by the guerrillas, who

in many cases have established their own checkpoints.'

The resistance in Iraq has entered a decisive stage. When the US marines finally make their all-out assault on Fallujah, uprisings will take place all over Iraq.

Here in the West, the anti-war movement must not stand idly by. We cannot allow the US army raze the city of Fallujah to the ground, like the Russian army crushed the Chechen capital of Grozny.

During the Spanish Civil War in

the 1930s, Guernica became a symbol of the terrible cruelty inflicted by aerial bombardment. The famous painter Picasso immortalised the city in his famous piece of art.

Today, Fallujah should be a similar symbol for the anti-war movement.

We need to stand with its people and resist the attacks of the US marines and their support unit in the British Black Watch Regiment. Against imperialist terror, we need global solidarity.

HOSPITAL CRISIS

'We want beds not trolleys'

ANGRY PATIENTS' relatives forced the crisis in the hospitals onto the agenda in October when they mounted protests at the Mater Hospital A&E Department and Leinster House to highlight the fact that their loved ones were on hospital trolleys and chairs, for days on end.

Outside the Dáil, the family of Kathleen Byrne told *Socialist Worker* about her plight.

Husband Brendan said, 'Kathleen was unwell on Saturday morning. She was falling about and her head was spinning and then she passed out.'

'We dialled 999 and an ambulance arrived.'

'When we arrived at the Mater Hospital A&E, my wife was put on a trolley.'



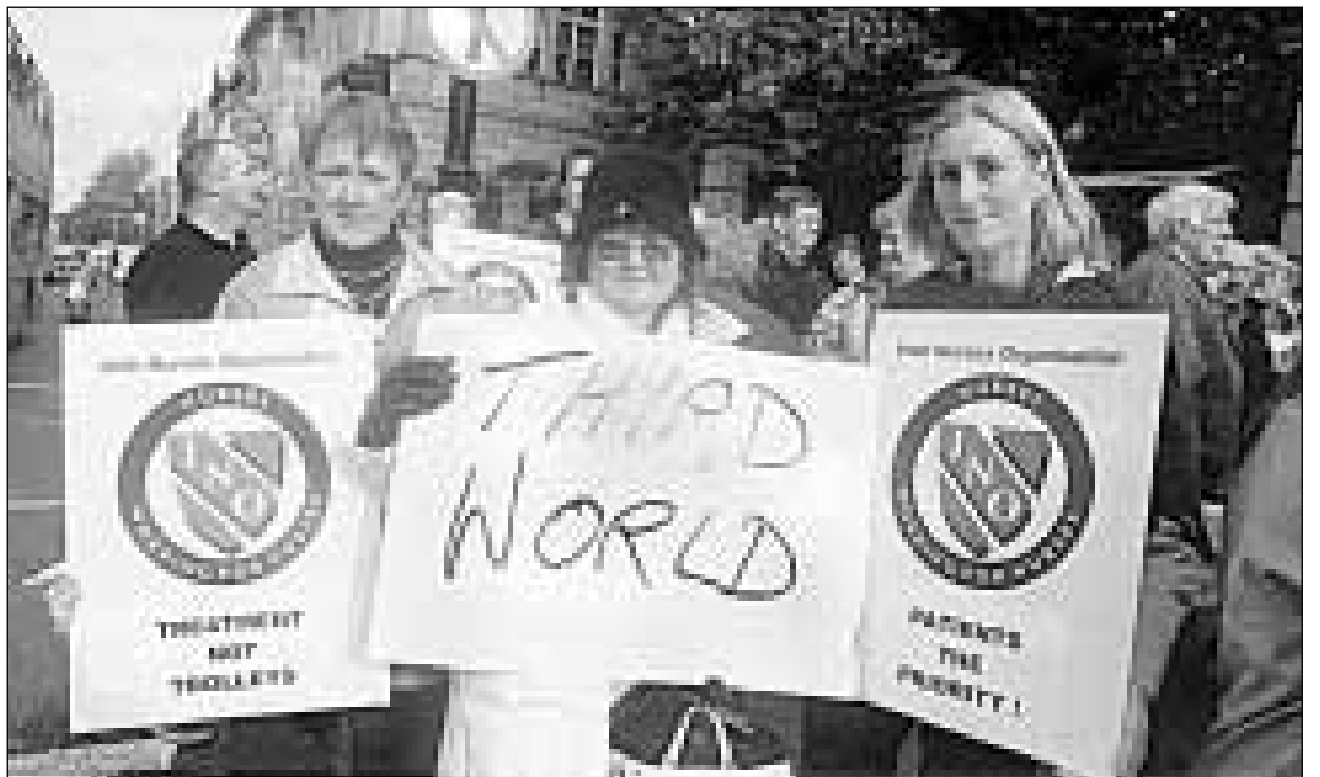
She was in the same condition, falling about, but the doctors could not examine her properly because there was no bed to admit her. She spent the next four days on a trolley in the A&E Department. All the time there were another 20 to 40 people in the same situation.'

Ellen Cogavin, a nurse at James Connolly Memorial Hospital and one of the leaders of Patients Together said, 'Patients Together was formed to support the victims of the health crisis.'

'Everyone in Ireland is suffering. As an immediate measure, we are demanding that the government reopen the 400 beds that were closed when this government came to office.'

'Mary Harney says there's a shortage of nurses, but there are thousands of Irish nurses registered but are not working. 3,000 nurses left the system last year, mostly because of intolerable working conditions and stress levels on the wards. We could win back these nurses with better pay and conditions.'

Patients Together has been trying to organise a meeting with Mary Harney but so far she has not made herself available to meet them.



■ Above and left: Protests outside the Dail against hospital beds crisis

Photos: Paula Geraghty

Blame Harney—Not the elderly

OLDER PEOPLE are the latest to be scapegoated for the Government's failure on Health by having the disgusting label of 'bed blockers' applied to them.

Chat show host Joe Duffy even claimed that he could solve the whole crisis by moving them out to private

nursing homes.

But private nursing homes cost up to €1,000 a week and the maximum state subvention is €680. Less than half of the nursing home beds are in public hands.

The roots of the crisis lie in the terrible cut-backs

imposed in previous years.

The government promised to reverse these by providing 3,000 hospital beds. But they have only actually delivered 299 since 2001.

Mary Harney said shortly after being appointed Minister for Health that patients on hospital trolleys

was 'unacceptable.'

Then next day she announced there would be no extra funding to solve the crisis this year.

The reason is that she does not want to tax her rich friends. That is where the problem lies — not with the elderly.

MARGARET HASSAN — LET HER GO

BERTIE AHERN has pleaded for the life of Margaret Hassan. But it is doubtful her kidnappers will listen to a politician who has collaborated with Bush by allowing US troops to pass through Shannon.

A far more eloquent plea for her life came from Robert Fisk who wrote recently,

'Margaret was the enemy of United Nations sanctions on Iraq. She is the symbol of all those who believe that Iraq — a real, free, unoccupied Iraq — has a future; and all we can be told is



■ Margaret Hassan

into Iraq's dark hole.

'The ultimate disgrace yesterday was to hear British diplomats who supported those deadly sanctions weeping their crocodile tears for "Margaret". Margaret Hassan has spent her life working on a humanitarian mission in Iraq. She stayed there during and the two Gulf Wars because she really cared for the Iraqi people.'

Throughout the world, anti-war activists have joined the call to release this brave and wonderful woman.

MARY KELLY — LET HER GO

MARY KELLY should be honoured, not criminalised. She took an axe to a US warplane because she wanted to save the lives of Iraqi civilians.

She was motivated by the Nuremberg judgement which states that 'individuals have international duties which transcend national obligations of obedience. Therefore (individuals) have the duty to prevent crimes against peace and humanity occurring.'



■ Mary Kelly

She has already been tried once before a District Court in Kiltrush, where the judge falsely stated to the jury that she had 'admitted to a crime.'

Despite the bias, however, a jury of local people failed to reach an agreement to convict her and she walked away a free woman.

The Attorney General could have dropped the case but this vindictive government wants to demonstrate their loyalty to George Bush.

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Lenin has been demonised as a tyrant who paved the way for Stalin. But even the most cursory reading of State and Revolution shows he wanted a much more profound form of democracy.

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STATE AND REVOLUTION



V.I. Lenin
An abridged edition with an introduction by Emma Allen

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FORUM

ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE



■ Anti War protest at ESF in London in October

The Call of the Assembly of Social Movements

THE FINAL agreement by the Assembly of Social Movements called for a day of action on 19 March across Europe against the occupation of Iraq. Some excerpts from the final agreement appear below.

'We come from all the campaigns and social movements, "no vox" organisations, trade unions, human rights organisations, international solidarity organisations, anti-war and peace and feminist movements. We come from every region in Europe to gather in London for the third European Social Forum. We are many, and our strength is our diversity.'

'Today war represents the harshest and most real face of neo-liberalism. The war and the occupation of Iraq, the occupation of Palestine, the massacre in Chechnya, and the hidden wars in Africa are crushing the future of humanity.'

'The war in Iraq was justified by lies. Today Iraq is humiliated and destroyed. Iraqis are prisoners of war and terror.'

'The occupation brought neither freedom, nor better conditions of life.'

'On the contrary, today the supporters of the thesis of "clash of civilisation" are stronger.'

'We are fighting for the withdrawal of the occupying troops in Iraq, for an immediate halt to the bombing and for the immediate restitution of sovereignty to the Iraqi people.'

'We support the right of the Iraqi people to resist the occupation.'

'20 March 2005 marks the second anniversary of the start of the war against Iraq.'

'On 22-23 March 2005, the European Council meets in Brussels. We call for national mobilisations in all European countries.'

'We call for a central demonstration in Brussels on 19 March against war, racism, and against a neo-liberal Europe, against privatisation, against the Bolkestein project and against the attacks on working time; for a Europe of rights and solidarity between the peoples.'

'We call all the social movements and the European trade union movements to take to the streets on this day.'

■ Full details of the call can be found at <http://www.fse-esf.org>

By DAVID LYNCH

OVER 20,000 people — including more than 200 from Ireland — gathered in London recently to attend the third European Social Forum (ESF) to debate and discuss a plethora of issues within the Global Justice movement.

Over three days people from nearly 70 countries took part in over 500 meetings, listening to over 250 speakers. This unique event was witnessed by 600 members of the international media.

The ESF first emerged from the spectacular success of the World Social Forum which opened in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2001. Its first two gatherings in Florence (2002) and Paris (2003) attracted over 50,000 participants from across Europe and beyond. The invasion and ongoing occupation of Iraq dominated many of the debates and seminars.

'In September there were 2,700 Military Operations launched by the Iraqi resistance against US forces. The Americans have lost more soldiers in September than they did in August. They lost more in August than they did in July. This is turning into nothing more than a military and political disaster for the Americans and British,' boomed George Galloway, former Labour Party MP and founder of the new Respect coalition, at a Saturday morning meeting in Alexandra Palace.

'With the axe of the Iraqi Resistance and the anvil of the anti-war movement in the West, these occupying forces can be defeated,' he roared as he received a standing ovation from a majority of the thousand plus in attendance.

The overwhelming number of speakers called for the immediate withdrawal of troops and 'victory to the resistance.'

At the same meeting Richard Boyd Barrett, chairman of the Irish Anti-War Movement argued, 'We must support the resistance in Iraq regardless of what banner they march under.'

He pointed to the history of Irish resistance to British imperialism. Should we have refused to support it because religious elements were involved? Maria Styllou from Greece also got a standing ovation from much of the huge crowd. She talked about the weakness of US imperialism and the growing strength of the anti-war movement in Greece, which recently prevented a planned visit by Colin Powell to the Olympics Games.



■ Aleida Guevara

Aleida Guevara, daughter of Che, talked of the tremendous hope for the world that the Global Justice movement offers.

Some of the most well attended meetings dealt with that running sore in the Middle East — the Palestinian Question. Well over 1,000 people crammed into the Great Hall in Alexandra Palace to hear Israeli

woman Nurit Peled attack political education in her own country.

'Children learn intolerance and xenophobia and this creates a mental wall of hatred that makes the concrete wall that they are now building around the Palestinian ghetto seem difficult to pull down.'

Peled lost her thirteen-year-old daughter in a suicide attack but has worked since that day, 4 September 1997, to 'help build peace'.

The debate surrounding whether a one- or two-state solution to the Palestinian Question was preferable was aired at the meeting.

What is the alternative?

A MEETING dealing with an alternative world to capitalism drew a large crowd. Aydin Cucukzu from Turkey pointed out that capitalism limits our imagination: 'It tells us fairytales about the eternal nature of capitalism which a glimpse of history shows are wrong.'

Jonathan Neale from Globalise Resistance in Britain argued that we needed a democratic world, unlike the Stalinist dictatorships but also unlike capitalist society that maintains dictatorship at work.

Walden Bello from Focus on the Global South said, 'Globalisation failed to deliver on economic growth. The growth rate was better in the 1950s and '60s than in the 1980s and '90s. There is more poverty now than in the '90s.'

A meeting on music was addressed by Martin Smith and he talked about how music has a tradition of supporting mass movements, from Dizzy Gillespie to Bob Dylan, The Clash and Rage Against the Machine.

His conclusion was that music really does matter because we live in a terrible world, and music can give us a glimmer of something beautiful and creative.

Billy Bragg talked about his involvement in Rock Against Racism. His main message was that it's not the artist's job to change the world — it's the responsibility of the audience.

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Eamonn McCann

Will Sinn Fein partner Fianna Fail?

IT'S HARD for a socialist to know whether to laugh or cry at the kerfuffle over the possibility of Sinn Fein joining Fianna Fail in a coalition in the South.

The *Sunday Independent's* rent-a-loudmouth team has been spluttering with outrage. How could a respectable constitutional party like FF think of bedding down with people associated with shooting and bombing?

The fact that FF is up to its oxters in the carnage of Iraq—more than 150,000 US soldiers have now used Shannon en route to obliterating towns and villages—doesn't figure in the loud-mouths' line of argument.

But that's par for the course. Everywhere, supporters of wholesale violence by major powers tend simultaneously to denounce retail violence as beyond the moral pale. The rationale is that the former is legal violence, the latter illegal.

The distinction doesn't work in relation to Iraq. Even Kofi Annan has conceded that the US/UK invasion had no legal basis. The bombing of Baghdad was as illegal as the bombing of Enniskillen. But the fact that the argument doesn't make sense even in their own limited terms never fazes the proponents of big-power brutality.

The other Indo argument on the issue is that SF is a left-wing party intent on overthrowing capitalism and that its policies would spell ruination for the South's thriving little economy. Much of the time, SF doesn't object too strongly to this charge. It rather enhances the party's radical credentials, and can be off-set against the things party leaders say when talking to, for example, the Dublin Chamber of Commerce.

But if we look beyond the rhetoric to what SF does in practice, it's plain the party poses no threat to capitalism.

At the European Social Forum in London, Gerry Adams and Mary Lou McDonald vigorously defended the endorsement of privatisation by SF ministers in the North. They'd done it reluctantly, it was explained. If was either private finance in schools, for example, or no new schools at all.

This is nonsense. Under the rules of the Agreement, it would have been *impossible* for the other Executive parties to have forced Bairbre de Brun or Martin McGuinness down the privatisation road. SF can point to no meeting of the Executive or any other occasion when they tried to fight off privatisation plans but were overruled. Not once was the issue the subject of inter-party controversy during the life-time of the Executive.

In London, McDonald was explicit that if the Executive is restored, SF will continue to privatise, "when necessary." She dismissed the option of going into opposition and mobilising against the neo-liberal agenda.

The underlying argument is that the implementation of the Agreement overrides all other considerations. What is this other than an updated version of de Valera's dictum that "labour must wait?" Once, it was "national liberation" which had to be achieved before class issues came onto the agenda. Now, it's merely the restoration of power-sharing and cross-border bodies.

There is nothing in this record to give Fianna Fail grief at the prospect of partnering SF in government.

Sinn Fein is not a socialist party, but a nationalist party. In almost a century of existence, it has never based itself on the interests of the working class but on the idea of "the nation." Serving in government North and South, privatising schools and hospitals on an all-Ireland basis, would be regarded by Sinn Fein not as a betrayal but as a triumph.

Coalition with Fianna Fail would be a perfectly appropriate next phase for the party.

WATER CHARGES

Would it go same way as rent and rate strike?

THE CAMPAIGN to stop the introduction of water charges in the North is growing almost daily. Meetings are being held in community centres, local libraries, even schools to organise opposition to this unfair double tax.

Everywhere, people agree that the best way to stop water charges, and the privatisation of water that goes with the charges, is a mass campaign of non-payment.

However, everywhere the same argument is raised against non-payment by the bureaucrats of the ICTU and by their representatives in local trade union branches and trades councils.

"Remember the Rent and Rates Strike" they declare against any suggestion for a mass campaign of non-payment like the one that defeated water charges in Dublin and Waterford and the Poll Tax in Scotland and England.

Certainly, the legacy of the Rent and Rates strike needs to be looked at and explained.

That strike was called, literally

overnight when internment was introduced on 9th August 1971. There was no organisation, no development of local groups, no legal support. Everyone was in it as an individual.

It was widely thought at the time that the entire Catholic population had joined the rent and rates strike. But it turns out relatively few actually did. Austin Currie, who as a leading SDLP member was responsible both for calling the rent and rates strike AND for crushing it as Housing Minister in the Sunningdale Assembly, gives the figures in his recent autobiography.

At the end of August 1971 – the height of the rent and rates strike – 26,000 households in the North were



■ Austin Currie

withholding payment. By Dec. 1973, when the SDLP decided to abandon it, there were 12,000 still on strike.

In April 1974, when Currie introduced draconian measures to end it, just over 11,000 tenants were involved.

Even 26,000 tenants was not a mass campaign. The Socialist Environmental Alliance and Communities Against the Water Tax have made it clear that anything less than 100,000 households refusing to pay water charges will mean the campaign cannot work.

This time round, we have more than 18 months in which to get organised, to ensure that there are people on every estate, if possible on every street, to whom non-payers can come for support.

The other huge difference is that the rent and rates strike was limited to Catholics living in public housing.

The water charges campaign unites Protestants and Catholics whether in public or private housing. This factor on its own means that the experience of the 1970s does not set a precedent.

Marxism 2004

Another World is Possible



November 26/27/28, Trinity College Dublin. Advance ticket €20 (€10 conc)

We live in a violent, unequal world where bombs are built instead of hospitals - Bush and Blair spent billions on war while half the planet live on less than \$2 a day.

Behind this 'war on terror' our rulers have launched a war on workers living standards and on civil liberties.

But the resistance is growing. The greatest super-power in history - the US, is being humbled every day by the resistance in Iraq.

A new movement is challenging war and the power of capitalism - the global anti-war and anti-capitalist movement.

This Summer in Ireland 30,000 people marched against Bush when he came to visit, thousands marched on Mayday for a world where people come before profit.

At Marxism2004 we will discuss how we can build this global movement and how we can start to build another world without war, poverty or greed ... a socialist world!

Some of this year's highlights

A member of the Iraqi Democrats Against the Occupation will speak alongside Richard Boyd Barrett, chair of the Irish Anti-War Movement on Iraq, Resistance and Revolution. They will also be joined by Jamal Jumma from the Stop the Wall Campaign in Palestine. Jamal will also speak on How can Palestine gain freedom. Deirdre Cronin will speak on Do we need a new Womens movement? and there will

also be a forum on Stonewall to Seattle - The fight for Gay liberation. Ivana Bacik from the Labour Party will speak on Is it time for a New Left in Ireland? while Laurence Cox and Kieran Allen will debate Does the movement need political parties?. Ryan McKinney and Eoin O'Broin from Sinn Fein will debate Is national liberation possible in a globalised world? Kathleen Lynch

will introduce Education and inequality in Ireland. Aisling Reidy from the ICCL will speak on Racism in Ireland and John Gormley TD will talk on Climate Change: Can we save the planet? Dr Juliet Bressan will introduce the Politics of food and Barry Finnegan from ATTAC and Kevin Wingfield discuss Globalisation. For full programme, tickets and info contact Marxism 2004, PO Box 1648 Dublin 8 Tel (01) 872 2682

TRADE UNIONS IN COLOMBIA

'Neoliberalism is destroying our society'

EDGAR PAIS has been a union activist in Colombia for more than twenty years.

He worked for the Nestlé Corporation before his plant closed and is now the international secretary of the SINALTRAINAL trade union.

He recently toured Ireland to speak to students and union activists.

He urged solidarity with Coca Cola workers in Colombia. Eight union activists in Coca Cola bottling plants have been murdered by paramilitaries.

One of those killed was Isidro Segundo Gill who was shot dead at the Carepa plant.

The paramilitaries who killed him returned next day to force workers to sign a form withdrawing from the union.

The forms had been prepared by the local management.

Edgar Pais spoke to Socialist Worker about the situation facing trade unionists in Colombia.



■ Funeral of Javier Suarez, a trade unionist killed by paramilitaries in Medellin, Colombia, in May 2000.

Photo: Marcelo Salinas.

COLOMBIA IS undergoing a deep militarisation through the US-backed Plan Colombia. There have been many forced disappearances and arbitrary arrests of social leaders.

All of this has the aim of destroying the country and exploiting its natural resources.

Over the past few years, 4,000 comrades in the trade union movement have been murdered — including the eight Coca Cola workers and ten workers from Nestlé.

The initiative of UCD students in boycotting Coca Cola — no Coca Cola product can be sold in the UCD Student shop — has been a great help. It is being copied in other parts of the world.

Not everyone likes the particular initiative but those who actually

organise against it only help strengthen the multinationals and help postpone a settlement of the problems.

Coca Cola has sacked over 10,000 workers at its plants.

It has broken collective bargaining agreements and the internal legislation of Colombia.

It is deliberately making it difficult for the union to exist. This year our members have had to go on a hunger strike against the sackings.

But while we are forced onto a hunger strike, Coca Cola goes off with paramilitaries to negotiate the distribution of their products.

As a reply to our lawsuit, Coca Cola took a legal action against members of our union but they lost the case. We hope that the judge in the US will also be positive towards our case.

We have had three meetings with the US embassy in Bogota.

We went there to demonstrate against the company's attacks, and because of global pressure the US government is paying greater attention to Coca Cola.

A CIA delegation came to investigate allegations against the company.

All of this happened only because of pressure from groupings like the UCD students.

Remember US investment in Colombia is not confined to Coca Cola. US multinationals also operate in the oil and coal industries. So the US government is frightened that the dispute with Coca Cola could affect other multinationals.

Believe me, the globalisation of struggle is the only way to defeat the multinationals.

Neoliberalism is destroying our society and the economic rights of workers. Insecurity now affects 90 percent of Colombian workers. This economic model has meant the privatisation of our health and education services.

Eight million out of Colombia's 40 million now live in poverty. That

means that 80 percent of the population live on between €70 and €100 a month.

We have to struggle against all of this. I cannot walk down the street in my own country without a bullet proof vest.

The majority of trade union leaders can only go around with protection and bodyguards. I have to come to Dublin to walk around normally!



'Believe me, the globalisation of struggle is the only way to defeat the multinationals'

SIPTU: We need Solidarity

THE WEEK before Edgar visited Ireland, the Dublin Regional Conference of SIPTU narrowly rejected a call to disinvest in Coca Cola over the company's involvement in the assassination of eight trade unionists.

Scandalously, Anne Speed, a leading Sinn Féin trade union official, claimed that the resolution could lead to the loss of Irish jobs.

The SIPTU Food Branch has also made approaches to the Teachers Union of Ireland to get them to rescind a resolution calling for a boycott of Coke.

Spurious arguments were used to break the solidarity movement. It was claimed, for example, that SINALTRAINAL is not the major union in Coca Cola and the other unions do not support the boycott call.

Edgar Pais replied:

'THERE ARE a number of unions in Coca Cola because workers can be a member of more than one union. SINALTRAINAL, however, is the largest union, representing more unionised workers than the others combined.

'One other union SINALTRAINBEC began in the plant in Monteria. It was set up by Coke to break our union. But eventually they closed the plant down and that union is in decline.

SICO is another union which has the support of the International Union of Foodworkers. It was set up in 1996 in Carepa when our members were facing kidnappings and violence. But it has only a handful of members.

'We have received support from the labour movement across the world. In the US, the steelworkers union has taken Coca Cola to the courts on our behalf. They helped to finance and organize a tour for us.

'The Teamsters union in America have also shown solidarity. Their leadership does not support the boycott, but many branches do.

'Our real problem is with union leaders who attack our actions. The International Union of Foodworkers, for example, have claimed that the murder of union members is due to the internal conflict in Colombia — that it has nothing to do with Coca Cola. We think this is completely wrong.

'We understand that some unions may not agree to a boycott, but we still urge them to do something. And by that we mean really do something — not just talk about it.

ANALYSIS

The Resistance in Iraq

By KIERAN ALLEN
Editor: Socialist Worker

THE PENTAGON has doubled its estimates about the Iraqi resistance. In a report leaked to the *New York Times*, they now believe that 20,000 people are involved in attacks on US forces. It was an admission that the US now faces a major national liberation force.

What should the attitude of the left in the West to this resistance?

In the 1960s, the streets of Berlin, London and Paris rang with the cry, 'Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh — we will fight and we will win!' The movement was firmly on the side of the North Vietnamese leader, Ho Chi Minh, with many mistakenly believing that he would usher in a socialist society.

Today, however, some argue that the resistance in Iraq is a reactionary movement that will impose Islam. The kidnappings of Ken Bigley and Margaret Hassan, it is claimed, show that US and British forces cannot simply withdraw. Otherwise violence would increase and a civil war would ensue.

These claims are similar to those made in previous national liberation struggles.

Almost every colonial government has tried to paint its mission in 'progressive colours'. When the British colonised India, they said they wanted to abolish the Suti practice whereby Hindu widows burned themselves after the death of their husbands. During the Kenyan struggle for independence, the Mau Mau were presented as backward savages, bound together by a blood oath ritual.

But the real force holding poorer countries back has been imperialism. By systematically plundering their wealth and dislocating their societies, imperialist powers help reinforce the most traditional lifestyles. To bolster their rule, they also try to build up the power of conservative tribal elders.

WHEN THE British Army conquered Basra, they formed a council made up of 'tribal elders' to apparently rule the city. Similarly, Saudi Arabia is acknowledged as the most reactionary government in the Middle East yet it owes its power to the decades long support of the US.

The liberal argument for imperialism amounts to saying that native people must be liberated from themselves. Freedoms won in the West have to be pushed down the throats of natives.

But how could anyone believe that an evangelical fundamentalist like George Bush could bring freedom to Iraqi women when he is cutting funding from family planning centres in his own country?

Propagandists for occupation also try to draw on fears about Islam which are not justified.

Historically many national liberation movements have aligned themselves to religions to broaden their support base. The Sinn Féin movement in Ireland was chaired by a priest, Fr. Flanagan, and drew considerable support from the lower echelons of the clergy. The FLN movement which defeated French colonialism in the early sixties combined both Islamic and secularist wings.

Islam is neither more reactionary nor progressive than Catholicism or



■ Above: Supporters of Al Mahdi army, below: al-Zarqawi

determine people's lives — not what is written in a particular sacred text.

People can fight under the banner of Islam and can come out with all sort of different outcomes. It depends on the political and social forces involved.

IRAQ HAS a long tradition of a secular left, having at one stage the largest mass Communist Party in the Middle East. If the secular left is involved in the resistance, it can help shape the outcome after the defeat of US imperialism.

If, however, it aligns itself with the puppet government of Allawi — as the present Iraqi Communist Party has done — then the future will be shaped by more conservative elements.

But even then, that is not a reason why the left in the West should not support the resistance.

The left were marginalised during the Irish War of Independence and the new Irish government took some regressive measures. They outlawed divorce, allowed the Catholic Church to imprison unmarried mothers in the Magdalene laundries and handed

over orphans to priests who abused them in the industrial schools.

But no one seriously argues that we should have kept the British Empire to save us from ourselves. In reality, the power of the Catholic Church was eventually broken by Irish people who struggled themselves for contraception and abortion rights.

The same thing can happen in the Middle East. In the 1980s, Iranian society, for example, united under the banner of Islam against US imperialism. Khomeini and the Islamic clergy had considerable support because they shrouded themselves in an anti-colonial rhetoric.

TODAY, HOWEVER, Iranian society is riven apart as thousands of young people demonstrate and fight against the mullahs. They want neither the imperialist liberalism of the US, nor religious domination. They seek freedom for themselves.

What about the claims that the Iraqi resistance is particularly blood thirsty and therefore not a proper

national liberation movement?

Again, this is a familiar argument made against such movements historically.

The British Empire made much of the violence of the Mau Mau. During the Lari massacre, for example, 150 people, mainly wives of home guard soldiers, were killed.

Nelson Mandela was also once described as a terrorist by Margaret Thatcher and in support of this claim the Western media pointed to the ANC practice of 'necklacing' apartheid collaborators—killing them with burning tyres around their necks.

But the violence of the oppressed was taken out of context. It was made more visible in precise proportion to how the violence of the imperial power was hidden. The fact that the killings of the Mau Mau and the ANC were a direct response to terrible cruelties visited on them by their oppressors was ignored.

The same method of removing the context is at work in Iraq.

EVERYONE IN Ireland was appalled at the beheading of Ken Bigley. But few are aware that on the night when he was killed, twelve innocent Iraqis who were attending a wedding were murdered by US bombers.

The mere fact that we do not know their names, or have any idea of the suffering they felt, shows how human life is valued in the colonial calculus.

The Western media focus on the activities of the al-Zarqawi group, which has links to Bin Laden and has been responsible for many of the kidnappings.

But this is tiny group which Western leaders are using as an excuse for attacking the 300,000 strong city of Falluja. The Iraqi resistance is built around much bigger groups such as the Sunni-based 1920 Revolution Brigade or the 15,000 strong Shiite Al Mahdi army. The vast majority of Iraqis despise the al-Zarqawi group.

One Iraqi writer, Sami Ramadan, summed up how the occupation forces use the al-Zarqawi group as a propaganda ploy:

'The occupation forces have admitted that the attacks on them by the resistance rose last month to 2,700. And how many of these 2,700 attacks a month were claimed by al-Zarqawi? Six. Six headline-grabbing, TV-dominating, stomach-churning moments.'

Just as Iraq's 25 million people were reduced, in the public mind, to the alleged threat from Weapons of Mass Destruction, which Blair claimed could be deployed within 45 minutes, the resistance is now being reduced to a single hoodlum.

A defeat for US and British imperialism in Iraq will help the poor of the whole world because it will weaken the military forces that enforce the debt payments to Western banks.

It will help to break the power of the US and British governments over their own people. In brief, it will open up tremendous possibilities for a change.

That is why anti-war activists should recognise that the people of Iraq have as much a right to resist their occupiers as the French resistance had to oppose Nazi rule. We should also hope that there is a similar outcome.



IRAQ IS A FIGHT FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION

By **WALDEN BELLO** (Focus on the Global South)

■ Above:
Resistance
fighters in
Iraq,
below:
Walden
Bello

THE QUESTION is no longer whether Washington will eventually be defeated by the Iraqi resistance. It will be defeated.

The question is how long it will hang on to an impossible situation. On the resolution of this issue, our role in the global peace movement has a very important bearing.

Washington hangs on despite the daily attacks on its troops by the resistance.

Given this situation, the victory of the Iraqi peoples resistance will definitely be hastened by one thing: the emergence of a strong global anti-war movement such as that which took to the streets before and after the Tet Offensive in Vietnam in 1968.

Yet at the very time that it is most needed by the people of Iraq, the international peace movement has had trouble getting into gear.

Perhaps a major part of the reason is that a significant part of the international peace movement hesitates to legitimise the Iraqi resistance.

Who are they? Can we really support them?

These questions have increasingly been flung at the advocates of an unconditional military and political withdrawal from Iraq.

Lets face it: the use of suicide as a political weapon continues to bother many activists who were repelled by statements such as that of the Palestinian leaders who proudly asserted that suicide bombers were the oppressed peoples equivalent of the F-16.



Lets face it: the fact that a large part of the resistance in both Iraq and Palestine is Islamic rather than secular in inspiration continues to bother many Western peace activists.

Yet there has never been any pretty movement for national liberation or independence.

Many progressives were also repelled by some of the methods of the Mau Mau movement in Kenya, the FLN in Algeria, the NLF in Vietnam.

What progressives forget is that national liberation movements are not asking them mainly for ideological or political support.

What they really want from the outside, from progressives like us, is

international pressure for the withdrawal of an illegitimate occupying power so that internal forces can have the space to forge a truly national government based on their unique processes.

We cannot promote conditional solutions even ones that say US and coalition troops should withdraw only if there is a UN security presence that takes the place of the Americans.

The only principled stand is unconditional withdrawal of US and coalition military and political forces now.

But if the future in Iraq itself continues to hang in the balance, the Iraqi resistance has already helped to

transform the global equation.

The US is weaker today than it was before 1 May 2003, when Bush declared victory in Iraq.

The Atlantic alliance that won the Cold War no longer functions, largely because of the divisions over Iraq.

Spain and the Philippines have been forced to withdraw their troops from Iraq, and Thailand has now quietly followed suit, contributing further to US isolation.

The situation in Afghanistan is more unstable now than last year, with the US writ extending only to the outskirts of Kabul.

In Latin America, we have massive popular anti-neoliberal and anti-US movements in Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela and Bolivia that are either in government or are making it difficult for governments to maintain their neoliberal policies.

The US is suffering from that fatal disease of all empires: imperial overstretch.

Our role, to echo that great Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara, is to worsen this crisis of overextension.

It is not only by creating or expanding movements of international solidarity against the US in Iraq, the US-Israel axis in Palestine, and the creeping US intervention in Colombia.

It is also by giving birth to or reinvigorating struggles against the US imperial presence in our own countries and regions.

But let me end by returning to our urgent task, which is to defeat the US

in Iraq and Israel in Palestine.

We are all here not to celebrate our strength but, most importantly, to address our weaknesses over the next few days.

One of the challenges that we will be addressing is how we get beyond spontaneous actions, beyond coordination that remains at the level of coordinating international days of protest.

The enemy is extremely well coordinated at a global level, and we have no choice but to match that level of coordination and cooperation.

The other challenge that I would like to highlight is that of closing the political and cultural gap between the global movements for justice and peace and their counterparts in the Arab and Islamic worlds.

This is a gap that imperialism has exploited to the hilt, with its effort to paint most of our Arab and Muslim comrades as terrorists or supporters of terrorism.

We cannot allow this situation to continue.

Unless the global movements and the Arab movements forge tight, organic ties of solidarity, we will not win the struggle against corporate-driven globalisation and imperialism.

□ This is an extract from Walden Bello's speech 'Where next for the anti-war and anti-globalisation movements?' given in Lebanon last month.

For the full text go to www.focusweb.org

UNIVERSITIES

The corporate take-over has begun

By RORY HEARNE,
Vice President of USI

IN UCD, one education centre is named the Quinn School of Business after one of its main financiers. Students attend their classes in a lecture hall that is named not after past UCD professors or famous economists but an executive of that role-model institution, AIB bank.

Buildings in both Trinity College and UCD are named after the richest man in Ireland, Sir Anthony O'Reilly. Rather than being filled with students engaged in learning, these buildings are often preserved for prestigious conferrals or used to generate income for colleges by renting them out for conference use.

Posting of notices for student meetings or protests is actively discouraged. The reason given is that posters don't fit with the 'clean' ethos of these buildings. Thus students are denied an important tool in communicating and organising.

Corporate sponsoring of third level institutions is becoming widespread as colleges look to the private sector to fill the funding gap left by government cut-backs.

Between 1995 and 2000, public expenditure on education declined from 4.7% to 4.1% of GDP. By comparison, Sweden spends 6.3% of GDP on education, while France spends 5.6%.

The corporate take-over extends to many services such as college canteens, cleaning services, gyms, and photocopying facilities. The colleges are eagerly out-sourcing such services as a means of cutting costs but it often results in inflated prices for students and worse conditions for staff employed in these companies.

Higher level educational institutions and the Department of Education and Science (DES) have embraced corporate globalisation. Policy is made according to the neoliberal recommendations of the OECD, the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund and the EU.

In this way the Government is reducing its funding and regulation of third level institutions in order to allow private companies gain access to the highly lucrative market of education.

A recent example was the decision of the DES to allow the private company Hibernia College to run an online teacher training course with no regulation of intake.

The existing public teacher training colleges applied to run such an online course and sought to increase their intake of students. The DES, however, turned down their offer and capped their intake, preferring instead the 'cheaper option' of Hibernia.

When questioned on the issue of over-supply of trained teachers due to unregulated intake, the DES responded with 'the markets will decide'.

John Carr, General Secretary of the INTO, said, 'Letting the markets decide is a complete policy reversal by the Department of Education and



Science... a laissez faire policy has the potential to return primary teaching to the 1980s, with high teacher unemployment and the closure of Carysfort college. Boom and bust doesn't work in teacher supply any more than it works in economics.'

PUBLIC PRIVATE Partnerships (PPPs) are another manner in which the government allows the private sector make huge profits from education provision.

The Cork College of Music which is part of the Cork Institute of Technology is being built and run by Jarvis plc. They were due to make €23m from this project. However, Jarvis' financial difficulties have meant that the college has yet to be built.

Since the 1950s, Irish economic and industrial policy focussed on

attracting multinationals (especially from the US) to invest here. Our environment, our right to join trade unions and our neutrality were all sacrificed in order to please corporate America. Our education system is now facing a similar threat.

College departments across the country are being used by multinationals to do their research.

The new Digital Enterprise Research Institute (DERI) at NUI Galway received €12m from Science Foundation Ireland. It is being run jointly by the university and the giant corporation Hewlett Packard. The research will give the company a competitive advantage in the areas of new web technology and boost Hewlett Packard's profits many times more than the money it has put in.

A similar SFI grant was given to a new centre named CRANN in

Trinity College. Intel is the main industry partner. On its website, Intel is quite explicit about the corporate interests served by the partnership: 'By building technical leadership and research capability... CRANN allows Intel Ireland to add value to its existing operation while also demonstrating strategic value to Intel Corporation.'

A NEW coalition, Education is Not For Sale (ENFS), has been formed to fight the neoliberal trend in education.

They point out that 'the freedom for academics to carry out research away from the commercial pressure of big business has always been an important right in our institutions of learning. Corporate funding of university buildings and research carries with it corporate bias. The argument is often put that universities need this

funding. But it is big business, not our education system, that is the main beneficiary. The university-business link amounts to further government hand-outs in terms of infrastructure, building and research manpower — to private companies.'

THE TOTAL tax revenue as a percentage of GDP in Ireland is one of the lowest in the OECD. Public services therefore suffer from under-funding.

The result is that the primary focus of education institutions is to compete globally in order to attract much-needed private funding. Colleges are already undergoing structural reform to create competitive institutions.

Representation of staff and students at governance level is being reduced in order to boost representation of the private sector and enterprise bodies. In one scandalous case in UCD, promotion to professorship was granted to a neoliberal hack — outside of all normal channels. Under the guise of 'reorganisation', traditional university departments are being amalgamated into new 'centres'. The real agenda is to cut back funding to areas such as Classics or Languages because they are not considered profitable or enterprising.

Neoliberal policies and corporate involvement in education threaten the value of education as a social good that exists to develop society and individuals in a broad and critical manner.

Education is increasingly a commodity that is bought and sold in the marketplace, created for the sole goal of enhancing the profits of private enterprise.

Just as neoliberalism in public services is being challenged globally, so too the neoliberal agenda in Irish education is beginning to face a challenge. The left is starting a fight back in the student unions (most noticeably in UCD) and the trade unions (SIPTU Education Branch).

The ENFS campaign is a broad alliance of teachers, parents, academics, trade unionists and students with supporters including the SIPTU Education Branch, the Union of Students in Ireland and the presidents of the ASTI, the INTO and the TUI.

They are demanding that the Government increase spending on public education. One potential source of this funding would come from a reversal of the decision made by Ruairi Quinn, the former leader of the Labour Party as Minister for Finance, to lower corporation tax to 12%. Corporations who are making record profits in Ireland should be forced to pay back significantly more.

All those involved in education in Ireland should get involved in ENFS through their student or trade union and begin the fight back against neoliberalism in our public services. Protests and strikes are urgently required but will only come about if we begin to build the momentum in the classrooms, staff rooms and lecture halls.

REVIEWS

'Tinkering with corporate governance is not enough'



■ Xerox executives keep an eye on workers in the 1950s, scene from *The Corporation*

The Corporation

Reviewed by MARK WALSH

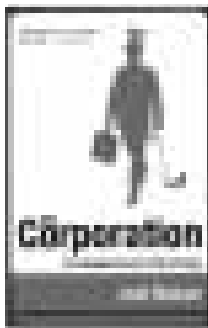
ONE OF the most eye-catching posters at the recent European Social Forum in London showed the red silhouette of a salesman, briefcase in hand, with a halo and the tail of a devil.

It was an invitation to a pre-screening of *The Corporation*, 'a shocking new feature film which reveals the inner workings and controversial impact of corporations,' according to the organisers.

The film is a multi-award-winning documentary based on a book by Canadian law professor Joel Bakan, which has been published to coincide with the UK & Ireland release of the film.

According to its website (www.thecorporation.com), the film has been an 'unprecedented box office hit in Canada, [and] is now playing across the USA and Australia.' It has won nine audience choice awards including one from the Sundance Film Festival.

The website encourages 'theatre goers to organize groups to attend the film together. Why not meet for dinner to talk about the issues it raises? For groups of 10 or more contact your local theater for group sale rates.'



No doubt many local SWP branches will be doing just that when the film opens in Ireland on 29 October in the Irish Film Institute (www.irishfilm.ie) and UGC. It will be the next in a series of recent branch outings to see *Fahrenheit 9-11*, *The Motorcycle Diaries*, *Supersize Me*, *Checkpoint*, and *Battleship Potemkin*.

The success of all of these films reflects the growing popularity of film as a form of cultural opposition to neoliberalism and war. The recent Irish Film Institute (IFI) showing of *Battleship Potemkin* — a silent film in black and white based on events around the Russian Revolution — sold out.

A former student of mine, whom I met before the show and who is now studying film at college, told me it was one of his favourite films of all time.

The film was shown as part of the 'Incendiary Cinema' evening course which is currently running every Tuesday at the IFI. According to the promotional literature, the course covers 'the history, politics, and aesthetics of some of the most provocative films ever made.'

The Battle of Algiers, which was screened in October, is an important film in the history of the struggle against imperialism. As the IFI programme puts it, 'Italian director

Gillo Pontecorvo's classic portrayal of the Algerian liberation struggle has become a model of political filmmaking... His aim was to show the rightness of the Algerian cause and the moral bankruptcy of the French colonial regime.'

A similar film could probably be made today on the popular insurgency in Iraq and its struggle against Anglo-American imperialism.

Indeed, the absence of any reference to Anglo-American imperialism from *The Corporation* (at least from the book; I haven't seen the film yet) is surprising. The election of George W. Bush was funded by US corporations, notably Dick Cheney's Halliburton.

The subsequent invasion of Iraq and sharing out of the colonial spoils (for example, the handing out of lucrative reconstruction contracts) were to provide a return on the corporations' investments.

Surely this would have made for a unique case study of the corporation, its 'near-complete takeover of the electoral process', its pathological exploitation of people and the environment for profit, and the utterly meaningless notion of 'corporate social responsibility'?

Leaving that aside, however, *The Corporation* is an important contribution to the ongoing debates within the Global Justice movement and the book will be a useful resource for activists.

While many of the issues Bakan

deals with in the book — sweatshops, branding, advertising to children, the commercialization of the public sphere, shareholder and consumer democracy — have been well documented in Naomi Klein's *No Logo* and George Monbiot's *The Age of Consent*, his legal perspective and the charting of the corporation's rise to dominance offer a new, enlightening exposé on the corporate domination of society.

At the end the book he provides some prescriptions for how to deal with the problem, some of which may strike revolutionaries as reformist 'tinkering with the system' to try to improve it.

While he argues that 'tinkering with corporate governance is not enough... post-Enron measures such as those found in the Sarbanes-Oxley Act... will do little to improve corporate accountability to society as a whole...', he cautions that 'at the other extreme, proposals based upon visions of corporation-less futures leave unsolved the problem of what to do about and with corporations right now.'

Whatever about the prescriptions, though, his conclusion is a hopeful one: 'No social and ideological order that represses essential parts of ourselves can last — a point as true of the corporate order as it was for the fallen Communist one.'

He might have added the powerful message of the European Social Forum: 'Another world is possible.'

MUSIC OF THE WORLD

MusicK/Rearranging the 20th Century
Gilad Atzmon and the Orient House Ensemble

ON THIS, his fourth album, jazz musician Gilad Atzmon releases some of the newer features of his recent gigs.

The standout track, "Liberating the American People", highlights the quality of Frank Harrison's piano playing.

Overall this is a more diverse and bitty collection than his previous award-gathering *Exile*. But the key is to witness his music live.
Nick Grant

Tekitoi
Rachid Taha
RACHID TAHA, born in Algeria, has been mixing musical styles ever since his family moved to France in the 1960s.

He was influenced by English punk and, in response to the racism and bigotry he faced, began to write political songs with his first band, *Carte de Séjour* (Residence Permit).

His latest album is a confrontation with a world that's "going head-on into a brick wall" as he puts it.

It is a musically brilliant mix of rock riffs, Arabic melodies and North African percussion.
Mary Buchanan



Rachid Taha

Una Sangre/One Blood
Lila Downs

I'VE LOVED the Mexican singer Lila Downs ever since her album *Border*, which was such a powerful expression of the feelings of migrant workers.

Downs was interested in music as an intellectual pursuit until she went home to Mexico from university in the US and came into real contact with the lives of ordinary people.

As an "educated one" she was asked to translate the death certificates of young men whose bodies were sent home from the US.

Shocked by the suffering, she started writing her own songs.

Her latest album is a celebration of the possibilities of cultural unity, whatever borders there are on maps.
Julie Culshaw

EDUCATION FOR ACTIVISTS

A new series

THE EU CONSTITUTION:

The Military Agenda

By ANDY STOREY

THE KEY elements of the EU Constitution in relation to foreign and security matters are as follows:

There is no provision for a mutual defence clause (thus preserving narrowly defined ideas of neutrality as non-participation in a mutual defence pact – see below);

There is a facility for 'structured cooperation' (action by individual EU states in cooperation with each other, but not including all member states);

The Constitution establishes an EU Minister for Foreign Affairs (merging the existing roles of high representative for foreign policy and commissioner for external relations), with their own diplomatic corps;

Member states will "make civilian and military capabilities available to the Union for the implementation of the common security and defence policy [and] undertake progressively to improve their military capabilities";

The Constitution formally establishes a European Armaments, Research and Military Capabilities Agency, though this was already in train, charged with harmonising military requirements, coordinating military R&D, Encouraging convergence in national procurement policies.

The EU's common foreign and security policy is, in theory, governed by the the Petersberg Tasks, which were originally outlined as follows in Article J.7 of the Amsterdam Treaty:

"The common foreign and security policy shall include all questions relating to the security of the Union, including the progressive framing of a common defence policy... Questions referred to in this Article shall include humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking".

These have been expanded as follows in the Constitution:

"shall include joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking and post-conflict stabilisation. All these tasks may contribute to the fight against terrorism, including by supporting third countries in combating terrorism in their territories".

Intervention

The broadening of the EU's security agenda is clear from this change – even greater scope is created for European military intervention in third countries.

The European Convention was the process by which the Constitution was drafted. The Final Report of Working Group VIII – Defence – provides a good illustration of how decision-making is to be undertaken in this area:

"With a view to the forthcoming enlargement of the Union, most members of the Group consider it more important than ever that the Member States should agree to move from unanimity to other decision-making procedures, relying more on consent and a culture of solidarity among Member States. The launching of an operation would be decided unanimously, but the rules on constructive abstention would apply, although these might be relaxed. Member States not wishing to support an operation actively, in particular those not wishing to contribute militarily, would be encouraged not to oppose the operation, but to abstain".

The closing off of space for democratic protest and dissent is apparent. Thirteen experts were heard by this working group: Two were representatives of the armaments industries, all others were politicians, military figures or civil servants.

The most recent and important development in EU military doctrine and practice springs from British and French proposals for a series of rapid-deployment military units.

By 2007, the EU is to have nine such 'battle groups' – each consisting of 1,500 troops and capable of being deployed within two weeks.

When the Irish government commits Irish soldiers to these 'battle groups', we can be sure that we will hear the usual nonsense that Irish neutrality is unaffected because we haven't signed up to a mutual defence pact.

True enough, but what Irish soldiers will be doing is going to war outside Europe itself alongside the armies of other European countries.

Crunch time for Dublin Bin Charges

DUBLIN CITY Council will present its upcoming budget proposals to city councillors during the month of November.

The controversial budget has been the subject of meetings held between Sinn Féin councillors, independent councillors and representatives of the Dublin City Campaign Against the Bin Tax.

The budget will, yet again, contain a bin charge to be set for 2005 when the 'Pay by Volume' system is set to be introduced.

Already a number of councillors are preparing to table amendments to the budget to eliminate the bin charges and replace them with taxes on tourism and/or rates on Government buildings in the city.

Sinn Féin and Independent councillors have been co-operating to prepare to present budget alternatives which will be subject to controversial votes at forthcoming City Council meetings.

According to independent socialist councillor Joan Collins, from Crumlin, 'The people voted for change in the local elections.

'Now with Fianna Fáil heavily defeated, the people are waiting to see changes coming through with the new council, particularly on the issue of the bin charges.



Bin Tax campaigners protesting last year

'Many of the new councillors, particularly those in Sinn Féin and Labour, ran in the election on opposition to the bin charges. We will be lobbying Labour Councillors and the

Lord Mayor, Michael Conaghan, for their support to eliminate bin charges from the Council's budget.'

The anti-bin charges campaign will be organising the

first of a series of protests against the charges at the city council meeting on Monday 1 November. The campaign has collected thousands of signatures across Dublin appealing to the Lord Mayor and to the Labour Group to vote against any budget containing a bin charge.

These letters will be presented to Michael Conaghan, Lord Mayor and to Kevin Humphries, chair of the Labour Group at the protest on November 1st.

PROTEST AGAINST THE BIN TAX
OUTSIDE CITY HALL, DUBLIN
MONDAY 1ST NOVEMBER AT 6.30PM

STUDENT NEWS

USI occupy Fianna Fail headquarters

USI (Union of Students in Ireland) brought hundreds of students on to the streets of Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Dublin recently to protest against the registration fee (€750), inadequate grants and cut-backs to college funding

and access programmes. In Dublin around 20 students occupied the FF headquarters for over an hour.

The next date of action is December 1st when USI are organising a march and protest in Dublin.

U.C.D.

THE PHYSICAL attack on Justin Barrett at the L & H debate was a futile act and has only served to discredit the left in UCD.

In order to combat

racism and the extreme right we need to build movements that are democratic and involve hundreds of students not the type individual conspiratorial actions

like that which took place at the debate.

We are concentrating on building broad anti-war activity in UCD.

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FORUM

AROUND 15 SWSS students travelled over to the London ESF. Everyone was inspired and enthused by the event.

We came back with the determination to make anti-imperialism and anti-war activity our priority over the next while.

TRINITY

OVER 150 people attended a meeting with two Israeli refuseniks speaking.

It was co-organised

by the One World Society and SWSS.

George Galloway is speaking next week at a meeting co-hosted

by SWSS, One World and Labour.

QUEENS

QUEENS Students against the War held a very successful rally outside the college which had around 80 students attend.

The student union president spoke at the rally along with anti-war speakers.

We got 70 people signed up to the anti-war group and sold a few SW papers.

We are planning to hold another rally the day after the US elections!

Sun October 31st Students and Anti-Capitalism Educational

Come find out about the theories of socialism and Karl Marx, the anti-capitalist and anti-war movements, alternatives to capitalism.
12pm-4pm Teachers Club, 36 Parnell Sq, Dublin 1

news from the struggle – news from the struggle – news from the struggle

send reports to Socialist Worker phone (01) 8722682 email socialistworker@swp.ie

Lusk anti-dump campaign gathers momentum

By MARK WALSH

LOCAL COMMUNITY activists have mounted a serious and well organised campaign against Fingal County Council's plans for a second landfill site in the Lusk area.

At a recent meeting in the Balrothery Cricket Club, which was attended by over 100 local residents, the *Nevitt, Lusk Action Group* gave a presentation on the likely impact of the proposed superdump and invited local councillors and TDs to outline what they intended to do in order to prevent it from going ahead.

The site at the Nevitt, Lusk was chosen by Fingal County Council from a number of possible sites in the North Dublin area. Its construction will involve the eviction of several families from their homes and farmlands.

The group is opposing the superdump on a number of grounds. The size of the site is not in line with stated Government policy of 'guarding against the over-provision of landfill'. It is close to the local national school. An Environmental Impact Study was carried out by the same contractor that selected the site — a clear conflict of interest. The same study ignored listed heritage sites. The site is only three-

quarters of a mile from the Bog of the Ring, the only source of water in Fingal.

At the meeting, the Group called for a full hydrogeological study to be carried out, funded by the same public money that Fingal County Council has been using to employ consultants, whose reports, not surprisingly, support the Council's plans.

Another proposal called on councillors to rezone the land as 'high amenity'. Socialist Party councillor Clare Daly pointed out that councillors no longer had the power to make decisions in relation to the siting of dumps, incinerators, and waste charges. These vital decisions were now made by unelected county managers following the rushing through of the misnamed Protection of the Environment Act.

However, she proposed that councillors could submit a Section 140 motion instead.

Whether the motion is successful or not, the campaign will continue until the Council's plans are changed.

Follow the campaign online at www.fingalsuperdump.com. The PowerPoint presentation to Fingal County Council and to the local meeting is available at <http://martinri.freeshell.org/council-presentation-oct-18.ppt>

Waterford Against Racism organise march and rally



■ Jimmy Kelly said that the immigrants had huge support from the Waterford community and that racists, thankfully, are in the minority

ON FRIDAY 8th October, Waterford Against Racism held a march and rally to demand an end to deportations, for the right to work, and for an amnesty for all refugees/asylum seekers currently in Ireland.

The marchers assembled at Government Buildings in the Glen and marched to the

Mayor's office on Parnell Street, where they were met and addressed by the Mayor Seamus Ryan.

Support

At the rally, speeches were delivered by Eddy Graham, Chairperson of Waterford Against Racism and by Jimmy Kelly, Chairperson of the

Transport and General Workers Union.

Jimmy Kelly said that the immigrants had huge support from the Waterford community and that racists, thankfully, are in the minority.

He said the support of the first citizen, Mayor Seamus Ryan, represented a statement

of solidarity against deportations.

The Irish trade union movement is also committed to organising support for all our immigrants.

Eddy Graham made an appeal for an end to deportations and for a general amnesty for asylum seekers.

Save Viking Waterford group formed

THE WOODSTOWN Viking site, discovered during excavations for the Waterford bypass, has been described by Professor Donnchadh O'Corrain, medieval historian at UCC, as 'the most significant new find in Viking studies in perhaps a century.'

Archaeologists, historians, medievalists and conservationists from around the world have welcomed the find and it has been predicted that the site could be worth millions to the local economy in increased tourism revenue.

Some 5,000 artefacts have been unearthed already and archaeologists believe thousands more lie just beneath the soil surface.

However, despite the fact that the site was discovered nearly 18 months ago, the government has not yet decided whether or not to order a full excavation.

The new Minister for the Environment, Dick Roche, is awaiting reports from the National Roads Authority (NRA), the National Museum and his own department, but fears are growing that he will

order only a rescue excavation, which will fail to unearth the true wonders of Woodstown.

Despite the extraordinary significance of the find, the NRA and former Minister for the Environment, Martin Cullen, waited an incredible nine months before they made it public!

The newly-formed Save Viking Waterford Action Group has formulated five demands to ensure the complete protection of this extraordinary site:

Excavation

The Minister for the Environment orders the full excavation of the entire Woodstown Viking Site and not a partial or rescue excavation

The excavation to be done by hand without the use of heavy machinery.

The route of the Waterford bypass to be excavated first with the surrounding areas excavated after, facilitating the construction of the bypass without re-routing or significant delay.

The state to bear the cost of the excavation.

Once the site has been fully

excavated and artefacts removed, an interpretative centre/ education facility to be constructed near the site utilising the knowledge gained from the excavation and acting as a tourist attraction for the region.

SVWAG have launched a petition, which has received huge support on the streets of Waterford and are holding a series of lectures with eminent historians on the topic of Woodstown and our Viking heritage.

The campaign also hopes to link up with other conservation campaigns throughout the country and beyond to organise an international conference in Dublin, which will culminate in a protest march on the Department of the Environment.

Chair of the SVWAG, Dr. Catherine Swift of NUI Galway, said: 'If the government can afford to pay €15 million for PuncHESTOWN or waste nearly €50 million on e-voting, they can surely afford to pay for the excavation of what they themselves call a site of European and world-wide importance.'

OVER 2,000 workers at Bord na Mona have balloted for industrial action after management refused to grant a pay rise which had already been agreed.

Strike action will take place on November 1st and 8th.

The workers are due to receive the second phase 3 percent of an overall pay deal agreed last February.

The company is claiming

that progress has not been made on productivity concessions.

Ever since the new benchmarking system was introduced, companies are increasingly holding up pay rises.

They constantly demand 'verifiable' productivity rises and if these are not to their satisfaction, they claim there will be no pay rises.

Under the Sustaining

Progress agreement, they also claim the right to make 'normal ongoing changes' without offering workers compensation.

The company is hoping that by refusing to pay up they can frighten workers into giving more concessions. But the unions involved — SIPTU, ATGWU, and TEEU — should not cave in to such pressure.

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RACISM NOT WELCOME HERE

THE BRILLIANT No Excuses rally organised by the Anti-Racist Network is exactly what we need.

There is alarm at the rise of racism across Northern Ireland which has been assisted by three main factors.

First, the role of mainstream politicians in Britain and the South of Ireland. Blunkett and Blair constantly denounce refugees with the support of some sections of the media. They use the same arguments as the right wing Justice Minister of the South, Michael McDowell, when he pushed through his new Citizenship referendum.

Blunkett's depiction of 'welfare tourists' matched McDowell's scare stories of foreign women creating chaos in the maternity wards. The Blair government has backed up their 'respectable racism' with anti-Muslim rhetoric from the 'War on Terror'.

Second, there are the local conditions. The crisis in loyalism means that some paramilitary elements are attempting to regroup around 'defence of the local area' and against 'foreign' elements. They have encouraged racist attacks and pipe bomb attacks on the homes of ethnic minorities. The statements of mainstream unionist politicians help to foster a climate which legitimates these actions.

DUP councillor Ruth Patterson, for instance, expressed 'grave concerns' over establishing a Chinese community centre in Donegall Pass. Her talk of Protestant culture being under attack reinforces the position of bigots who circulated leaflets

attacking Chinese people for 'diluting Britishness' in the area.

Finally, there is the institutional racism. The PSNI are doing little about racist attacks. They have brought less than half a dozen prosecutions despite over 600 reported racist incidents.

The Chinese Welfare Association has now had its fourth attempt to gain premises blocked — Belfast City Council must take responsibility for the racism that allows this to happen.

As Chinese Welfare Association chief executive Anna Lo puts it, 'When are we going to be accepted? We have a third generation now, being born and brought up here. We have stuck with the wider community throughout the Troubles. Now when peace comes, we are being kicked around.'

A STRUGGLE FROM THE GRASSROOTS

THE FIGHT against racism has come from grassroots organisations like the Anti-Racist Network (ARN).

They have drawn in an impressive range of groups to support initiatives like the No Excuses rally. All the minority ethnic community organisations and major voluntary and community groups have backed the call.

Significantly support has also come from major unions like NISPA, T&GWU, UNISON and ICTU.

This means we can

start to tackle the roots of racism, which come both from the racist culture at the top of society and the competition for scarce resources at the bottom.

We must take up the lack of resources, low wages and particularly a shortage of decent housing if racism in working class areas is to be undermined. This is where the unions have a central role.

The ARN can also learn lessons about fighting racism from socialists in Britain in the 1970s.

There was a twin approach of popularising

anti-racism through marches and music together with fighting for more resources. This dual strategy enabled the movement to drive back hardcore racists like Enoch Powell and the National Front.

The Anti-Nazi League and the Rock Against Racism carnivals created a cultural shift across Britain which had major long lasting results.

But inside the unions, socialists fought for a common struggle of black and white workers to improve working conditions.



NO EXCUSES

Against Racism...

For Diversity

Rally/Carnival

2pm Art College,

Sat 30 October

FEEDER MARCHES:

South Belfast

assembles Shaftesbury

Sq at 1pm

West Belfast

assembles Roden

Street at 1pm

Contact the ARN:

www.arnni.tk or

07900 313 363

ARN Rally Supported by: Chinese Welfare Association, Belfast Islamic Centre, ICTU, Belfast Trades Council, UNISON, NI Human Rights Commission, Intercomm, Latin-America Support Group, NI Law Centre, NI Commissioner for Children & Young People, NIPSA, Indian Community Centre, UNESCO Centre, T&GWU, Belfast Jewish community, Wheelworks Youth Arts Organisation, Alliance Party, Socialist Workers Party, Sinn Féin, Workers Party, Organise, Sai Pak Chinese community group, Amnesty International, STEP, International Voluntary Service NI, Duncrun Cultural Initiative, Fountain Mens Group, Fountain Youth Club, Rasharkin Womens Group, Travellers Movement of Northern Ireland., NICVA, Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Progressive Unionist Party, Refugee Action Group, The Blanket, Socialist Party, Tools for Solidarity