

# Socialist Worker

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

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## AHERN'S £36,000 PAY RISE IS MORE THAN A TEACHER EARNS IN YEAR

# PAY THE TEACHERS



Teachers marching on the Dail

# ...NOT THE CROOKS IN THE DAIL!

**BERTIE AHERN has got a wage increase of £36,000. It is more than the average teacher earns in a year. But Aherne is waging a war to stop them getting extra pay.**

Fianna Fail wants to recruit strikebreakers to organise exams. They are using the media to slan-

der teachers.

They have encouraged the Labour Court to prolong its investigation into teachers case so that they can get over the oral exams.

The majority of teachers never voted for partnership agreements. They do not want 'benchmarking' or performance related pay.

They want a decent well funded education system that does not copy the Thatcherite reforms pushed through in Britain.

But Aherne wants to make an example of the teachers — to frighten other workers off seeking a wage rise beyond the partnership agreements.

And he is getting the silent collaboration of the ICTU leaders who want to keep their cosy deals with the bosses.

Rank and file workers should stand up for the teachers.

A victory for them will be a blow against wage restraint.

**Don't dump here**

A SERIES of meetings have taken place in Cork to try and halt the dumping of demolition waste in Golders Glen near Mayfield.

The EPA and the Co. Council have disgracefully given the go ahead for a construction firm to dump waste on the area.

Even claiming at one point to have the support of local people — despite not having consulted them.

One local campaigner told *Socialist Worker*, "The area is the source of two rivers and there are real concerns that chemicals from the dumping could end up in the water supply."

"And that is with even considering the destruction of a valuable and beautiful environment."

**INSIDE INTEL**

**WORKERS at anti-union multinational Intel have been told that their pay review is being held over till October and even then no pay rises are guaranteed.**

Meanwhile the company CEO has cashed in shares worth \$12million.

A case of cashing in before the bubble bursts perhaps.

If you work in a non-unioned work place ring (01)8722682

**Stop the incinerators**

IN MEATH anti-incineration campaigners have presented a huge petition against 'thermal treatment' to Meath County Council in advance of a public meeting.

Over 26,000 people signed the protest letter against building an incinerator and some 800 objections have been lodged with Meath County Council over the plan.

For more on anti incinerator campaigns turn to page 10

**Fighting docklands**

SOME 100 people protested at the old Bord Gais Site in Pearse Street Dublin against the toxic waste being released by a development run by the Dublin Docklands authorities.

Local residents were joined by office workers and Students from Trinity College.

Protests are set to continue till residents are sure the site is safe. More information ring Ann on

★ More reports from campaigns and industry and the unions turn to page 10 and 11

**Stop the deportations**  
**Protesters win a victory**

**PROTESTS have forced the lifting of the immediate threat to deport Anthony Benson.**

Anthony, a 24 year old Nigerian has been living in Dundalk, applying for asylum for three years. He was given the right to work and has been employed by Quantum in Dundalk. However, he was arrested by gardai one morning at work and held in Mountjoy prison pending deportation.

**Picket**

The Stop Deportation Campaign organised a picket of Mountjoy jail last month and at the court hearing.

The court released Anthony and granted him an extended right to appeal until March 15th. But his employers refused to let back to work.

Another asylum seek-

er, Nigerian Blessing Oguri was finally deported last week at the second attempt.

He had courageously physically resisted the first attempt to deport him but was overpowered on a second occasion.

Marnie Holborow of the Stop Deportation Campaign told *Socialist Worker*: "The cases of Anthony and Blessing show the need to organise against these racist deportations of asylum-seekers."

"There were 187 deportations last year and so far 1,095 Deportation Orders have been signed."

The Stop Deportation Campaign has the backing of Comhlabh; ARASI; ANASI, the Anti Racist Campaign; the Pan African Organisation and others.

The Campaign is producing a fact-sheet and plans a major demonstration against deportations on June 16th.



Protesting against racism in Ireland



**Burke's bag**

*Socialist Worker* would like to apologise to its readers. For a number of years we have referred to cash being given to disgraced FF minister Ray Burke as being in brown envelopes — it now appears we had no sense of the generosity of Burke's friends.

Former FF deputy, Jim Geraghty told the Flood tribunal of being in Burke's council offices in 1986 when unnamed persons entered with a hold-all full of cash and, on a separate occasion, a stuffed plastic bag.

Full of £20 notes apparently.



Bags o' money Burke

**Turkey resists the IMF**

EARLIER THIS month Turkish anti-capitalist protesters struggled with police outside the Hyatt Hotel in Istanbul that was hosting a meeting of finance officials from twenty of the world's industrialized nations, as well as representatives from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Protesters shouted "No to globalised capitalism and the IMF!" before being arrested by police. Turkish police detained forty demonstrators.

The demonstration took place as Turkey's Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit announced emergency measures in order to save the nation's economy, which has

been nearing collapse.

**Rotten**

The IMF ignoring the Turkish governments rotten human rights record praised their "resolute and leadership in overcoming Turkey's current economic and financial problems," by developing a program that "builds on the achievements made so far in disinflation and fiscal consolidation and moves forward decisively the country's structural reform and privatization agenda."

**Bigots on the bench**

A DISTRICT judge, Michael Connellan, told a woman who had been assaulted that she deserved to be hit.

He said that he could not blame the man for hitting the woman because women were "getting drunk and acting like alley cats".

But it is not the

first filth to come from the esteemed Justice.

Two years ago the judge said that Travellers have too much time on their hands and get too much money, "These people shouldn't be let in anywhere when they can't conduct themselves. I'm fed up of it."

These people are at it the whole time, and the only way to stop it is to imprison them.

★ AIB profits have soared once again. They were up by 10.5 percent to just under £1 billion a year — the equivalent of £2.7 million a day.

**Crooked cops South & North**

A RUC inspector, exposed as a crook, has been jailed for two years.

Robinson, 45, pleaded guilty to 17 charges including fraud, interfering with the judicial system and obtaining property by deception.

From one insurance scam alone Robinson made around £12,000.



**Nike comes clean at last — sort of**

NIKE, THE athletic-apparel giant finally admitted to the appalling conditions their workers have to endure.

But the admission, after years of dodging such accusations, smacks more of opportunism than benevolence.

**Abuse**

Workers at factories contracted by Nike in Indonesia suffer verbal and sexual abuse and complain of forced overtime and poor health care, says a report funded by the multinational.

The study, said that 30 percent of the employees interviewed at Nike's partner factories had been abused verbally. About 2.5 percent said they had experienced sexual assault. One report said a superior had thrown a

book at a worker when she was slow to complete a task.

More than 45 percent of the employees were not satisfied with the health care clinics in the factories.

The report was compiled by The Global Alliance for Workers and Communities, which despite its name is a front for multinationals.

It was formed in 1999 and its members include Nike, Gap and the World Bank, as well as several private foundations.

★ Mike Moore, head of the World Trade Organisation, recently made clear his feelings about anti-capitalist protesters. "The people that stand outside and say they work in the interests of the poorest people—they make me want to vomit" he said.

**Know your enemy**

A NEW book, *Managing Activism: A Guide to Dealing With Activists and Pressure Groups*, is a sign that the corporations are under pressure.

It explains to corporations and governments how to deal with pesky activists who can "cause severe damage to an organisation's reputation, sales, profitability and share price".

It advises capitalists to "get to know the enemy", and then attempt a "proactive strategy of relation-

ship building, negotiation and conflict resolution".

This book is all part of the way that corporations are trying to co-opt the movement into their structures by pretending to be fluffy while continuing to exploit people and destroy the environment.

**Banning Bloody Sunday**

THE BBC has barred its journalists from using the word "massacre" in any reports on Bloody Sunday.

The dictionary definition of massacre is "to kill indiscriminately". British Paratroopers shot 13 unarmed civilians dead a fourteenth victim died later — on 30 January, 29 years ago in Derry in Northern Ireland.

Yet the BBC, after a complaint by just one listener and his MP that the use of the word massacre in relation to this particular indiscriminate killing of a number of people was "inappropriate".

**what we think**

*Latest food scandal shows*

# FOOD POISONED FOR PROFIT

**"THE PROFITS of the fast food industry have been made possible by the losses imposed on the rest of society". This is the damning conclusion of a new book *Fast Food Nation* that has become a best seller in the US.**

Eric Schlosser has revealed the sheer greed that lies behind companies like McDonalds. It spends \$2 billion dollars a year on promoting its image but according to Schlosser the fast food industry is responsible for food poisoning, rural poverty, environmental degradation and exploitation of workers.

Here are some of the facts that Schlosser reveals

- Poor hygiene practices at US meat factories which supply the fast food industry have been responsible for a sharp rise in E Coli O157.

- Fast food is stuffed with chemicals. A typical artificial strawberry flavouring is a cocktail of more than 50 chemicals.

- Out of every \$ 1.50 spent on a large order of fries at a fast food restaurant, a meagre two cents goes to the farmer who grew the potatoes.

- McDonalds has denied workers rights and bitterly resisted minimum wage laws.

- McDonalds invest large sums in designing equipment that requires as little skill as possible - and then accepts vast US government subsidies for teaching job skills to those forced off social welfare.

McDonalds hates an inquiry into

its methods. They tried to persecute two anarchists, Helen Steel and Dave Morris, because they dared to distribute an anti McDonalds leaflet.

Their British head of security Sidney Nicholson who once worked for South Africa police force organised infiltration of environmental groups to get evidence against the pair. But even the trial judge damned McDonalds for 'exploitation of children', 'helping to depress catering industry wages' and 'cruelty to animals'.

In Cork, McDonalds claimed they would not hire black people to work on their front counters and protests have been organised against them.

McDonalds's is a real symbol of global capitalism.

And just as the symbol stinks so does the overall system. All the more reason to spread the anti-capitalist movement to every corner of Ireland.



*Slaughtered pigs being dumped because of the foot and mouth outbreak*

## Everywhere they go — we go!



**WHERE EVER the tiny elites who run the planet go they are met with growing protests.**

Since Seattle in 1999 no meeting of the World Bank, IMF, WTO or World Economic Forum has gone without demonstrations against globalisation.

As *Socialist Worker* went to press anti-capitalists were assembling in Cancun, Mexico, (pictured left) to protest at the World economic forum.

While business and political leaders

dined poolside at a swanky hotel, protesters gathered outside to chant "death to capitalism!"

"I came here to say no to globalisation, but also to discuss the alternative" said Areli Cirreon, a 30-year-old environmental activist from Cuernavaca, just outside Mexico City.

For a report from the Montpellier protest in France and the plans for the G8 summit in Genoa turn to page 12.

## Globalisation & RESISTANCE

Trinity College  
Fri 2 / Sat 3 March

**Organised by Trinity College One World Society, Socialist Worker Student Society, Society against Racism and Environmental Society — For tickets (£3) or more info please write to: Rory Hearne c/o Student Union, Trinity College, D. 2 Phone**

## JOIN THE ANTI CAPITALISTS

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I want to get **Socialist Worker** fortnightly

Return to SWP PO Box 1648 Dublin 8. Tel (01) 872 2682



# news of the world

## — South Korea

# Workers stand up to globalisation

**SOUTH KOREAN car workers are involved in a brave and militant fight against globalisation despite severe repression from the government.**

Worker Daewoo plant in Bupyeong — about 30km west of Seoul, tried to force their way inside to join a sit-in of three hundred workers. Approximately 2,000 riot police blocked the entrance of the plant but several outside protesters did manage to slip in. The sit-in began after the bankrupt business notified 1,751 workers that they were fired because of a restructuring plan intended to make the ailing auto maker an attractive purchase for General Motors.

The clash is yet another in a series of violent episodes between police and Daewoo workers that has occurred since Daewoo collapsed during the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis.

### Scam

At the same time, 34 Daewoo Group executives and accountants, including Chang Byong-joo, former president of Daewoo Corp., were indicted for being involved in a multibillion-dollar corruption scam.

According to the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KTCU), "Daewoo Motor's mass layoffs, which was the largest-ever, was the result of the Kim Dae-Jung government's neo-liberalistic economic restructuring that demands sacrifice only from workers."

The International Monetary Fund offered to lend South Korea approximately \$21 billion. In exchange, the government of former dissident Kim Dae-Jung agreed to the IMF's economic restructuring program.

The IMF has since heralded its South Korean loans as a stunning success. Currently the South Korean economy is growing at approximately 9 percent but at the cost of major attacks on workers' standards of living and mass lay-offs.

Trade Unionists predict the nation will face several hundred thousand layoffs if the government continues to follow IMF prescriptions; the union pledges to fight those layoffs, and the international globalisation they represent, through strikes, protests.

In the words of union leader Kim Il-sup, "We've nothing more to lose, what can we do but protest?"



Workers and their relatives fought police repression

## Solidarity with the Daewoo motor workers!

**HERE WE print a report and appeal from South Korean socialists.**

"The workers of South Korea have suffered yet another violent and brutal crackdown at the hands of former dissident Nobel Peace Prize-winner President Kim Dae-jung.

On the afternoon of February 20, over 4,000 armed riot cops stormed Daewoo Motors' Bupyeong plant, which was being peacefully occupied by several hundred striking workers and their families.

Many were viciously beat-

en and 76 were taken in for questioning. The cops have detained seven union leaders and are out to arrest 29 more.

The next day, on February 21, Daewoo's creditor banks gave the company a pat on the head for the crackdown by extending the credit period and providing it with even more funds.

This shows who this is all for, whose interests the whole vile affair is all about. As this is being written, arrest warrants are also being drawn up for the top leaders of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions.

The Bupyeong workers had

begun a strike on February 16, in opposition to the company and regime's mass sacking of 1,750 workers. What's more, many of this 1,750 are the key union activists and militant workers in the plant — an open attempt to destroy the union in Bupyeong.

### Collapse

This sacking comes on top of some 3,500 that have been laid off since last November, and thousands more since the collapse of the Daewoo empire in late 1998.

The completion of

Daewoo Motors' restructuring and its self-off overseas is vital for the onward march of the regime's neoliberal "reforms", which are nothing but a desperate bid to salvage a deeply crisis-ridden capitalist economy at the enormous expense of working people's living conditions and democratic rights.

Its result is billions of dollars of handouts to the corporate robbers, while working people suffer increasingly unbearable hardships. And when workers resort to mass struggle to defend even the little they still have, the regime thunders down with batons and boots. It is not-

ing short of a war on South Korean working people.

However, since the crackdown, the workers have courageously begun to regroup. They are holding daily rallies in Bupyeong and attracting the support of other workers and organisations.

In response, the regime has deployed even more cops and are attempting to suppress any attempts at protest.

It is almost like a return to the days of military rule when we had to converge at pre-arranged locations to hold surprise demonstrations.

We urgently call on the

international workers movement to take immediate solidarity action to place international pressure on the vicious Kim Dae-jung regime.

We request protests and industrial action to target the South Korean government's embassies and consulates, Daewoo Motors outlets and service centres, as well as any other South Korean government representative institutions and figures. Stop the mass sackings! Kim Dae-jung regime Resign Now! Release the Arrested Now! Nationalise Daewoo Motors!

Send messages of support via Po Box 1648, Dublin 8

## — Iraq

# Blood on Bush's hands

**THE LATEST bombing of Iraq was soaked in hypocrisy.**

George Bush talks of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction and his evil rule. But this week the US was involved in joint military exercises with the one certain nuclear power in the Middle East — Israel. The Israeli government is now headed by Ariel Sharon, a war criminal, responsible for the murder of 2,000 Palestinians in 1982.

But there are no words of condemnation from George Bush. There aren't any "no-fly zones" over Israeli air space. Instead the US has given Israel over \$80 billion in aid since 1974. The US is also silent about repression and the lack of democracy in Middle Eastern states such as Qatar and Kuwait because they support the West.

Bush claimed the bomb-

ing was to protect the "no-fly zones" over northern and southern Iraq. These were established by the US and its allies at the end of the 1991 Gulf War, supposedly to protect the Kurds in the north and Shia Muslims in the south.

The West is also silent about the bombing, persecution and repression of Kurds unleashed by the Turkish state. The Turkish state has

## The West backed Saddam

**SADDAM HUSSEIN is a dictator, but one who was built up by the very Western powers that today say they want to bring him down.**

They provided the deadly gas that he used against the Kurds in Halabja in 1988. They armed both sides during the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s—which left one mil-

lion dead. And when Iraqi diplomats first hinted to US officials about invading Kuwait, they said they would turn a blind eye. In 1990, the US and its allies fell out with Saddam only because they thought he had got too big for his boots, and because at the start of 1990 the US was ready to seize an opportunity to prove itself.

The USSR was collapsing. The US wanted the world to know it was now

top dog, the dominant power everywhere. We were told the war in 1990-1 was to restore democracy to Kuwait.

But Kuwait did not have democracy in the first place. It was a war for oil and power.

Then President George Bush wrote in a secret memo, "Access to Persian Gulf oil and the security of key friendly states in the area are vital to US national security."

Tomatoes, onions, potatoes and meat for local people were drenched in uranium dust. There is a fourfold increase in cancer today in the south of Iraq, and children are dying of leukemia and lymphoma cancer.



There were protests around the world like this one in India against the bombing

## Deadly legacy

THE US dropped vast amounts of weaponry made from the deadly depleted uranium during the Gulf War. The depleted uranium entered the lungs of Iraqi soldiers who were the first to become ill.

Tomatoes, onions, potatoes and meat for local people were drenched in uranium dust. There is a fourfold increase in cancer today in the south of Iraq, and children are dying of leukemia and lymphoma cancer.

# Eamonn McCann

## The collapsing talks merry spin

**THE NORTHERN parties and the Dublin and London governments have been whirling on a talks merry-go-round for so long that people watching them closely have begun to go dizzy.**

The pro-Agreement parties have met separately with Blair in London, with Aherin in Dublin, in various combinations with Northern Secretary John Reid in Belfast. Meanwhile, they consult continuously with their own councils/executives as the leaderships check what room they have for manoeuvre.

Each of them wants to do a deal, but can't find a formula for jumping together. The main issues—policing, decommissioning, and demilitarisation—have been teased out and argued over for so long that many find the wrangling simply tedious.

It's tempting to say, "We told you so". When the Belfast Agreement was unveiled in April 1998, the SWP argued that it did not provide a basis for ending the problems rooted in the sectarian organisation of Northern politics, but, rather, amounted to the consolidation of sectarianism.

*This ran counter to the argument of sections of the Left that once the Agreement was up and running, "real politics", to do with bread-and-butter issues, would come to the fore, and sectarianism gradually wither away.*

We maintained that, on the contrary, the mechanisms which demanded that each block separately endorse all key decisions would ensure continuous friction along the line of communal division, stoking up suspicion, ensuring permanent confrontation. The Agreement, we said, was "pre-programmed to deadlock". And that's what's happened.

### Crisis

It is possible the current crisis will be overcome, through fudging some issues and postponing others. All the pro-Agreement leaders have invested heavily in the process. The pressure from Dublin, London, Washington and the "business community" is intense.

And the great majority of the people, particularly in the working class areas which bear the brunt of violence, desperately want to avoid a slide back into full-scale hostilities. For Catholics in many areas, violence has never abated. Hate-fuelled bigots launch murderous attacks nightly.

*But even if the Agreement survives, peace, in the sense of "the two communities" settling down to live at ease alongside one another, is unlikely to follow. Sectarian competition would continue as the main basis of politics, albeit in a refurbished setting.*

To say this is not to suggest all sides are equally to blame. The Nationalist parties haven't exactly proclaimed from the rooftops that the Agreement leaves Northern Ireland securely within the UK. But, in practice, they have accepted that this is the case. In contrast, Trimble has never embraced the Agreement insofar as it lays down that the institutions of the Northern State must reflect the Nationalist as well as the Unionist identity.

*Thus, the persistent calls from the Nationalist parties on Blair, or Blair and Aherin together, to pressurise Trimble into "working the Agreement".*

Socialists take a different view. The SWP argues that the way forward lies in mobilising outside the structures and against the ideas embedded in the Agreement.

The replacement of the Orange police force with an Orange-and-Green police force, for example, would certainly reflect the thinking implicit in the Agreement. The Nationalists have a point in arguing that Trimble is in breach of the Agreement by balking at this change.

*But in any working-class perspective, an Orange-and-Green police force would solve nothing at all. The difference it would make is that Catholic youngsters who had their heads cracked by the cops would get short shrift from Nationalist leaders if they complained.*

Similarly, a fully-realised Orange-and-Green State would continue to keep the working class people of each community down, while channelling the resultant anger and alienation along sectarian lines.

Whatever the fate of the Agreement, the task of socialists is to push class politics to the fore. This can only be done in the context of a serious effort, through unions, community organisations and single-issue campaigns, to mobilise the working class in its own specific interests across the whole range of politics.

## Health workers protest to show they are...

# United against Loyalist threats

**MORE THAN 100 health workers at the Mater Hospital in North Belfast held a lunchtime protest against loyalist deaths threats on 14 February.**

The threats against staff are believed to have come from the UDA.

The protest which involved porters, catering staff and nurses was organised by UNISON.

Union representative Denis Keating said they wanted to show their opposition to sectarianism. "People from both communities work together here and we all get along. This is the last thing we need."



### Security

The walkout was also intended to highlight the lack of security for hospital workers across the North.

A worker at the Royal Victoria Hospital was attacked and robbed the night before by masked men who attempted to shoot another worker who had come to her aid.

The UDA's pipebomb campaign has suddenly declined in the last week, after more than 50 attacks since the New Year.

Only two attacks, in North Belfast and Lisburn were reported in the last fortnight.

This is despite consistent RUC denials that it was centrally organised by the UDA leadership. To date only a handful of people have been arrested.

A TV investigation of the pipebomb attacks in Larne, revealed that RUC officers sent to investigate attacks routinely attempted

### Part of the protest at the Mater

to persuade victims not to pursue complaints, claiming that it would only make matters worse.

Ulster Unionist Trade and Industry Minister, Reg Empey, made a startling comment that the real problem with the UDA attacks is that they made it harder for

Unionists to argue for IRA decommissioning.

"Those people who clearly are loyalists are actually completely undermining the unionist case on disarmament because the republicans are saying to us that while we are asking republicans to disarm, these

loyalist elements are running around pipebombing," said Empey.

Unionist politicians and the RUC have long had an ambiguous relationship with loyalist terror gangs.

Unionist Party deputy leader, John Taylor, has claimed that the loyalist

death squads played a vital role in the war against the IRA in the 1980s.

The RUC Special Branch notoriously directed the killing by the UDA in the 1980s and 90s through the use of agents and informers.

# 11 plus on the way out but Blair brings back selection

**AS NORTHERN Ireland looked on the brink of finally introducing comprehensive education, Tony Blair announced the end of the "bog standard comprehensive school" in England.**

There was uproar

from educationalists and children's rights organisations across the UK.

Scrapping the hated 11-plus and introducing comprehensive schools in the 1960s and 1970s led to the biggest ever increase in educational achievement in Britain. The system was so successful that when

Margaret Thatcher was Tory education minister, even she went along with it.

Standards have continued to rise in England and Wales, despite schools being starved of cash and the survival of many grammar schools. In Scotland, where all schools are comprehensive, few young people leave school without qualifications.

Now Blair wants to return to widespread selection in England.

He says the next New Labour government will double the number of "specialist schools" to about 1,500 over the next five years. That is 46 per cent of secondary schools in England and Wales.

These schools can formally select up to 10 per

cent of their pupils. He claims

selection will be "by aptitude" and will be fair.

But who is more likely to be able to demonstrate "an aptitude" for, say, music-a working class child or one from a family that has a grand piano and money for tutors?

Blair's assault on education means opportunities for the few and rejection for the majority.

This is the system that children in the North have suffered under for over 50 years now.

Anyone who visits the Review Body on Selection's website at [www.pprbni.gov.uk](http://www.pprbni.gov.uk) will see that most people want an end to selection. We cannot let Tory Blair derail our chance to save future generations of children from educational apartheid.

Campaign Against Selection phone John Price on

### Market

Specialist schools get extra cash. The market in schools means they are then oversubscribed and can pick and choose who gets in, selecting far more than 10 per cent of their intake.

**CAMPAIGN AGAINST SELECTION  
END ELITISM IN EDUCATION  
MARCH TO END SELECTION  
Belfast, 2pm Sat 31 March  
Assemble Art College Gardens,  
march to City Hall**

Sponsored by ICTU, ATGWU, UNISON, SIPTU, Irish National Teachers Organisation, Fire Brigade Union, Tony Benn MP, Tom Paulin, Newry & Mourne Confederation of Community Groups, West Belfast Partnership Board, Women's Coalition, PUP, Sinn Fein, SDLP, Socialist Workers Party, Alliance Party, Workers Party, Socialist Party  
**For details phone**

### Socialism in Belfast

**GROWING SUPPORT for anti-capitalist ideas was in evidence when 70 people attended a Socialism in Belfast Conference recently.**

Environmentalists, Palestinian activists and trade unionists joined socialists in a discussion on how to take forward the movement against global capitalism.

At a meeting on the corporate take-over of Northern Ireland, an NUT representative, Mark Hewitt slammed Sinn Fein Ministers for introducing Private Finance Initiative schemes in the schools and the hospitals.

"McGuinness is handing over the running of a school to a cement company. That must mean more temporary contract posts and less trade union rights. He is following the neo-liberal agenda of privatising basic public services."

At the end of the conference 13 people joined the SWP.

### CLOSE DOWN GAP

**Solidarity with women workers  
around the world on International  
Women's Day  
THURSDAY 8 MARCH at GAP  
Belfast**

## Alcohol

# Profit binge for multinationals and publicans

A REPORT published last month by the World Health Organisation said alcohol abuse among Irish teenagers is now the worst in Europe, with growing numbers indulging in binge-drinking.

Health Minister Michael Martin described the statistics as "shocking and intolerable".

Consultant Dr Peter O'Connor, of Dublin's Mater Hospital, says 50 per cent of casualty admissions are for alcohol-related injuries.

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

advertising campaign features images of a young couple in Ballymum, high as a kite, laughing uncontrollably and falling off a wall. Then we see laughing young drinkers in a pub sinking pints of Guinness. The images are set up to suggest that sexual success, friendship and care-free happiness are to be had by drinking lots of alcohol.

The returns are spectacular. Consumption of alcohol has increased by 70 per cent in ten years. Last year Guinness Ireland's operating profit soared 16% to €188m.

### Massive

Guinness Ireland, is part of the massive multinational Diageo group, which markets brands as diverse as Burger King, Budweiser, Carlsberg and Chang and White Horse, and which made profits of £1.09 billion sterling last year.

The Minister for Health has said he is opposed to any deregulation of the drinks industry on public health grounds. This would appear to contradict the more usual government stance of privatisation and, for example, deregulation of taxis.

But behind it the same defence of vested interests can be seen. Taxi drivers — working class people who typically bought their licences and taxes by mortgaging their homes or investing redundancy payments — are opposed to a free-for-all which can only result in the industry being dominated by one or two big operators to the detriment of both drivers and passengers.

They launched "youthful" Brev white beer and Guinness in long necked bottles advertised as perfect for drinking while clubbing and dancing.

### Crushed

Small wonder then that so many young people whose lives have been crushed by the system seek escape in drink and drugs. The government proposes to spend on its National Alcohol Awareness campaign a mere £500,000 a year over three years.

This is just a drop in the ocean compared to the £25 million which is spent each year on advertising by the alcoholic drinks industry in Ireland.

And most of it is aimed at teenagers and young people. Guinness, alarmed that consumers of its stout were ageing, devised a strategy to attract the "youth market".

They launched "youthful" Brev white beer and Guinness in long necked bottles advertised as perfect for drinking while clubbing and dancing.

The current Guinness

## Aids crisis...

# DRIVING FOR MORE PROFITS

EVERY YEAR, infectious diseases kill 11 million people in the developing world. They die because they are poor and cannot afford to pay the high cost charged by drug companies for basic medicine. Nurse MARION GIBBONS writes for Socialist Worker about how drugs companies are colluding in deaths of millions of the world's poorest people.

STATE OF the art treatment has so increased the quality of AIDS patients' lives in the west that complacency has begun to set in. But not in Africa, "When a baby gets bad" said Dr Iwan Bekker, head of pediatrics in a S.A hospital, "We won't admit it for a second time, but will tell the mother to take it home and let it die". Some 500,000 infants were born with HIV in 1999, AZT costs \$100 per patient, Africa can't afford this.

In Sub-Saharan Africa 24.5 million people are infected; 11 million people have already died from AIDS.

In 1997 the South African government passed a law that would permit it to import AIDS drugs from countries other than the United States at cheaper prices through compulsory licensing.

Multi-national drug companies would be forced to license their patented drugs to South African companies that then could produce drugs such as AZT, which is shown to reduce the rate of transmission from mother to baby.

AIDS activists say that drugs

'KINDLY tell me how come drug companies spend twice as much on marketing as they do on research and development?'

JOHN LE CARRÉ, author of *The Constant Gardener*, a novel that attacks the drug firms

GLAXOSMITHKLINE Research \$3.75 billion Profits \$7.6 billion  
ASTRA ZENECA Research \$2.62 billion Profits \$4.11 billion

"For poor people sickness is a constant fear. It means that you will fall into debt. It is hard for us to buy the drugs we need to treat our children when they have a fever."

### ■ Vietnamese farmer

"301 watch list" which places countries under scrutiny for violations of intellectual property laws. Getting on this list spells trouble for countries seeking foreign investment.

"While we don't say it explicitly, it's a warning for investors going to that country that there are potential problems with respect to protection of intellectual property," said a US trade official, who requested anonymity.

The ten largest US drug producers had \$100 billion in profits in the year ending November 2000, and that is after ploughing \$21 billion back for research and development.

The New England Journal of Medicine described the rate of return on assets as the highest of any industry. Pfizer, Merck, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Glaxo and Roche, the largest producers of AIDS drugs faced worldwide criticism for profiteering on history's worst pandemic.

James Sapirstein, head of Bristol-Myers' global HIV business, commented in 1998 after a visit to South Africa, "South Africa was not priority, the thinking was that we should just write the business off, that it was impossible, that there was no money to be made" in Africa.

The ability of a country to finance effective AIDS programs is measured by the amount of GNP available per-infected person.



"If you don't have money today, your disease will take you to your grave."

■ **Ghanaian Woman** "Despite pledges to help treat the AIDS pandemic in Africa, pharmaceutical firms determined it would be too expensive to lower the cost of drugs."

New research by the charity reveals that exclusive marketing rights created by patents are driving up prices of drugs, which treat major Third World killers — HIV and Aids respiratory-tract infections and childhood diarrhoea.

When Belkis recently experienced severe stomach pains, she did not consult a doctor, concerned about the price of the medicines she might be prescribed.

Unable to afford costly

## WTO trades in death

GSK'S NEWEST anti-retroviral, Combivir, has made a billion dollars for Glaxo. But thanks to a monopoly backed by the World Trade Organisation, it is priced out of the reach of the developing world. In the past, these countries were able to make some drugs themselves at a fraction of the price, but recent legislation backed by the WTO, means new drugs cannot be copied for 20

years. Under World Trade Organisation rules, patents are protected for 20 years. These patenting laws are enforced by the threat of US sanctions and corporate bullying. South Africa is not the only target. GSK is suing Ghana and Uganda for importing low cost versions of life-saving drugs.

### Against

The US government has taken a case against Brazil at the WTO. There has been a formal threat of trade sanctions against more than 15 developing countries.

"This is the shadowy side of globalisation," says Oxfam policy director, Justin Forsyth, launching a new campaign. Cut The Cost, to make life saving drugs available to the world's poor. "The drugs industry is using the legislation to cripple cheap, local competition."

"It is obscene for GSK to make such huge profits when they and other drug companies are doing so little to help poor people get access to cheap medicines."

"The industry must take responsibility for its role in saving millions of lives in the developing world, and start putting people before profits" he said.



- ★ Every minute one drugs company, GLAXOSMITHKLINE, makes £10,000.
- ★ Every minute 21,000 people die from preventable diseases.

## 'I can't really see a future'

BELKIS PEREX, 31, lives in a shack in Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic. Belkis and her second child, Jennifer, who is now seven years old, were diagnosed HIV-positive three years ago, when she was pregnant with her third daughter, Yanira. She did not receive the medication that could have prevented transmission of the virus, and Yanira was also born with AIDS. Since then most of the family budget goes on buying medicines.

When Belkis recently experienced severe stomach pains, she did not consult a doctor, concerned about the price of the medicines she might be prescribed.

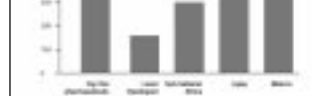
Unable to afford costly

anti-retroviral drugs that would combat AIDS, she said, "I can't really see a future, not for me, not for my children. But we will keep on struggling."

A monthly course can cost up to US\$1,200 — 12 times the minimum salary. "We just cannot budget for anti-retrovirals," says Dr. Raul Benoit, head of the government's essential medicines programme.

Export

The United States, the Dominican Republic's main export market, has threatened trade sanctions against the country if it does not ban the production or import of cheap generic drugs that compete with US-patented products, including those needed to treat HIV/AIDS.



Value of the top five Drug companies compared to GNP of developing world countries

## what do socialist s say?

# Are refuse charges a Green tax?

REFUSE CHARGES have become a major issue across the right wing parties push the charges, claiming there is no money in the kitty for local government unless they are imposed.

Labour usually opposes them — but does not campaign for non-payment as this would mean breaking the law.

Rather surprisingly, the Green Party have become Fianna Fail's major ally in pushing through the charges.

To be fair, they do so for very different reasons. They claim that the taxation system must be reorganised so that a polluter-must-pay principle forms its bedrock. This means increased charges on petrol use and also refuse charges.

Nevertheless on this crucial issue the Greens find themselves aligned with the right rather than the left. How has this come about?

At first sight the polluter-must-pay seems like a good idea. The biggest polluters are industry and big farmers. They are driven by a fanatical desire for profit and so refuse to take on extra costs to help the environment.

### Taxes

Imposing heavy taxes on industry to force them to clean up is an excellent idea. In the longer run, of course, it also comes slap up against the logic of a system that puts profit before people.

However, when the Greens talk about 'polluters' they often ignore issues connected with class and power.

Quite simply, they are an enormous difference between an individual working class family who put out two or three bags of refuse and a major chemical company that spews filth into the atmosphere.

Sometimes this simple distinction is ignored because saving the environment is seen in moral terms rather than in how the structure of capitalism works.

Working class people and chemical companies are equated because, it is argued, they both morally choose not to show any concern for

the environment and so have to be penalised.

But this is nonsense. The poor do not 'choose' to use food which has lots of wrapping or dispose of their bottles in the local refuse sack rather than the bottle bank.

Giant food companies sell their food in a huge amount of packaging because they invest more in logos and images than in the quality of the food.

There are hardly any bottle banks on local estates and it is often only those with cars and more free time who are able to use them.

It is not moral choice that drives waste — but a system that is driven by a short term greed for more and more profit. That system is not shaped by individual families but by those who have the enormous power that comes with money.

### Assault

Even the most modest measures to protect the environment, require an assault on this system.

If we want to see recycling, for example, there will have to be high taxes on the wealthy to force them to provide facilities that would allow working people to cut back on their waste.

The Greens, unfortunately, put it the wrong way around. They want working people who already shoulder the main tax burden to carry a double tax instead.

But the Irish rich already pay the lowest level of tax on profits in Europe. If a local environmental tax was imposed on all businesses there would be plenty of money to provide a proper infrastructure that would allow re-cycling to take place.

In the longer run, the imposition of service charges are part of a neoliberal agenda.

This economic doctrine argues that all public services should be cut back in order to reduce taxes on profit and those that remain should be privatised.

Fianna Fail's long term agenda is to turn waste collection into a business and then sell it off to their friends with the brown envelopes.

That in turn will mean a less adequate — and more environmentally damaging service. The failure to see the class issues at the heart of the waste management crisis puts the Green Party in Ireland an enormous step behind the huge movement that has linked environmentalists and workers together after Seattle.

by KIERAN ALLEN

## The Celtic Tiger and the myth of Social Partnership

£13.60 plus £1.50 p.p. Available from SW Books, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

OUT NOW

# FASLANE PROTEST

# Fighting nuclear madness

**SOME 2,000 people demonstrated at the Faslane Nuclear base in Scotland earlier this month.**

At the Faslane protest police arrested over 370 people, including Scottish Socialist Party MSP Tommy Sheridan, Labour MP George Galloway and Green MEP Caroline Lucas.

Billions are spent every year on the Trident nuclear programme. The lifetime cost of Trident, according to Sir Richard Mason, the former chief scientific adviser to the British Ministry of Defence, will be over £50 billion.

The fight against nuclear weapons is part of the struggle for a decent world, where people come before profit and nurses matter more than generals.

PROTESTERS stopped cars entering the north gate of the Faslane nuclear base on the Clyde in Scotland.

Some 70 people travelled from Ireland to the protests in Fast Lane.

According to **GRAHAM SCOOPY**, "A group of us went over from different colleges around Ireland. Of we were protesting at the the South Gate of Fastlane. People sat down on the road. There was a great atmosphere."

"There were people from all walks of life. It was the first time I have seen priests on a demonstration before."

"There must have been at least 500 police, with helicopters flying all around."

"It was the biggest anti nuclear protest since the 60s in Scotland. It is the Seattle effect — people feeling confident and angry enough to come out and protest"

**TRACEY RYAN** travelled from Cork to be on the protest, "Despite getting arrested fairly early on in the protest — it was brilliant."

"Up until the police moved in there was a real carnival feel, with people chanting and singing."

"On our way back we decided to drop in on Sellafield, but we were met at the gate by a bunch of riot cops in a van."

## Security risk

"Someone came out from British Nuclear Fuels and told us that since we were a security risk we couldn't go in."

"I think the protest will be seen as the re-start of the anti nuclear movement."

**PATRICIA O'REILLY** from the Isle of Bute summed up the feeling

of many young people when she said, "This is just the start. The upcoming generation is not going to take it any more. Big business is getting richer, the poor getting poorer."

There were delegations from all over the world at the protest.

Groups represented included Trident Plough-shares, CND, Socialist Workers Party, Scottish Socialist Party, Green Party, SNP, various church organisations, People and Planet, Quakers for Peace, and Ninjas against Nukes.

## Faslane has got to go

PEOPLE SANG and shouted, "Say hey! Say ho! Faslane has got to go!" and, "Nuclear weapons are insane — shut down Faslane!"

**SHEILA**, aged 75, had never been on a demonstration before.

She said, "I decided at the millennium I must do something. I've got grandchildren. What kind of world am I going to leave them?"

One of those arrested, **JOHN HARPER**, worked at Faslane for five years.

"I'm here protesting because I want to see Trident scrapped, and the money spent on hospitals and schools," he said.

John knows from personal experience that accidents can happen.

During manoeuvres a nuclear powered sub crashed into an undersea sand mountain in the Irish Sea. "I've never been so scared in all my life," he said.



Part of the big blockade at Faslane

## Profiting from arms

**CHURCHES, VOLUNTARY organisations and government agencies in Ireland North and South, own shares in the arms industry.**

**That's according to a new report from the Campaign Against the Arms Trade.**

The CAAT found that the pension fund for Northern Ireland local government workers holds around 1.3 million shares in companies involved in military production. These include BAE Systems, Rolls Royce and GKN. All three make military aircraft.

GKN's Apache attack helicopters have been used in the Balkans and the Gulf War. Rolls Royce plc makes engines for Hawk fighter jets, used by the Indonesian government against the East Timorese people.

And BAE systems makes the Hawk planes themselves. It also owns Hecker & Koch which supplies guns to the Turkish army, notorious for its human rights abuses.

The Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Charitable Fund still has 48,500 in BAE. Plus another 57,000 in Rolls Royce. The Department of Social Development owns 40,000 shares in GKN. A spokesman said "it's neither illegal nor immoral".

The Masonic Trust company, based in Dublin, also holds some 8,000 shares in BAE Systems and BAES Stock, a partner company.

And the Presbyterian Church in Ireland owns more than 30,000 shares in GKN, with another 18,000 BAE Systems shares in the hands of its pension scheme for ministers.



**MILITARY expenditure is rising at an appalling rate. Last year world-wide military spending amounting to approximately \$790 billion.**



**THE START 1 treaty signed in 1991 saw the US and Russia pledge to limit themselves to 9,000 nuclear warheads each — down from over 30,000 each at the height of the Cold War. None of the major new nuclear weapons systems ordered during the 1980s have been cancelled or scrapped.**



**START 2 was signed in 1993. It pledged that both sides would reduce their stocks to 3,000 nuclear warheads. THE START 2 treaty has not been ratified by the US congress. In 1964 Robert Macnamara, the**

**then US secretary of state, admitted the US had 'overkill'—enough nuclear weapons to destroy any conceivable combination of enemies. The US had just 400 nuclear weapons at the time.**



**FROM 1940 through 1996, expenditure on nuclear weapons exceeded the combined total spending on education, training, employment, and social services, agriculture, natural resources and the environment, general science and space research, community and regional development (including disaster relief), law enforcement, and energy production and regulation.**



**ALTHOUGH the cold war has been over for ten years the United States currently spends \$35 billion a year or more than \$96 million a day on its nuclear arsenal. The cumulative cost of U.S. nuclear weapons is nearly \$5.5 trillion.**



**THE United States has carried out over 950 nuclear tests since 1945. Russia has carried out over 930, France 192, Britain 44, China 42, India 1 and South Africa 1.**

**An estimated 800,000 people worldwide have died or will die prematurely from a fatal cancer attributable to fallout from U.S. nuclear testing.**



**THE developing worlds spends \$121 billion on weapons. Pakistan spends \$2.40 on defence for every \$1 spent on education. Only 40 percent of children receive primary education. In India 30 percent of the population lives below the poverty line yet India and Pakistan together account for almost a fifth of global arms imports. Nigeria spends over four times more on defence as on education and 13 times more than on health. Mozambique has 10 million small arms distributed amongst a population of 15 million.**

## Star Wars suits big business

**MILITARY SPENDING is linked to the needs of big business. Take the oil industry. US companies want cheap access to the oil of the Middle East, so the US government uses its military to ensure they get it.**

George Bush himself is a former oil industry executive, as was his father. So too is US vice-president Dick Cheney. Together they have already announced plans to open up the protected Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge to oil company exploitation.

Bush's insane plan for a National Missile Defence (NMD) system, a ring of missiles which will supposedly protect the US from attack, also shows the deadly connection between the US government's military aims and its multinational-als' economic aims.

Professor Paul Rogers of Bradford University's Peace Studies Department writes:

"The US defence industry is dominated by a few contractors such as Boeing, Lockheed and TRW."

"All have suffered in recent years, but they have immense lobbying power, close links with the Republicans and persistent vested interests in playing up threats to US interests."

"Many on the Republican right think the only threats to

**'THE HIDDEN hand of the market will never work without the hidden fist. McDonalds cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas. The hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley's technologies to flourish is called the US army, air force, navy and Marine Corps.'**

■ **THOMAS FRIEDMAN, right wing US journalist. McDonnell Douglas merged with Boeing in 1997 to create one of the biggest arms manufacturers in the world.**

US dominance will come from China if it develops into an economic giant. One way to curb its growth is to force it to commit more money to defence, and the NMD system is one way of doing this.

"That may stimulate a dangerous nuclear arms race, but the Soviet giant was successfully 'spent into an early grave' and perhaps the same strategy can be applied to China."

The US is prepared to risk starting a nuclear war and to pour billions of the planet's resources into the arms industry in order to protect its power and wealth.

## in my view

### Tight genes support us

IT IS not often that a complex piece of scientific research helps challenge right wing ideas. But the recent news from the human genome project teams is a victory for a socialist understanding of human nature.

The human genome is the genetic information needed to build a human being.

The search is nearly complete. And the results announced are a shock to those supporters of the project who expected to be able to discover genes for all sorts of traits — including sexuality, intelligence, violence, and even for a disposition to be homeless.

Instead of the predicted 140,000 genes, humans have around 30,000. This is only twice as many as a worm and not much more than a mouse. Dogs and humans are 85 percent identical genetically!

**The main lesson of the discovery is that the complexity of human experience is not controlled by our genes. Overwhelmingly our behaviour is shaped by social conditions and not our DNA.**

As one of the researchers put it, "if you think that we are hard-wired and that everything is deterministic, there should be a lot of genes, because we have a lot of traits."

The socio-biological view of human nature really took off during the Thatcher-Regan years.

Just as the free-market economists said there was no point trying to regulate business, so the socio-biologists said that it would do more harm than good to change society.

#### Inevitable

We were told that wars, rape, exploitation and classes were inevitable. It was all part of a fixed 'human nature'.

The people who supported such conservative ideas expected to find genes to support their right wing theories. They also anticipated that genes for sexuality would be discovered and these would reinforce the idea that being gay was abnormal.

Socialists opposed the hunt for a 'gay' gene as being right wing propaganda and very bad science. Since human genes have not changed in the last thirty thousand years, how can the variety of behaviour, from that in Ancient Rome to modern life, be explained by genes?

Just as the tide is turning globally against the market ideology of the 1980s and 1990s, it has decisively turned on the genetic determinists too.

They have spent the last ten years pouring billions into the Human Genome Project, which has itself been a sordid tale of commercial rivalry.

But the results of the human genome project vindicate completely the socialist stance. There is no gay gene, nor is there a gene for crime or poverty.

The second point about the relatively small number of genes in humans is that it provides further vindication for Darwin's theory of evolution. The same material, with a few adjustments, has been used by organisms across the 3.8bn year existence of the planet.

Best of all the human genome research provides a devastating refutation of racism. Humans the world over share 99.9% of DNA.

#### Race

There is more genetic variation between people of the same colour than between people of different colours. We are one race not several.

"No serious scholar in this field considers race to be a scientific concept," says one of the researchers, "it just is not. We all evolved as black Africans."

Genes are important in shaping our basic biological make-up. But human behaviour and society are shaped by complex environmental and social factors — and those are something we can change.

by CONOR KOSTICK

## Film

# Just a set of influences?

by PAUL MCCARTHY

**HANNIBAL**, the third of Thomas Harris' Lecter books to be made into cinema was released to packed theatres.

Following on the success of *The Silence of the Lambs*, Ridley Scott has recast the brilliant Anthony Hopkins as Dr. Hannibal Lecter and the film was guaranteed to be a success long before it was even released.

Hannibal is not as frightening or interesting as *The Silence of the Lambs* and the plot is unbelievable at times.

A serial killer has managed not only to escape from custody but make his way to Florence and find a job as a classics lecturer, presumably having murdered the previous employee.

Having evaded capture for seven years, he is finally cornered by a website! Lecter's picture is shown on the FBI website of America's ten most wanted criminals, alongside the Unabomber and Osama Bin Laden.

#### Debates

Not surprisingly, Bill Clinton and George Bush Sr, who have killed, maimed and tortured more people than either Lecter or Bin Laden, don't appear on the site!

Despite the film's shortcomings it is quite entertaining and has opened up several debates in the press and on television about human cannibalism.

Channel 4 has a four-part series entitled *Cannibal*, which looks at the practice throughout human history.

Of course, the first episode, seeking to cash in on the release of Hannibal took the sensationalist approach, focusing on well-known cannibals, including Jeffrey Dahmer and Russian serial killer Andrei Chikatilo.

At the time of Dahmer's trial, the fact that he was gay was jumped on by right wing tabloids to show what such 'social deviancy' could lead to.

In fact, psychiatrists who dealt with Dahmer and were interviewed by Channel 4 pointed to his traumatic childhood and social isolation as probable causes of his psychopathy.



DR. LECTER, possibly worried by contamination in the food chain

The other murderers examined all had damage to key parts of the brain.

The rest of the series is to take a more scientific, anthropological look at cannibalism, which has been reported in the tribal history of every continent but rarely ever proven.

Part of the cannibalism myth comes from colonialist propaganda - Columbus claimed to have been told of a tribe of Caribs on Hispaniola who practised it and the

story served to fuel European racism against the slaves from the Caribbean and Africa.

Films like *Hannibal* create the impression that such socially unacceptable practices are carried out by lone, crazed and extreme individuals.

That is what creates the fear in the story.

In *Silence of the Lambs*, Hannibal says, "You can't reduce me to a set of influences." Running through the trilogy is the idea that evil,

while fascinating is inextinguishable.

In the real world, there is something to be afraid of concerning cannibalism, but the threat doesn't come from an unknown psychopath.

One organism eating parts of its own dead is at the centre of the BSE crisis.

#### Food

Multinational food corporations and the Irish beef barons are feeding us products more dan-

gerous than anything Dr. Lecter would serve up.

Coincidentally, the same weekend that *Hannibal* was released saw the departure of junior Agriculture minister, Ned O'Keefe, who was caught feeding bone meal to pigs on his family's farm.

With such incompetence and wilful malpractice in government and industry, you don't need to watch *Hannibal* to be worried about your diet.

## book

# Song of struggle

by SINEAD KENNEDY

**STRANGE FRUIT**, a new book by David Margolick, explores the story of a song that foretold a movement, and the lady who dared to sing it — Billy Holiday.

The song's powerful, evocative lyrics — written by a Jewish communist schoolteacher — portray the lynching of a black man in the South. Its performance in 1939 sparked controversy (and sometimes violence) wherever Billie Holiday went.

It was first performed in Café Society in Greenwich Village, New York's only truly integrated nightclub.

#### Applause

But even here, Holiday was afraid of singing the song. She wrote about the experience later. "There wasn't even a pat of applause when I finished", she wrote "Then a lone person began to clap nervously. Then suddenly everybody was clapping".

Strange Fruit was performed



#### STRANGE FRUIT

*Southern trees bear a strange fruit,  
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,  
Black body swinging in the Southern breeze,  
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.*

*Pastoral scene of the gallant South,  
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth,  
Scent of magnolia sweet and fresh,  
And the sudden smell of burning flesh!*

*Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck,  
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck,  
For the sun to rot, for a tree to drop,  
Here is a strange fruit and bitter crop.*

**BILLY HOLIDAY** and the controversial lyrics that she sang

during a period when lynching especially in the Southern states was common. Between 1889 and 1940, 3,833 were lynched.

It would not be until sixteen years later that Rosa Parks refused to yield her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama bus.

Margolick chronicles its effect on those who experienced Strange Fruit first-hand: musicians, artists, journalists, intellectuals, students, budding activists, as well as the waitresses and bartenders who

worked the clubs. Strange Fruit is also a powerful and passionate portrait of Billy Holiday herself.

One story has it that Billy's mother objected when she began singing Strange Fruit and asked her why she was doing it. "Because it could make things better" Billy replied.

"But you'll be dead" her mother insisted. "Yeah but I'll feel it", Billy said. "I'll know it in my grave".





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

**FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM**

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

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

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

**FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST**

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

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

**FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION**

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

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

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

**FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH**

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

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

**FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT**

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

**FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY**

To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party. This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system. The SWP aims to build such a party here.

news & reports/politics/industry/the unions (01) 8722682 /fax (01) 872 3838 e-mail swp@clubi.ie

PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS

**Refuse Charges**

**'WE WON'T PAY THE BIN TAX!'**

**FOLLOWING last month's decision by Dublin City Council to approve the introduction of refuse charges opposition has sprung up around Dublin.**

**The Campaign Against the Bin Tax has been formed to bring together a united campaign to fight the charges.**

**At a number of public meetings around the Dublin Corporation area, actions groups have begun to organise resistance and to encourage mass non-payment of the bin tax.**

**A number of local activists spoke to Socialist Worker about the campaign.**

**ARTANE**

A PUBLIC meeting in the Hollybrook Hotel is set to take place on Wednesday 28th March. "I am speaking at the meeting to highlight the lack of consistency of the political parties who have claimed they opposed service charges but when the crunch came they voted for them."

"This is a double burden especially on PAYE workers who already pay for these services through their taxes."

"I call on all people and in particular trade unionists and community activists to help build opposition to these charges and to organise a mass refusal to pay them."

— FINIAN McGRATH, Independent Councillor

■ In Artane, Beau-



**"Political parties claimed they opposed service charges but when the crunch came they voted for them"** — FINIAN McGRATH, Independent Councillor

mont and Clontarf contact Richie Browne on

**BALLYMUN EAST:**

LOCAL activists from the Socialist Workers Party, Sinn Fein and others joined forces to leaflet the entire Shangan and Country area in February. 17 people attended and set up an action group and volunteered to take posters, petitions, leaflet neighbours



**"Some people have all the money and the rest of us are supposed to pay the bills!"** — LAURA KINSELLA, Housewife

and get the word out. "We want to have a network in place for when the bills arrive to tell the Corpo We Won't Pay!"

— MARTINA FELLONI, Community Arts Worker, Ballymun

■ In Ballymun and Poppintree contact Kevin Wingfield on

**STONEYBATTER:**

A MEETING in the Stoneybatter area drew 17 people at the end of January and an action group was established. "I am totally opposed to these charges. If the Corporation send me a whee-bin I will send it straight back again. The government has no waste disposal policy worthy of the name. Already a number of people have the Don't Pay the Bin Charges poster in their windows. Now we have organised an action group I will be doing my best to ensure people hear

the message and refuse to pay."

— JIM CRUMLISH, Labour Party member

■ In Phibsboro Cabra and Stoneybatter contact Helena on

**FAIRVIEW:**

"AT THE beginning of February 20 people turned up in Fairview. People were angry at having been left in the dark by the Corporation about their plans. They definitely don't want to pay the bin tax. Next week a meeting in East Wall is organised."

— CATHERINE McDONAGH, Community activist

■ In Fairview and East Wall contact Grace on

**CHERRY ORCHARD:**

AT A lively meeting 15 people established an action group. Petitions and posters were distributed and a recall meeting will be called when the bills are delivered.

■ In Cherry Orchard and Ballyfermot contact Brid on

**RINGSEND**

"THIRTY PEOPLE came to our small local hall a week ago. I thought it could have been more but it's early days. People asked 'where will put the whee-bins in our small houses?'"

"Of course it's unfair and people are very angry. It seems some people have all the money and the rest of us are supposed to pay the bills! I think most people will refuse to pay."

"We organised petition-

ing from the meeting—each person on a road to do the neighbours around them. Everybody wants to sign and get their family and friends to sign too. Already we have run out of petition forms and we need to get more. But we need a lot more people to cover areas like Irishtown."

— LAURA KINSELLA, Housewife

■ In Ringsend contact Shay on

**PEARSE STREET**

A LOCAL resident told Socialist Worker: "A few of us got together and leafleted our streets and about 50 turned up to a bin charge meeting. My neighbours have been saying to me 'Why should we pay? This is an outrage!' We are now collecting signatures around the area."

■ In Pearse St contact Shay on

Meetings to get the Anti Service Charges Campaign organised locally are to take place in BEAUMONT; CABRA; EAST WALL; POPPINTREE; RATHMINES; RIALTO in the next week or two. Contact the Campaign Against the Bin Tax in your area at one of the numbers listed or telephone Brid on

**CIE**

**IARNROD Eireann bosses are trying to scapegoat a train driver for an accident at a dangerous level crossing.**

An accident at Kiltwood level crossing in South Roscommon in February followed a similar incident before Christmas.

There have been five incidents at this particular level crossing, on the same line, over the past few years.

Without holding a formal enquiry to investigate the cause of the December accident, rail managers rushed to blame the driver.

Minister Of State Joe

Jacob said in the Dail claiming that a formal inquiry into the accident had taken place and the cause was driver error.

But the Irish Locomotive Drivers Association have indicated that no such formal inquiry had been convened in the two months since the accident.

As a result of the prejudicial public statements the driver handed in a letter of protest to the Iarnrod Eireann inquiry when it convened in late February and withdrew from the proceedings.

He and his union are keen to give evidence before a properly constituted independent inquiry.

**Incinerators**

**Drogheda fights waste mess**

**ACTIVISTS around the Drogheda area are taking action against major threats to the environment in the region.**

Indaver is seeking planning permission for an incinerator to be built at Carranstown outside Drogheda while Meath County Council have already given planning permission for a "super-dump" at Kentstown near Navan.

At the same time local campaigners are fighting bin charges in the area.

**Protest**

In recent months the No Incinerator Alliance has organised four large public meetings around the area and a protest before Christmas at Newgrange.

Local campaigner Kevin Smyth says plans for the protest march have received a good response.

"People are fearful of the environmental impact of these schemes."

"It's very important we organise now to put maximum pressure on Meath County

Council to refuse planning permission to Indaver and to withdraw plans for the

Super-dump. "What we really need is a proper and sustainable waste

management policy put in place.

"If that was to happen the amount of waste generated would be very much reduced. But that means taking on big business interests."

★ Campaigners against bin charges in Drogheda are facing a campaign of intimidation by the local council.

Last year the council introduced a £3 tag for a bag of rubbish and instructed its bin men not to collect rubbish without the tags. For a year volunteers have been following council bin trucks

throwing in bags which do not have the tags.

Now Drogheda Council is employing private investigators to frighten pensioners and those on invalidity pensions into believing they will lose their entitlements if they continue helping out in collecting the rubbish. Another volunteer has faced prosecution

in the courts under the litter acts.

One activist told Socialist Worker, "We can have up to 16 people volunteering to follow the trucks around throwing in bags without the tags in any one week. They have been doing it in all weathers for a year. "Now we hear more and more

reports people throwing the bags of their neighbours. The campaign is spreading and the council is getting worried."

"More and more people are seeing that intimidation and bin charges are not the answer. What we really need is a proper waste management plan, with separation and recycling."

**PROTEST MARCH**

**Saturday**

**March 10**

Assemble:

Ballsgrave

Church 2.30pm

and Lourdes

Church 2.30pm

March to Rally at

St Peters Church

**Incinerators**

**A NEW campaign group has been set up to fight against an incinerator in the North West.**

Derry City Council is in the process of reviewing its waste strategy and incineration is once again on the agenda, despite a massive local campaign, which stopped plans for an incinerator at Du Pont 10 years ago.

At the end of last year,

over 70 people protested outside Derry City Council's meeting against an incinerator. Yet councillors have been discussing the issue in secret and three councillors, Shaun Gallagher (SDLP), Mildred Garfield (DUP) and Tony Hassan (Sinn Fein) recently attended a waste management conference in Belfast organised by waste management multinational Entec.

A number of groups and individuals have now come

together, including the North West Environmental Alliance, the Socialist Workers Party and the Foyle Basin Council.

At a public meeting on 12 February it was decided to set up an action group to organise public protests against incineration.

Goretti Horgan, who spoke at the public meeting to launch the action group, said, "The effects of an incinerator would be devastating.

Already, the air around Derry is heavily polluted from the power station.

All over France, incinerators are being closed because of the damage they are doing to people's health. The people of Derry have shown before that they will oppose an incinerator. It is an outrage that it is being considered again."

For further information contact



## British Midland

## Solidarity can win strike

**A THATCHERITE company is importing scabs to break an important strike right at the heart of the most unionised workforce in Ireland. And a state company is openly colluding with this operation.**

Workers at British Midland have been on strike for nearly a month because their company wants to transfer them to a ground handling company, Gatwick Handling International.

It would mean the loss of flight privileges and a serious worsening of their pension schemes.

The company are employing the most aggressive tactics to break the strike. They have taken out ads in the national press to blame the workers. And they have imported strikebreakers from Britain.

Scandalously, the state

company Aer Rianta gave these scabs security clearance within a matter of hours. Normally it takes up to three weeks to get these airport clearance cards.

During the Ryanair dispute strikers had their security clearance cards withdrawn. One British Midland worker told *Socialist Worker*,

"My wife works in the airport and her security card lapsed. She has had to go through awful trouble to get it back again. So how did these strike breakers get clearances so quickly?"

## Collusion

As a result of Aer Rianta's collusion, British Midland is continuing its flights in and out of Dublin. As one worker said, "If it were not for these scabs, our strike would be over by now".

Aer Rianta's action represents a threat to all unionised workers at the airport. But unfortunately, the

ICTU is not moving half quick enough to deal with the issue.

If Aer Rianta were told they were facing a one-day stoppage of all unionised workers, they would quickly be persuaded to stop the sponsorship of strikebreakers. The ATGWU is now set to extend the pickets themselves to Aer Rianta in an important escalation of the dispute.

The company has already taken out an injunction against some of the strikers after a protest march to their premises. They will most probably respond to the ATGWU with more legal

threats. The union should face them down and extend the pickets from March 5th. It is the key to winning the dispute.

★ Every trade unionist should get behind the British Midland strike. They need solidarity collections to sustain their struggle.

Already Waterford Glass workers have raised a magnificent £1,000 for their strike fund. SIPTU taxi-drivers at the airport have also contributed £500.

Send solidarity collections to British Midland strike Committee c/o ATGWU Middle Abbey St Dublin 1.

## Bray house fire

## A tragedy waiting to happen

TERESA CAHILL and her 13-month-old baby died tragically in a fire in the Old Court estate in Bray on the 11th of March.

But this was a tragedy that could have been prevented.



The house on Old Court Estate in Bray

★ **NOEL MANNING**, the independent fire assessor, told the meeting that he had submitted a report to the Bray UDC 13 years earlier following another fire in Old Court, which claimed the lives of four members of the Cassidy family. In that report he indicated "serious inherent problems" in the reconstruction and refurbishment of the Old Court houses, which took place in 1987.

The report indicated that the refurbishment was

sub-standard at the problems could constitute a serious fire hazard.

At the time, councillors and officials promised a full independent investigation would take place looking at the building and safety standards of the houses in the estate. This never happened.

Despite the introduction of mandatory regulations in 1992 many developers do not bother installing the necessary safety features.

At a public meeting held sub-standard at the problems could constitute a serious fire hazard.

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## National Car Testers

AFTER SEVERAL weeks on strike against poor working conditions, compulsory unpaid overtime and health and safety issues, workers at National Car Testers — members of the ATGWU — were in the Labour Court.

One of the strikers told *Socialist Worker*: "I think the Court was clearly biased in favour of the employers. But still they were forced to recommend some concessions."

"NCT workers in the country are paid £37 less per week than workers in Dublin. The Court proposed that they be made up in two phases."

"We opposed the system of annualised hours because the employers were abusing it. The Labour Court says that annualised hours

should stay but says we should be paid overtime if we are forced to work more than 20 hours extra in a five week cycle.

"The company must give us reasonable notice of starting and finishing times. All this represents some improvement."

On the unhealthy conditions we are forced to work, the Labour Court refused to directly consider the issues and recommended this be taken up by the Health and Safety Authority."

The strikers were set to vote on the recommendations as *Socialist Worker* went to press, but as a striker noted "We got these improvements because we fought and that is a base from which to organise in the future."

## SWP branch meetings — all welcome

□ **ATHLONE**: Contact 01-872 2682 for details

□ **BRAY**: Meets every Wednesday at the Mayfair Hotel at 8.30pm

□ **BELFAST CENTRAL**: Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Kitchen Bar, 16 Victoria Square, near Cornmarket

□ **BELFAST SOUTH**: Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Queens Students Union

□ **BELFAST WEST** ring for details

□ **BELFAST QUEENS UNIVERSITY** Wednesdays 1pm, Peter Froggatt Centre

□ **CORK**: Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in O'Donoghue's, Drawbridge St

□ **DERRY**: Meets every Wednesday at 8.15pm in Badgers Bar upstairs, Orchard St.

□ **DROGHEDA**: Meets Wednesdays 8:30pm in McHugh's Pub St, Lawrences Gate

□ **DUNDALK**: Contact 01-872 2682 for details

□ **DUN LAOGHAIRE**: Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in the Christian Institute

□ **DUBLIN ARTANE / COOLOCK**: Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Artane / Beaumont Recreational Centre (opp. Artane Castle)

□ **DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL**: Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Conways Pub, Parnell St

□ **DUBLIN KILLBARRACK**:

□ **DUBLIN CABRA**: Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Aughrim St Parish Hall, Prussia St

□ **DUBLIN BALLYMUN**:

□ **DUBLIN DUNDRUM**: Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Dundrum Family Recreation Centre

□ **DUBLIN RIALTO**: Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm St. Andrews Community Centre, SCR

□ **DUBLIN RATHMINES**: Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Tom Kelly flats community centre, Charlemont Street.

□ **DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL**:

□ **DUBLIN TALLAGHT**: Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Jobstown Community Centre

□ **ENNISKILLEN**: Phone 01-872 2682 for details

□ **GALWAY**: Meets every Wednesday in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square (beside Cuba) 8.30pm

□ **LIMERICK**: Phone 01-872 2682 for details

□ **MAYNOOTH** meets Thursday lunchtime ring (01)8722682 for details

□ **SLIGO** Meets fortnightly

□ **SWORDS**: Meets Tuesdays 8pm Senior Citizens Hall

□ **TRALEE**:

□ **TRINITY COLLEGE**: Meets Thursdays 7pm see posters for details

□ **UCD** meets Wednesdays 1pm see posters for details

□ **WATERFORD**: Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the ATGWU Hall, Keizer St.

## Builders

## Campaign for direct labour

A MAJOR campaign has been launched by SIPTU general operatives in the building industry to fight for direct labour.

The Dublin Alliance of General Construction Operatives is seeking to outlaw the growing practice of

agency working.

As a DAGCO activist told *Socialist Worker*: "Under agency working you have no continuous employment record for pensions for example."

"Sisks, for example, can send out to an agency for say ten men. The foreman can put you off at any time and you have no comeback."

"This suits the bosses, of course, as they can take men on and get rid of them at will."

"But it doesn't suit us, the workers."

"In addition the cut the agency gets is taking money out of the wages of the general operatives. We are organising a mass meeting for GOs in Dublin to get organised and fight for direct employment under proper conditions by the building firms."

## Protest

## saves beach

RESIDENTS in Strand Road in Sutton scored a victory in the last few weeks and defeated an attempt by Sutton Dinghy Club to grab a public beach.

The club planned to concrete it over it over and fence it in.

The Strand Road Residents Association began campaigning to appeal the planning permission. And have forced the scheme to be scrapped

## Issues for the labour movement

**BENCHMARKING IS a concept that was invented in Japanese car factories.**

Each company was supposed to do a survey of their rivals and establish a 'benchmark' of unit costs against which they had to measure themselves.

Their aim was to engage in 'continual improvement' to reduce their own costs below the benchmark.

In other words, it was a form of 'management-by-stress' where employees were permanently pressurised to be more productive.

**Who will be implementing the benchmarking?**

The Benchmarking Body

and it has a remarkably anti-public sector bias. Its members are:

★ John Dunne, the outgoing director of IBEC, the employers organisation;

★ Maureen Lynott a management consultant

★ Paddy Mullarkey, the former Secretary General of the Department of Finance who implemented stringent cuts in public spending.

★ Jim O Leary, from Davy Stockbrokers who has advocated a neo-liberal agenda.

★ Phil Flynn, a director of the ICC bank

★ Billy Attley, a director of the Telecom board.

**How does the benchmarking process work?**

The Benchmarking Body

are supposed to carry out research to see which groups in the private sector these groups should be measured against.

The Public Services Employers have stated that the comparison with private sector employment should include 'a broad range of 'employments (it should extend beyond the traditional "good"- usually large employer)'. The private sector may also be reluctant to supply full details of pay structures and employment practices unless the information is confidential.

All of this raises a simple question: if certain aspects of the research process is to be surrounded in secrecy, how are we to assess how 'objective' that process has been?

**What sort of things is the benchmarking body looking for?**

The benchmarking body is supposed to 'take account of the way reward systems are structured in the private sector'.

The private sector uses bonus payments and performance pay quite often. In non-union companies, (and most of the private sector is non-union) employees are ranked against each other for pay increases.

It is clear that the government has an agenda of introducing performance related pay.

How this might be implemented exactly — exam results, freeing up hospital beds — is not clear. But there is a real danger that benchmarking is a step towards Thatcherite reforms.

**What is wrong with Performance Related Pay?**

It is often sold on the basis that it will attract 'high fliers'. In fact, it involves continual needless stress. It imposes artificial quantitative criteria on the public services.

It involves a vast expansion of paper work. It increases bureaucracy and waste because there is a new need to monitor performance. It is divisive and puts staff into competition with each other.

**Are there any other dangers from benchmarking?**

Traditionally the salary of public sector employees has progressed both through national awards and 'relativity increases'. Fire-

fighters for example got extra pay because they had a relativity with Gardai.

Benchmarking is a mechanism to destroy these relativity payments. The PPF documents for example states that "Cross Sectoral relativity is incompatible with the operation of benchmarking".

The Buckley Review has just awarded very high increases to higher civil servants, politicians etc. (None of these grouping were benchmarked!)

There was certainly no Performance Related Pay mechanisms introduced.) These pay increases may also percolate down to other grades — and other workers could in turn claim a relativity award. But not if we get immersed in the Benchmarking process.

# Socialist Worker

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**SOUTH KOREAN WORKERS FIGHT GLOBALISATION**

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**AIDS CRISIS: DYING FOR PROFITS**

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## GLOBALISE THE RESISTANCE

# DROP THE

# DEBT



PEOPLE ACROSS the continent are eagerly planning for what looks likely to be the biggest demonstration Europe has ever seen against the bankers and politicians who suck the Third World dry.

The leaders of the eight richest countries in the world will meet in Genoa, Italy, from 20 to 22 July at the G8 summit.

They will face a wave of protest from debt campaigners, environmentalists, anti-capitalists, trade unions and others.

Major trade union federations in France, Italy, Spain and Germany are already discussing support for the demonstrations.

Drop the Debt, that came out of the Jubilee 2000 campaign, is preparing a protest on 21 July.

Debt still causes the death of 19,000 children a day.

The leaders of the richest nations have the power to tell the IMF and World Bank to write off these debts. But they refuse because they want to retain power over the poor countries' economies.

The leaders of the G8 want Genoa to push forward "further trade liberalisation and the next steps in the process that was stalled at Seattle in 1999".

Everyone who can should be

★ **Top World Bank official, Isac Diwan, has revealed that debt reduction has been a fraud. He told a meeting recently that, even when debt is cancelled, a complex series of financial manoeuvres mean that poor countries only benefit from 40 percent of the money written off.**

preparing now to mobilise for the Genoa protests.

■ Contact Drop the Debt [www.dropthedebt.org](http://www.dropthedebt.org) or Globalise Resistance: [www.gn.apc.org/globalis-eresistance](http://www.gn.apc.org/globalis-eresistance). Ring

## 15,000 march against the system

**A TWO-day carnival-like event took place in Montpellier, southern France, recently.**

It was a 15,000-strong protest against globalisation that saw people pack into meetings on every-thing from how to fight the multinationals to the threat to privatise public services under the planned GATS trade agreement.

There was also an inspiring march, with students,

peasants and trade unionists chanting what has become the slogan of the movement: "The world is not for sale!"

They had all come to support the left wing French peasants' leader José Bové.

### Protest

He and nine others faced a series of court cases centring on a protest Bové led two years ago in Millau, in the south of France.

That had seen people dis-

mantle a McDonald's outlet in protest at the US and World Trade Organisation (WTO) sanctions on France's Roquefort cheese. The sanctions threatened farmers' livelihoods.

The protesters turned the court cases into a trial of globalisation and the neo-liberal policies pushed by the WTO, International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

"We are all José Bové!" chanted the crowd outside the court.

Bové gave an inspiring

speech to the thousands who gathered to launch the march.

He stressed the links between this protest and other struggles which have erupted in France recently—most notably the recent wave of mass workers' demonstrations and strikes against bosses' attacks on pensions:

"Our fight is for the transformation of society.

"We stand in solidarity with those fighting for public services like health and education."

Bové argued for solidarity with the "sans papiers" (immigrants made illegal by French laws).

He said, "For us the struggle of the sans papiers is important.

"They are people chased from their homelands by the policies of the World Trade Organisation, the IMF, the World Bank. And when they arrive here our duty is to support their fight for rights.

"Our slogan should be 'Globalise the struggle! Globalise hope!'"