

Socialist Worker

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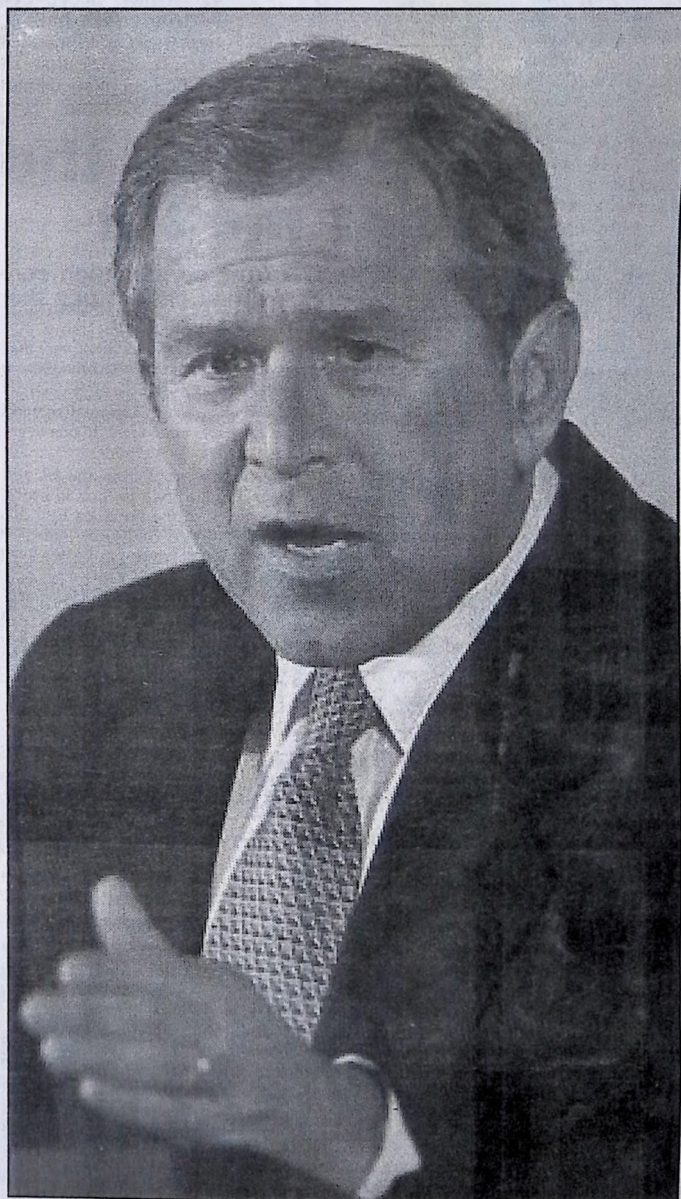
GLOBAL WARMING CRISIS

BUSH TURNS

HEAT

UP ON

PLANET



Residents vs fat-cats

RESIDENTS ARE opposing a commercial development of the former Rowntree buildings opposite Kilmainham Jail.

Developers plan to build a six storey office development. As one resident pointed out:

"This would be completely out of character with the surroundings. Instead of benefiting ordinary people round here it would only benefit fat-cat business interests.

"Instead the area should be used for a green space or play area for the kids in the area."

A protest campaign has been started which has leafleted the locality and is organising protests.

£250 fine for opposing sanctions

DURING Clinton's last visit last year youth worker Colm O'Brien staged a protest against the US sanctions on Iraq along the road Clinton was to travel.

Garda arrested Colm charging him with a breach of the peace. He was also charged with assaulting a garda as one of their caps was knocked off when making the arrest.

Colm was fined £250 and given a suspended sentence but has decided to appeal.

A fundraiser to pay for the appeal attracted 200 people and raised £800.

A fellow Rialto youth worker told Socialist Worker, "This is a total miscarriage of justice."

The sanctions on Iraq cause the deaths of half a million children each year as medicines and agricultural equipment was covered by it.

"Colm had every right to draw attention to this when the man responsible for upholding the sanctions was being welcomed here."

Donations to the legal fund sent to Socialist Worker will be forwarded to Colm.

LECTURE
Waterford Trades Council Frank Edwards Lecture Kieran Allen speaks on "Globalisation and Labour: Can the Multinationals be Tamed?"
Wednesday 25th April 8pm
See local press for venue

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

Bosses refuse to pay PPF...

Sheer greed

THE BOSSES' organisation, IBEC, has warned that it will not give workers the extra 2 percent pay rise that came with the Review of the PPF.

They have the cheek to claim they are unable to pay because of growing fears of recession.

The extra 2 percent was conceded to workers after there was an increase in militancy last year.

Tiny

It was a tiny rise that was supposed to cover for a rise in inflation and so save the whole structure of social partnership. The union leaders were so worried about how small the rise was that they refused to put the agreement out to a ballot. The one union that took a vote, the CPSU, turned it down overwhelmingly.

But now from sheer greed the bosses do not

Putting on the poor mouth

Here are some of the construction companies who claim they cannot pay their workers an extra 2 percent rise.

★ **Sisks:** Ireland's largest construction company made £20 million last year. It has seen its profits grow by six times between 1994 and 1997.

★ **Cramptons:** One of its directors, George Crampton, was linked to the Ansbacher accounts. In one year in 1997, its profits trebled.

★ **CRH:** This is the main supplier in the building industry. Last year it made £548 million in profits. That was up 22 percent of the previous year. The Ansbacher operation was run from their HQ and seven of the directors, including Tony Barry, were implicated in its operation.

BSE: Was there a cover-up?

A report from the British Food Safety Authority has suggested that there has been a major cover-up of BSE in Ireland.

Its author, Christie Donnelly from the Department of Epidemiology at the Imperial College, claimed that 20,000 Irish cattle were infected with BSE between 1985 and 1996 compared with one million in Britain.

But far from dealing with the issue as a health problem, the Irish government's main concern was the profits of the beef

want to pay this miserly increase.

Shortly after IBEC's announcement, the building bosses said they were not paying, as workers have already gained large increases.

Their sheer brass neck was astounding. The building industry has made phenomenal profits during the boom in the Celtic Tiger. They have jacked up the price of houses so that even the best-paid building workers can barely afford to buy their own house.

In 1994, house prices were on average 4 times the annual industrial wage. By 1998, they cost eight times the average industrial wage. The main reason was the greed of the builders.

One senior planner in South Dublin council estimated that they were making a 100 percent profit on every house they built.

But as soon as there is the slightest cloud on the horizon, the building bosses want workers to pay. It shows that the whole idea of social partnership is a fraud.



The dining room at Michael Smurfit's KClub

We are having a ball

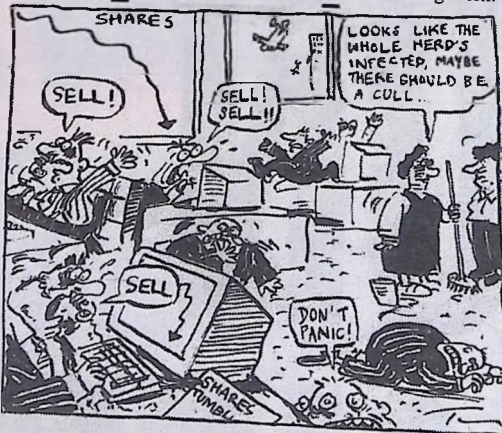
THE RICH talk a lot about social partnership but they are having a ball at our expense. Last month, two major Irish companies admitted they were paying their directors outrageously high salaries.

★ **SMURFIT:** Michael Smurfit got a £5.2 million package off the company. He also got a £900,000 contribution to his pension fund. In June, the company is bestowing a £30 million yacht, which unfortunately

will be too big to enter Dun Laoghaire harbour. But not to worry: Smurfit's official home is the tax haven of Monaco.

★ **AIB:** Five directors of Allied Irish Banks gave themselves a 12 percent rise and shared out £3.6 million between them.

There was also a little bit left over for Fianna Fail hacks who attend a few meetings of the board. Ray McSharry got £32,000 for turning up while the pet food millionaire Albert Reynolds got over £40,000 for his back breaking work.



US still bombing Iraq

A US bombing raid killed six military observers near the Iraqi border recently after a plane missed its target during a routine training mission.

US and British bombing raids in Iraq regularly kill many more civilians but do not get media coverage.

UN officials say the raids are putting people's lives at risk.

In the south the UN have withdrawn all staff.

They have said it is too dangerous for them to travel there because they fear they will be bombed.

In the north staff are only allowed to travel in the region between 12.30pm and 3pm for the same reason.

Backing for Genoa protest grows

THE GREEK TUC has just voted to back the anti-capitalist protests against the leaders of the world's richest countries meeting in Genoa, Italy on 20-22 July.

High on the G8 summit agenda in Genoa are plans to help global capital grab control of social services, education, health pensions, immigration and democratic rights.

The Greek TUC announced, "We call on working people, the Labour Centres, Trade Union Federations and local unions to actively support the international mobilisation in Genoa."

If you want to get involved building for the Genoa protests ring 086-4098186. or email: globalise_resistance@yahoo.com

DEMPSEY ATTACKS LOCAL DEMOCRACY

THE FIANNA Fail Environment Minister, Noel Dempsey, is destroying local democracy in a bid to ram through plans for incinerators.

His new Waste Management Bill takes the power of decision-making on waste disposal away from local authorities and vests it in his department.

Even after a waste management plan has been imposed from on high, for four years the consent of an unelected city manager will be required before the plan can be varied.

The bill is Dempsey's response to the huge upsurge of popular protest.

Recently, thousands of people marched through Galway to protest at the building of an incinerator.

The only sort of democracy that Fianna Fail like is one where brown envelopes

decide policy rather than popular opinion.

★ Are genetically modified (GM) crops safe?

Governments tell us they are, but an example from the US says otherwise.

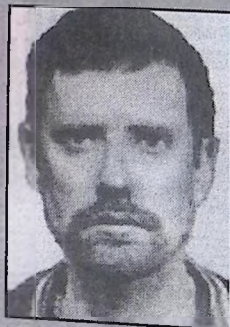
A GM maize intended only for animals is threatening to contaminate grain supplies for the second year running.

StarLink corn is not approved for human consumption because of fears it might provoke allergic reactions.

But last year it turned up in hundreds of US foods such as taco shells.

Now fresh traces of StarLink have turned up in seed supplies, probably because pollen from it has contaminated neighbouring crops.

Did you see this suspect?



THIS IS James Kopp who was on the FBI's Most Wanted list for the murder of Dr Barnett Slepian, who performed abortions.

Kopp has just been arrested in France but for a whole year he sheltered in Ireland and used two Irish passports.

Kopp was a member of Operation Rescue, a fanatical anti-abortion group which has links with Youth Defence in Ireland.

Although he claimed to be "pro-life" he is also a suspect in the attempted shooting of three other doctors in Canada and one in

the US. While running from the FBI, Kopp was actively assisted by the anti-abortion movement.

He was arrested in France as he picked up a small parcel of \$300 sent by two fellow anti-abortion militants.

Anti-abortionists in Ireland have denied they had any connection with Kopp who operated under the pseudonym of Seamus O'Brien.

Figures

But Kopp was one of the main liaison figures with the Catholic wing of the anti-abortion movement.

It seems more than a co-incidence that he took shelter in Ireland.

★ **FACT:** Youth Defence and other anti-abortion fanatics receive huge sums of money from the US and support groups like Operation Rescue

Bush bows to the barons of industry

THE BUSH administration has signed the death warrant for the Kyoto treaty on global warming, declaring it had "no interest" in its implementation.

The treaty which was agreed by most of the world's governments was designed to reduce carbon emissions. The US had to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane by 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012.

But the oil and coal industry launched a massive campaign to change all this.

The coal industry gave \$1.9 million in campaign contributions in the last US presidential election and three quarters went to Bush.

Even Newsweek magazine said that Bush's main motive was "special interest pressure from coal producers and others in the energy industry".

Bush tried to pretend that there was "an incomplete state of scientific knowledge" on the subject. But only a few weeks ago the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change reported that average temperatures could rise by up to 5.8 degrees celsius this century if there is no serious effort to curb emis-

sions. It forecast much more frequent "extreme weather events" with dire consequences.

The Kyoto protocol was a wholly inadequate response to the hazards facing the global environment.

But even these weak measures have been cast aside by Bush. Now the whole planet is being threatened because of the greed for profit.

Signs

Already the signs of global warming are evident in the growing number of violent storms and hurricanes.

The US is the major culprit for carbon emissions. US power plants produce more emissions than 146 poorer countries put together. Although the US has only 5 percent of the world's population, it produces 25 percent of the carbon emissions.

It will be the world's poorest countries that stand to suffer most from climate change.

Some, such as Bangladesh and Samoa, face being flooded while others, such as Nigeria, face being ravaged by desert.

In a worst-case scenario that some scientists are taking seriously, billions of people in developing countries will face a more inhospitable environment before the 21st century is over.

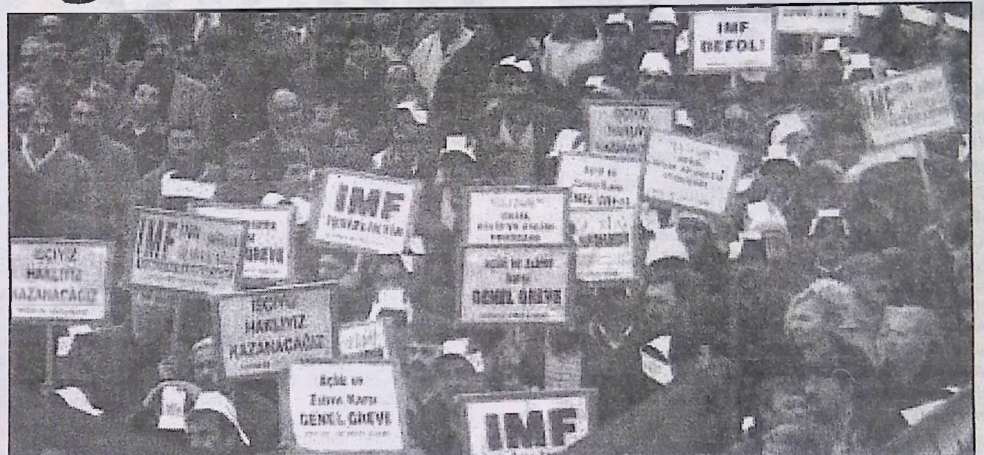
Vote 'NO' to Nice

The Irish government has announced the 31st May as the date for the Referendum on the Nice Treaty.

The Nice Treaty will make

it easier for big business and multinational capital to operate within the EU. There are also plans to set up a European Defence Force to compete with NATO.

Thousands protest against IMF in Turkey



THOUSANDS OF DEMONSTRATORS took to the streets in cities across Turkey on the last day of March to protest against the IMF backed economic cuts. Shouting "IMF go home," they gathered mainly in downtown Ankara and in Istanbul while a heavy police presence looked on.

The government was expected to call for sacrifices by workers to allow Turkey to make the reforms that economy minister Kemal Dervis says are essential to win support from international lenders and the markets.

Dervis, a former senior official with the World Bank, was brought in to take over the reins of the economy at the start of the month.

Trade unions are threatening protests and strike action against the IMF cuts.

Defenders of the EU say the Union is about increased democracy. But the European Parliament is even more remote from ordinary people, and more powerless to challenge corporations, than national parliaments.

The European Commission

is even more undemocratic. It is an unelected bureaucracy headed by 20 people appointed by European states.

Since its foundation as the European Economic Community (EEC) the EU has been about protecting the interests of business. Its links to giant

corporations have grown over the last 15 years as those firms have become bigger through a wave of mega-mergers. Over 10,000 professional lobbyists roam the corridors of EU institutions every day representing the interests of big business.

May Day

Global day of action against corporate greed



Protest at the Irish Stock Exchange

May 1st @ Anglesea Street, off College Green, 4.30pm - 6pm

Rally 7pm Burke Theatre, Trinity College

Speakers to include: Pádraic McKenna MEP (Green Party), Nicolas Verdun (French Trade unionist), Claudine Galdoni (Attac), Kieran Allen (Editor, Socialist Worker), Joe Higgins (Socialist Party), Joe Falton (Dublin Bus Shop Steward), Nisk Jones (Latin America Solidarity Centre), Eoin Dubaky (Gluaiseacht - Environmentalist), Odir Tonga (Irish-Sudanese Solidarity Campaign).

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Trainstopping: Protestors halt atomic waste

ANTI-NUCLEAR protestors clashed with police in Germany as they tried to block the transport of nuclear waste.

Increasingly brutal police actions eventually

cleared the tracks of demonstrators—but not until protests had held up the nuclear transport for over 30 hours.

Thousands of anti-nuclear waste protestors delayed the train transporting nuclear waste from the French reprocessing plant at

La Hague to the storage facility at Gorleben.

The Castor train had arrived in the Wendland region with only a few hours delay, but then the plans to proceed the remaining 50 kilometres went into total disarray.

Thousands of people had blocked the tracks and could only be moved by police using extreme force.

At Sueschendorf, five activists had chained and cemented themselves in between the tracks, forcing the train to stop and even retreat for the first time in the history of the transports.

It took police 20 hours to remove the activists.

Earlier on Tuesday, the train had to wait for several hours in Lueneburg until police had removed a 1,600

strong blockade.

Even the train carrying the arrested activists was blocked by more protestors.

Other blockades near Goettingen had already forced the train to change route.

Greenpeace activists abseiled with chains connected to the track from Seerau bridge and succeeded in holding their position for six hours.

The protests have thrown German politics into disarray.

Nuclear transports were stopped after protests in 1997.

At the time there was a right-wing minister for the environment.

Now shamefully it is a Green Party minister pushing through the transports.



Police brutally tackle a demonstrator

'Some 16,000 people demonstrated in Luneberg on Saturday.

The German government launched one of the biggest police mobilisations since the Second World War to try to prevent protestors from blockading the rail transports.

Some 30,000 police and troops tried to hem in protestors, and broke up campsites at the weekend where thousands of people had gathered.

But local people opened their homes to the protestors and provided them with food. School students occupied to provide people with somewhere to sleep.

Even many farmers joined the protest, blockading the road with 300 tractors. Churches provided refuge and church wardens handed out tea and coffee. The police and government response has infuriated the protestors and shocked public opinion.

The government is led by the Social Democrats, equivalent to the British Labour Party, and includes the Greens as a junior partner. Three years ago, leading Green figures such as Joschka Fischer and Jurgen Trittin helped lead similar protests against the transport of uranium and plutonium.

Now Fischer is foreign minister and Trittin is environment minister. They have set their face against the protests. Despite that, large numbers of Green members joined the blockades this week. Veterans of anti-nuclear protests in the early 1980s linked arms with young demonstrators.

And people drew the links between the nuclear power industry and multinationals. The blockades and the police reaction have added to the growing sense of radicalisation in Germany.

— Eyewitness report by HANS KRAUSE

international round-up

Austria

THE ONGOING movement against the far right in Austria has inflicted significant losses on the Freedom Party in elections in the capital, Vienna.

The Freedom Party is a junior partner to the conservative People's Party in the Austrian government, and won 29 percent of the vote in a general election 18 months ago. But its vote in council elections in Vienna, home to one in five Austrians, fell to just over 20 percent.

The Social Democrats increased their vote to 48 percent and the Greens took 12 percent. The Freedom Party and its leading figure, Jorg Haider, ran an anti-immigrant campaign and hurled abuse at Ariel Muzicant, a leading Jewish figure.

However the racist and anti-Semitic scapegoating did not reverse widespread disillusionment with the governing parties which have forced through free market policies of cuts in welfare and increased taxes on workers.

Italy

"PEOPLE OF Seattle converge on Naples."

That's how the London *Guardian* summed up the marvellous 20,000-strong anti-capitalist protest at the Global Forum gathering of the world's rich in the Italian city last weekend.

The protest marked the latest in the wave of anti-capitalist mobilisations since the great demonstration against the World Trade Organisation in Seattle in 1999.

In July an even bigger international protest is expected at the meeting of rulers of the G8 richest countries in the Italian port of Genoa

Venezuela

PRESIDENT Hugo Chavez on Wednesday ordered National Guard troops to deploy to oil installations and other key points to clamp down on striking oil workers and teachers.

Some 40,000 oil workers took strike action to demand a 15 percent pay rise. Striking oil workers clashed with



Protestors took to the Streets to condemn the latest round of IMF imposed cuts on Nigeria.

guardsmen and police officers in the western oil-producing state of Zulia while trying to stop gasoline trucks from leaving a refinery.

Students also forced the country's largest university, the Central University of Venezuela, to suspend classes indefinitely.

Hungary

SOME 30,000 people protested in Hungary last month against plans to give employers the right to disperse workers throughout the country as they see fit.

Argentina thrown into turmoil

ARGENTINA is in turmoil as people revolt against a massive cuts package backed by the world's bankers and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Students and teachers have staged huge

strikes. They occupied schools and colleges, and blocked roads in cities across the country.

From the capital, Buenos Aires, to provincial cities like Cordoba they also staged open-air classes, launched "free" radio broadcasts and planned marches. The upheaval threw the government of President Fernando de

la Rúa into crisis. The key economy minister, Ricardo Lopez Murphy, was forced to resign.

And de la Rúa had to announce the withdrawal of the austerity package that has sparked the revolt. Lopez Murphy announced a plan only last week to slash \$2 billion from public spending this year.

Placate

The move was designed to placate Argentina's bosses and international bankers. Before Christmas Argentina's currency slumped as an 18 month long recession continued and panic spread across the world money markets about whether the country would meet its debt

repayments. The IMF stepped in with a \$40 billion rescue package and demanded harsh austerity measures.

One Argentinian paper reported, "Groups of students and teachers, unemployed and pensioners were maintaining blockades on streets in different areas of Greater Buenos Aires."

The Argentinian protests are just the latest in a wave of revolt that has swept Latin America in recent months.

Revolts have toppled governments in Ecuador and Peru, and beaten back massive privatisation plans in Bolivia.

In Colombia up to one million workers were set to stage a national strike against job and welfare cuts.

Tom Paulin Interview

'A very divisive system on top of the sectarian education system'

Socialist Worker spoke to poet, novelist and broadcaster Tom Paulin about the Campaign against Selection and the prospects for change in Northern Ireland.

SW: What damage do you think Northern Ireland's selective system of education has done?

I think it has done immense damage. I know some of the good luck stories but then I know many other horror stories. It is a very divisive system on top of the sectarian education system. I think it is very significant that only 1 percent of children from loyalist communities go on to higher education. This is a shocking and shameful figure. The people, who underpinned Unionism, look at what was done to them.

SW: What alternatives can we successfully replace it with?

The Scottish Comprehensive system is an obvious one. It is very good and very successful. I believe private schools should be taxed out of existence - forcibly abolished.

SW: You have been conventionally described as part of the Protestant radical tradition. Is that tradition still alive today?

I'm uneasy with the word tradition. I'm my own kind of headbanger, I think. I'm uneasy with that sort of pigeon-holing. Is Eamonn McCann a Catholic radical? No. He is just a radical. Eamonn is a heroic figure from my youth. I remember him from Literiffic - the Queen's Debating Society. I remember one of the great moments in television when Eamonn demolished Norman Stone, then Professor of History at Oxford. Stone was devoted to Margaret Thatcher.

I've written about Milton and Marvell but I'm uneasy with effectively putting on that kind of label i.e. "Protestant". I am fed up with all these sectarian terms. I wouldn't want to be sniffing around what particular culture a person was brought up in.

SW: Do you think the Belfast Agreement institutionalises sectarianism?

No, I don't. I think it gives an opportunity to break out of it once and for all. I'm obviously worried there's great negativity within the Unionist community and I think republicans need to be sensitive to loyalist anxieties. It seems to be touch and go all the time whether it will hold.

SW: Are you a socialist? What do you think socialism means today.

It is hard to use that term now. I just don't know how to answer that. I've certain beliefs that might be termed socialist. I don't think labels help. I've noticed generations younger than my own - people switch about, radical in some ways, reactionary in others. It's much more mixed up nowadays. I think socialism means being adept, flexible even opportunistic, working inside institutions to change them. A certain old style Trotskyism, an entryism.

SW: Do you think the new global anti-capitalist movement might help produce a stronger radical voice in Northern Ireland?

I haven't a clue. I haven't got enough sense of it. I believe in changing institutions as far as possible from the inside, but you need oppositional forces from the outside to force institutions to recognise that they have to change from the inside.

SW: When does art become political and how can it become politically effective?

Art is often making a political statement. I don't know. Art and culture, they are all political. You need to have space because you can't always be thinking in ideological terms, but that's probably the bourgeois quietist in me. I have this old fashioned belief in culture, a kind of peaceable kingdom where opposition forces argue civilly and get on with each other.

Campaign against selection gains ground

250 march against selection

TWO HUNDRED and fifty people marched through Belfast city centre on Saturday, March 31, to demand the immediate scrapping of the 11+. Saturday shoppers lined the streets to cheer on the demonstrators as they approached City Hall.

Parents, teachers, school students, trade unionists and political and community activists from both communities came together to send a clear message to Martin McGuinness that they wanted an end to selection within the Northern

Ireland education system.

John Price, chairperson of the campaign, condemned the 11+ as "promoting educational apartheid, and denying equality of educational opportunity".

Denying

He pointed to the fact that only 10% of working class school children attend grammar schools as evidence of this and demanded "a fully funded comprehensive system of education with additional resources, both human and material, to be directed at poorer children".

This call was echoed by many other speakers. Mick O'Reilly of the ATGWU said "the existing system

props up a system of inequality and privilege. Northern Ireland needs an alternative system based on inclusiveness and equality for all". INTO, NIPSA and UNISON were among the unions that sent delegations on the demonstration

David Rose of the PUP condemned the 11+ and noted that in some Protestant working class areas just 1% of pupils went on to higher education.

As one protestor said "Today is a great start and it is great to see a campaign drawing together so many groups and so many people of different backgrounds.

"We need to keep working together if anything is to really change in post Good Friday Agreement Northern Ireland"

Farren keeps student fees

THE RECENT announcement by Sean Farren, SDLP Minister for Further and Higher Education, on student fees and grants is a sell-out.

Tuition fees remain and the bursaries introduced to help students from low-income families are insultingly low.

Limited

Apart from the introduction of a child care grant for students on low incomes, none of the changes introduced by Farren are as good as the limited changes introduced in Scotland over a year ago.

Nonetheless, the fact that these small changes have been introduced at all shows that putting up a fight for the right to free education is worthwhile.

Farren admitted that "social groups IV and V make up 25 percent of the overall population, but students from these groups represent only 11 percent of the student population and that finance is the main rea-

son for this."

He also admitted that 75 percent of students now have to take out loans, and the average loan is about £3,200 per year.

So, by the time a student finishes their degree, they owe between £7,000 and £10,000.

Access

But his changes, which will cost about £20 million a year, will do little to help improve access for working class people to higher education.

Instead, it's clear the Executive thinks that working class people should stick with the further education sector - the old Techs.

So, Farren has abolished tuition fees on a broad range of vocational courses at levels 2 and 3 for full-time students aged over 19 and has introduced a bursary scheme similar to that for University students.

The parties in the Executive still claim they oppose tuition fees.

But they all accepted the Farren deal - it was passed by the Executive before it was announced.

McGuinness acts like Scrooge

THE MISERLY approach of the Department of Education in the North under Sinn Fein's Martin McGuinness was revealed again at the end of March.

Term time workers across the North had been delighted to hear that some sort of deal had been agreed to provide them with some money to live on during school holidays.

Now they've been told that the deal

only applies to those grades represented by NIPSA, the union which had threatened strike action.

Other term time workers, including domestic assistants, general assistants and school library assistants have been told they are excluded from the new deal.

These workers make up the majority of term time workers.

They are the lowest paid too. Yet they were told that they "were never part of" the negotiations. It's clear socialists were right when they dubbed McGuinness "Scrooge of the Year".

Derry incinerator protest

THE DERRY-BASED Ban the Burn group had its first protest against a proposed incinerator in the North West in March. Over 40 people protested outside a meeting of the Derry City Council environmental services committee.

The North West Cross Border group, which includes Derry, Donegal and seven other councils, have been discussing their waste management plan for three and a half years.

The consultants employed by the group, Emtec, are part of a French-based multinational which has interests in incineration in Europe. Plans are so far advanced that 31 tenders



Anti-incinerator protest

to build the incinerator have been narrowed down to a shortlist of six.

It is rumoured that the proposal put forward by Emtec is for a combination of incineration and recy-

cling, what they refer to as a 'balanced option'.

But the evidence from other areas is that incineration undermines any recycling strategy since it demands a constant supply

of waste.

The Ban the Burn group is demanding that the minutes of the Cross Border group are made public.

Derry and the North West has one of the

worst records of recycling in Europe. There are only three recycling depots in the whole city. Another protest is planned at April's environmental services committee.

Noam Chomsky on Israel the US and Palestine

WHAT IS HAPPENING AFTER FIVE MONTHS OF THE NEW PALESTINIAN INTIFADA?

ISRAEL HAS an overwhelming force advantage, and can act with few constraints as long as it has US authorisation.

Israel has tried to restrict outright killings to a level low enough not to evoke too much international condemnation. They aim at large scale and severe wounding, brutal strangulation of the population by closures, impassable barriers, and now trenches around cities and villages. Their calculation is that there is a limit to what flesh and blood can endure.

The same strategy was carried out in the first Intifada. In 1989, for example, Israeli defence minister Yitzhak Rabin informed Peace Now leaders that the US was offering Israel a year or more to suppress the Intifada by "harsh military and economic pressure", and assured them that the Palestinians "will be crushed".

WHAT LED UP TO THE PRESENT PEACE PROCESS?

THE TERM "peace process" is used to refer to whatever policies the US happens to be carrying out—perhaps blocking peace. The US "peace process" shifted in 1971 from support for the US-initiated "land for peace" resolution UN 242 to Kissinger's demand for "stalemate".

The decision was taken in response to Egypt's offer of a full peace treaty in accord with US policy, now abandoned.

Since then the US has stood virtually alone in the world in rejecting UN 242.

That continued until the Gulf War, when the US made it clear that it was going to run this region unilaterally by force. Others backed away, but the US began implementing its own rejectionist programme, first at Madrid and later as it took over the Oslo process. That continued until the latest Clinton-Barak proposals of January 2001.

WHAT DOES THE PEACE PROCESS OFFER NOW?

It would give the Palestinians several isolated enclaves, separated from one another and from the centre of Palestinian life in the former Jerusalem by Israeli settlements and massive infrastructure projects. Israeli "Jerusalem" also extends well to the north and south.

Another salient virtually separates the northern enclave (Nablus, etc) from the central one (around Ramallah).

The Gaza Strip is connected only by a road that is

under Israeli control, and though details were left obscure it is not unlikely that the plans include effective partitioning of the Strip as well. In return Palestinians were to be offered a pile of sand at the Egyptian border that is disconnected from the other enclaves.

Barak's chief peace negotiator explained in 1989 that the goal of the Oslo process is to ensure that Palestine remains a permanent neo-colonialist dependency. It can be called "a state", just as apartheid South Africa was happy to call the Bantustans "states".

The "peace process" broke down because Palestinians were no longer willing to tolerate the continuing decline in social and economic conditions. These were bad enough in 1993 and have become much worse since, now exacerbated further by the fact that they have two oppressors: Israel, and the corrupt and brutal Palestinian Authority.

WHAT IS THE US' ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

THE PRIME concern of the US is the energy reserves of the Gulf region, by far the largest and most easily accessible in the world, and expected to become even more significant in the global energy picture in coming years.

It has long been understood that control of these resources not only brings enormous wealth, but also great power.

HOW DOES THIS TIE IN WITH THE BOMBING OF IRAQ?

THE US and Britain supported Saddam Hussein through his worst atrocities. They turned against him for the usual reasons — in August 1990 he disobeyed (or perhaps misunderstood) orders.

That cannot go unpunished. The bombing is the expression of US-British contempt for the UN and world opinion generally, and their insistence that they will use force to attain their ends.

Sooner or later Iraq will be allowed to re-enter the US-dominated world system, but only when US and British energy corporations gain the inside track on exploiting its oil reserves.

WHY SHOULD EVERYONE WHO WANTS PEACE SUPPORT THE PALESTINIANS?

WE SHOULD bear in mind that while peace is preferable to violence, it is not an absolute value. Hitler also wanted peace on his terms.

Those who want a just peace should support all the people of the region, not only Palestinians, and including Israeli Jews.

PLAN TO BAN PROTESTS

Our civil liberties are not for sale

Dublin corporation tried to introduce a series of draconian by-laws to effectively ban rallies and protests in Dublin city centre. But they were defeated by a magnificent mobilisation of left wing forces in the city.

The Corporation claimed the by-laws were necessary for the upgrading of O'Connell Street. But the main disruption on O'Connell Street is caused by traffic jams rather than people.

Dublin Corporation admitted they wanted the bye-laws because demonstrations are "detrimental to the business life of the city".

The City Manager claims the proposals came because of lobbying by "business interests".

The corruption scandals have already revealed how big business dictates to Dublin Corporation.

Permission

The former City Manager, George Redmond, took money from builders like Brennan and McGown and then made sure they were given £1 million as compensation for not getting planning permission.

Yet Redmond was never jailed.

The Corporation was again following the dictates of big business - this time trying to stop the most basic democratic right.

Countless groups and individuals came out against the proposal. 300 people turned up to a council meeting to demonstrate their anger.

The street protests were organised by the Freedom of Assembly Coalition which linked together the Socialist Workers Party, Greens, ICCI, Sinn Fein, Labour Youth and USI.

The bye-laws fell after Labour put down a resolution to call for their scrapping. Labour spokespersons initially wavered on the issue but then came down

on the side of free speech. The Labour TD Mary Upton wholeheartedly supported the measures on a *Questions and Answers* programme just one week previously.

The attempted restrictions came at a time when there is a growing protest mood against a system that puts profits before people. The political establishment know millions are protesting all over the globe against corporate greed.

Already British legislation on terrorism has been amended to include 'anti-capitalist' protestors. Clearly the Corporation wanted to prevent the anti-capitalist movement that we've seen in Seattle and Prague from hitting the streets of Dublin.

But they were beaten back by mass action.



"This was a magnificent victory for people power. These laws are part of process of taking democracy away from the people of Ireland. We have already seen the government threaten to disband the Corporation unless they put through the bin charges. Then they tried to stop us protesting. We set up united left wing coalition to oppose the by-laws and we made sure that not one aspect of these laws got through."

RORY HEARNE, President Trinity College Students' Union



"The proposed by-laws were completely unnecessary and amount to an attack on the civil rights of every individual in this country. In Brussels there have been mass demonstrations by many groups especially farmers. None of these groups had to get licences or permission to march so why should Ireland be different from its EU neighbours?"

PATRICIA MCKENNA, Green Party MEP

★ Last month the Dublin Corporation SIPTU Section Committee voted to oppose to the Corpo's plan to effectively ban public protests and demonstrations from Dublin's O'Connell Street. One Corpo shop steward told *Socialist Worker*, "This is a direct attack on democratic rights. Trade unionists cannot stand by and watch our rights be taken away because big business interests say so."



Business interests wanted the ones above. Nurses in anti fascism march

"When Gardai and commercial interests try to cosy up to civil society in future, we will be wary."

How can we take them seriously when they tried to remove the human right to protest? We should make sure these proposals do not return in a watered down form. I want to congratulate the councillors who voted against the bye-laws and also the Socialist Workers Party who pulled this coalition together so quickly

DONNCHA O'CONNELL, ICCI.

PROTESTS SCRAPPED

ill rights for sale!



Business interests wanted to get rid of protests like the ones above. Nurses marching on the Dail and an anti fascism march



"It was a clear sign of how a united front of progressive groups can quickly defeat proposals put forward by unelected bureaucrats who were acting in the interests of business - not people. There is a broad alliance of socialists, republicans and environmentalists forming which is putting people before business interests."

□ CIAN O'CALLAGHAN, USI Deputy President.

"When Gardai and commercial interests try to cosy up to civil society in future, we will be wary."

How can we take them seriously when they tried to remove the human right to protest? We should make sure these proposals do not return in a watered down form. I want to congratulate the councillors who voted against the bye-laws and also the Socialist Workers Party who pulled this coalition together so quickly

□ DONNCHA O'CONNELL, ICCL.

"Many groups including Afri would have found it impossible to find the amount of monies required for insurance if the by laws are approved. The Government lied to us when they did their U-turn over the Partnership for Peace. Now they were trying to create a situation where it will be illegal for us to publicly oppose their lies and mistakes."

□ JOE MURRAY, Afri

A law to ban the 1916 rising

O'CONNELL STREET is Ireland's centre of protest. In 1913 police tried to baton locked out workers off O'Connell Street and afterwards Larkin spoke from the balcony of what is now Cleary's.

The 1916 rising started and ended on O'Connell Street at the GPO. In the 1930s and 1950s the unemployed took to O'Connell Street. De

Valera and every major Irish politician used to organise huge election rallies on the street.

No one then dared to claim that "business interests" came before democracy.

In 1992 some 14,000 people came spontaneously on to the streets to protest against the Supreme Court's ruling that a 14-year old rape victim could not go to England for an abortion.

In recent years nurses, teachers, builders, and taxi drivers have all taken to O'Connell Street to stand up to "business interests".

The right to protest is a funda-

mental one.

As long as the rich use "brown envelopes" to buy politicians, working people must make sure they have a right to demonstrate to have their voices heard. Every time workers want to stand up to the government they have to protest.

At the huge anti-capitalist protests in Seattle, one of the main slogans of the demonstrators was "Whose streets? OUR streets! This is what democracy looks like!"

It is a cry that needs to be heard on Dublin's O'Connell Street today.

What the by-laws would have meant

ANY assembly — whether it's a trade union rally or a gathering of sports fans to welcome home an Irish team — would have been affected by the Corporation bye-laws.

If the proposals went ahead it would have meant that:

- ★ Protests/demonstrations could only last for 2 hours
- ★ Speakers have to be approved in advance
- ★ All demonstrations in Dublin City Centre would be illegal unless the Corporation received an application 31 days in advance of the event (thereby banning all spontaneous protests)
- ★ A deposit of £2,000 would have to be paid for a rally of 50 plus.
- ★ The maximum number of demonstrators was to be 300 - if the number exceeded this then the organisers must have indemnity insurance cover of £3 million
- ★ Noise levels would be fixed so this would probably mean a restriction on the number of megaphones
- ★ Protest organisers could also be billed for extra costs the Corporation incurs such as cleaning

what socialists say

Why the bubble burst



THE GREAT Wall Street bubble of the 1990s has definitively burst. Stockmarkets almost everywhere have been tumbling over the past year as nearly \$10 trillion has been wiped off global share values - equivalent to US annual output.

Most people eyes glaze over when they hear meaningless terms like "Nasdaq", "Dow Jones" or "FTSE" at the end of the evening news.

The stock market is a giant gambling den for the rich. Traders hope to make huge amounts of money by buying stocks at one price and selling them for a higher price.

During a boom, speculators believe that their gamble cannot fail to make them money. As more people invest, the share prices go higher.

This fuels the bubble even further as investors don't want to miss out on making "easy money" on a "sure-fire bet".

In the US many middle class families invested heavily in the stock market. As share prices rose they felt richer, so they stopped saving and borrowed heavily in order to buy more goods and services.

Demand

The resulting increase in demand was good for the American economy, but it led to two problems.

Firstly, many people ran up massive debts. Secondly, the US began importing more goods than they were exporting.

With economies, as with people, if you spend more than you earn you have to find the money somewhere. In the case of the US, it came from Japan.

Dollars earned by Japanese companies through exporting to the US were lent back to the US, allowing people to buy yet more Japanese imports.

But the American slowdown means the virtuous circle binding the US and Japanese economies together could turn vicious.

As workers are laid off and shares fall, consumers will spend less.

As economist George Friedman wrote in the bosses magazine the Economist recently

"Japan's economy is so close to the edge it will not take much to push it over the edge."

This could spell disaster for the world economy.

According to the Financial Times, Japan's general government debt "is close to 130 percent of gross domestic product, greater than any leading economy in modern history".

And if the US enters a recession it will be the first time since 1974 that this has happened simultaneously in the world's two biggest economies, who collectively account for 46 percent of the world's output.

So while the stock market operates like a speculative bubble on top of the real economy which is based on the daily production of goods and services, it feeds back into it, exacerbating the contradictions that already exist there.

Up to recently stockbroker economists tried to pretend that information technology was producing a "new paradigm of growth" which abolished the business cycle.

But nothing could be further from the truth. Capitalism, whether it is producing computers or tins or bins, is an anarchic system that pressurises each individual firm to over-produce while simultaneously forcing them to cut back on unit costs.

This in turn means that consumers cannot buy the goods which are produced.

The slump can be postponed through the type of crazy borrowing and speculation that occurred on the stock exchanges. But eventually it occurs with a vengeance.

Each time there is an economic crisis the bosses want to make us pay for their mess.

Intel recently let 1,600 building workers go over night as they decided to postpone the completion of their new FAB 24 plant. They also announced that they would be laying off 5,000 workers worldwide.

But socialists argue there is an alternative. Some 200 multinationals control a quarter of the world's output.

They are run in competition with each other for the profit of a handful of billionaires.

If the workers in these multinationals took over control of these factories and produced for human need rather than profit, the madness of the market would end.

by SINEAD KENNEDY

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.



THOUSANDS SET TO PROTEST IN QUEBEC AGAINST FTAA

Is free trade fair trade?

LATER THIS month thousands of anti-capitalist protesters will congregate in Quebec to protest at a meeting of government representatives from 34 countries throughout the Americas and Caribbean (except Cuba) who will meet to agree a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

5,000 police are being mobilised and already there are stories about how Quebec will be surrounded by a three

meter high fence are being put about.

As the

Canadian writer Naomi Klein puts it the press are printing 'protest deterrence stories' to give the impression that demonstrating is not a democratic activity but 'a dangerous sport, suitable only for hard core activists with doctor degrees in rock climbing'.



FTAA will extend the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) from USA, Canada and Mexico to the Western

Hemisphere. Since 1994 secret negotiations have discussed a draft agreement which the ministers hope will be finalised at the summit.

These meetings have been lobbied by the Americas Business Forum—over 1,000 of the hemisphere's business

leaders. The ABF was set up to provide a mechanism for multi-national corporations throughout the Americas to shape the agenda of the FTAA treaty.

The aim is to create a deregulated free-trade area throughout the hemisphere encompassing 755 million people dominated by these multinational capitalists.

The Seattle summit of the World Trade Organisation in November 1999 collapsed in the face of mass anti-capitalist protests and internal disagreements.

Now the hemisphere's governments—headed up by the US—and the corporate giants whose interests they represent are planning to force through the same neo-liberal agenda throughout the Americas.

But

the real issue is what is this latest agreement on free trade really

all about?

Key elements of the expected FTAA agreement include:

- **DISMANTLING OF all tariff barriers and free movement of goods, services and capital.** It will be illegal to protect small, local industries from the competition of massive multinationals.

- **REMOVAL OF all "Performance Requirements" in public projects.** It will not be legal to discriminate against goods produced under sweatshop conditions or using child labour.

- **REMOVING ALL "Non Tariff Barriers":** It will be illegal to ban imports on health or environmental grounds that have not been agreed by all. GM foods or timber from old endangered forests cannot be banned.

- **SAFEGUARDING "Intellectual Property Rights".** The FTAA is set to further tighten World Trade Organisation rules on patents and copyrights. This will outlaw, for example, Brazil's programme of producing cheap generic drugs for the treatment of AIDS. These substitutes cost a fraction of the \$15,000 a year demanded by the multinational drug companies in patent licences for the same medicines.

ZAPATISTAS HIT BACK

LAST MONTH the Zapatistas marched into Mexico City after a seven year uprising based on the indigenous peoples of the Chiapas region.

The rising hit the headlines on January 1st 1994 at precisely the moment when the heads of state of Canada Mexico and the US were preparing to sign the NAFTA treaty.

Resistance to the effects of IMF-imposed Structural Adjustment Programmes had been building for some time.

Before Mexico could enter NAFTA they had to rewrite Article 27 of the Constitution which defended communal land ownership (ejidos). This was a legacy of the Mexican Revolution of 1917.

Defended

The free trade treaty however paved the way for the privatisation of ejido lands which were to be bought and sold to the highest bidder.

Zapatista leader Subcomandante Marcos said this measure "radicalised the companeros (peasants). The reform closed the door on the indigenous people's strategies for surviving legally and peacefully."

The government committed 50,000 troops to encircle the rebels in the Chiapas region and the US government provided \$362 million in military aid in an attempt to smash the rebels.

On the other hand millions of Mexicans had enormous sympathy for a movement that seemed to challenge the neo-liberal agenda.

MULTI - NATIONALS RULE OK?

FTAA IS set to include "investor-to-state" suits. These allow even greater scope for corporations to sue governments in secret "corporate courts" for any act that may indirectly affect their profits, such as the enforcement of

public health laws.

■ U.S.-based Metalclad Corp. sued a Mexican state to establish their 'right' to set up a toxic waste disposal site.

Seizure

They claimed that the environmental law forbidding the dump constituted an effective seizure of the company's property—and demanded compensation.

■ In 1997 the Canadian Parliament banned the petrol additive MMT over fears that it caused brain damage to children and its pollution effects.

The US-based Ethyl Corporation sued the Canadian government at the NAFTA tribunal, claiming the ban was "indirectly expropriating their anticipated profits". NAFTA ordered Canada to overturn the ban and to pay Ethyl \$13 million.

What Free Trade meant to Mexico

THE "FREE market", and the associated privatisations and cuts ordered by the Structural Adjustment Plans have left millions of Mexican in misery.

Half the population of 90 million live in poverty and 15 per cent below the extreme poverty line.

Forty million Mexicans are undernourished and 10 million have no access to any health provision.

Since NAFTA in 1994, over one million more Mexicans earn less than the minimum wage, and 8 million more families have slipped into poverty.

Every day, 44 tons of hazardous waste from the maquiladora or "free trade" zones along the US-Mexico border is improperly discarded.

Due to lack of sewage treatment and safe drinking water diseases, including hepatitis have doubled and tripled. This pollution has caused birth defects to increase dramatically.

Sacked

Last December, an employee at a maquiladora in Matamoros that spent five years glueing leather covers to steering wheels until he was sacked testified that his son was born with Spina Bifida, a spinal tumor, an enlarged heart, and no kneecaps.

Under the free trade Agreement Mexico was opened up to cheap, often

genetically modified US cereal grown with subsidies.

Mexican farmers were unable to compete and were driven off their land.

US wood product companies have also set up operations in Mexico, and logging has increased dramatically.

In the state of Guerrero, massive tree cutting led to soil erosion and habitat destruction.

The US government has responded to the growing poverty by taking an ever harder line against Mexican immigrants.

The border has been completely militarised. Under Proposition 187, California denied education and health care to undocumented immigrants and their children.

New laws have also facilitated the deportations of long term immigrants.

IS FAIR TRADE THE ANSWER?

SMALL FARMERS in the Third World producing commodities like tea, coffee, chocolate and bananas face falling prices and rising cost for pesticides, fertilizers and imported farm machinery.

They are frequently dependent on traders who pay them very little for their produce.

As one "Fair Trade" organization puts it: "Recognising the important role consumers could play to improve the situation for producers, Alternative Trading Organisations were set up."

"ATOs buy directly from farmers at better prices, help to strengthen their organization and market their produce directly through their own shops and catalogues."

And Fair Trade produce is now available in mainstream

supermarkets. For example Dunnes Stores, Superquinn's and Centra now carry Fair Trade bananas.

Socialists welcome anything that makes life a little more bearable for the impoverished Third World.

Succumbed

But there is also a lesson from the co-op movement in Ireland. This movement originally attempted to break out of the stranglehold of the dairy monopolies. However, it eventually succumbed to the dictates of the market. Some of the co-ops fell by the wayside, unable to keep up with their bigger competitors. Others were swallowed up by larger co-ops or went to form massive agri-companies like Glanbia.

A strategy to break the power of multi-nationals really needs to address the whole capitalist system and look to the possibility of working class revolution.

in my view

13 days that nearly blew up the world

A NEW movie *Thirteen Days* has brought a part of Cold War history back in to the news.

It is about the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. In 1959 there was a revolution in Cuba. Nationalist guerillas led by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara drove out a corrupt dictatorship with strong links to the Mafia and the US government.

The guerillas at this point were not Communists, but they did want to control their own economy. They nationalised some US businesses and drove out organised crime.

The US government, under the new president, John F Kennedy, organised an invasion of Cuba in 1961 by an army of supporters of the old dictatorship. That army was defeated as it landed at the aptly named Bay of Pigs, because the great majority of the Cuban people rallied to Castro against a US-backed invasion.

Castro turned to the Soviet Union for economic support and announced that he had always been a Communist. To cement that alliance, the Russian government moved long-range nuclear missiles into Cuba.

Cuba is 90 miles from Florida. These missiles threatened the US directly. More important to the White House, the example of the Cuban Revolution was enormously heartening to people all over Latin America.

Finally, somebody had stood up to the Yankees and got away with it.

Thirteen Days starts at the point when Washington discovered the missiles were being installed. It is based on the tapes the Kennedy administration secretly made of their own people in meetings.

It covers the 13 days when the Kennedy government threatened Russia with global nuclear war unless it withdrew the missiles.

There are three possible political positions on this crisis. One holds that a global nuclear holocaust killing at least 100 million and perhaps destroying the planet is always a bad idea. We should never do it, and we should even get rid of nuclear weapons. Nobody in the film supports this position, although we do see some demonstrators who carry signs but never talk.

The second position is that the holocaust would be tragic, but sometimes, for instance if the Russians get too uppity, you have to threaten it. And for the threat to work, you have to really mean it. So sometimes you might have to commit mass murder on a scale that would dwarf Adolf Hitler. This is the position Kennedy held, and the one the new film supports.

The third position is that war with Russia would be a good thing now. This, with qualifications, is the position that some in the US government, particularly the Pentagon, held. The film says this is wrong. But in fact both the Kennedy and Pentagon positions are deeply evil.

Hailed

It is worth remembering that Kennedy is often hailed as a liberal president but he was prepared to kill everybody on earth to stop "communism".

Forty years on, Cuba continues to resist the pressure of US imperialism. But it would be wrong to see Cuba as an island of socialism surrounded by enemies. Until 1986 Cuba stayed afloat by tying itself to the Soviet bloc.

This did not bring the freedom and independence most Cubans had hoped for after 1959, although they did get a good health service and real educational opportunities.

When Eastern Europe collapsed Cuba had to look for new sources of foreign currency — and the answer was tourism. Today there are dollar shops for the rich and a huge trade in prostitution. The tragedy of Cuba is that it still being made to suffer for defying Uncle Sam. As long as it remains isolated, the noose continues to tighten around its neck.

The missile crisis would seem unlikely to happen again but the blockade on Cuba remains. Socialists defend Cuba against Bush and his cronies in the Pentagon. But Cuban workers will also have to take full control of their country and spread the their revolution throughout the region. That, rather than nuclear missiles, is the best way to deal with Uncle Sam.

by SIMON BASKETTER

film

Doyle tackles Celtic Tiger

WHEN BRENDAN met *Trudy* is a brilliant film. Written by Roddy Doyle it is a comic allegory of the changes that have taken place in Ireland over the past 20 years.

Brendan is a teacher who sings in the parish choir. We meet him in the opening scene in a bar. The bar could be anywhere, anytime in the Ireland of the past. It is here that he meets *Trudy* and everything changes.

Introduces

Trudy is a liberated woman, who is also a thief. Brendan falls for her and she introduces him to sex and burglary. Brendan is transformed from being a subservient mass goer to being a rebel against the conventions of conservative Catholic Ireland.

Climax

This process reaches an important climax when Brendan gets involved in a near riot.

He is caught on TV trying to prevent the police deporting an asylum seeker, who is



Finding happiness in modern Ireland

a friend of *Trudy's*. This extremely funny scene is an obvious reference to the racist policies of the Irish state.

Brendan only got involved to impress *Trudy* but being involved changes him.

It is better not to give away the rest of the film but from here Brendan and *Trudy* enact a hilarious assault on the conservatism of Irish society.

Roddy Doyle's brilliant *Barrytown* trilogy captured the plight of

working class life in the 1980s. From a slightly different angle, *When Brendan met Trudy*, captures the radicalisation of popular consciousness in 1990s.

By the end of the film many of the back-

ward institutions of Irish society have been held up to ridicule and pushed aside.

Go see this film, it reflects the present and points to the future.

— RICHARD BOYD BARRETT

No more discrimination

TRAVELLERS ARE the largest ethnic group in Ireland to date. There are about 22,000 in the Republic and a further 1,000 in Northern Ireland.

Travellers have their own language and culture that sets them apart from the majority of the population.

They are also one of the most impoverished groups in Ireland with about a 90 percent unemployment rate.

Health statistics are even worse with Travellers now reaching the life expectancy that settled people reached in the nineteen forties. The lev-

els of literacy skills among Travellers are very poor with very few Traveller children going on to secondary school or even coming out of primary school, knowing how to read and write.

So why is this?

It's not so long ago that Travellers had a segregated class in some schools. There were separate breaks and some schools went so far as to shower Traveller children in the mornings before class because they were dirty!

This sort of discrimination happened not only in schools but in other institu-

tions like hospitals. And it is still happening only, in less straightforward ways.

Excuses are still found to refuse a Traveller access to services and places. There is no recourse for individuals or groups who make racist statements or carry out racist actions publicly. County councillors have been quoted as saying that 'the sooner the shotguns are ready for these people, the better' or 'They are not our people, they are not natives'.

Considering Travellers' origins can be traced back as far as the twelfth century, this is debat-



Travellers still suffer discrimination

able! We need anti-racists codes of practice for institutions and individuals and stiffer penalties for those who discrimi-

nate against Travellers.

■ KATHLEEN JOYSE, Primary Health Care Worker Pavee Point.



**where
we
stand**

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

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

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

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

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

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST

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

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

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

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

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

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

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

Northern Ireland is a sectarian state, propped up by the British Army.

Catholic workers are systematically discriminated against by the state. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers weakens the whole working class.

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

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

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

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

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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

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



PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS



Aer Lingus

'Do they think we can live on fresh air?'

AER LINGUS clerical, general operatives and catering staff began a series of one-day strikes at the end of March.

Over 3,000 workers who are all members of SIPTU struck in Dublin, Cork and Shannon. The workers are demanding parity with increases won earlier this year by 1,650 cabin crew workers.

Pickets

Socialist Worker spoke to some of the strikers on the picket line.

"Aer Lingus agreed when we signed our deal

last year that any increase in pay or benefit provided to any other local group in the company would be available to all unless it was specifically linked to actual productivity changes" said one worker.

"Cabin crew won

increases above what we had been given and fair play to them, but now we want paying. The linkage is long standing and the company is only trying it on and attempting to divide us.

"We only want what's ours by right according to the agreement that the

company and the unions signed," he continued.

Workers are determined to win and received support from other Aer Lingus workers.

"We got great support from other workers in the company and we won. Now it's our turn.

That is why we are supporting the strike" said a cabin crew worker.

Aer Lingus were forced to cancel all flights when cabin crew staff refused to cross the picket lines.

Fobbed

"If the company think they are going to get away doing this to us, they can think again.

"We are united and we are determined and will not be fobbed off

this time. Aer Lingus bosses have no problem paying themselves huge salaries. Every month inflation is rising.

"Do they think we can live on fresh air? We are not asking to be millionaires, we just want to be able to live a decent life" one striker said.

As *Socialist Worker* went to press another one-day strike action was planned for Friday 6th April.

Galway Globalise resistance

A GALWAY branch of Globalise Resistance was set up at a planning meeting held in NUIG at the end of March.

Among those present were representatives of NUIG Students Union, Green Party, Galway for a Safe Environment, SWP Galway, Women in Media And Entertainment, Global Women's Strike, Galway Refugee Support Group, SWSS NUIG, Galway Environmental Alliance among others.

Formation

Galway Trades Council, Galway One World Centre, NUIG Ecology Society, Amnesty NUIG were among the organisations which supported the formation of this network but were unable to attend.

It was agreed to hold a variety of activities on Monday 7th May with the possibility of focusing on the environment and George Bush's repudiation of the Kyoto agreement on global warming.

The meeting decided to set up an email list to keep all groups informed of each others activities and a website.

The contributions from all the representatives took a strong anti capitalist tone with a clear rejection of the policies of institutions such as the WTO, IMF, World Bank.

Participants are keen to mobilise as large a delegation as possible to attend the demonstration in Genoa in July against the G8 summit.

— SEAN DUNLEAVY

Bray Fire Service

Residents in Bray are demanding a full-time fire service for the town.

The recent tragic death of a young mother and her daughter in a fire in Oldcourt highlighted the inadequate fire service.

Catherine Kennedy told *Socialist Worker*, "This is the second major tragedy. In 1988 a mother and her four children died in a fire in the town.

"With 30,000 people in the town and a purpose-

built fire station we are still having to rely on a part-time service."

Every first and second Tuesday of the month the Full Time Fire Service for Bray Campaign has been holding protests of sixty or more residents outside Council meetings.

■ The campaign is organising a major protest march through the town. Assemble Town Hall, 12 noon Saturday 27th April
■ Contact the Full Time Fire Service for Bray Campaign c/o Margaret Cahill phone: 086-6083196

Stop the Refuse charges

Drogheda:

DROGHEDA Corporation has been engaged in a concerted offensive against the anti-bin charge campaign.

Volunteer bin collectors follow the bin trucks on collection day and throw in the rubbish from those who don't pay the double tax and whose rubbish would not otherwise be collected.

Fined

One volunteer, Harry Phelan was recently fined £150 and bound over to keep the peace for placing a bag beside the truck ready to be put in.

Harry is mounting an appeal against this decision and Drogheda Residents Against Bin Charges and Privatisation is organising

fund-raising on his behalf.

For those who feel compelled to use the Corporation "tag on a bag" system, the campaign is producing stickers "Paying Under Protest" to be displayed on the wheelie bins visibly showing opposition to the tax.

Petitioning is also being organised.

—PADDY MOEN

Rathmines:

FOLLOWING A successful meeting in the Stoneboat, Kimmage a lively refuse charges campaign is well underway in the Harolds Cross and Kimmage area.

About 20 people are working together in the area to build the campaign.

At present we are circu-

lating a fact sheet on the Bin tax as well as petitions and also posters which people have put in their windows to publicise the non-payment campaign.

There will be another public meeting in the area as soon as the bills arrive.

Down the road in Lower Rathmines a public meeting is being held in the Lower Deck bar on Portobello Bridge on Tuesday April 3rd.

SWP member Anne Ryan from the Ringsend action group is speaking alongside Joe Moore from the Refuse Charges Campaign in Cork and we have been busy leafleting and poster the area.

—NICOLA COLEMAN

☒ Contact the Anti Bin Campaign in the area: Nicola 086-

8412732 or Mary 087-2917415

Dun Laoghaire:

OVER TWO hundred people attended the latest round of public meetings against the bin charges in

the Dun Laoghaire area.

Non-payment stands at 50 percent in the borough with many who paid in 2000 joining the boycott this year.

The meetings agreed to continue non payment and extend the campaign in the coming months.

★ Residents are opposing a commercial development of the former Rowntree buildings opposite Kilmainham Jail.

Developers plan to build a six storey office development. As one resident pointed out:

"This would be completely out of character with the

surrounding. Instead of benefiting ordinary people round here it would only benefit fat-cat business interests.

"Instead the area should be used for a green space or play area for the kids in the area."

A protest campaign has been started which has leafleted the locality and is organising protests.

Housing

THE TALLAGHT branch of the SWP has organised with others action on the housing crisis last month.

A protest meeting was called in the Jobstown Community Centre.

At the meeting there was anger expressed, not only about the huge lack of public housing currently available, but also on the failure of the County Council to meet the needs of the

community through maintenance and public amenities.

Frustration with the council was summed up well by Damien Pillau from the local Traveller's Group when he told the meeting, "Housing is a human right, not a privilege."

Petitioning was organised and it was agreed to hold a protest the details of which will be announced soon.

☒ For details contact 087-9846412

Dun Laoghaire opposes harbour privatisation

LOCAL RESIDENTS are fighting a plan to privatise Dun Laoghaire harbour.

A spokesperson for the Coal Harbour Users' Group (CHUG) told *Socialist Worker*, "The harbour is currently publicly owned and controlled by the Minister for the Marine.

"But now the plan is to hand it over to Marina Marketing Management.

"If this plan goes through ordinary people will lose access to this amenity and the boat yard will become an exclusive area."

CHUG held a public meeting last month attended by 300 people at which direct action was discussed.

An ongoing campaign is underway and further public meetings will be held in the future.

Bray rejects beach takeover

Over 200 people attended a meeting in Bray last month to hear how local business interests want to enclose the beach.

The plan would involve building on the shore a private development with an enclosed beach. And the public would be charged to use the beach.

The backers of the scheme consists of prominent Fianna Fail supporters in the town.

They include John Noble whose company was involved in a failed refuse privatisation last year.

Another is Michael Freney who owns slot machine arcades in the town and Joe Duggan who has extensive property interests.

As one local resident told *Socialist Worker*, "The meeting unanimously rejected the plan.

"The council has promised consultation. We must watch them to see that this plan is not brought out again."

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



PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS



Teachers

Vote NO to a rotten deal

"IT IS a disgrace. It offers us nothing." This is how Pat Cahill, an ASTI Standing Committee member, reacted to the most recent offer from the Labour Court.

The only sign of improvement in the offer was a £350 a year allowance for teachers to buy a computer.

But on the same day that this was announced, it was revealed that teachers in Northern Ireland were to be given over £1,000 to get their own computer.

Teachers are also to be given £1,700 to take on extra tuition days to make up for the strike. But this is only a sweetener to cajole members into accepting the defeat of their campaign.

All of the rest is a demand that the ASTI sign a surrender document.

They are to join the Benchmarking Secretariat, even though their union has democratically voted to oppose the setting up of this body.

They are to accept the parameters of the PPF even though the union objects to it.

ASTI has suffered a major set-back after the press whipped up an hysterical campaign over the exams.

The campaign was triggered by an article by the National Parents Council leader, Barbara Johnson, who described the teachers as "terrorists".

Behind the scenes ICTU leaders worked hard to sabotage the ASTI's campaign. Dan Murphy of the ICTU Public Services Committee even warned the government against conceding to ASTI.

Charged

The Parents Council and Fianna Fail activists then encouraged secondary school students to stage demonstrations. But once the students started to march, all the accumulated frustration of Irish society came to the surface.

Far from sticking to the agenda of the strike-breakers, young students charged Dail Eireann and



Teachers on the march

attacked the police.

The overall effect of the press campaign was to weaken the resolve of teachers to boycott the exam work.

Yet instead of holding the line, the full time apparatus of the ASTI around Charlie Lennon, almost turned the whole affair into a rout.

Lennon tried to rush

through a vote on the new deal within a week.

The special Standing Committee of the union only saw the Labour Court document at 11.30 while they were meeting.

The meeting broke up in disorder when ASTI President, Don McCluskey, a supporter of Lennon left the room.

But despite all these

manoeuvres, the larger CEC of the union held its nerve and decided to take its time over the ballot.

"The issue of the exams is a now a separate one to the vote on this offer.

"If we accept this deal, we will be throwing away our whole campaign.

"But if we vote NO we keep our options open.

"We will control the agenda rather than being dictated to by government," said Pat Cahill.

ASTI ELECTIONS:

The ASTI holds a crucial election at its convention, which will affect the balance of power between the full time apparatus around Charlie Lennon and the rank and file group, which has set the pace on the pay campaign.

The ASTI Vice President, Catherine Fitzpatrick who is working with Lennon to try to sell the deal, might normally have expected to become President this year. But she is being challenged by Patricia Roe, who is very critical of the deal.

In the Vice Presidential race, Pat Cahill — a leading opponent of the deal — is running.

Turning education into a commodity

THE TEACHERS dispute is really about the long term future of education. Irish secondary schools receive one of the lowest levels of state funding in Europe and 60 per cent are overcrowded.

The government's answer is to introduce more market mechanisms to increase pressure to scapegoat teachers. This, they hope, will cover up for their failures.

Benchmarking is part of that process because it opens the way to

performance related pay.

Globally there is also a wider agenda of turning education into a commodity.

Under the new General Agreement on Trade in Services, currently being negotiated at the WTO, education is being targeted as a key service area that needs de-regulation.

Governments will be pressurised to allow education providers such as the Edison Corporation to compete with local schools.

Breaking the teachers union is an important first step in this process.

SWP conference resolves to...

Build the anti-capitalist movement

THE SOCIALIST Workers Party held its annual conference at the end of March. The theme of the discussion was the growing anti capitalist movement.

Kieran Allen argued at the conference that, "the growing Anti-capitalist movement offers the biggest challenge to revolutionaries since the 1960s.

"Around the world, there is global opposition to the system. In Ireland, there is an anti-capitalist mood but not yet a fully formed movement.

"The job of the SWP is to help build that movement."

Delegates reported

how there is a growing interest and anger in global issues. Richard Boyd Barret said, "The SWP has to become a party of agitators.

"Across the country people are organizing over a whole number of things.

"SWP branches have to be part of those campaigns, taking initiatives and joining with others.

"It also about bringing politics of anti-capitalism in to local campaigns.

"Tackling service charges means talking about and discussing GATS and the WTO.

"The revolutionary party will be built by leading struggles."

John Price spoke about how the Campaign against selection had

grown massively, "What started off as two or three people, grew to collect 10,000 signatures, have the backing of nine trade unions, eight political parties and countless celebrities.

"People who had never postered before set up poster groups and when we visited groups to tell them about the campaign they already had the literature from e-mail lists."

Revolution

Grace Lally said "Building Globalise Resistance as a genuine umbrella organisation that pulls in wider forces will mean allowing people to participate at their own level in these movements.

"Within the movement the SWP will be identified as the people who are most consistent in pushing for an orientation on the working class and revolution."

The conference resolved to build for the protests in Genoa against the G8 summit in July and to send a delegation of at least 100 people.

The conference also resolved to push apace with the setting up of Socialist Alliances.

Colm Bryce pointed out that, "Across Europe the far left by coming together to contest elections has made some quite impressive breakthroughs. Local Socialist Alliances can lay the same basis here to start to provide an alternative."

Occupation wins

ALMOST 200 workers at the Lowe Alpine sportswear factory in Tullamore occupied the factory for over week at the end of March, after the company failed to comply with the full terms of a Labour Court redundancy settlement.

Lowe Alpine, which is owned by British multinational William Baird Ltd., had offered only two and half weeks pay for each year of service, plus statutory entitlements.

After occupying the factory for almost a week, workers who are all members of SIPTU, won a settlement of four weeks pay plus £75, plus statutory entitlements.

Lowe Alpine made profits of £93 million last year.

Credit union

THIRTEEN workers in the Mayfield Credit Union in Cork are on strike after management refused to pay them long service increments. The issue has been outstanding since August of last year.

After management refused to enter talks with the Labour Court over the issue, workers who are all members of Mandate, voted for strike action.

Once strike notice had been served management tried to stall the strike by playing with the idea of

entering talks with Labour Court. "At this point we refused" one worker told Socialist Worker. "We knew it was just a stalling tactic. They'll only use the Labour Court when it suits them."

"The whole issue of low pay has been ignored by PPF and it only coming to the fore when rank and file workers like those in Aer Lingus started fighting for decent pay".

Management, in consultation with IBEC, have been using underhand tactics such as placing adverts in local papers to try and break the strike.

But the workers are determined to keep fighting until they have won.

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 07771 781 958
- **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:** Phone 087 6235071
- **DUBLIN CABRA:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Aughrim St Parish Hall, Prussia St
- **DUBLIN BALLYMUN:** Meets every Wednesday at 6.30pm in Arts Factory, 304 Balcarris Road Phone Kevin on 086-3074060 for details
- **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:** Phone Simon 087 6561455
- **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 on Saturdays, phone 087 6329511 for details
- **SWORDS:** Meets Tuesdays 8pm Senior Citizens Hall
- **TRALEE:** Phone 087 6329511 for details
- **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

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IRELAND'S GROWING ARMS TRADE



Blair tries out one of the arms trade's toys

IRELAND'S GROWING role in the international arms trade is the dirty secret that politicians of all main parties, North and South, would prefer was never mentioned.

Research by AFRI shows that over a dozen Irish companies are involved.

Export

The Irish government issues export licences to these companies through the Department of Trade, Enterprise and Employment.

Some of these goods are being exported to countries with bad human rights records such as

Turkey, Nigeria, Algeria, Angola, the Balkans and Colombia.

There are also growing links between arms companies and research institutes in Irish Universities.

For example, University College Galway is working on a joint project with British Aerospace, while the University of Ulster in Magee has close links with Raytheon.

While most of these companies produce 'dual-use' technology which can be turned to civilian or military use, there are some who are straightforward arms manufacturers.

Raytheon in Derry and Timoney in Navan both manufacture military goods as their main business—any civilian uses of their products is a by-product.

Decommission Raytheon

Raytheon, the third largest arms manufacturer in the world, has a plant in Derry.

It manufactures the new cluster bomb model, the Joint Stand-Off Weapon which the US used against Iraq in February.

Twenty eight JSOWs were fired then. Each of the 1,000 pound, 14-foot-long weapons carried 145 small anti-armour and anti-personnel incendiary bombs. Primed to

explode about 400 feet before impact, the JSOW rains bombs down on an area the size of a football field.

These cluster bombs are particularly dangerous for children. They pick them up and then lose their hands when they blow up.

Cluster bomb technology is closely related to landmines, which Raytheon also manufacture. In the 1990s, Human Rights Watch approached companies which make anti-personnel landmines asking them to stop. 19 out of 27 companies

agreed to do so, Raytheon wasn't one of them.

The two Nobel Prize winners, Hume and Trimble welcomed Raytheon's establishment in Derry. Since then, every political party on Derry City Council—including Sinn Fein, the SDLP and Ulster Unionists—have offered a welcome to these merchants of death.

It is a sad indictment of North's "peace dividend" that it is based on bringing death and destruction to people in other parts of the world.

MANUFACTURERS OF DEATH

Here are some of Ireland's arms traders

- **Adtec Teoranta / Timoney Holdings** Gibbstown, Navan, Co. Meath: Delivers armoured personnel carriers to Belgium. Timoney were also involved in the development of the Saracen and Saladin APCs.

A company spokesperson admitted, "We do the design and prototype work in Ireland and the production is done by the likes of the Australian or US militaries".

- **Assman Electronics Ltd.** Ennis, Co. Clare:

Manufactures products for Texas Instruments which form part of its military technology.

- **Data Device Corporation (DDC)** Cork:

John Gaskin, European sales manager for DDC, admitted that some 25% of the components produced in Cork would find their way to military contractors.

- **Essco-Collins Kilkishen, Clare:**

Essco-Collins is a joint Irish-American company specialising in "Radomes"—protective covers for the antennae systems used in air defence radar.

It sold equipment to the Mexican air force which bombed the Zapatista area of Chiapas in January 1994.

- **Moog Ltd. (Ireland) Cork:**

Moog makes defence control systems for bombers and for a range of missile systems.

The Irish plant makes electronic controllers for a range of main battle tanks and anti-aircraft guns in Europe and the US, including the Bofors L-70 Air Defence Guns.

The Indonesian armed forces are known to possess Bofors L-70 guns. Moog received a £4.4 million grant from the IDA.

- **Shorts Missile Systems, Belfast:**

This company is separate from Shorts-Bombardier which is involved in 90 per cent civilian production.

SMS, on the other hand, is wholly owned by Thomson-CSF, the French government owned military electronic manufacturer.

It produces Startstreak, Apache and Longbow missiles.