

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

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inside

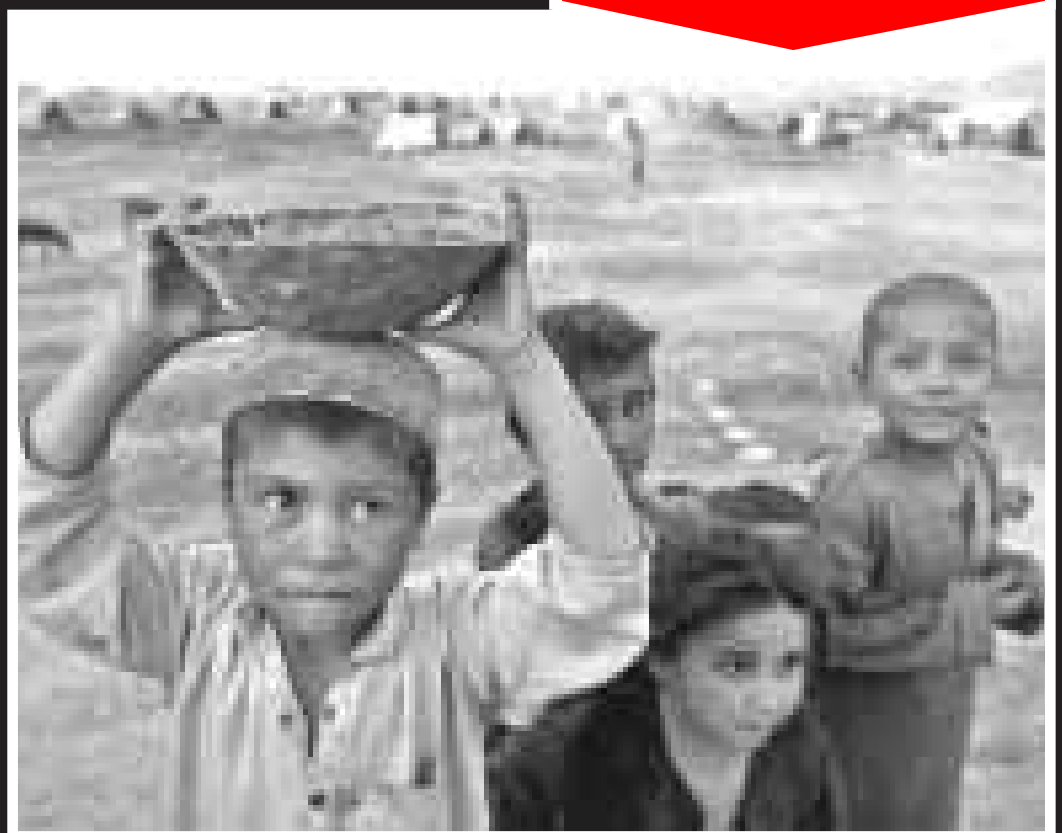
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Solidarity price £1

NO REFUELLING AT SHANNON

SAY NO TO BUSH'S WAR

**This is
what the
target
looks like**



GEORGE BUSH is dragging the world to war. He is using the terrible terrorist attack on the US to bring even more killing and suffering to the people of Afghanistan.

But even then Bush's war will not end. He wants to attack any state such as Iraq or Libya that the US does not like.

Bertie Ahern has no right to drag us into this war. After the Omagh bombing he did not support calls for the bombing of Irish towns which might "harbour terrorists".

So why is he now handing over Irish airports to US bombers who will bring terrible suffering to the poor of Afghanistan?

★ Over 100 people turned out for Charlie Haughey's 75th Birthday party. In attendance were Dermot Desmond and John Byrne, both friends and financial backers to the crook of Kinseally.

The Sunday Tribune said the party "was like a flash back to the lavish and flamboyant days of 1980s." The exuberance was presumably helped by the fact that Haughey has just sold his estate for £35 million.

★ GIANT MULTINATIONAL Coca-Cola isn't content with being one of the biggest firms in the world.

It has launched a new campaign called "H2No", aimed at people in restaurants who choose to drink plain tap water. Coca-Cola moans that many American restaurants face "a high water incidence rate".

Reduce

It wants restaurant workers to "reduce tap water incidence". Coca-Cola advises restaurant workers to suggest "a profitable beverage in place of water to the customer during the ordering process".

It explains that using the kit should result in "higher profits for the restaurant". Incidentally, Coca-Cola markets bottled water in countries like Mexico.

★ During the summer TDs managed to sneak through another pay rise for themselves.

Long service allowances mean TDs now receive £52,089 a year. Bertie Ahern's pay packet now stands at £143,130.

★ THE WORLD Bank is not content with ignoring criticism from outside.

It is silencing dissent from within. It has just launched disciplinary action against one of its most published economists, William Easterly, after he wrote an article in the Financial Times.

In it he said that the World Bank and IMF's "aid programmes" to developing countries "have all failed to attain the desired results". He continued, "It is little wonder that protestors have demonstrated so vehemently against the international organisations."

Islamic centre attacked

FOLLOWING THE horrific events in America, Northern Ireland's only Islamic centre was attacked.

Jummal, who works at the centre said, "We have been receiving threatening e-mails and faxes from people who are obviously distraught by the events in America.

"Members of the Muslim community have been ringing

us to ask for advice and help because they are very scared of revenge attacks on them."

Threats

The Islamic Centre in Dublin has also been receiving death threats.

Nothing at all to do with the *Evening Herald's* campaign to find an Irish link with the Bin Laden gang.

Imagine there's no music

IN THE build up to war radio and music television stations are censoring the music they play.

Programme directors at Clear Channel Communications, which owns 1,200 radio stations across America, have banned over 150 songs. Tracks relating to explosions, terrorism, airplanes, skyscrapers, New York, the Middle

East and even the day Tuesday are banned.

Songs on the list include Frank Sinatra's "New York, New York," and Simon and Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water." And John Lennon's "Imagine".

Slick

Though noticeably it was acceptable for former Contra supporter

Neil Young to sing the song on the slick hollywood fundraiser TV special.

BBC radio produced as a similar list, including Childrens TV's Bob the Builder!

MTV banned a number of songs too. A spokesman for the station said that playing "really inoffensive music was the key for us."

The last entry on the Clear Channel banned list reads "and everything by Rage Against the Machine".

Masters of war

AS THE financial markets went into freefall after the attacks on Washington and New York, one part of the global economy is booming: Arms dealers.

Shares in Arms manufacturers rocketed as America built up for war.

The huge Raytheon company which makes cruise missiles and has a plant in Derry saw its share price increase by 21 per cent.

The world's total weapon bill is \$800 billion every year, 40 per cent of which is spent by the US government.



CIE scandal

Consultants, ESAT and the signaling scam

A consultant has described the CIE signaling scandal as "the greatest cock-up of the century", which is only a mild exaggeration.

The new signaling system for CIE cost £36 million more than expected.

Modern Networks Limited was the company who won the contract.

Strangely after the overspend, six members of CIE top brass ended up leaving CIE for cushy jobs with MNL.

Along the way to installing the signal cables MNL helpfully put down cables for Denis O'Brien's ESAT. Ploughing ESAT's cable ahead of the CIE's own cable meant that they had to re-handle and dig the trenches for their own cable.

The cost was an extra £8m but no-one appeared to be counting. It took four years for the "managers" to respond to queries from their own Rail Inspection Officers about it.

CIE's response at every turn was to employ consultants.

One of the consultant's, Leslie Buckley, bill for eight months work was initially £50,000 but subsequently it rose an additional £280,000 plus VAT.

The report was 30 pages long.

Leslie Buckley worked for ESAT while he produced his report.

He later became Chief Executive of the company.

Imploded

As the Mini CTC project imploded CIE went to town and hired two more consultants to tell them what had gone

wrong.

The first set of consultants informed them that projects like this often went 100 per cent over budget, there was no need to panic.

The second lot increased this to 150 per cent and suggested the best way to sort it all out

would be to put together a new contract worth £58.5 million (400 per cent over the original budget).

In 1995 CIE employed Ray "Rambo" Byrne as Head of Projects.

While he didn't manage to notice the

overspending on the signaling project he did have time to work as consultant for ESAT.

Happily, after his resignation from the company, CIE are still enjoying the benefits of Byrne's expertise — you guessed it, as a consultant.

Injustice Judge Sabo

NEW EVIDENCE about the wrongful conviction of black activist Mumia Abu Jamal in the US has come to light.

Mumia faces the death penalty.

Now a court stenographer-reporter who worked in the court during Mumia's original trial in 1982, heard by Judge Sabo, has issued a sworn affidavit. It reads, "I, Terri Maurer-Carter, declare:

"In 1982, a few months after I started working at the Court of Common Pleas, I was sent to a court-room different than that I

usually worked in.

"I went through the ante-room on my way to that court-room where Judge Sabo and another person were engaged in conversation. Judge Sabo was discussing the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

"During the course of that conversation, I heard Judge Sabo say, 'Yeah, and I'm going to help them fry the nigger.'

"There were three people present when Judge Sabo made that remark, including myself."

CNN lies again

The CNN named Adnan Bukhari and Ameer Bukhari as two of the pilots who crashed planes into the World Trade Centre.

Florida

It turned out that Adnan Bukhari lives in Florida where he was on the day of the attack and Ameer Bukhari died in a small plane over a year ago.

They also named another man who is living in Egypt, and who only found out about the allegation when he saw his photograph on CNN.

what we think

Build the anti war movement

THE IRISH government has given the US military full access to Irish airports to re-fuel planes as they go to drop bombs on Afghanistan.

The majority of the Irish people voted against the Nice Treaty in order to defend neutrality. But this has not stopped Ahern associating us with a new war.

Socialists have condemned the indiscriminate terrorist bombing which killed thousands of people in New York.

Killings

But support for the US war effort will only lead to more killings and more terrorist actions in response.

Despite its talk about bringing people to justice, the US is acting without the mandate of any international body.

It is pretending that it is the world's super cop.

The real victims will be the poor of Afghanistan who have already suffered more than enough.

When the US last tried to bomb Bin Laden in 1998, they killed 20 innocent Afghans — but no one held a day of mourn-

ing or called for justice for their families.

This time around thousands may lose their lives after the US deputy defence secretary Paul Wolfowitz said his mission was to "end states".

But the consequences will not simply stop at Afghanistan.

George Bush has proclaimed a new kind of war that will not be confined to "surgical strikes" with Cruise missiles.

He has made it clear that the US is taking upon itself the right to destroy any country it considers a "rogue state".

After Afghanistan, it may be Iraq. After Iraq it may be Libya. And after all these it may eventually lead to new conflicts with Russia or China.

It is time to call a halt to this madness and build an anti-war movement.

The mainstream media have been whipping up the war hysteria — but tens of thousands of people want no retaliation.

Just as the conventional politicians were out of touch over the Nice Treaty, they are once again misreading the mood when they act as poodles for George Bush.

We make a special appeal to readers of *Socialist Worker* to exert every effort to build a mass anti-war movement that can link up with the many other peace movements emerging around the world.

Anti-War Movement grows in US

A LARGE anti-war movement is starting to take shape in the US. But its activities are not being reported by the media.

● Judy Keane lost her husband Richard in the World Trade Centre. She called a peace vigil in Wethersfield Connecticut and some 5,000 people turned up to hear her say, "The WTC attacks was in retaliation for something else and that was in retaliation for something else. Are we going to continue this to perpetuity?"

● Over 100 colleges participated in a National Student Day of Action against War on September 20th. 30,000 joined the protests in Berkeley, the centre of the original anti-Vietnam war movement. Several hundred others were involved in Harvard.

● A coalition led by Martin Sheen, Harry Belafonte and Rosa Parkes, the civil rights campaigners from the sixties,



Protest rally in New York

issued a major statement saying war "will spark a cycle of escalating violence, the loss of innocent lives and new acts of terrorism".

● The National Councils of Churches in the US has also come out against war.

● September 30th will see a major peace demonstration

in Washington. This replaces a huge anti-capitalist demo against the IMF and World Bank after they cancelled their summit.

Defend you civil rights

OUR RULERS want to use the outrage in America to crack down on our civil rights. They want to target all centres of dissent.

One of the principal targets is the anti-capitalist movement which has been growing in support since the Genoa protests in July.

Crackdown

The German prime minister Gerhard Schroeder has even claimed that "protests against world trade organisa-

tions in the present context have a violent intent".

Now the US and the EU are trying to rush through special laws to clamp-down on all our civil rights.

In the US plans are being drawn up for greater surveillance of phones and emails and even the introduction of compulsory "smart cards" which allow the state to monitor everyone.

In the EU, the right to political asylum is being removed for any political dissenters within its borders. Instead of legal procedures, extradition will be automatic.

In the past republican prisoners who escaped custody in Northern Ireland could argue for some sanctuary in the South. But

the new measures remove this.

More ominously the EU leaders are also working on a new definition of terrorism.

According to the *Irish Times* they are working on a broad definition that includes activities aimed at "seriously altering the political, economic and social structures" of more than one country.

This definition could in some circumstances mean that socialists, anti-capitalists and environmentalists could be labelled as "terrorists" and subject to imprisonment.

This is the real meaning of talk about "war of a new kind".

Fighting the war hysteria is now part and parcel of defending basic liberties.

What you can do

● Order anti-war petitions from *Socialist Worker* or other anti-war organisations and take it around your workplace.

● Support the peace protests that are organised in many towns on September 30th, in conjunction with major protests in the US.

● Organise a public meeting in your town with speakers from groups such as the Green Party, CND, *Socialist Worker* and Afri to launch an anti-war activist group.

★ For any assistance on these activities ring our anti-war desk on (01) 872 2682 or email swp@clubi.ie.

You can make a difference. We need your help.

Marxism 2001

Global crisis, Global resistance

Vincent Browne Eamonn McCann Chris Harman

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Eamonn McCann

John Hume's Assumption

From the media response it almost seemed John Hume hadn't so much resigned as party leader as been assumed into heaven.

The choruses of praise were led by Dublin politicians and commentators, depicting the departing SDLP chief as a man of vision who had transformed the Irish political landscape and brought us to the brink of peace.

In fact, Hume's popularity with Leinster House politicians is mainly based on a different and more obvious consideration: throughout his career he has held rigidly to the principle that events in the North should not be allowed to disturb the political tranquility of the South.

The possibility of the Northern conflict creating instability across the border and radicalising a section of the population has been among the abiding fears of establishment Dublin politicians since the onset of the civil rights movement more than 30 years ago. Hume has consistently helped salve these anxieties.

Suggestions in the 1960s and '70s that the fight against sectarianism and discrimination called for active opposition in the South to sectarian laws — the ban on divorce, for example — and discrimination against Travellers were resolutely opposed by Hume and the faction which coalesced around the emerging SDLP. Neither Hume nor his party made any intervention in the first divorce referendum in 1986 when their involvement might have helped turned the tide.

Enthralled

It's said by some that the mainstream Dublin parties, and even the machinery of government in the South, became so enthralled by Hume that, effectively, he dictated their line on the North. The ex-Foreign Affairs official Eamon Delaney, in his book "An Accidental Diplomat", tells that in the 1980s the Department's headquarters on Stephens' Green operated almost as "a branch office of the SDLP".

But, of course, looked at in another perspective, the same facts show the SDLP as a branch office of whatever party was in office in the South. On both sides of the border, that is, the SDLP under Hume was a force for conservatism. It is this, more than any other consideration, which made Hume hugely popular around Leinster House.

Hume's specific achievement was to modernise conservative Nationalism at a time when it seemed on the edge of irrelevancy. He hitched the fortunes of Northern Nationalists not only to right-wing political leaders in Dublin but also to EU bureaucrats and Washington power-brokers. He was in tune with the reality of the capitalist world order in the late 20th century in a way which the old Nationalist Party of Eddie McAtteer had never aspired to or, in all likelihood, understood.

After the pattern of his relationship with Dublin, this involved the adoption of a wholly uncritical attitude to the policies of successive US administrations. Hume held that it would be wrong-headed of anyone perceived as representing the Nationalist community to risk alienating a powerful potential ally by taking a particular clear stand on an issue of vital importance to the US.

Since the announcement of his resignation, Hume has been presented as something of an internationalist. And, true, he was a jet-set politician, frequently flitting between continents. But he was the polar opposite of an internationalist in the far more important sense of discouraging his followers from putting local problems in a global context.

In a phrase more telling than he may have intended, Tom McGurk in the Sunday Business Post described Hume as "a social democrat who disdained ideology".

The obvious riposte is that if he eschewed ideology, wherein lay the social democracy?

In fact, Hume's most significant achievement marked him out as a Nationalist pure and simple. The aim and end result of his dialogue with Gerry Adams was the construction of the all-class alliance which formalised the dependent relationship of Northern Nationalists of both militant and moderate persuasions with outside, establishment interests.

This relationship was necessarily predicated on Nationalist workers shelving all class demands. Small wonder he was so valued by green capitalism.

Holy Cross

Teachers organise to oppose bigotry

THE PICKET of the Holy Cross primary school in north Belfast continues. Since the first day of school in September, hundreds of children have run a gauntlet of hatred to get to school.

Now teachers from schools in East and West Belfast have started a petition calling on the teaching unions to act immediately.

Unions

Mark, a teacher at a state school in East Belfast said, "The scenes in North Belfast are horrible to see. We are calling on the teachers unions to act now to stop the daily harassment of kids. The unions are the only mass organisations that can bring this about".

John, a teacher in west Belfast agreed, "I have been getting a great response from the teachers at my school. In two hours we got over 110 signatures. I had Catholic and Protestant teachers stopping me in the car park trying to sign the petition."

Meanwhile controversy about an urban regeneration grant for the Glenbryn area - where the protests occurred - has highlighted how all the main parties play the sectarian card.

A grant of £8.7 million has been made available to the area by the DUP Social Service Minister Maurice Morrow.

Morrow has little sympathy with Catholic areas in North Belfast and allocated few grants to these areas.

Funds

But instead of arguing that all areas of North Belfast needed a massive injection of funds, Sinn Fein issued a statement claiming that their areas had a better case to receive the grant than Glenbryn.

But instead of looking out for "our poor", what is really needed is a united movement of Catholic and Protestants to tackle poverty in the area.

A recent report from



Running the gauntlet at Holy Cross school

the Northern Housing Executive estimated that 1,750 houses would need to be built in North Belfast to handle the severe housing shortage

and that £135 million would need to be spent to bring the housing in north Belfast up to a habitable state.

The report also said

that the waiting lists for housing in north Belfast is among the worst in the country. Over 46 per cent of those needing housing urgently are families.

What is desperately needed is open opposition to both bigotry at Holy Cross and the poverty from which it feeds.

Belfast Agreement in disarray

THE BELFAST Agreement is once again moving from crisis to crisis. Trimble has put down a resolution to remove Sinn Fein from the Executive. He has threatened to leave himself if it is not passed.

He is also working with Paisley on policing. He wants to use the UUP positions on the police board to stall and prevent any reforms to the RUC.

Obstruct

Their intention is to use the police board to obstruct even the watered-down reforms suggested in the implementation plan.

The SDLP has declared that it will use its position to ensure that the reforms are carried

through. The result is bound to be repeated crises.

Trimble and Paisley are clearly hoping to increase pressure on Sinn Fein to deliver IRA decommissioning, especially in the wake of the New York and Washington attacks.

The US envoy, Richard Haass, who visited Ireland last week said that the Bush administration would not tolerate republican links to "thugs, drug runners" and terror groups across the globe.

Haass said he had told Sinn Fein that the US was deeply concerned about the Colombian connection, "I made it categorically clear the US had very big interests in Colombia" and warned Sinn Fein to sever all links

with groups like the FARC.

Haass also said he had "disturbing reports" about connections with the Turkish Hunger strikers.

Sinn Fein's Alex Maskey was part of a delegation who visited the hunger strikers in Turkey last week.

Sinn Fein's reluctance to challenge the US's hypocrisy over issues like Colombia and human rights in Turkey is now coming back to haunt them.

Death squads

The US is backing a government in Colombia which has employed death squads against left wing opponents.

The US is also the main backer of the

military regime in Turkey, whose crack-down on political activists provoked the year-long hunger strike by political prisoners and their relatives.

Instead of challenging the US's hypocrisy, Sinn Fein have been running for cover, fearful of upsetting the mainly right-wing Irish business and political lobby in Washington, who they believe have given them access to the White House.

Sinn Fein's Gerry Kelly merely said that the party "has no case to answer" about Colombia. Gerry Adams has delayed his planned visit to Cuba.

NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...

THE WORLD is facing its most serious recession in decades—and it started before the terrorist attacks on America.

George Bush and the media have been trying shift the blame for the chaos of the system onto one man: Osama Bin Laden.

But last August the top business magazine, the *Economist*, announced that “global industrial production had fallen at an annual rate of 6 per cent in the first half of 2001. Welcome to the first global recession of the 21st Century”.

On Friday September 7th, four days before the terrorist attack, the *Financial Times* noted that “the slowdown in the United States has had a savage effect on those countries which had come to depend on it as an export market through the boom years”.

Recession

It pointed out that countries like Mexico and Taiwan were already in recession because of the downturn in investment.

Most of the stockbroker economists who appear on the Irish media have tried to lull people into a false sense of security claiming that the

Resistance needed

THE MEDIA and mainstream politicians speak of economic crises as if they are inevitable natural disasters.

We cannot do anything about them, they say, except tighten our belts until they pass (although you rarely see them tighten their belts).

But the only thing that makes crisis inevitable is the capitalist organisation of production.

It is based on rival groups of capitalists competing to make the biggest profits. When for some reason the profits are not as large as they want, they shut whole industries.

That means there is no market for many of the things being produced.

There is the absurdity of absurdities, a crisis of over-production in which millions of people suffer while the material goods that could overcome their suffering go to waste.

There is no need for anyone to simply put up with this state of affairs.

In Argentina there has been a huge surge of militancy in response to IMF demands that workers accept wage cuts and do without social security to bail out the economy.

Straight from the horses mouth:

‘Welcome to the first global recession of the 21st century’

—*Economist*

Celtic Tiger would go on for ever.

But one accountancy firm Pricewaterhouse Coopers wrote in October 1999 that

“The years 2000-2002 will represent the single most profound period of economic and business change that the world has ever seen, not unlike the

industrial revolution but much faster—e speed.”

That change has already begun with savage job cuts that will devastate the lives of millions who were encouraged to take out big debts during the booms years.

Boeing International set the headline figure when it announced 30,000 job cuts globally.

All the main computer companies, which have invested in Ireland, are also planning more job cuts.

Profits

The wealthy made enormous profits in the past few years. But now they want to off-load the costs of the recession onto working people.

Argentina’s workers are setting an example to the mass of people everywhere in the world on how to respond.

Every week thousands of unemployed people are blockading the roads.

The education system is shut by strikes.

There have been repeated one-day and two-day general strikes.

These protests are making it very difficult for the government to continue placating big business and the international financiers.

And this begins to raise the central question of who runs the economy and in whose interest.

Democratic

If working people controlled the major centres of production and ran them through a system of democratic planning for human need and not for profit, crisis would be seen as a relic of a prehistoric past.

Today there exists an anti-capitalist movement with supporters in every part of the globe.

It has to carry the message about an alternative to the system to people everywhere who are being threatened by the spreading economic crisis.



This is sheer madness

THE MARKET for telecoms provides one example of the madness that underlies the present system.

In 1995, Bill Gates told a meeting held in Ireland that “bandwidth” (telecom transmission technology) held the key to economic success.

He claimed that the telecommunication industry would expand to carry new internet facilities to every home and mobile phone.

The greed for profit meant that this signal was picked up across the globe.

Soon streets everywhere were dug up in a headlong scramble to lay as much fibre optic cable as possible.

Mobile phone companies paid out large sums for licences to operate “third generation” services.

Between 1996 and 2001 banks advanced \$891 billion in loans to telecom companies.

Another \$415 billion came from the bond market and \$500 billion was raised from stock markets.

By 1999 half of all European bank lending was to telecom compa-

nies. According to the *Financial Times* “the global financial system became addicted to fuelling this bonfire”.

Pressure

This led to an enormous pressure for to get in on the big profits. But as every major company was investing wildly in the expectation of these high returns, there was soon an oversupply.

Now in 2001 the situation has become unsustainable.

According to the

Financial Times again, “The enduring legacy of all this money is a glut in ‘bandwidth’ so great that if the world’s six billion people were to talk solidly on the telephone for the next year, their words would be transmitted over the potential capacity in a few hours.”

Suddenly, companies found they were over-committed and panic set in. \$3,800 billion has been wiped off the stocks of telecom operators and manufacturers since March 2000. 300,000 jobs have already been cut and another 200,000 are possi-

bly planned.

HOW THE BUBBLE BURST

The US economy has been the motor which has driven the world economy throughout the nineties.

The Celtic Tiger, for example, grew in the slipstream of the US boom because American companies needed a platform inside the EU to export their goods.

But the boom in the US rested on a number of shaky foundations.

US employers were more successful than their counterparts elsewhere in attacking workers conditions.

Until 1997 real wages were lower than they were in 1973.

Job security was virtually abolished, as the number of job agency temps grew by nearly 19 per cent in the mid nineties.

Employers came to expect that they could get higher and higher profits through this super-exploitation—but it was not sustainable.

Secondly the US boom was further stimulated by stock market speculation.

Household and companies borrowed enormously in the expectation of big returns from stocks and shares and bought more and more goods.

But the dot.com bubble finally burst and has now left a huge debt hangover.

Lastly, the apparent success of the US economy sucked in foreign investment, attracted by the high dollar and the expectations of high returns.

This led to a huge balance of trade deficit, which was sustainable for as long as the world capitalists continued to believe in the US success.

Today all these factors are working in reverse. Just as the US pulled up the world economy in the nineties, it now has the potential to pull it down dramatically.

As it does so it reveals the chaos and madness of the whole system.

NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...

NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...

Afghanistan has suffered enough

The wealthiest super-power is set to bomb one of the poorest countries of the world back into the stone age. But Afghanistan has already suffered terribly from colonial powers who fought proxy wars on its land.

It is presently in the grip of a three year drought and on the verge of mass starvation. According to the UN run World Food Programme, by the end of the year 5.5 million people will be entirely dependent on food aid to survive the winter—that's a quarter of the Afghan population.

But instead of getting food, bombs will fall on them. As the war hysteria built up, the UN Food Programme pulled out.

There is now growing evidence that the US threatened to bomb Afghanistan two months before the attacks on New York and Washington. The threat of war unless Bin Laden was surrendered was passed on by the Pakistani government.

According to the *Guardian* newspaper which broke the story this "raises the possibility that Bin Laden, far from launching the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon out of the blue, was launching a pre-emptive strike in response to what he saw were US threats".

Yet it is the people of the country who will suffer terribly. Chris Buckley is the Christian Aid programme officer for Afghanistan. He recently made a global appeal against this immoral war.

"The real Afghanistan is one where 85 per cent of the population are subsistence farmers. Most Afghans don't have newspapers, television sets or radios.

"They will not have heard of the World Trade Centre or the Pentagon and most will have no idea that a group of zealots attacked these icons of western civilisation. There isn't even a postal service."

Half a million Afghans are disabled because of previous wars. Hospitals and schools have been reduced to rubble. There are millions of landmines littered over its landscape.

Afghanistan's history is that of a country destroyed by the system and by outside intervention.

Afghanistan escaped formal colonial subjugation in the 19th century. But the country was hemmed in by the Russian Empire to the north and the British Empire, which controlled what are

"The real Afghanistan is one where 85 per cent of the population are subsistence farmers. Most Afghans don't have newspapers, television sets or radios. They will not have heard of the World Trade Centre or the Pentagon and most will have no idea that a group of zealots attacked these icons of western civilisation. There isn't even a postal service."

today Pakistan and India, to the south and east. Afghanistan was on the frontier of a struggle between those two empires for control of the vast Central Asian region.

Just before becoming viceroy of India in 1898, Lord Curzon wrote of Afghanistan and its neighbours, "I confess they are pieces on a chessboard upon which is being played out a game for the domination of the world." That struggle was called the Great Game.

The end of the Second World War brought a new struggle for domination. The British Empire crumbled.

India achieved independence in 1947, only to be partitioned into India and Pakistan. Afghanistan was one of the countries ground between the two superpower blocks, centred on the US and Russia, during the Cold War.

A royal family held power through links with local leaders, landlords and military figures who had a power base in different areas of the country.

It was desperately poor, but with a thin layer of big landowners. A succession of governments made attempts at industrialisation and development.

But they never offered significant change for the vast majority of the population, and succeeded only in fuelling the tensions between different groups in the ruling class and across the country. In 1979 a pro-Russian government that had come to power the year before began to break up.



Hospitals in Afghanistan said they had enough medical supplies for a week when the country's the borders were closed

Various armed Islamic groups stepped up their campaigns to seize control of remote parts of the country. Afghanistan slid towards civil war.

Then the superpowers stepped in and poured petrol on the flames. Russia sent troops into Afghanistan in December 1979 to prop up its client government.

The US threw its weight behind the assorted Afghan forces ranged against Russia.

Through its allies Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, it poured \$500 million of military aid behind the rebels in 1980. Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher spoke of the "brave Afghan struggle for freedom".

The war devastated the country and hundreds of thousands fled.

Many urban supporters of the government grew to hate its dependence on Russia, and went over to the Mujahadeen rebels. Russia was finally forced to withdraw in 1988 and 1989.

The loose Mujahadeen coalition of Islamic groups seized the capital, Kabul, in April 1992.

By then, with almost a quar-

ter of the population in refugee camps and the country in ruins, the US and the West had cut off all aid.

The US had found \$3 billion to finance war, but not a penny to rebuild the country. The Mujahadeen split.

A group backed by Iran took control of Kabul. America and Saudi Arabia backed a rival group led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

It bombarded Kabul, and 25,000 people died just as horrifically as those in New York last week. The group failed to take Kabul and fell apart.

The Taliban emerged in 1994. It took its ideology from the version of Islam practised by the Saudi ruling family. It was austere and concentrated the most oppressive features of rural societies.

Within two years the Taliban went from being a 30-strong guerrilla movement based in one area of southern Afghanistan to seizing the capital.

It won considerable support from the mass of people who were sickened by fighting and

warlordism, and who were desperate for stability.

The Taliban also got the backing of the US and its allies in the region.

The Pakistani intelligence services helped arm the Taliban. A few months before the Taliban entered Kabul, a US State Department official said, "You get to know them and you find they really have a great sense of humour."

Hours after the Taliban took Kabul in September 1996, acting State Department spokesperson Glyn Davies said the US could see "nothing objectionable".

The coldest of calculations lay behind the US policy. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 had created five independent states in Central Asia.

The early 1990s were awash with speculation that these states were sitting on huge reserves of oil and gas.

A top US commentator wrote that the Taliban's "most important function was to provide security for roads and, potentially, oil and gas pipelines that would link the states of Central Asia to the international market through Pakistan rather than through Iran."

Then the US did a U-turn. It feared the Taliban would encourage radical Islamist movements in other countries which could

threaten US interests.

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright signalled the shift in November 1997 with a typical display of hypocrisy.

She got on her knees in front of Afghan children in the Nasir Bagh refugee camp in Pakistan and said, "I'll never forget you—being here with you. I will do everything to help you and your country."

The US's only contribution since 1997 has been to bomb part of the country in 1998 in an ongoing attempt to kill Osama Bin Laden.

The US, Russia, European powers, oil multinationals and local rulers are playing a new Great Game which stretches from Turkey through Central Asia and Afghanistan to the western provinces of China.

The men moving the chess pieces are hurling millions of people into poverty, with tens of thousands forced to flee from numerous civil wars.

Violent intervention by the US will only make matters worse and create more people ready to die to hit back at the West.

NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...NO TO WAR...

in my view

The first casualty of war is truth

"EVERY GOVERNMENT wants to control the media in wartime to ensure public support for its war aims. If necessary it will lie in order to achieve this control.

The media will usually go along with these lies because it considers it is in its best commercial interests in wartime to support the government of the day." According to Philip Knightley the author of the classic book on war and the media, *First Casualty*.

The build up to the Bush's war has sent the media into overdrive — there has been an onslaught of rhetoric, lies and omissions.

For example, *The New York Post*, (headline: Bin Laden Wanted Dead or Alive) has columnist Steve Dunleavy, whose by line is "The Man They Call Mr Blood and Guts," writing that the response "should be as simple as it is swift...kill the bastards.... A gunshot between the eyes, blow them to smithereens, poison them if you have to... As for cities or countries that host these worms, bomb them into basketball courts."

He was not alone. The *Washington Times* called for the dropping of nuclear weapons on Afghanistan and the British and Irish tabloids haven't been that far behind. The Independent group came close to inciting racial hatred by blaming Dublin's Muslim community for the bombing. The television studios have charts and computer simulations of war planes, show pictures of callous Arabs and crocodile tear-crying politicians calling for murder.

Propaganda

From the Crimean War in 1854 to NATO's attack on Yugoslavia, almost all war journalism has been indistinguishable from propaganda. The media has "marched to the drum beat of war", shouldering aside truth.

During the First World War Lloyd George said, "If people really knew, the war would be stopped tomorrow. But of course they don't know and can't know. The correspondents don't write, and the censorship could not pass, the truth." As one journalist conceded, "there was no need of censorship of our dispatches. We were our own censors". Neither of these things has changed.

The massacre of more than 100 Vietnamese civilians in the village of My Lai in 1968 was not reported at the time. It was left to Seymour Hersh, a rogue investigative reporter, to break the story in the face of media indifference and opposition. Even then, *Time* magazine headlined it "An American Tragedy!"

The corporate media did not fuel the growth of the anti-war movement with honest reporting; rather it was the growth of the mass anti-war movement that forced the press to report US atrocities.

More correspondents than in any war ever before were all set to cover the Kosovan war. 2,700 journalists accompanied Nato forces when they entered the province. But instead of more information we received less.

"Kosovo . . . turned out to be the most secret campaign in living memory," wrote war historian Alistair Horne when it was over. British journalist Peter Dunn wrote that it was "the first international conflict fought by press officers."

According to a fine war correspondent, Robert Fisk, the vast majority of journalists are: "frothers or sheep". Frothers had convinced themselves of the justice of Nato's war and the wickedness of President Milosovic and the Serbs. The sheep stayed in Brussels, believed everything Nato told them, and defended Nato when anyone dared to suggest that Nato might be lying.

We are to be offered more of the same this time. Armchair generals will revel in the sanitised, "surgical" war waged by "smart" bombs, undisturbed by the charred bodies of civilian "collateral damage". Again they will attempt to ignore the anti-war side.

Writing about the First World War the great revolutionary journalist John Reed commented: "More nauseating than the crack-brained bombast of the Kaiser is the editorial chorus in America which pretends to believe - would have us believe - that the White and Spotless Knight of Modern Democracy is marching against the Unspeakably Vile Monster of Medieval Militarism...But we must not be duped...this is not Our War."

Neither is Bush's coming war our war, and the best way to find out the truth in the coming weeks will be to read the anti-establishment press and *Socialist Worker* in particular.

by SIMON BASKETTER

Film

Spielberg's false emotions

by JAMES
READ

MORE THAN any other filmmaker, Steven Spielberg has presented childhood as an almost sacred concept, a province of innocence and imagination that he has devoted his considerable technological, narrative and emotional talent to celebrating.

The shock of *A.I.* is that Spielberg, at least for a while, has chosen to make a film about the dark side of childhood.

A.I. is set in a bleak future.

The polar ice caps have melted, flooding coastal cities and killing millions and everyone looks as if the Gap run the world. Pregnancy is now licensed by the government. To fill the human void robots have been designed to take the place of everything from servant to lover to child.

Murder

It is the story of a child-robot, David (Haley Joel Osment), programmed to love his adoptive mother (Frances O'Connor). Abandoned by her, he goes on the run with Gigolo Joe (Jude Law) a robo-rent-boy also on the run after becoming privy to the hotel-room murder of one of his clients.



LOOKING INTO the future

Spielberg directs the early scenes as a black-humored parody of child-rearing and of the loving family life he has always exalted.

The robot kid, obsessed with finding mommy and becoming a "real boy", journeys far along the yellow brick road with Joe and his own talking robotteddy. They come to the submerged city of New York, where the poor little tousled android tyke becomes frozen and finds redemption.

Along the way, there is a spectacle

that's part World Wrestling Federation match, part demolition derby.

Cheering humans assemble to watch captured robots tortured and destroyed in all sorts of flamboyant ways. The sequence makes a point -- by knocking you over the head.

The original plan from the movie was Stanley Kubrick's. Spielberg tries to merge that director's vision of a technologically dominated future with his own vision about the

transformative power of emotion.

So the film winds up feeling less an emotionally and intellectually unified vision than a series of — sometimes spectacular — sequences.

Instead of offering enlightenment or insight, the ending highlights a grossly simple storyline, narrated with a pandering tone as if we were a bunch of four year-olds — and artificial ones at that.

Film

Lessons in Death

A SCHOOLGIRL collapses backwards to the floor, a knife embedded in her skull. Her terrified classmates cling to the walls. Their former teacher, now murderous overseer, announces "And today's lesson is...you kill each other!"

This is Japan. The "nation" has collapsed, millions are unemployed and hundreds of thousands of defiant, disillusioned school students boycott classes. Authority is treated with contempt.

The "high-ups" devise an annual event — one ordinary class of school kids is chosen at random to fight to the death on a remote island until one victor is left.

The film *Battle Royale* was almost banned in Japan. But this film does not glorify violence.

The real culprits and enemies always

by ROB
FERGUSON

remain the "high-ups". Most of the kids try to resist the compulsion to turn on each other.

Suicide

Some try to protect one another. Some commit suicide. Some band together against their persecutors.

This is a significant, albeit despairing, film that expresses deep revulsion at the corruption and decay of one of the world's greatest powers.

Film

Chants, crashes and a dot.com

by MATTHEW COOKSON

KALEIL AND Tom are best friends from high school. Together they decide to set up an internet company to make money out of local government.

Although it doesn't sound the most exciting story, *Startup.com* is a fascinating and funny film.

This fly on the wall documentary by Chris Hegedus and Jehane Noujaim shows the reality behind the madness of the internet economy craze. They raise millions of dollars from numerous investment bankers.

Even before the website is launched Kaleil is appearing in newspapers and is interviewed on TV as the next big internet entrepreneur. President Bill Clinton intro-

duces him in a White House discussion on the "new economy".

To reciprocate Kaleil offers him a place on the company's board!

Kaleil and Tom are new age capitalists. They keep hugging and saying they love one another. They meditate, take their employees to nature camps and lead the company chant.

But as the company crashes around them things get tense. Kaleil sacks Tom, has him escorted from the building and later leads a chant in his honour.

Because *Startup.com* is a real life documentary it draws you in, despite the awfulness of both Tom and Kaleil, and makes you unable to stop watching.



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.

A message to our readers

There is huge opposition to Bush's war in Ireland. On a recent Late, Late Show the majority of the audience voted against allowing US warplanes to re-fuel at Shannon.

But this opposition needs to be organized and focused. Belfast shows what can be done.

The city has suffered from many bomb attacks. And that is why, maybe, they have given a great lead on what can be done.

On Saturday September 22nd 250 people joined a hastily organized anti-war protest in the city. They came from all sorts of backgrounds, Protestant and Catholic, young and old. A few days before 80 people turned up to an SWP meeting against the war.

In Derry, anti-war activists carried a banner calling for 'No Retaliation' on the Day of Mourning. They got huge support and further protests are planned.

The Socialist Workers Party wants a broad based, united anti-war movement that puts huge pressure on the Irish government to stop US bombers using our airports.

Over the next few weeks we will be on the streets carrying the anti-war message and appeal to readers to join us.

But more than that we need to form anti-war activist groups in each area. These groups can encourage individuals to resist the propaganda for war and bring home the reality of suffering. They can provide a regular public focus of opposition.

We have entered a new period where our rulers tell us 'all has changed'. For them it means an era of war and repression. We have to rise to the challenge and organise for a better alternative.

Marxism 2001

Global crisis

Global resistance

A weekend conference of radical politics

Highlights:

- Intifada: Can Palestine be liberated? ● No Logo - Naomi Klein and the tyranny of brands ● Green and Red: Do they mix? ● Columbia, FARC and the US ● After Genoa and Washington: Direct action and the Anti Capitalist movement ● Cuba: The last island of socialism? ● The revolt last time: Forum on the sixties ● Islamic Fundamentalism: The new enemy? ● Antonio Negri and the rise of Autonomism ● Anarchism: An alternative to Marxism? ● Picasso, art and revolution ● Bush, Kyoto and Global warming

Tickets £12 waged / £8 unwaged (£15 / £10 on door) available from Marxism 2001, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8 or from (01) 872 2682.

16, 17, 18 November Trinity College Dublin

SWP activist meetings — all welcome

- **ATHLONE:** Contact 01-872 2682 for details
- **BRAY:** Meets every Thursday 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** Meets Wednesdays 8pm phone 01-8722682 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 BALLYFERMOTT:** Meets Tues 8.30pm in Ruby Finigans Pub
- **DUBLIN CABRA:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Aughrim St Parish Hall, 13 Prussia St
- **DUBLIN BALLYMUN:** Meets every Wednesday at 6.30pm in Balcurris Road Phone Kevin on 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 Thursday at 8.30pm downstairs J O'Connell's (Pub) Sth. Richmond Street Dublin 2.
- **DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:** Meets at 8.30pm every Tuesday upstairs Bowes (pub) Fleet Street Dublin 2
- **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** Phone for details
- **SWORDS** Meets Tuesdays 8pm Senior Citizens Hall
- **TRALEE:** Phone 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.



- SATURDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER GLOBALISE RESISTANCE: Video on Genoa Protests Ti Fili McCurtin St Cork
- SUNDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER: MASS TRESPASS OLD HEAD OF KINSALE. Bus leave Cork Public Library at 12pm contact Michael on 086 3125465
- SUNDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER WORLD VEGETARIAN DAY St Andrew's Resource Centre, Pearse St., Dublin contact Graham on 086 3037467
- SATURDAY 6TH OCTOBER: NATIONAL HUNGER STRIKE RALLY 2pm Garden of Remembrance.
- 10-11TH OCTOBER 2-DAY SEMINAR TAKING CRITICAL LOOK AT GLOBALISATION & THE IRISH ECONOMY - NORTH & SOUTH - organized by Institute for Popular Economics contact Clare on 028 90247940
- TUESDAY 16TH OCTOBER PROTEST WORLD ANTI-MCDONALDS DAY contact Aoife on 087 9509571
- 20TH OCTOBER BELFAST RALLY IN SOLIDARITY WITH TURKISH HUNGER STRIKERS



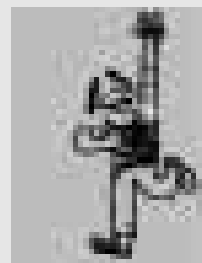
Globalise Resistance

Stop the PPP/PFI Global Summit DEMONSTRATION

Wed 10th Sept 5:30pm Burlington Hotel

Anti War events

- VIGIL AT DÁIL Thursday 27th September 6.30pm contact 087 2225742



- GLOBALISE RESISTANCE RALLY FOR PEACE - Saturday September 29th 3pm Central Bank Dublin contact 086 4098186 (GR meeting after rally)

- CORK ANTI WAR RALLY September 29th 2pm Bishop Lucy Park 086 3125465

- DERRY ANTI WAR RALLY September 29th 3pm Guildhall

- 30TH OCTOBER ANNUAL FEASTA LECTURE BY DAVID FLEMING Trinity College Dublin contact 01 4912733 31st October same in UCC

Upcoming event?
Tell us: 01 8722682
swp@clubi.ie

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

Building Industry

BATU organises for site safety

RECENTLY A number of deaths and injuries in accidents on building sites has raised in sharp focus the issue of safety on the industry.

One of the main causes of this appalling safety record is that too many building workers are not directly employed by the main contractor.

Instead they work for sub-contractors or are recruited by agencies.

Recruit

The building workers' union BATU held a meeting for carpenters in Dublin in September to recruit to the union and forty carpenters turned out to discuss these issues.

One carpenter told Socialist Worker, "We need stronger, more powerful unions. The marches organised about safety by the building unions were all well and good, but this needs to be sorted out on the sites.

"We have got to have shop stewards on the site fighting to implement safety and pushing for decent conditions.

"If someone is killed like in the John-Paul site a few weeks ago, we need to march in big numbers onto the site and occupy it."

Another carpenter told Socialist Worker, "The government and the SIPTU union are bringing in a new 'Fail Safe' scheme where each worker spends a day training on safety before they go on a site.

"I can tell you that it will be ignored by the companies on the sites unless it is policed by union people actually on the sites.

"Look at the provision that there should be 25 per cent social housing in any building scheme. That has collapsed. The builders

won't build the houses if they don't see a big enough profit. Only strong unions at site level can make a difference."

Car free day

Cycle Protest Reclaims the Streets

IN THEIR most direct and effective action to date around 150 cyclists joined pedestrians in creating their own car-free zone in Dublin's O'Connell Street to mark this year's European Car-Free Day.

Following an hour long mass cycle around the city-centre cyclists blocked off one lane of O'Connell Street and proceeded to play ball

games on an area usually grid-locked with cars.

This followed the failure of Dublin Corporation to offer any substantial car-free zone to Dubliners for this one day of the year.

The Corporation has also failed to tackle the ongoing traffic chaos which car-dependency and lack of an integrated, properly funded public transport system has produced.

When cyclists held a sit-down protest, Gardai used heavy-handed tactics against cyclists, pulling bikes and people from the road.

Free the Colombia three

A CAMPAIGN to bring home three Irishmen currently held in Columbia was launched by Christy Moore recently

He highlighted the media witch-hunt that was mounted against the three, which has put their lives in danger.

The Colombian govern-

ment, which is strongly backed by the US, employs a policy of assassinating opponents.

The campaign is broad based and is led by the families.

A public meeting is due to be held in late October.

For more information contact the Bring Them Home campaign 087 9018147 or e mail colombia3@eircom.net.

Waterford Stanley

Victory for Direct Action

DIRECT ACTION by workers at Waterford Stanley forced the company to honour an agreement to make permanent 18 temporary workers.

The company has an agreement that any worker who has twelve months unbroken service will be taken on full-time.

But they tried to wriggle out of this by wrongly claiming that 18 workers whose year was up had broken service and did not qualify.

The 200 general operatives, members of the TEEU, decided to stand by their workmates.

As one shop steward told Socialist Worker, "The workers decided to organise a sit-

in. This was against the advice of the union official but the workers themselves were determined not to let the company away with breaking the agreement.

"They understood if they got away with letting these workers go, the position of all the rest us would be weakened.

"We got great support as well from other sections including fitters and craftsmen.

"After three days of sit-in the company gave in and the men were taken on.

"This is a great victory and it has given all the workers in Stanleys more confidence to stand up for our rights.

"It proves that you can win if you stand up to the boss and stick together."

Dublin Bin Tax campaign

SEVENTY ANTI-BINS tax activists from across Dublin met up in late September to plan the ongoing action.

The campaign has more than 25 local action groups and many of them were represented at the meeting.

Activists reported that local meetings had attracted a lively interest and more and more people were signing up to the campaign. Latest estimates are that more than 80 per cent of householders are refusing to pay their bins charges.

Planning

The meeting put the campaign on a sound footing by electing officers and planning out activities for the next few weeks.

Independent Councillor Finian McGrath agreed to

place a motion down for the next City Council meeting calling for the cancellation of the Bins Charges.

The campaign is calling a picket on the next City Council meeting on Monday 1st October.

Support

The Campaign also decided to urge utmost support for the protest to Defend Public Services; October 10th Burlington Hotel at 5.30pm at the Burlington Hotel called by Globalise Resistance.

One activist told the meeting, "We need to organise throughout the city in all the localities. Most people do not want to pay the bins tax and they are more like to continue to refuse to pay if they are in contact with a local group of the campaign."

*Contact the campaign: For details of your local anti-bins tax action group contact the campaign phone Brid Smith 087-9090166

Aer Lingus

RESIST JOB CUTS AT AER LINGUS

AER LINGUS plans to axe 1,000 permanent jobs and to sack a further 700 temporary staff before the winter season starts in October.

Aer Lingus management is demanding reductions of 25 percent in operating costs. Seven of its 40 aircraft will be disposed of and cutbacks are planned on routes to the US, Britain and Europe.

Estimated operating losses for this year have soared from £30 million to

£70 million after the attacks in America.

Aer Lingus is terminating two of its US routes from October, and the service between Dublin and Stockholm is being axed.

Flights between Dublin and London City, Glasgow, Amsterdam and Paris are being slashed.

Trainee pilots are also expected to be laid off.

One Aer Lingus told Socialist Worker, "We have made sacrifices before for the company. Now we should be getting aid from the government. The situation where losses have grown from £30 million to

£70 million are not of our

making."

Another worker commented, "US airlines demanded \$24 billion from American federal funds to stave off bankruptcy. The US government is now bailing them out.

"But Mary Harney is insisting that there is no government money for the Irish national airline."

The Government and the EU insists that there is no question of cash injections from the EU to European airlines, despite the US government's decision to give US airlines up to \$15 billion in emergency aid.

These job losses should be resisted. Aer Lingus

workers have a perfect right to demand state aid to face this crisis.

When Fianna Fail's buddy Larry Goodman's rotten beef empire faced bankruptcy a few years ago, the government brought the Dail back from holiday to effectively nationalise the bust concern. Two years later and Goodman was back in charge of the rescued company.

One worker told Socialist Worker "There is talk of us giving up the 5.5 per cent due under the PPF. The company pleaded inability to pay under the Cahill Plan, I don't think we'd wear that again."

SIPTU Conference ... SIPTU Conference ... SIPTU Conference ... SIPTU Conference ... SIPTU Conference ... SIPTU

SIPTU: WHERE TO AFTER PARTNERSHIP?

IRELAND'S LARGEST union SIPTU meets for its biennial conference amidst a growing crisis over its strategy.

The union has pinned everything on social partnership during the boom but now has been caught unexpectedly by a mounting employers' offensive developing as the first signs of recession looms.

Slashed

Not only have jobs been slashed in Aer Lingus but there is now discussion about the company pleading inability to pay the PPF pay rises.

A revised agreement on the PPF - accepted by SIPTU leaders

without a vote - has made it easier for employers to use this option.

On top of that the government has warned that there will be "no give-away" budget this year.

This means that the tax concessions promised under the PPF deal - principally the removal of low paid workers from the tax net and the placing of 80 per cent of PAYE workers on the standard rate of tax - may be removed.

Public sector workers were also persuaded to give up their traditional "relativity" claims in favour of an elaborate process of benchmarking, which was supposed to be organised around "performance indicators".

Many of the rank and file accepted this because they were told that benchmarking would lead to large pay rises.

Yet there is little prospect of

these pay rises now.

The union's problems stemmed from the fact that its leadership is totally committed to the running of Irish capitalism.

Like the rest of the establishment they assumed that the Celtic Tiger would last another decade. They saw the employers as their "partners" and did not seek to build up strong shop organisation against them.

Restrain

But capitalists do not change their spots. They used social partnership arrangements to restrain workers during the boom - they will use the whip of unemployment to attack workers in a recession.

The union leaders' main response so far has been to call

for a "high level" group to discuss the economic slowdown.

But what is really needed is a policy of encouraging resistance to the employers.

The occupation by SIPTU members at Peerless Rugs should have been turned into a national campaign. This would have given a signal to employers that they could not walk away from plants without severe costs to themselves.

Instead the Peerless Rugs workers have been left to fight virtually alone.

Similarly, instead of conducting a war against dissidents in the union, the resources of the union should have been devoted to encouraging democratic participation.

Liberty Hall, the union headquarters, has been instrumental in fomenting a near civil war in

three key branches of the union.

● **In Aer Lingus, two trustees have been dismissed after they sought transparency on expense accounts.**

● **In Dublin Bus, workers have been stopped from standing in a branch election on the most spurious of grounds.**

● **In the Civil Aviation branch a High Court injunction was taken out over the conduct of a ballot.**

The union hierarchy will undoubtedly use the conference to try to increase their bureaucratic hold.

They want to abolish direct elections for the National Executive Committee to prevent dissidents like Carolann Duggan tapping into membership discontent.

They have produced no report

to justify why they called on workers to vote Yes in the Nice Treaty referendum.

They are using a Rules Revision session to push for more centralisation to ensure the core structures are controlled by few loyalists who are unresponsive to the rank and file.

Yet there is considerable discontent in the union.

Attacking

This is expressed in resolutions attacking the continued inequality in Irish society, against privatisation and for more open and democratic debates on partnership.

The hope is that the real concerns of the membership make themselves heard at the SIPTU conference.

Socialist Worker

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PROTEST AT THE FAT CATS' CONFERENCE

Public Private Partnerships mean:

- Service charges
- Incinerators
- Safety and the future of the environment left in the hands of big business.
- Hospitals and schools run for profit.

**Defend Public Services;
October 10th Burlington Hotel
The main demonstration will take place
at 5.30pm at the Burlington.**

Other protests will be taking place throughout the day.
Supported by: Globalise Resistance, Green Party, Socialist Party, Socialist Workers Party, WSM, Derry Trades Council, Waterford Trades Council, President Cork Trades Council, SIPTU Dublin Bus, Dublin Campaign Against the Bin Tax, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Anti-Service Charge Campaign, Sensible Transport Group.

SAY

NO TO

PRIVATISATION

A GROUP of global fat cats and politicians are coming to Dublin to discuss the sell off our public services.

The second global conference on Public Private Partnerships takes place in the Burlington Hotel from the 10-12th October. Access is restricted to those willing to pay £1,200.

Countries attending include Argentina, Chile, Australia, South Africa, and Romania—all of which have gone through massive privatisation drives.

Global multinationals will be given advice on how they can take over vital public services such as water supply, schools and health, in order to run them for profit.

Government ministers are going to explain how they can help the private sector in the takeover.

The conference is fully backed by the Irish government.

The invitation to the conference includes a letter from Finance Minister Charlie McCreevy in which he states, "The Irish Government's commitment to Public Private Partnerships is clear" and boasts that the conference will help the "private sector to share in the risks and rewards of public service provision".

Public Private Partnership projects involve the "give-away" of public services. The government provides significant capital investment (i.e. taxpayers' money) for these projects, but it is the private sector that makes all of the profit.

Research conducted by Unison, the British public sector union, has found that wages and conditions for newly employed workers in PFI (which is what PPPs are called in Britain and Northern Ireland) schools and hospitals are much worse

than the public sector.

In London one group of workers was paid only 50 per cent of what they would have got in the public sector. The working week was on average 20 per cent longer.

The vast majority of new PFI workers could not become members of a government approved pension scheme and were offered no pension scheme at all. Maternity leave, sick pay, paid holidays, were all worse or non-existent.

PPP schemes are shrouded in secrecy. "Commercial confidentiality" is the excuse used to keep trade unions and the public-patient organisations at arms length.

Already the Irish government has handed over the building of six schools to the building company, Jarvis. The schools are expected to produce a profit.

New road projects under PPP involve a total estimated investment of about £1.2

billion.

The National Roads Authority will provide £500 million. But the private companies who invest will be allowed to collect tolls and will control the finished roads.

This means that tax-payers provide the seed capital for big business to set up profitable enterprises.

National Toll Roads has pioneered the concept. Over the last three years they have made £12 million in profit.

They were also involved in making donations to the corrupt Dublin County manager, John Redmond.

Around the world people are fighting back against privatisation, from the people of Bolivia who just defeated water privatisation to workers in South Africa on strike against the sell off of State assets.

That is why it is important to protest at the privaters summit in Dublin.

PUT PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT