

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

70p

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Solidarity price £1

STOP THE WAR NOW!

US MILITARY

OUT OF

SHANNON

Socialist Worker can reveal that hundreds of US troops have been transported through Shannon airport as part of the war against Afghanistan.

Within days of the September 11th, attack the government opened up Irish airports to the US military.

During September and October, more than 50 US military flights landed at Shannon airport. These military planes included:

- F-16 fighters
- A-10 Thunderbolt tank destroyer aircraft.
- US Navy C-130s—these planes are used to transport military hardware

In addition, hundreds of soldiers have been transported through Shannon. Many have travelled on supposedly "civilian" aircraft that landed for refueling.

These planes belong to World Airways. World Airways charters the DC 10-30s that have been landing at Shannon to the US military for transport.

As late as September it was awarded \$175 million contract to supply charter services to USAF's Air Mobility Command.

In the past, the government while admitting that Shannon is used by the military claimed the personnel are unarmed, not involved in surveillance and not engaged in military exercises. This is clearly a smokescreen

Clearance

All flights through Irish airspace and landings receive diplomatic clearance from the Department of Foreign Affairs. Military aircraft over-flying Ireland rely on Irish air traffic control.

■ In 1997 — the last year for which figures were available — 3,500 US military aircraft passed through Irish airspace and 425 planes landed at Shannon.

George Bush has said that all nations had to play their part in his war. The Irish government is showing subservience to the toxic Texan beyond the call of duty.

Fianna Fail and the PDs have blood on its hands. They have gone as far as to offer to send Irish troops to Afghanistan as part of a "peace keeping force."

At the same time the bosses are using the September 11th attack as an excuse to attack workers.

The Government is using Bush and Blair's war against Afghanistan to cosy up to the US military ignoring the fact that the people rejected militarism when we threw out the Nice Treaty.

The Irish Anti War Movement can play a big part in halting the carnage in Afghanistan by getting the US military out of Ireland.

NO TO IRISH TROOPS IN AFGHANISTAN

★ Everybody exaggerates on their CV including Bertie Ahern. His governmental CV states he studied in Rathmines College of Commerce and UCD. Only he was never registered on any course there. He may have attended a lecture that happened to be held in Beilfield however... The Fianna Fail website goes a step further. It claims he studied in the prestigious London School of Economics. Again, they have never heard of him in the admissions office. Why does he feel the need to invent academic credentials?

★ English professional footballers voted with a 99% majority to strike over the amount of television money the Professional Footballers Association (PFA) receive. They want to receive the same percentage of the new deal the Premiership and FA got from Sky Sports that they got last time (considerably more), but the associations want to give them the same amount. This money goes to education for young players and a fund for the treatment and rehabilitation of injured footballers.

★ Downbeat bankers still profit BIZARRELY the Bank of Ireland's executives were in downbeat form as they presented the bank's half-year results: the numbers were "satisfactory"

The group registered a profit of 572m (£450m) in the six months before October.

★ There was further embarrassment for the Gardai recently when they impounded a security van delivering euro coins to a Dublin city centre bank. Over a quarter of a million pounds worth was confiscated because the Guard in question felt the van was illegally parked.

Palestinian deaths doubled since Sept 11

The weekly toll of Palestinians killed as a result of the intifada, or uprising, against Israel has more than doubled since the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, according to Amnesty International.

Some 150 Palestinians had been killed in the past two months. "In a blatant violation of the right to life, Israel continues to implement

a deliberate policy of assassinating Palestinians said to have been planning attacks on Israelis," said the 98-page report entitled "Broken lives: a year of intifada."

"In addition, during the past year, the Israeli authorities have cut off almost every Palestinian town and village from the outside world.

"Hundreds of Palestinian houses have been demolished and Palestinians barred from travelling along certain roads in the Occupied Territories."

Who killed the PLO ambassador?

A lethal 60 per cent level of carbon monoxide was found in the body of 47-year-old Yousef Allan. He was found dead at the foot of the stairs of his residence in Haddington Road, Balls-

bridge in January. While the Gardai claim to be investigating the death there still hasn't been an inquest.

Release

The Irish authorities have yet to release a death cer-

tificate to his family more than ten months later. There are suspicions that the gas pipe into his home may have been tampered with.

The Department of Foreign Affairs, the department of Justice and the Gardai remain strangely silent.

£90 million planning scam

History repeats corrupt farce

JACKSON Way Properties is demanding a compensation of between £72 million and £92million from the construction of the South-Eastern motorway near its lands in Carrickmines, south Dublin.

The company's predecessor, Paisley Park Investments, paid less than £600,000 for the 106 acres in 1988.

The owners of Jackson Way and Paisley Park are the same and have gone to elaborate lengths to conceal their identities.

John Caldwell is one owner of Jackson Way. Jackson Way hired crooked TD Liam Lawlor and, later, Fianna Fail spin doctor Frank Dunlop to 'lobby' for the rezoning of the land.

Arcade

Lawlor and Jim Kennedy, the arcade entrepreneur and associate of corrupt official George Redmond, were at meetings in 1996 to settle a dispute as to who owned a Company Caldwell had an interest in.

Caldwell "went to ground" in response to a summons from the tribunals. He attempted to resign as a solicitor and told the tribunal he was not an Irish citizen and no longer resided here. He later told the tribunal that his "level of recollection" had improved. Jackson Way proba-

bly learned the compensation scam from the builders Brennan and McGowan

In 1989, Brennan and McGowan received £1.9 million of public money when Dublin County Council was forced to pay them compensation.

The cheque was signed by the then assistant Dublin city and county manager George Redmond. Brennan and McGowan had paid £50,000 over to Redmond.

Bankrolled

Brennan and McGowan bankrolled Ray Burke since the 1970s.

Their architect, John Keenan, even designed his house — which

bizarrely Burke claims to have lent himself money in order to buy.

Later Burke appointed Keenan to An Bord Pleanala, where he mysteriously turned down the planning permission for Brennan and McGowan.

This was the pretext for Redmond giving over £1.9 million in compensation.

John Caldwell set up a trust for Tom Brennan in Liechtenstein, and he also acted for Canio, a company owned by the two builders and John Finnegan. Canio paid £75,000 to Ray Burke in 1984 and 1985.

While the tribunals rumble on it looks like the planning gang are still up to the old profitable tricks.

War crimes

THE LATEST weapon US forces have used in Afghanistan is the fearsome BLU-82 "daisy-cutter" bomb. Considered to be the world's largest conventional bomb, it has been described as equivalent to a low level nuclear strike.

Physically pushed out of the back of a cargo plane, it completely discredits the US lie that they are using 'surgical strikes' against the Taliban in order to minimise 'collateral damage', meaning innocent civilian deaths.

The bomb weighs 15,000 pounds and contains a 5,700kg mixture of "explosive slurry". The bomb falls by parachute and is det-

onated approximately a meter off the ground by a prod sticking out of the bomb.

The plane dropping the bomb must be 6,000 ft up to avoid the massive shock wave

Horrific

The results are horrific. The mixture of ammonium nitrate and aluminium powder expands in the air to form a mist. The mist is ignited causing a shock wave of energy.

Everything for 600m around the detonation is incinerated.

Also anyone in a bunker or cave underground is killed due to a vacuum created by lack of oxygen.



ARE GARDAI MAKING UP CONFESSIONS?

THAT SEEMS to be a logical question after a number of cases in the draconian non-jury Special Criminal Court.

In the trial of Colm Murphy for an alleged part in the Omagh bombing.

The Judge criticised two gardai and said they were "discredited witnesses" because of the falsification of interview notes with Murphy. Justice Barr said the conduct of the two gardai was "outrageous".

In one recorded interview 89 per cent of the time is unaccounted for.

Justice Robert Barr said Detective Garda Liam Donnelly had been exposed as a "liar" and he had been shamelessly backed up by his co-interrogator Detective Garda John Fahey.

In the same trial it was put to one Detective Garda Hanley that "a large number of people who have been interviewed by you have come to court subsequently and said 'I never said that'."

Hanley replied: "I wouldn't agree

with that. A large number of people would contest the admissions made, but I wouldn't say a large number of people have said they never said that, no."

Hanley was involved in the cases of John Gilligan and Paul Ward. The judges in the Gilligan trial said: "The court is concerned that Garda James B Hanley ...conceded in evidence that he kept no record whatsoever of several meetings

Denied

Last July Paul O'Donoghue, was accused of murdering his wife. In interviews with Hanley in garda custody, O'Donoghue allegedly said: "I want to be charged. . . I want to go to jail." O'Donoghue denied making these statements when the case went to trial and he was acquitted by the court.

Asked if there was some controversy in court about his interview with O'Donoghue, Hanley said: "There was a question of different ink on the time — and the date and the time at the heading of the notes."

what we think

Don't let the bosses make us pay for their crisis

At the press conference to launch the government's financial plans for the year Charlie McCreevy showed every sign of enjoying himself. He said there were now three certainties in life—death, taxes, and rising health spending.

He should have said long waiting lists. According a leaked government document thousands of patients will still have to wait up to 12 months for treatment in public hospitals. The government claim that by 2004 patients will be 'only' waiting months for public treatment.

At present there are 26,500 public patients awaiting treatments over 50 per cent of them have been waiting for two years.

At the same time as the government plans to cut spending on housing, the number of people becoming homeless as a result of evictions from private rented accommodation has increased by nearly one-third in the past year according to Focus Ireland.

Increased

The housing charity also found that the proportion of homeless people using its services who were in employment had increased from about 4 per cent of the total last year to over 20 per cent this year.

Currently some 120,000 people are on housing waiting lists.

That is the reality of what ordinary people got out of 10 years of the Celtic Tiger.

Yet as the boom ends we are expected to foot the bill.

Thousands of workers have already lost their jobs. The bosses have dropped any talk about being 'social partners' and are starting to stick the boot it.

Many employers are refusing to pay the miserly partnership pay rises. And McCreevey looks set to renege on the paltry tax promises in the Partnership deal.

Social Partnership meant that workers were left behind in the boom.

We need organised militant resistance by the unions to stop the bosses in their tracks before they drag us down with their sinking ship.

Anti-war movement growing



Over 100,00 marched in London against the war

DESPITE THE crowing of members of the pro war lobby, Northern Alliance victories do not mean liberation for the Afghans or the end of fighting in the region.

Even the most basic of the Bush's ever changing war aims have not been met. Kabul is occupied, against the explicit orders of Bush and Blair, by various competing warlords with a record of brutal atrocities to

match anything the Taliban have done.

These forces are causing chaos and disrupting aid efforts. Christiane Berthiaume, spokeswoman for the World Food Programme described the situation in Mazar; "there is a lot of pillaging as well as civilian kidnappings, armed men out of control and fighting in the streets." UN observers have

not gone in to Mazar because the situation there is too dangerous. US forces even bombed the Al Jezeera television network as the Northern Alliance arrived in Kabul.

Lies

But despite the lies and disformation the anti war movement is growing.

Over a hundred thousand people

marched against the War in London—double the number of the previous demonstration. Around the world hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets.

In Ireland everyone should be building for the National Demonstration on December 1st in Dublin.

■ For more on the war in Afghanistan turn to page 5

JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

To join the Socialist Workers Party, fill in this form and send it to: SWP PO Box 1642, Dublin 8

Name

Address



Trade Union

Phone.....

E-mail

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

FOOD NOT BOMBS STOP THE WAR

2:30pm Sat Dec 1st

Garden of Remembrance Parnell Square, Dublin 1

IRISH ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT

www.irishantiwar.org

info@irishantiwar.org

NIPSA call Rally against PFI

Launch the fight against privatisation

SOCIALISTS and trade unionists across the North were delighted to see a half page advertisement in the *Irish News* from the public sector union NIPSA calling a rally against PPP (Public Private Partnerships).

It is hoped that the rally, which is in the Ulster Hall, Belfast at 12.30pm on Tuesday 4th December, will launch a campaign against PPP which, as the advert said, is privatisation by the back door.

The statement from NIPSA called for 'public need, not private greed' to determine services. It pointed out that PPPs (also known as PFIs):

- Disadvantage the weakest in our society;
- Reduce standards of public service;
- Put social security benefit at risk;
- Weaken public control;
- Waste public funds on consultants;
- Threaten jobs;
- Privatised by the back door.

The call to campaign against PPP explained how these privatisations waste millions of pounds of public money, reduce standards, put public sector jobs at risk and put profits before need.

Active

NIPSA activists in Belfast spoke to *Socialist Worker* about the rally.

"This is the kind of active union we voted for when we elected the new leadership of NIPSA under the 'Time for Change' banner", said one branch committee member. "But the leadership need to involve the rank and file—it's not enough to call a rally, it has to be built", he said.

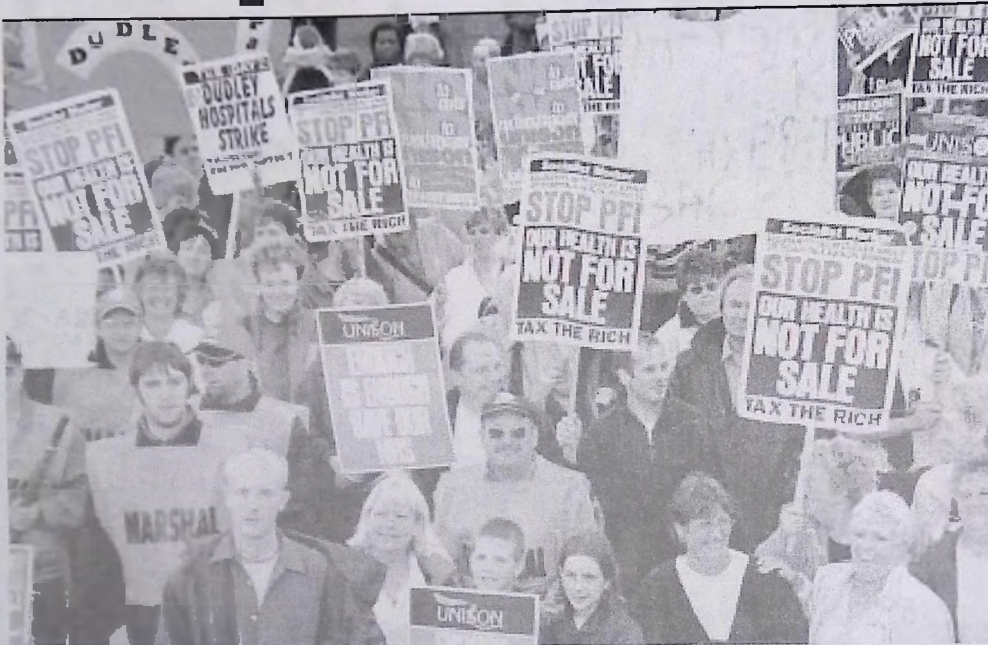
Another branch committee member agreed: "The first we heard about the rally was the ad in the *Irish News*. It's great that it's happening, but it must be a success or we'll have the old guard moaning and saying 'see, as usual's interested'".

"People are very interested in keeping their jobs in the public sector, but they don't know how

"The leadership has to follow up this excellent start by taking the campaign into the workplaces.

"An active campaign must mean mobilisation of the members to take industrial action to save our public services. Members understand they have to fight for their jobs"

Ballots for industrial



We need to mobilise a massive campaign against "back door privatisation"

action to oppose privatisation are already taking place in a number of the "first step agencies" set up, literally, as first steps towards privatisation.

The DSS branch in Cas-

tle Court is balloting for strike action at present.

The Child Support Agency is the only one of these agencies not threatened with privatisation. NIPSA activists in the CSA

said that this is because they form a large and relatively militant branch of the union.

They think management want to "pick off" all the other branches first, in order to leave the CSA militants isolated when their turn comes for privatisation.

Trade unionists across the North must start mobilising now to attend the rally and make it the start of a fight against the increasing use of PPP and PFI.

NIPSA members in well-organised workplaces could leaflet other workplaces to let others know about the rally.

Members of other trade unions need to get there too —UNISON, the ATGWU, MSF and GMB in particular have many members whose jobs and working conditions are under threat from privatisation.

Many school and college ancillary staff have already been transferred to the private sector. It's time it stopped.

A fight against privatisation would bring another important benefit—it would act as a counter to the horrible growth in sectarianism seen around Holy Cross school and across the North in recent months.

The jobs of both Catholic and Protestant workers in the public sector are under threat.

The services being privatised are used by Protestants and Catholics alike.

A united fight of Protestant and Catholic together in defence of our class interests would help to isolate the bigots in our communities and put a halt on the awful spiral of sectarian hatred.

NO TO PRIVATISATION!
RALLY AGAINST PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS
 Tuesday 4th December
 12.30pm
 Ulster Hall, Belfast
PUBLIC NEED NOT PRIVATE GREED!
 Called by NIPSA

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL Union blocks anti-sectarian initiative

AS LOYALIST protests outside Holy Cross school look set to continue indefinitely, parents and supporters are getting frustrated at the lack of action in defence of the children's rights.

Now, *Socialist Worker* has learnt that teachers who tried to organise non-sectarian action to stop the protests have been blocked by their union.

Two socialist teachers, one from a West Belfast (Catholic) secondary school, one from an East Belfast (Protestant) secondary, brought a petition to their two schools.

They petitioned their trade union, the NAS-UWT, to take action across Belfast up to and including industrial action in defence of the children of Holy Cross.

One of the teachers, John Price, told *Socialist Worker*, "In just two days, we collected over 110 teachers' signatures across the two schools, from both Protestant and Catholic teachers."

The signed petition was sent both to the Holy Cross school and to the union.

Teachers in other schools got hold of the petition and it spread like wildfire.

Instead of welcoming this anti-sectarian initiative, Tom McKee of the NAS-UWT wrote to all union reps telling them not to support the petition, effectively killing it among teachers from that union.

The two teachers who had started the petition then received a letter from the Secretary of the Belfast Executive reprimanding them for "the unauthorised use of the name of the NAS-UWT calling for industrial action".

John Price says: "This is nonsense. We did not use the name of the NAS-UWT.

"We were petitioning our union and in order to show that it was an authentic petition of union members, we put down the fact that we were both members of the union, one of us a school rep.

"It's hard to understand what the union's problem is with this."

John has since put a resolution to a union meeting at his school which is very similar to the petition calling for

industrial action, if necessary. The motion was passed unanimously.

Following an exchange of letters, the Belfast Executive has dropped threatened disciplinary action against the two teachers.

But, as John Price says: "What were they threatening disciplinary action about? We were simply doing what teachers are supposed to do and acting to protect children who are under attack.

"We were following the trade union motto 'an injury to one is an injury to all' and were very careful to ensure it was a cross-community petition, to counter the sectarianism that has surrounded the protest.

"One of the teachers at the meeting in my school made an excellent point. He said 'if this was London and it was Muslim children not able to get to school, there'd be blue murder—so why is this protest being allowed to continue?'

"As a union activist I have to ask also, why is the union so opposed to doing anything to help bring an end to this abuse of children in Ardoyne?"

Eamonn McCann

Policing the Agreement

THE DECISION of the Monaghan county board of the GAA to support the removal of Rule 21 was the number two item on the BBC Northern Ireland news on November 12th — after the latest from the New York 'plane crash. The item ended with the announcement that "The result from Cavan is expected within the next few hours".

A foreign listener chancing on the broadcast might have deduced that "the GAA" was probably a government party whose members were deciding on some make-or-break issue of confidence.

Both the tone of the item and the priority it was given reflected the extent to which the campaign to get rid of Rule 21 had become an inextricable part of the overall push to bury any remaining resistance to consolidation of the structures set up under the Belfast Agreement.

Arrangements

Support for the police force is fundamental to copper-fastening the new arrangements. It's the police force which presents the abrasive face of any State to its citizens, which represents the State in coercive mode. By proclaiming support for the police, any party or other political grouping signals that it accepts the legitimacy of the State and the State's entitlement to a monopoly on the use of violence.

This is the reason policing presents Republicans with a dilemma at least as acute as did decommissioning. But socialists have a different and deeper problem with policing, which has nothing to do with the specifics of the North or of the GAA.

In any capitalist State, the police, in the end, represent the capitalist class. Their primary function is to defend the capitalist status quo, to monitor and repel challenges to the existing order. In any clash involving the interests of capitalist class, the police will, always and inevitably, weigh in against the opponents of capitalism.

If this seems abstract or a too dogmatic formulation, ask yourself when's the last time you heard of police drawing batons to beat back a gang of scabs trying to break through a picket line. On the other hand, when's the last time you noted the cops beating pickets back to allow blacked goods or black-legged individuals to pass through?

Rejecting the authority of the police doesn't, of itself, make you a socialist. But it's a requirement for socialists. It's a necessary but not sufficient condition for fighting for socialism.

This provided the context for the socialist approach to the Rule 21 issue. There was a complication, in that the GAA was already welcoming police with open arms. There have been thousands of guards in the GAA over the years. But still, faced with a straight choice between giving the thumbs up or thumbs down to cops, our digits would automatically adopt the downward position.

Order

We would have been confirmed in this attitude by the overbearing nature of the demand put on the GAA to get its house in acceptable order. The call in the Patten Report for the removal of Rule 21 came in the context of a wider edict — that "schools, community leaders, including political party leaders and local councillors, bishops and priests, school-teachers and sports authorities take steps to remove all discouragements to members...applying to join the police and make it a priority to encourage them to apply" (para 15.2).

What's been demanded of the GAA — as of teachers etc. — is not that they allow people who join the police to remain members but that they make it a priority to urge members to join the police. The explicit injunction is to become a recruitment agency for the police.

This goes a lot further than was acknowledged in the debate leading up to the November 17th special conference. It means, or ought to, that the vote hasn't ended debate or disposed of the issue. But it's the socialist, not the nationalist, perspective which will be necessary to take the debate forward.

STOP THE WAR...STOP THE WAR...STOP THE Imperialism will not bring peace

WAR UPON war, horror upon horror. That is what faces not only the long-suffering people of Afghanistan, but millions of others across the globe if the most powerful capitalist state in the world, the US, has its way.

The US has bombed and blasted Afghanistan for over a month so that the Northern Alliance warlords could advance.

The murderous record of the Northern Alliance is so grotesque that even the US military admits its "allies" will commit savage atrocities.

Power

More dead Afghans do not bother George W Bush.

What concerns him is the global assertion of US power—"full

spectrum dominance", in the clinical language of the US military.

That is what this war has been about from the beginning.

Bush has spoken of waging war against any country or group he chooses.

He said any government that rejects war against those the US state targets "will know the consequence".

Price

"For every regime that sponsors terror, there will be a price to be paid and it will be paid."

The US vice-president, Dick Cheney, warned that after the Afghanistan campaign is over, America could use military action directed at up to an

Pictured right:
Protesting against the war

**STOP THIS
BLOODY
WAR**

**Fight US/UK
imperialism**



Who pays the price?

WIDER AND more vicious wars have been the result of every US military success over the last quarter of a century. US-backed death squads killed 75,000 people in El Salvador in Central America in the early 1980s. That encouraged similar butchery in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras.

The US invasion of Grenada in 1983 meant it did not hesitate to murder over 3,000 people in the invasion of Panama six years later. The slaughter of Iraqi civilians and con-

scripts in the 1991 Gulf War led to repeated bombing of the country and sanctions that have killed one million people since.

Suffer

Afghanistan will suffer, no matter what the immediate course of the fighting. Rival local powers—Iran, Pakistan, India and Russia—support different factions. Talk of the UN organising a government is about giving each of these states a slice of

power, or possibly a slice of a partitioned Afghanistan.

The US bombing has increased the rivalry—most sharply between India and Pakistan.

Both states have nuclear weapons. With every B-52 bombing raid over the last month, the US's closest ally in the Middle East, Israel, has tightened the noose around the Palestinians.

The more confident the US military is over Afghanistan, the more the US can carry on arming Israel.

Propaganda and lies

AT FIRST, all the talk was of "smart weapons"—supposedly infallible Cruise missiles and precision "bunker-buster" bombs.

Within days US spokesmen abandoned even the pretence that the US was using "smart weapons" and admitted it was dropping cluster bombs.

These release 2,000 bomblets, many of which do not explode and so act as landmines.

"Surgical strikes" then gave way to carpet-bombing by Vietnam-era B-52 planes. Then the US deployed "daisy-cutter" bombs, which were also used to pound rural areas in Vietnam.

Then came the admission that the US was using "fuel air explosives". These create firestorms and have the effect of "mini nuclear bombs", according to the West's own military experts when they described Russia's use of them in Chechnya two years ago. And the Northern Alliance ground offensive has meant more destruction. It is not a "clean alternative" to bombing.

Retreating

It has gone hand in hand with the US bombing retreating Taliban forces on the Salang highway, as it did when it killed thousands of Iraqis on the Basra to Baghdad road at the end of the Gulf War in 1991.

The US state's strategy rests upon re-igniting civil war in Afghanistan.

It means supplying, working with and then rewarding the most brutal murderers and the most ruthless military commanders.

There were already reports as Kabul fell of massacres by Northern Alliance forces every bit as savage as anything the Taliban have been held responsible for over the last five years.

"We know this is happening," said UN official Stephanie Bunker, "but we don't know the scale, nor the

details."

The rival forces of the Northern Alliance fought each other and groups based on the Pashtun-speaking people in the south of Afghanistan after the pro-Russian government collapsed in 1992.

The fighting led to 20,000 people killed in one week in the siege of the capital, Kabul.

It meant massacres of one group by another, as rival war lords stoked up ethnic hatred. And it led to the division of the country as rival military leaders tried to set up their own fiefdoms.

Ongoing war led to the deaths of over 1.5 million people in Afghanistan between 1979 and 1994.

Over six million fled the country as refugees. Yet the US-led war on Afghanistan has deepened the division in the country and laid the basis for yet more conflict.

It comes after the US government poured billions of dollars of military aid behind the resistance to the Russian occupation in the 1980s and then cut off aid in the 1990s.

Bush and Blair are twisting the knife into the people of Afghanistan. Yet not one of the people they say were responsible for the hijacking of planes on 11 September came from Afghanistan.

The horror the US has brought to Afghanistan does serve a purpose—it is about asserting US power across the region and across the globe.

That is why even before the Northern Alliance entered Kabul the US military and politicians were considering their next target and looking particularly at Iraq.

The Northern Alliance — better than the Taliban?

THE Northern Alliance has already provided evidence that it will not necessarily be the submissive force that the US was hoping for.

The Alliance entered Kabul despite US and Pakistan's demands to wait until a multi-ethnic coalition government had been worked out.

Then the Alliance declared that an international peace keeping force was unnecessary as they would take care of security in Afghanistan.

Already, "security" has meant that more than 100 pro-Taliban Pakistani fighters were shot dead after their surrender in Mazar-i-Sharif

to General Rashid Dostum's forces.

The Alliance committed similar and worse atrocities during the struggle in 1992-1996 to control Kabul. When the Taliban won this vicious struggle they were greeted by the inhabitants of Kabul as saviours.

The Taliban were revealed as a barbaric and oppressive force but are the Northern Alliance any better?

Rejects

The Revolutionary Association of Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) doesn't think so and completely rejects the Northern Alliance.

They've confirmed Amnesty International's reports of the forces

engaging in massacres of rival ethnic groups, uncontrolled looting of already poverty stricken people and using rape as a means of subjugating women.

When Borhanuddin Rabbani, head of one of the Alliance factions, was President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan he announced that punishments such as amputation of feet or hands, flogging and stoning to death would be introduced.

Amnesty International documented scores of human rights abuses by his forces, torturing and killing political opponents and rival mujahideen.

General Dostum, is commander of one of the largest alliance forces and is now favoured with 20 US military advisors.

Dostum enforced the blockade of Kabul during 1994. His forces kept international food aid from reaching the population, many of whom were starving.

He was also responsible for the indiscriminate shelling of homes, mosques and hospitals in the city—presumably this is why he's now so popular with the US military.

General Dostum has also been reported as punishing his own men by tying them tank tracks and driving them around a barrack's square until they are horribly crushed to death.

In 1997 during the fighting in Mazar-i-Sharif, General Pahlawan Malik slaughtered thousands of Taliban prisoners by

drowning and firing squads.

Other Taliban prisoners were locked into containers and left to smother to death in the Afghanistan heat. There's no reason to believe his army will behave any different this time.

These are just three of the leaders of the Northern Alliance, now being described by the US, UK and the UN as the basis of a future provisional government.

In time it's likely they will turn on each other in a terrible bloodbath—that's exactly what happened last time they had any control in Afghanistan—but until then these butchers are the best the Allies have to offer an already brutalised population.

STOP THE WAR...STOP THE WAR...STOP THE

WTO meeting in Doha

Vultures carve up the spoils

ROBERT ZOELLICK, the US trade representative commented, "Today the members of the WTO have sent a powerful signal to the world—we have removed the stain of Seattle."

Of course that was only possible because the World Trade Organisation met in Doha in the Gulf state of Qatar amid massive security.

As widely expected the US, EU, Canada and Japan—the "Quad"—set the neo-liberal agenda of the multinationals while giving at most vague verbal assurance to the victims of these policies.

Developing countries have long complained about "implementation issues"—according to the previous "Uruguay Round" they must open up their economies to the multi-nationals. But the US continues to stall on its promise to open up its enormous and enormously protected textile market to the products of the Third World.

Exports

While the Least Developed Countries account for 10 percent of the world's population but only 0.4 percent of world trade, the EU and America still refuse to honour previous commitments to allow quota and tariff free access to exports from these countries.

The United Nations estimates that northern protectionism robs the Third World of \$2 billion a day in export earnings. This is many times the amount of external aid.

Subsidised exports—dumping—has led to a collapse in the incomes of farmers in the poorest countries. In the much-heralded agriculture negotiations in Doha the agreement of the EU to the aim of "reductions of, with a view to phasing out, all forms of export subsidies" was proclaimed an eleventh hour break-through.

But they added in the fine print that this aim is "without prejudging the outcome of negotiations".

As the World Development Movement notes, this severely undermines any commitment to open up EU agricultural markets to exports from the developing world.

GATS—the General Agreement on Trade in Services—affects every public service from healthcare and education to energy, water and transport.

Through a mechanism called "lock-in" national governments must harmonise their environmental, labour and consumer laws to remove any barriers to trade.

This will involve privatisation and effectively making these and other critical services totally unregulated.

Negotiations and binding agreement are to be completed in just over three years.

WTO members committed themselves to "the reduction or, as appropriate, elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to environmental goods and ser-

vices."

This includes not only environmentally damaging services such as nuclear waste processing, but also services such as water, providing an accelerated commitment to put on the market, in all countries, the supply of water, waste collection and disposal, and other services, up to now provided by the public sector.

TRIPs—Trade Related Intellectual Property Measures—deals with patents. Under pressure over issues like generic drugs for AIDS sufferers in Africa, the WTO concedes that the TRIPs agreement "does not and should not prevent Members from taking measures to protect public health".

Developing countries were forced to waste a huge amount of time clarifying that the existing agreement allows them to prioritise affordable treatment for health emergencies such as HIV/AIDS.

But there is still doubt as to whether this concession will be legally enforceable.

The TRIPs agreement still threatens traditional rights over natural resources and traditional knowledge through "biopiracy". This is where multinationals patent the active ingredients of plants used by indigenous peoples.

Despite African demands there remains no clear cut prohibition on the patenting of life, nor any clear statement that the Biosafety Protocol (allowing countries to refuse the release of GM seeds) takes precedence over WTO rules.

Negotiations

On the Environment the Ministerial Declaration includes negotiations on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

However, there are more get-out clauses. "The negotiations shall not prejudice the WTO rights of any Member that is not a party to the MEA in question".

That lets the US off the hook over agreements they have not signed, such as the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change and the Biosafety Protocol.

On all these issues despite some window dressing, the clear finger print of the multi-nationals' free-market agenda is clearly visible.

A number of NGOs have done a valuable job in researching and publicising the real agenda of the WTO.

But this only demonstrates that despite the well-meaning efforts of a number of these NGOs to lobby the WTO and assist Third World governments in their negotiating stances, the business lobbies of the Western governments can shout louder and kick harder.

The strategy of anti-capitalists has to be to harness the forces necessary to shut down the WTO.

—KEVIN WINGFIELD

■ For a report of Beirut anti capitalist conference turn to page 10

IRELAND ENTERS RECESSION

The death of the Celtic Tiger

"THE ERA of the Celtic Tiger is over," according to Maurice O'Connell, the governor of the Central Bank.

George Lee, RTE's resident economic commentator has put it more dramatically. "The Irish economy is now falling faster than any other economy in the world."

At the start of this year, the Celtic Tiger was growing at the

annual rate of 11 percent a year, making it one of the most successful economies in the world. But in the last few months, it has plunged into recession.

The signs are everywhere to be seen. North Dublin, for example, is set to lose some 4,000 jobs as factories such as Gateway, Cisco and Motorola close up.

Household names like Aer Lingus and the *Irish Times* are slashing jobs.

But the worst is still to come. Many of the redundancies are still in the pipeline as companies hold off for a Xmas rush in consumer spending. Once that is over the axe will fall even further.

The collapse of the Celtic Tiger is stark contrast to the predictions that were being made by the political establishment until quite recently.

All the major economists claimed that the Celtic Tiger would boom for a long time.

Figures

The top research institute, the ESRI, even put precise figures on it. They claimed that there would be "an annual average growth rate of 5.1 percent between 2000 and 2005, falling to 4.3 percent per annum thereafter to 2010 and to something over 3 percent in the period 2010-2015."

National City Brokers, the leading group of stockbroker economists, claimed that because Ireland had a younger population with fewer dependents, the economy would grow by 6 percent for ten years.

Paul Sweeney, author of the



Thousands of Volkswagon i

Celtic Tiger: Ireland's Economic Miracle Explained, claimed that "The Irish miracle appears to have been built on a solid modern foundation on which a lasting edifice can be built."

What's left behind?

WHEN THE Celtic Tiger dies, many will look around to see what is left behind from the boom years.

There are countless new fancy offices and clogged up streets. But the boom years were squandered by right-wing governments who did nothing to build up basic public services.

- ★ Ireland has the lowest level of health spending in the EU. This is why our hospitals are in chaos as thousands queue up for a bed.
- ★ 210,000 women joined the labour force during the boom years.
- ★ But the Celtic Tiger provided no child care facilities. Today 1 percent of children below the age of 3 receive pre-school education compared to 45 percent in Britain.
- ★ Irish primary schools has one of the highest pupil-teacher ratio's in the OECD countries—just ahead of Mexico, Korea and Turkey.
- ★ Council house building has been slashed even though only 5 percent of mortgages go to unskilled workers.

THE BOSSES OFFENSIVE

IBEC, the employers' organisation, talked up social partnership during the boom because they knew it was a good mechanism to hold down wages.

They made huge profits during the Celtic Tiger years when there was an orgy of property and share speculation.

In 1997, for example, the value of shares on the Irish stock exchange jumped by a staggering £14 billion.

But at the first sight of recession, they are sticking the boot into workers. Their aim is to cut their work-

force and make the remaining workers carry a higher burden.

Aer Lingus was supposed to be a model partnership company that even gave SIPTU its own offices in the airport.

But they are using the temporary crisis in the aviation industry to halt pay rises until 2004 and to sack 2000 workers.

Property

The *Irish Times* could have mortgaged their valuable property in the city centre to cover debts they ran up on new printing

presses. But instead they want to slash their workforce and attack working conditions.

Waterford Glass is using the recession to pressurise workers to accept more imports of foreign glass to cut back on skilled labour.

This pattern also occurred during the last major recession in Ireland in the mid eighties.

In 1981, the employer's organisation, the Federated Union of Employers dropped all talk about "social partnership" and launched an offensive on workers' rights.

A small group of management hatchet men

moved into key factories to attack workers' conditions.

This time the bosses may keep their options open for a while.

They may stick with social partnership for a while if they think they can use the union leaders to break up any resistance to their attacks.

Or they may cast it aside and use the whip of unemployment to get their way.

Whichever option they adopt, workers need to be on their guard. The old policy of seeing the boss as a 'partner' and hoping the system could be made to benefit workers has failed. It is time for resistance.

ISSUES FOR ANTI-CAPITALISTS

What causes recessions?

ADAM SMITH, the founder of classical economics once argued that there was a 'hidden hand' behind the workings of the market. He meant that behind the apparent chaos, scarce resources were distributed efficiently.

If there is a shortage of a particular good, prices rose and this encouraged more investors to produce this goods until eventually the price drops again. In this way the system moved to a state of equilibrium as supply met demand.

Economists

Modern economists have built on this theory to claim that there is no inherent reason why the system should go into recession.

Many looked at the US boom in the nineties and claimed that computers had brought a "new paradigm of growth" where the boom could last indefinitely.

However, the new global recession has shattered these theories.

Conventional economists look for accidental factors which might help to explain the recession.

One crude approach is to blame September 11th.

But the recession had begun before this date with even the *Economist* magazine proclaiming on August 25th; "Welcome to the first global recession of the 21st century."

Another approach is to look for psychological factors such as 'consumer confidence'. Nobody is supposed to 'talk up the recession'

lest it damages consumer confidence.

But this consumer confidence is often a code for saying that many people are not able to buy the goods that are produced.

And that occurs because of something that is central to capitalism.

The system operates at a highly contradictory level. On one hand, each individual capitalist is forced to seek ever greater profits to re-invest back in their industries so that they can stay ahead of their rivals.

The result is a dynamic that leads to ever higher levels of accumulation and production.

But the source of profit is unpaid labour and there is a continual drive to reduce unit labour costs.

This occurs through increasing productivity or by switching from permanent employees to temporary contract employees who receive lower overall pay packets.

At some point, however, these two tendencies come into conflict as people cannot buy the amount of goods that are produced.

There is a crisis of over-production — not in the sense that there are too many goods to meet what humans need but rather in terms of what they can afford within capitalism.

The Celtic Tiger is a spin-off of the recent US boom and the collapse of the US boom shows how this occurs.

US employers made strenuous efforts to increase their profits by cutting wage costs more than their international competitors.

Between 1985 and 1997, for example the annual average increase in hourly wages was only 0.15 percent compared to 2.85 percent in

Germany. The problem of under-consumption was overcome for a period in two ways.

First, there was a huge increase in luxury spending by the wealthy and capital investment by companies. This spending was driven by share speculation and property speculation.

But the price of share speculation was that companies borrowed enormously to buy new shares.

This meant that there was an ever greater pressure to achieve gigantic levels of profits.

The result was a bigger greater squeeze on US workers, leading eventually to a collapse in 'consumer confidence'.

Second, the contradiction was also lessened by a huge inflow of funds into the US. Between 1990 and 1997, the inflow of foreign capital grew from \$59 billion to \$264 billion.

Much of this went into the financial sector or FIRE (Finance, Insurance and Real Estate).

After 1991, the total value of FIRE outstripped that of manufacturing.

But much of this was a bubble economy that was driven by escalating paper values.

When the bubble burst, even the wealthier sections of society could not buy the vast amounts of goods that were produced.

The system was stripped back to reveal its central problem—the drive to accumulate clashed with the attempt to reduce the purchasing power of the mass of workers.

The result today is that the largest economy in the world is reeling under one of the worst recessions since the thirties.

by KIERAN ALLEN

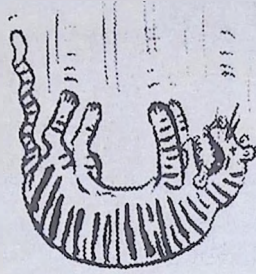
RESISTANCE

Ireland's socialist magazine

November/December issue out now £2.00

- STOP THE WAR ● George Monbiot
- Eamonn McCann ● Abortion referendum
- How can we end sectarianism?

Death of Celtic Tiger



Thousands of Volkswagen in Brazil are striking against job cuts and Belgian airline workers protest against cuts

SIVE

...moved into key factories to attack workers conditions. This time the bosses may keep their options open for a while. They may stick with social partnership for a while if they think they can see the union leaders to reap up any resistance to their attacks. Or they may cast it aside and use the whip of unemployment to get their way. Whichever option they choose, workers need to be on their guard. The old policy of seeing the boss as a 'partner' and hoping the system could be made to benefit workers has failed. It is time for resistance.

All of them argued that if workers agreed to social partnership and accepted wage restraint the boom could go on for decades.

They believed that Ireland was a model economy because it gave the wealthy an incentive to invest with low taxes and supplied them with a young well-educated workforce.

But in reality, the Celtic Tiger only grew on the back of the US boom.

It was a bridgehead for US computer companies to invade the European market.

Today 40 percent of exports from Ireland are in information, communications and technologies and much of it comes from US firms.

Ireland now has seven times more US investment per manufacturing worker than the EU average.

When the US boom collapsed, the Celtic Tiger came crashing down. No matter how much sacrifices workers made, the boom could not continue.

The 'experts' got it wrong because they thought capitalism could be made to work. The reality is that it is a mad chaotic system that is out of control.

Resistance needed

WHEN SABENA airlines in Belgium announced massive job losses, thousands of workers gathered to take over the airport and clashed with riot police.

When Aer Lingus announced huge job losses, SIPTU did nothing for weeks and then called a small march when the majority of its members were at work.

Unions

The 'do-nothing policy' is a disaster. The Irish union leaders are trying to keep their cosy relationship with employers by persuading workers to accept 'rationalisation'. But the of the crash facing the Celtic Tiger means this will bring huge job losses and terrible changes in conditions.

The only realistic policy has to be one of resistance. Aer Lingus workers, for example, are a powerful group. The multi-nationals

need to use Dublin airport to export their goods. If it were closed they would soon be screaming for the government to move.

If worker were to use that power instead of going along with plans to slash jobs they could force the government to intervene to save jobs.

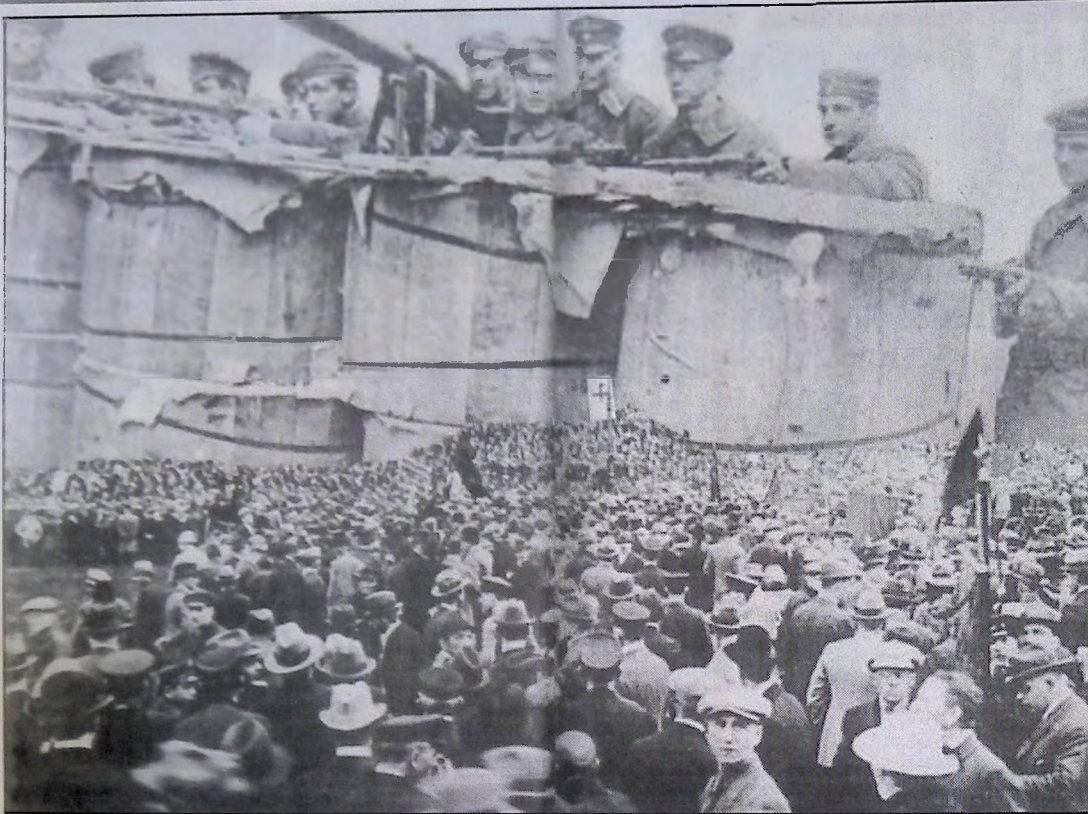
Governments in the past have intervened to prop up the Goldman company and Allied Irish Banks.

So why shouldn't they act to protect jobs for workers? What is needed now is a growing political force in the labour movement that puts workers' control of production at the heart of its strategy.

The sheer scale of the global recessions means that workers have to start looking at ways they can take control over the economy rather than leaving matters in the hands of speculators and capitalists.

A political awareness that an alternative can be built to capitalism will help feed into a strategy of resistance.

Karl Liebknecht — jailed in 1916 for saying...



Mutinying soldiers and a workers' rally in Germany in 1919

One of the bravest and most outspoken voices ever to be raised against war was that of German socialist, Karl Liebknecht.

For Karl Liebknecht in Germany, being against militarism was particularly difficult. The German state was highly repressive and obsessed with attempting to clamp down on the growing socialist movement. Nevertheless he put his neck on the line, and in doing so became a beacon for those wanting to hold to the spirit of international solidarity between workers of the world.

Karl Liebknecht was a lawyer who took up cases on behalf of the German Social-Democratic Party—which in the first decade of the century was a broad socialist organisation of both revolutionaries and reformists. He first came to national attention in 1904 in a case to defend the right of the party to organise—his strategy was not simply to pursue the case in the courts, but also through public meetings and rallies, in Berlin he spoke about the issues to a crowd of 4,000.

The issue for which Karl Liebknecht became internationally renowned was his challenge to Europe's war-mongers. In 1906 he made a speech which became the basis of a pamphlet: *Militarism and Anti-Militarism*.

In this booklet Karl Liebknecht made some powerful points about the role of capitalism in promoting war.

"War, he argued, was not something that was natural to humanity. In the earliest human societies it made no sense to have weapons.

Militarism, he argued, appeared with the division of society into classes, as a the ruling class required arms for use both against external enemies and its own exploited population.

Warfare is not specific to capitalism, but "capitalism, like every other class-divided social

order, develops its own special variety of militarism."

In this pamphlet Karl Liebknecht was one of the first writers to point out that the new phase of capitalism, in which the major powers were engaged in a race to establish colonies around the world, threatened to produce a world war.

"New and highly dangerous sources of tension have arisen in consequence of the aims of commercial and political expansion pursued by so-called civilised states, and as a consequence world policy, and especially colonial policy conceal countless possibilities of conflict."

His 1907 words were prophetic.

"The capitalist policy of expansion and its colonial policy have placed countless mines under the edifice of world peace. The fuses lie in the most varied hands, and the mines may easily and unexpectedly explode."

In words which have a great resonance to our own times, Karl Liebknecht challenged the hypocrisy of the super-powers:

"Colonial policy under the deceptive mask of spreading Christianity and civilisation profits and deceives with pious gaze in the service of the colonial interests of the capitalists, murders and assaults the defenceless, burns up their property, robs and plunders their goods and possessions, and scorns and shames Christianity and civilisation."

Against the nationalism and warmongering of the capitalist class, Karl Liebknecht appealed for the international solidarity of workers.

"The proletariat of every land has only one real enemy: the capitalist class which oppresses it and exploits it; because of its special interests the proletariat of every land is closely united with the proletariat of every other land; all national interests recede before the common interests of the international proletariat; the international coalition of exploitation and slavery must be opposed the international coalition of the

exploited, the enslaved."

Militarism and Anti-Militarism exposed the extent that Europe was devoting massive and increasing resources to armaments. It concluded with a round up of the anti-war movement across the continent, urging their further progress.

Just two months after publication of this pamphlet Karl Liebknecht was arrested by order

'HOW MUCH longer will the imperialist gamblers abuse the patience of the people? Enough and more than enough of the slaughter. Down with the war-mongers on both sides of the border! End the genocide!'

■ Liebknecht in 1916

of the Prussian War Minister and charged with high treason. The German state attempted to seize all the printed copies they could.

Despite the doubtful legality of the proceedings Karl Liebknecht was sentenced to fortress imprisonment for 18 months and his pamphlet was banned.

As he was led from court to prison thousands of supporters cheered him, and the fact that the state had failed to censor his message was shown by his election to the Berlin Municipal Council during his months in prison.

No sooner was he released than Karl Liebknecht threw his energies back into organising against militarism and in campaigning for the SPD.

As a well known civil liberties lawyer and enemy of the warmongers, Karl Liebknecht was tipped off about a scandal concerning Germany's biggest arms

producer.

The giant Krupp's company had been putting about the rumour that the French army had doubled its machine gun armaments. Krupp's had paid a spy to find out what was going on the war ministry and to bribe civil servants.

Karl Liebknecht was able to provide documentary proof of this and in 1913 force a prosecution of those concerned as well as expose the dirty dealings of the arms industry.

But it was Karl Liebknecht's response to the outbreak of war in 1914 for which he is justly famous.

All over Europe, trade union leaders and social democrats had forgotten their resolutions of internationalism and had become caught up in war fever. Only a handful of revolutionaries—such as James Connolly in Ireland—attempted to speak out against the impending slaughter.

In Germany Karl Liebknecht failed to persuade the SPD to vote against the government's proposed war credits. For the first vote in the parliament he held back from splitting from his party, but he quickly realised that he could not let party discipline prevent him from speaking out against the war.

On December 2nd, to howls of outrage from the right and the left, Karl Liebknecht stood up—alone despite the presence of 110 SPD deputies—and voted against the war.

Karl Liebknecht immediately became the target of vilification from both the conservative and social-democratic press.

It was hard for him to answer back, the anti-war forces of the socialist movement being so small. But slowly those socialists who had not abandoned internationalism began to regroup.

DOWN WITH WAR!

By March 1915 Liebknecht had persuaded one other deputy, Otto Ruhle to join his protests in the Reichstag, but more dangerously as far as the German state was concerned, he had linked up with revolutionaries outside parliament including the talented and unwavering Rosa Luxemburg. Early in 1916 a new publication was rallying the anti-war movement, the *Spartacus Letters*.

On May 1st, the new organisation, known by this time as *Spartacus*, organised an illegal anti-war demonstration attended by a several thousand workers. Liebknecht was imprisoned for shouting "Down with the the government! Down with the War!". Although he was sentenced to four years in jail, Karl Liebknecht was released in October 1918. Four years of war had transformed the political situation in Europe, a huge backlash against the war-mongers was under way, beginning with the Russian Revolution of February 1917 a storm of protest and revolution broke across the continent.

In November 1918 the accumulated bitterness of four years of war erupted when sailors at the ports of Kiel and Wilhelmshaven mutinied against their officers. It sparked off a wave of mutinies and strikes across Germany, hundreds of thousands of workers took to the streets and at the front soldiers simply put down their guns and refused to fight.

It was this workers' revolt which ended the First World War.

On November 5th the Kaiser fell and thousands of workers in Berlin called for Liebknecht who climbed up to the balcony from which the monarch had previously addressed patriotic crowds to shout:

"The day of Liberty has dawned. I proclaim the free socialist republic of all Germans. We extend our hand to them and ask them to complete the world revolution. Those of you who want the world revolution raise your hands." Thousands of hands rose up. Tragically for Karl Liebknecht, and indeed the fate of

socialism across the world, it was one thing to call for a socialist republic, but another to achieve it.

It was this workers' revolt which ended the First World War. The SPD leaders who had tried right up to the last minute to stop revolution from breaking out and to prop up the monarchy now ran to the front of the movement in an effort to lead it into safe channels.

Everywhere workers and soldiers were beginning to set up democratic councils which in each locality organised the strikes and mutinies.

Liebknecht and the Spartacists argued for the old state to be dismantled and for the councils to come together on a national scale and wield real power. But they were a very small voice and only had a few thousand supporters.

An attempted uprising at the beginning of 1919 was defeated and on 15 January Liebknecht and his fellow revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg were arrested and taken for "questioning".

A soldier smashed both of their skulls in with a rifle butt. Liebknecht was driven to a park in central Berlin and shot. Rosa Luxemburg's body was dumped in a canal.

The night before his murder Karl Liebknecht wrote down his thoughts in an article entitled "Despite Everything!" In it he argued that so long as capitalism existed workers would need to resist attacks from the bosses. He looked forward to the day when large numbers of workers would look to their own power to run society.

"From the bitter lessons of this week the motto that the liberation of the working class can only be achieved by the working class itself has acquired a deeper meaning." Liebknecht was an inspirational fighter against war and for our class.

...and freed by revolution two years later!

in my view

Like something out of the movies

LEADING executives and producers from Hollywood met with representatives of the Bush administration to discuss how they could contribute to the "war on terrorism".

Of course, it was stressed, especially by Bush's advisers, Karl Rove and Ari Fleischer, that under no circumstances would Hollywood be required to make propaganda films. "Content was strictly off the table."

This doesn't account for why a news anchor who poked fun at George Bush's running for cover in Nebraska was fired or why an MTV show was pulled from the air when a presenter disagreed with calling the WTC bombers cowards. In any case, such reassurances are meaningless promises.

It was highly unlikely that any studio was about to make a picture giving an accurate assessment of the war in Afghanistan, and we need only look at how mainstream cinema treated Vietnam to imagine how the current situation would be portrayed.

One military adviser was keen to stress that the current war wasn't Rambo, it was 'The Godfather'—implying that what America is doing is a clean, Corleone-style assassination of Bin Laden, as opposed to an imperialist onslaught on one of the world's poorest countries. Now there is something to be said for the comparison.

Incentive

Hollywood needs no incentive to make good patriotic films. It has always been more than happy to sacrifice truth, memory and accuracy to make a quick buck.

Witness the complete nonsense of Mel Gibson's *The Patriot*, where a southern farmer joins the War of Independence 'for the love of his family' or *Braveheart*, where William Wallace joins the War of Independence 'for the love of his family'.

Still, the current proposals would definitely put any rational person off going to the cinema for the next year, at least. Sylvester Stallone is trying to get *Rambo IV* together, in which he personally takes on the Taliban! Someone once said that the worst thing the Vietcong ever did was to take American hostages as it allowed Hollywood to make mountains of bad movies about plucky GIs going back to rescue their 'buddies'.

Bin Laden will quickly come to regret bombing New York when Sylvester Stallone makes movie after bloody movie about one man's war in Afghanistan. No doubt he'll kill Bin Laden, rescue some downed bomber pilots and rescue some girl from the evils of the veil.

Tom Cruise has promised to portray the CIA in a positive role in *Mission Impossible 3*. That has never been harder, given the ineptitude of the "intelligence" services who knew nothing about the single greatest act of terrorism ever committed in the US.

But then again don't suppose they'll mention that the CIA backed both Bin Laden and the Taliban during the 1990s.

But it isn't only that Hollywood is about to embark on a CIA inspired propaganda binge, the CIA is about to rent a truckload of action movies to see if there are any helpful suggestions for fighting Bin Laden. In particular, they were interested in *Die Hard*. Why? It's a while since I've seen it, but doesn't Bruce Willis blow up a skyscraper?

The one thing we can be thankful for is that Reagan is no longer in the White House, for Ronnie had problems telling the difference between the awful movies he was in and the awful foreign policies he presided over.

Having spent the second world war in Los Angeles making propaganda movies — and later informing on several colleagues to Joseph McCarthy's House Committee, Reagan made up stories about his exploits as a tail-gunner who had fought the Luftwaffe and claimed to film the liberation of concentration camps.

Having seen *Rambo*, Reagan remarked that the next time there were American hostages taken in the Middle East, he knew what to do. And indeed he did. He armed every tinpot dictator and fundamentalist tyrant in the Middle East. His successor, George Bush Sr. then went in to further oppress the subjects of one such tyrant in Iraq and now Junior is backing the very terrorists of the Northern Alliance whom Daddy and Ronnie armed the Taliban to get rid off. Honestly, it's like something out of the movies.

by PAUL MCCARTHY

film

The magic of marketing

by JAMES READ

HOW DID it happen?

Even the most conservative elements of the English upper classes are telling sob stories of how awful public schools were and how the experience damaged their development as people.

They say this is exactly the reason why they turned into awful adults who needed to spend a lot of money to feel better about themselves.

Now suddenly the story of one boy and his friends at a very English public school is being touted as the best children's story in decades.

"Anything that gets children reading has to be a Good Thing" sloganered the publishers marketing department.

"But don't let the readers know it's a woman at first or they won't buy the books" they said amongst themselves. Bloomsbury stock value trebled when Joanne Rowling joined their lists.

Rights

Cocoa-Cola must be hoping that some of this magic rubs off on them, having spent \$150m on the marketing rights alone.

The television rights have been sold for \$44m, double the previous record set by the *Titanic*. AOL Time Warner (the owners of the film studio) is making sure that Harry



Flying off the shelves at a shop near you.

will be on duvets, children's clothes and school stationery.

The merchandise will be produced not by spells but mostly in China with its long history of barbaric child labour practices and ter-

rrible record on workers' rights.

The commodity and its marketing power accounts for why some of the adults think that Harry Potter is so brilliant, but what about the film?

Well, its very long—almost three hours—and is filled with quite banal uses of magic — playing a pretty violent form of hockey on broomsticks is the highlight of the wizardry.

The film is filled with a

dreary nostalgia for a bygone England, where a boarding school comes to represent freedom from horrible guardians and boring suburbia.

Quite rightly, young readers want to escape violent adults (Harry is locked up under the stairs quite regularly) and a stultifying suburban existence.

The child characters are shown as having a real power independent of adults, something every child would love, but escaping to an essentially conservative, even reactionary world is depressing in the extreme.

Nasty

As the books develop there is a pretty nasty streak of anti French stereotyping — the really nasty characters have names such as Voldemort and De Malfloy. House elves act as a kind of serf class to wizards and witches, one character tries to 'free' them only to discover that the elves really want to be servants.

Even when the issue of racism is raised, it is easily resolved quickly, as being something only the truly 'evil' would believe in.

The film and the books deserve every award going for marketing, but don't bother going to see the movie unless you can't escape the eight year old's pester power.

book

The rise and fall of the Irish Labour Party

RAY KAVANAGH—author of the new book *Spring, Summer and Fall: The Rise and Fall of The Labour Party—was the party's General Secretary from 1986 to 1999.*

It is no surprise considering his position in the party over these years Kavanagh has a number of scores to settle and in this book he does so.

From the Right of the party, the former school teacher was one of the principal figures behind the expulsion of *Militant* in the 1980's.

He saw the party members grouped around the Labour Left group—Emmet Stagg, Michael D Higgins—as a block to future Labour Party electoral success.

The unprecedented

gains in '92 election Kavanagh puts down mostly to the defeat of the Left in the Labour Party.

But even he has to admit that the thousands on the streets over the X case, the Beef Tribunal, and the Church scandals caused a crisis in the main right wing parties.

In the 1992 election Labour won 33 seats, ten more than the party had ever achieved.

Many people put their hopes into the party as the people who were going to clean up politics and take on the right-wing policies of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael. But after the election, Labour went into government with both sets of right wing crooks in turn.

Workers did not forgive Labour and in the 1997 the party lost 16 seats.

Rather than looking at the underlying weakness

of the party, Kavanagh blames the individuals involved for the post '92 fall from grace.

But the problem of the party is much more profound than the spinelessness of Spring, Quinn and Co.

Failure

The Labour Party has been a failure as a vehicle for progress for the Irish working class.

Always happy to enter coalition with larger right-wing parties Labour was given the ultimate put down by former Fianna Fail Taoiseach Sean Lemass:

"The Labour Party is the most respectable party in the state.

"So long as they cannot be accused of being pale pink in politics they seem to think they have fulfilled their function

towards the Irish people."

The one chance that they had of breaking out of their irrelevance as one of the smallest social democratic parties in Europe was after the 1992 election.

But they blew it with their desire for the Ministerial mercs.

The party is now floundering.

Buy Kavanagh's book if you are interested in some party tittle-tattle over the past decade, but for left wing politics you will have to look elsewhere.

In that sense the book is a genuine reflection of Labour

■ *Spring, Summer and Fall: The Rise and Fall of The Labour Party* by Ray Kavanagh Blackwater Press £12.99.

— DAVID LYNCH

MIDDLE EAST CONFERENCE

Anti-capitalists meet in Beirut

THE PACKED lecture hall could have been anywhere in the world. Hundreds of thousands of people have taken part in similar meetings, counter-conferences and teach-ins to build an international anti-capitalist movement.

What was crucial about the World Forum on the WTO in Beirut in Lebanon in November was that for the first time the anti-capitalist movement had come to the Middle East.

As US cluster bombs fell on Afghanistan, activists from all over the world met to discuss building a movement to resist war and globalisation.

At least 800 people crowded into the opening rally to hear José Bové and Ahmed Ben Bella, one of the leaders of the great struggles against French colonial rule in Algeria.

There were differing views about the WTO at the conference, and debates about the way forward.

Ben Bella summed up the mood of many of the Arab activists when he told the crowd, "We know that the WTO is only meeting in Qatar because it is afraid to meet anywhere else."

"We need to organise a movement which is capable of throwing the WTO out of the Middle East as well."

Movement

Kanj Hamade, one of the organising team for the conference, says, "As soon as we found out that the WTO was going to meet in Qatar, we began organising to oppose it, and to stop it meeting in the Arab world."

"Everybody in Lebanon knows about the anti-globalisation movement. People are really interested in the fight against international capitalism and the multinational."

Julia, another student activist on the organising team, said, "We organised meetings and events in different universities to tell students about the issues of the conference. We set up an exhibition called 'Globalisation and Terrorism', with pictures and films."

"We have been showing the video of Seattle, and the BBC programme about Ariel Sharon and the massacre of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps."

The conference created a space for activists across the Middle East to meet, debate and organise together. Human rights campaigners, trade unionists and anti-globalisation activists from Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine,



There were protests across the globe against the WTO including this one in Thailand

Iraq and Syria all took part alongside delegations from India, Africa, Europe and the US.

Trade unions representing agricultural workers from Lebanon's impoverished south organised three buses to the opening session of the conference.

For many of these groups the debates of those few days have been a rare chance to meet and discuss

ideas and tactics openly. As a Syrian student explained, "It is extremely difficult for us to organise. Our situation is full of contradictions."

"We have come to the conference to show our opposition to globalisation, but one of Syria's leading economists, who advises the government, has also been invited to speak."

"We know that we can't rely on people like that to

stop globalisation."

Members of the Anti-Globalisation Group from Syria electrified the atmosphere when they announced that the Syrian government had rejected the WTO and called for demonstrations in Damascus against the meeting in Qatar.

One of the group's activists took the microphone to announce, "We have to leave the conference

because we need to be out on the streets with our people who are demonstrating."

"We invite everyone here to come and help us bring Seattle to Damascus."

United battle

MANY activists stressed the importance of using the example of campaigns in other countries to put an alternative to the barrage of propaganda from the WTO.

The World Forum on the WTO shows that there is a new generation emerging across the Middle East which feels part of the anti-capitalist movement.

Kurdish activists handed out a newspaper at the conference written by young people in Sulaymaniyeh in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Organised

Underneath a picture of the anti-capitalist protest in Prague last year there were articles discussing the movement against globalisation. Meetings about the war on Afghanistan have been organised in a number of different universities.

The video from the protests at the G8 summit in Genoa will be shown alongside exhibitions of pictures from the anti-war demonstrations in London.

The impact of the debates at the conference has gone far beyond the numbers who actually attended.

Several of the debates were shown live on Lebanese and Arab TV, and the final declaration of the conference was printed in the major newspapers.

There is a new sense of hope.

As a student activist said to massive applause during the final session of the conference, "Capitalists in the Middle East and in Europe are all part of the same system."

"What we need is a movement of workers' unity across the world to smash this whole rotten system."

War on the world's poor

THE WAR on Afghanistan dominated many of the debates within the conference.

Kanj explained why, for many activists in the Middle East, resisting the war and resisting globalisation are part of the same struggle:

"People are conscious that there is a link between the anti-capitalist struggle, the struggle in Palestine and the resistance to the war against Afghanistan."

"All of these things are different expressions of the same capitalist and imperialist system."

Heather is a student from the US, and a long-standing activist in the alternative media.

She believes that campaigners in the US have a lot to learn from people in the

Middle East: "This conference has been a real eye-opener."

"Many of my friends in the US don't make the connection between the issues of oil, war and anti-capitalism."

"People here have been working on linking up the anti-capitalist movement and the anti-war movement."

Many people in the conference argued that the war on Afghanistan is part of a wider war on all the world's poor.

Globalisation is wrecking the lives of millions across the Middle East.

Samer Hussein is on the executive committee of the Lebanese farm workers' union.

"Globalisation creates unemployment all over the world," he said. "In Lebanon the government is privatising the telephone system and the airlines."

"There are plans to priva-

tise the state electricity company. This is an organisation which employs 20,000 people."

"The average size of a Lebanese family is five people. So that's 100,000 people depending on those jobs, and 100,000 people who won't be able to buy food or drink if those jobs are cut."

It is clear that being part of an international movement has inspired people across the Middle East. As Samer explained, "I know people in Europe are opposed to globalisation."

"I saw the demonstrations in Genoa, Madrid and Brussels on satellite TV. Globalisation affects everybody, whether they live in the North or the South."

"The war on Afghanistan means that it is more urgent than ever to build on that feeling of international solidarity."

Globalise Resistance builds for Brussels protest

The European Trade Union Congress has called for people to mobilise against the neo-liberal corporate and military agenda that is being set in Europe since the Nice Treaty.

The next EU summit takes place on December 13/14 in Brussels.

The EU is following the same agenda as the WTO — prioritising the interests of corporate profits over our environment, workers' rights and public services.

The EU is also planning to pass new legislation that would equate anti-globalisation protestors with terrorists.

Globalise Resistance is organising transport

Contact Globalise Resistance:

E-mail globalise_resistance@yahoo.com or telephone

Diary Upcoming events

24-25 Nov Media Skills Weekend Workshop Practical media and communication skills for campaigners contact Comhlámh 01-4783490

1 Dec 3.30pm discussion with Ali Halimeh, delegate general of Palestine in Ireland - Mansion House, Dublin - organised by PANA

1 Dec Stop Esso Day - Contact Earthwatch for details of protest on 01 478 5100

3 Dec Anti-Bin Tax protest City Hall, Dublin 087 9090166

8 Dec 5pm Screening of 'Injustice' - Irish Film Centre, 6 Eustace Street, Temple Bar, Dublin - followed by Q&A with families and film-maker - Bookings: 01 679 3477

7 Dec Anti-Racism Gig The Point, Dublin - artists include Christy Moore, Sinéad O'Connor, Cora Venus Lunny, Afro-Celt Sound System, Juliet Turner, Frances Black, Luka Bloom, Máire Brennan, Kila and Mátisse - contact Amnesty 01-6776361

13 Dec European trade unions protest at EU summit Brussels, Belgium.

14 Dec Global peace & justice protest at EU summit Contact Globalise Resistance 086 4098186



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

Anti War events

Regular Events

Dublin

Irish Anti-War Movement - weekly stall - Saturdays 3pm - College Green

Waterford weekly vigil in Red Square - Thursdays at 7pm

Derry

Meeting in the junction, Bishop St - Thursdays 8pm - 07715 476277

Dublin, Clontarf

Weekly meeting - Smiths Pub, Fairview - Thursdays 8pm

Dublin, Rialto

Weekly vigil - Rialto Bridge - Fridays 6pm

Bray

Weekly vigil - McDonalds/County Hall - Fridays 6pm - 2304621

Other Anti-War Events

24 Nov 3pm

National demonstration at Shannon Airport against Irish involvement in the war - buses going from Dublin - contact 087 9890330

27 Nov 1-4pm

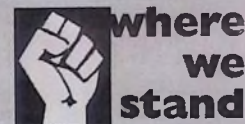
Teach-in Against the War - Trinity College - Contact 087 7955013

30 Nov 12noon

Mill Street Garda station, Galway - Indictment against Bertie Ahern for aiding and abetting crimes of violence against women - contact 091 565430

1 Dec

National Demonstration against the war Assemblée Garden of Remembrance, Dublin at 2.30pm 087 9890330



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.

Media

Jobs slashed as Wapping comes to Ireland

Irish Times

CIRCULATION of the *Irish Times* has been increasing over recent years, and the September figures were particularly good so it came as a massive shock to staff when they were informed by Management that over 250 redundancies were planned.

Irish Times editor Conor Brady went on *Morning Ireland* and said "We are talking about taking people out."

"Taking out" means up to one in three jobs are to go.

The company is even claiming it may not be able to afford a decent redundancy package.

Brady's claim that every level of the company will feel the pain is as vacuous as a dentist saying "This hurts me almost as much as it hurts you."

Directors

There was plenty of cash for the directors who have seen their pay rise an 160 per cent between 1996 and 2000, to £2.7 million.

Journalists spoke of complete shock at the announcement, but shock has turned to anger.

This figure does not include the 70 workers at *Ireland.com* who are employed by a different company.

Further losses have been

predicted by management at *Ireland.com*.

"Much has been made about money being lost here, but we have won many different awards and we provide a top class service," said one journalist at *Ireland.com*.

"Sales were up. It seems that management have made mistakes and we are all being asked to suffer."

Anger has been expressed by *Irish Times* staff that it seems that big mistakes by management have cost the Times its financial reserves.

£60m spent on a new Printing Press in City West and the use of the companies reserves was a risky strategy and now workers are being asked to pay for management mistakes.

Structure

The strange structure of the *Irish Times* Trust means that management can sit pretty with little fear for their jobs while 1 in 3 *Irish Times* staff face the boot.

Thomas Mc Dowell, has been the chairman of the trust since its inception in the summer of 1974.

The 78 year old chairman is a member of the trust which means he has vote equal to 50 percent of the board plus one.

In effect he has control of the trust for life.

With the first sign of trouble it is the staff that are asked to make all the sacrifices.

One journalist told *Socialist Worker*, "The *Irish Times* won't go into debt but we are supposed to pay with our jobs for mismanagement."

D'Olier Street is worth a fortune, but rather than take out a mortgage management are prepared sack people."

Independent

Bosses demand pay cuts and longer hours

INDEPENDENT Newspapers is to seek a five per cent pay cut from staff and the suspension of the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF).

A leaked document seen by *Socialist Worker*, circulated to senior staff says the company wants to cut all salaries by five per cent and seek suspension of the PPF "until such time as increases mirror enhanced productivity".

It also seeks "full and proper utilization of all redeployed staff". Which is clearly an attempt to reclaim the payments the company was forced to make when workers relocated to the new printing plant in City West.

Management are also attempting to increase in the working week from 32 hours to 35 hours.

The company wants reporters and sub-editors working to work an extra day a week and to cut back

on the numbers of freelances.

Crisis

Unlike the *Irish Times*, the Independent group isn't even pretending to have cash crisis, they are simply cynically taking a opportunity to attack their staff.

"Wapping without tears" was the phrase used by an Independent group executive Gavin O'Reilly to describe the group's move to a new printing press last year.

The 'rationalisation' of the newspaper industry has long been an aspiration of the Irish media bosses.

In Ireland print and media workers had avoided the worst attacks of the Murdoch style press in Britain, where hundreds of printers and journalists lost their jobs as Newspapers attempted to break the unions and increase profits.

In the *Irish Times*, RTE and the *Irish Independent* the bosses are now using the excuse of September 11th to attack working conditions and cut jobs.

Eircom

O'REILLY PLANS TO SACK 3,500

Valentia, the Tony O'Reilly-led consortium which is taking over of Eircom, plans to sack over 3,500 staff.

According to figures contained in a Valentia document, described by an informed source as a "blueprint for the future".

Salaries

The report states that many of these workers could be replaced by "customer service representatives" at salaries of £12,000.

Valentia has drawn up a detailed profile of the Eircom workers who have civil service status. They have an average of 24.5 years service and have an age profile of 42.5 years.

They are regarded by the authors of the report as expensive

and not very retrainable.

During the redundancy process a programme of simultaneous recruitment of younger, cheaper staff is suggested.

Parallels are drawn between the way Eircom operates its call centres and how its directory enquiries competitor Conduit Europe.

All of Conduit's 1,500 staff are contract workers on average salaries between £12,000 and £13,500.

Their employment conditions far worse than Eircom's.

The civil servants cannot be laid off as they enjoy security of tenure in their jobs under the 1983 Telecommunications Act.

Workers who joined Telecom or Eircom since 1984 do not enjoy this status.

The privatisation of Eircom has meant that Fat Cats like O'Reilly can run rampant over workers rights.

Easons

Action looms as bosses won't pay PPF

EASONS could face industrial action in the coming weeks because it has refused to pay staff 2 per cent pay rise due under the PPF.

The Labour Court decided Easons did not have to pay the increase because this "could undermine the position of the company to such an extent as to further the risk to competitiveness and employment".

The company made over £6 million last year.

The union leaders agreed the 2% rises due under partnership would be bound by Labour court rulings.

Reject

As Easons staff vote to reject the Labour Court recommendation the dispute could become a test case on whether the bosses can get away without paying the PPF.

NO TO PRIVATISATION!
RALLY AGAINST PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS
 Tuesday 4th December
 12.30pm
 Ulster Hall, Belfast
PUBLIC NEED NOT PRIVATE GREED!
 Called by NIPSA

Cork Anti-War takes off

TWO HUNDRED and fifty people marched through Cork to protest against the war.

They came from a wide variety of backgrounds and voiced their anger. The groups involved included Comhlámh, Afri, Cork Art Link and the Socialist Workers Party.

A follow up organising meeting drew 31 people and there was real enthusiasm for getting a bus to join the national anti-war demo in Dublin.

■ Cork Council of Trade Unions has now backed the Anti War Movement.

★ UP TO 100 cleaning, catering, laundry, portering and care-assistant staff at St Joseph's hospital, in Clonmel, Co Tipperary, took a series one day strikes this month. Nurses at the unit had already begun a work-to-rule over the overcrowding in the hospital.

Socialist Worker

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

70p

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Solidarity price £1

Civil liberties under attack

LABOUR WANT TO BRING BACK INTERNMENT



Bomber Blair

TONY BLAIR'S government, is ramming through new emergency powers that will destroy our civil liberties.

British Home secretary David Blunkett declared a state of emergency so that he could opt out of the Human Rights act and detain suspected foreign terrorists without charge.

Those detained would not be allowed to have a trial in public. Instead they would be tried in secret by a high court judge.

The home secretary would also be able to turn down asylum claims from anyone suspected of having associations with terrorists.

Blunkett said he "didn't give a damn" about the numbers who could be locked up under his vicious new law.

Definition

New Labour introduced the Terrorist Act earlier this year.

It outlawed 21 organisations and widened the definition of terrorism to include the "use or threat of action" against property in Britain or abroad to advance a "political, religious or ideological cause".

Anybody standing up against oppression, persecution or poverty in repressive countries could be defined as "terrorist" and detained.

New Labour has continually scapegoated asylum seekers, and these laws will give it more power to do so. John Wadham, director of the Liberty civil rights group, denounced Blunkett's new plans to lock people up without trial or legal process as "a fundamental violation of our rights."

"Arbitrary detention, locking someone up in-definitely without trial or any hope of release, is wrong in principle."

Hundreds of innocent people were locked up without charge when the government introduced internment in 1971.

This is not just the British government across the EU governments are attempting to agree new security measures against any acts with the aim of "seriously altering or destroying the political, economic or social structures of countries".

That would make everyone on the 300,000-strong protest against the G8 summit in Genoa in July into a criminal.

Civil liberties group Statewatch warned against such a policy, saying, "If it is intended to slip in by the back door draconian measures to control political dissent it will only serve to undermine the very freedoms and democracies legislators say they are protecting."