

Socialist Worker

(01) 8722682 <http://www.swp.ie> swp@clubi.ie

THE ANTI WAR PAPER—EVERY WEEK €1.00 / £0.70p

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These aircraft are re-supplying Bush's war machine in Iraq...



CLOSE SHANNON TO U.S. WARPLANES

Demonstrate
Saturday April 12th Assemble:
2.00pm Shannon Town Centre

Demonstrate
Saturday April 12th Assemble:
2.00pm Belfast Art College

THE IRISH government is committing a 'hostile act' against the Iraqi people by allowing US warplanes to use Shannon airport.

40,000 US soldiers will land in Shannon in the next few weeks on their way to fight a war that has already claimed nearly two thousand civilian lives.

US Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld recently accused Syria of committing a 'hostile act' because, he claimed, they allowed 'night goggles' to pass through to Iraq.

But isn't it far more of a 'hostile act' to turn a civilian airport into a military base for the US war effort?

Ireland's action means that it is regarded by the Bush regime as an unofficial partner in their 'coalition of the willing'.

US deputy defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, has said that 'It is very encouraging how many countries have stepped forward and given us help of various kinds, from basing [and] overflight rights to actually contributing forces.'

He said that in answer to a charge that the US was acting in a 'unilateral' way.

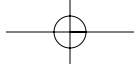
Ireland's action is taken as a signal of support for the war—even though US officials acknowledge that Ahern has 'political difficulties' in coming out and saying so.

The Irish people, though, are totally opposed to this war, with a two to one majority against it.

The mass anti-war movement is mobilising this majority and is putting huge pressure on this government.

In the last few weeks, FF's core vote has fallen by 8 percent to 31 percent. Opposition to the war has been identified as the one of main reasons—alongside disgust at the cutbacks.

The huge demonstrations and mass civil disobedience are having an effect. Let's keep it up—and throw the US warplanes out of Shannon.



The poison factory lie

KURDISH AND US forces seized the area held by the Islamist group Ansar Al Islam in the Kurdish area of northern Iraq on Sunday.

They did not find an "Iraqi poisons HQ" or "proof" of a link to a ricin plot, which the Sun proclaimed on its front page on Monday.

The BBC's Robin Denslow said he saw no evidence of weapons of mass destruction and that only a couple of bottles had been "taken away for analysis".

Nothing had come from that analysis by Tuesday.

And the Kurdish and US forces that took the area did not once reach for chemical weapons protection suits.

It doesn't run in the family

THE LATEST anti-war protester to volunteer to be a "human shield" in Iraq could prove a problem for one of Bush's gang.

She is Mary Cheney—daughter of US vice-president Dick Cheney.

A trip to detention

IF YOU cycle the world what country are you most likely to get arrested in?

Iranian Reza Khoshvarvesh Baluchi cycled 46,000 miles in a tour for world peace.

The finishing line was due to be Ground Zero in New York.

He cycled through Iran, the old "Eastern bloc" countries, Western Europe, Africa, and south and central America. But in the US he was arrested and detained by border patrol agents.

US's poison shells

BRITISH soldiers donned chemical warfare suits to protect themselves from radioactive depleted uranium in US weapons.

Journalist Audrey Gillan reports how soldiers put on the suits in order to recover the body of Corporal Matty Hull whose vehicle was fired on by US planes.

Depleted uranium was used in the last Gulf War and is the most likely cause of a staggering increase in deadly cancers in Iraq.

So British soldiers need chemical suits to protect themselves from US munitions.

But the western press are claiming that similar suits found in Iraqi barracks are "categorical" proof Iraq is going to use chemical weapons.

THE FANATICS WHO WANTED WAR

NEW evidence is emerging about the links between different 'neo-conservative' US think tanks who planned the war in Iraq.

The key figure at the heart of the network is William Kristol, the editor of the *Weekly Standard*.

This publication sells 55,000 copies to key opinion-makers in Washington and has been described as the 'house magazine' of the Bush administration.

In 1997, Kristol's paper published an open letter entitled 'Saddam Must Go'



Right wing fanatics: (left) William Kristol and (right) James Huntington

which was signed by 18 people.

Eight of these including Rumsfeld, Perle and Wolfowitz are members of the Bush administration.



The *Weekly Standard* is bankrolled by Rupert Murdoch, another strong war advocate.

Not one of 134 Murdoch-owned national

newspapers have come out against the war.

Murdoch's television station Sky News also specialises in 'military pornography' to back up the invasion.

Kristol is the central figure in the Project for a New American Century.

This receives funding from the Bradley Foundation which also funds the Harvard Centre for Strategic Studies.

The head of this was Samuel Huntington, who wrote the book 'The Clash of Civilisations' which predicted a Christian war against Islam.

The myths of precision bombing

US TOMAHAWK cruise missiles have actually missed Iraq entirely.

In the first ten days of the war five of the missiles hit Saudi Arabia, two hit Turkey and three landed in Iran.

You'd be hard pressed to discover that last week in the media, which was faithfully repeating Blair's spin about the "inaccuracy" of Iraq's air defences.

'WE WILL RUN THIS COLONY'

The Bush regime is already planning a colonial-style administration for Iraq.

The country is to be broken up into three administrative areas. Baghdad will be one, the others being territory around Mosul in the North and Basra in the South.

These are 'the same provinces with which the Turkish Ottomans ruled what is now Iraq for four centuries'

The proposed government will consist of 23 ministries, each headed by an American. A list of Iraqi exiles to be invited into government is being drawn up by the number three at the Pentagon, Douglas Feith, who takes orders directly from his immediate superior, Paul Wolfowitz.

Feith previously worked with fellow-hawk Richard Perle on a paper for the Israeli Likud Party in 1996, urging a 'clean break' with the peace process.

The man in overall charge of the new Iraq would be the arms-dealer and "Star Wars" weapons enthusiast, retired general Jay Garner. He will probably be advised by Ahmed Chalabi who is head of the Iraqi National Congress, an outfit named and promoted by one of the Pentagon's favourite PR firms, the Rendon Group.

Chalabi is also a member of the imperialist Project for a New American Century. He hasn't been to Iraq for 47 years. Garner is an ideological soul-mate of Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz.

He retired from the military in 1997 to become President of SY Technology, an arms contractor specialising in missile defence systems. The company soon landed contracts as part of the Star Wars program that Pentagon whistle-blower, former Lt Colonel Baker, alleged were procured through Garner's influence.

SY Technology was also awarded a \$1.5 billion contract this year to provide logistics services to US special operations forces.

It also has contracts to help build Patriot missile systems for Israel and Kuwait. Garner has said, "A strong Israel is an asset that American military planners and political leaders can rely on."

TERRORISM

Baghdad civilians are shot on sight

THE US army is subjecting Baghdad to a brutal terrorist attack. Every civilian is being treated with suspicion and hundreds have been shot on sight.

The *Observer's* James Meek reported how US Marines shot dead eight civilians and injured seven more at a checkpoint five miles east of the capital on Friday night.

The civilians were trying to flee the attack on Baghdad. One young 15 year old, Omar, was saturated in his parents' blood.

Lance Corporal Eric Jewell said they were shot because their car did not stop in time.

"It may sound bad but I'd rather see more of them dead than my friends... Everyone understands the word "stop", right?"

The US plan is to encircle the city and cut off basic supplies. It follows a similar attack on Basra.

Two weeks ago US and British forces put out of action the Wafa Al Qaed water treatment plant, which supplied over 60 percent of Basra's needs.

Bombing also wrecked electricity cables, shutting down pumping and treatment facilities at the plant.

The Red Cross commented, "There are reports of people drinking river water that has sewage flowing in it.

That is an alarming sign. For the children, the elderly and the more vulnerable, it could be serious."

This is biological warfare.

The thirsty don't get the water

SPECIALIST contractors from Texas received thousands of gallons of water last week to put out oil well fires in southern Iraq.

The nearby town of Safwan has not had water supplies for a week.

People have been living on hand-outs and rainwater.

Meanwhile secret documents leaked from the US State Department's "future of Iraq" office show plans to privatise Iraq's state-owned oil company.

It is the deliberate creation of the conditions for humanitarian catastrophe through measles, diarrhoea, respiratory infection and other diseases.

Bush and Blair are saying that if the people of Basra or Baghdad want food and water then they must surrender,



cooperate and greet those who bombed them as liberators. If they don't, they can thirst and starve.

As the siege of Baghdad begins, the US is stepping up this form of warfare.

Their first action was to knock out the whole of Baghdad's electricity. Now they are moving on to hit the cities infrastructure.

The entire US invasion plan for Iraq depended on civilian suffering.

US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld expected civil-

ians to take on Iraqi troops and security forces while US and British troops sped through the empty desert.

Now there is Iraqi resistance.

So the order is to besiege civilian areas and use food and water as a weapon.

A FOURTH WORLD WAR

ANOTHER figure who is tipped to play a key role in the new US-run Iraq is James Woolsey, a former head of the CIA and a member of the Project for a New American Century.

Woolsey belongs to the gang of fanatics who favour 'endless warfare' to impose American values on the Middle East.

He has described the war in Iraq as the onset of the 'Fourth World War' (the third being the Cold War), saying: 'This Fourth World War, I think, will last considerably



Ex-CIA man Woolsey longer than either World Wars I or II did for us.'

The US faces three enemies: the religious rulers of Iran, the 'fascists' of Iraq and Syria, and Islamic extremists such as al-Qaeda.

'As we move toward a new Middle East,' he said, 'over the years and, I think, over the decades to come...we will make a lot of people very nervous.

Our response should be, "Good! We want you nervous."

"We want you to realise now, for the fourth time in 100 years, this country and its allies are on the march."

SAFE FOR PROFIT

DRUG COMPANIES are not just profiting from AIDS and HIV patients in the world's poorest countries.

Giant pharmaceutical company Roche is going to charge \$20,000 a year per patient for a course of the new drug Fuzeon in Europe and the US.

That makes it the most expensive anti-HIV drug in the world—twice the price of Fuzeon's most expensive rival

treatments. Fuzeon is the first new anti-HIV drug in seven years.

It has to be taken with other medicines, which could bring the cost of treating one patient to between \$30,000 and \$40,000 a year.

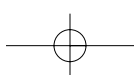
The new drug is particularly important for those who have developed resistance to other anti-HIV drugs.

This is estimated to be around 30 percent of patients in the

US. The giant pharmaceutical firms have patented the most appropriate combinations of drugs for AIDS in Africa, Latin America and Asia to keep the prices high.

But they do not make their huge profits from AIDS drugs in these countries as few can afford them.

The firms protect their patents to keep high price tags in Europe and the US.



editorial

War criminal in Belfast

George Bush's visit to Northern Ireland had nothing to do with bringing peace. It was a propaganda stunt, choreographed by the spin-doctors of Downing St and the Pentagon.

The aim was to soften the image of Bush and Blair and wrap them in the mantle of peacemakers. So the talks on Northern Ireland were simply bolted on to a summit for conducting the war.

The claim by Gerry Adams that Bush's visit was 'a strong signal' of support for the Belfast Agreement is, at best, naïve in the extreme. Bush has no record or even interest of involvement in the Northern peace talks.

Bush's visit was also supposed to give an impression that the war was virtually over and it was time to wrap matters up by discussing political reconstruction.

The summit was part of a psych-ops operation directed at the anti-war move-

Sinn Fein should boycott Bush

SINN FEIN speakers have spoken on countless anti-war platforms but up to now have failed to break their links with the White House.

The decision of Gerry Adams to welcome Bush to the North was a disgrace.

How can anyone who claims to be an anti-imperialist shake

the hands of a warmonger whose troops are butchering civilians in Baghdad?

Credence

By giving credence to a summit designed to project the global political leadership of Anglo-American imperialism, Sinn Fein assisted propaganda efforts to crush Iraqi resistance. They could have easily con-

tinued with negotiations on the North's peace process outside the framework Bush and Blair's summit of war.

Sinn Fein cannot forever have a placard in one hand and the US dollar in the other.

They cannot be allies of both the anti-war movement and right wing US politicians such as Peter King who wants permanent war to enforce US domination.

ment at home.

The US army will probably eventually conquer Iraq because as the Indian writer Arundhati Roy noted they only went to war 'after using the 'good offices' of the UN diplomacy (economic sanctions and

weapons inspection) to ensure that Iraq was brought to its knees, its people starved, half a million of its children killed, its infrastructure severely damaged [and] after making sure that most of its weapons have been destroyed in act

of cowardice that must be unrivalled in history.'

Conquer

But even if they eventually conquer the country militarily, the Bush gang have already been pulled up

short by the scale of Iraqi resistance.

Thousands of people who hate Saddam Hussein are fighting an anti-colonial resistance to the invading armies.

They have forced the US to skirt pass many

**Irish Anti-War Movement
Close Shannon
to U.S. troops!**

**National Demonstration on
Shannon airport
Saturday April 12th
Assemble 2.00pm Shannon
Town Centre
Book your buses now.**

For details contact: IAWM: 087-6329511

**stop the War!
Belfast Demonstration
Saturday 12th April,
Assemble 2.00pm Art College
Called by Derry Anti War Coalition and
Belfast Anti War Coalition
Details: 07900 353816**

towns rather than directly enter them.

The US military strategy of the Pentagon is now to take the centre of Baghdad in the hope that with the collapse of the Iraqi regime, resistance will cease.

But this is unlikely to happen.

No matter how many military 'victories' the US secure, they will loose the

political war.

A new generation has emerged in the Arab world determined to defeat US imperialism – and they are right to resist.

The anti-war movement in Western countries needs to step its efforts to fight this bloody war.

This is why we need big mobilisations in Shannon and Belfast on April 12th.

ANTI-WAR PROTESTERS BLOCKADE THE DAIL

ONE thousand people blockaded the entrance to the Dail for nearly three hours last week.

It followed a call from the Irish Anti-War Movement to let politicians who voted for US warplanes using Shannon know what it felt like for the people of Baghdad to be under siege.

The blockade began in a peaceful fashion after anti-war stewards directed demonstrators to sidestep a police barrier that had been erected to hold them back.

Resisted

But as the crowd began shout outside the Dail, riot police, without an identity numbers, began to assemble.

They soon began to wade into the crowd who resisted and staged a mass sit down.

The robo cops then man-handled people and dragged scores of them off.

One demonstrator told how 'In my past I had to put up with domestic violence from an abusive partner.

'The violence of the riot police brought it all back. I got a doctor's note about my injuries and I am going to follow this up. They will not get a way with it'.

The riot police also dragged away the Socialist Party TD, Joe

Higgins in full view of the cameras.

Despite their violence, the riot police could not prevent the blockade. TDs were hemmed inside the Dail car park and could not get out.

Eventually, the police were forced to negotiate with the march organisers and a deal was struck that the riot police would be removed to allow a rally to go ahead.

Depart

To the shouts of 'Cheerio, Cheerio' McDowell's new hit squad were forced to depart the scene.

The mass action outside the Dail was a powerful example of mass civil disobedience.

It was politically prepared for beforehand though speeches at the mass demonstrations.

It involved hundreds of people who were newly radicalised by the war. It was disciplined and peaceful.

Speaking at the rally afterwards, Kieran Allen of the SWP said, 'The campaign has entered a new phase of mass civil disobedience.

'Our aim is to build a broad mass movement that will help to trigger off the best form of direct action – strike action by workers against this bloody war'



■ Riot police rough up protesters

PHOTO: PAULA GERAGHTY

Derry rallies against war

ABOUT 500 people packed the Guildhall Square in Derry on Sat. 5th April for an anti-war rally. People were furious that Bush was jumping on the bandwagon of the Northern peace process.

Bush and Blair tell people here that it is unacceptable to use violence for political ends while waging a bloody war against the people of

Iraq.

Sinn Fein supporters were hugely embarrassed at the fact that their leadership did not dismiss the idea of meeting Bush.

One veteran republican said "They're saying that we have to remember the wider context of the peace process.

"Well, I say the peace process will not be unaffected by the truly wider context of the war in Iraq.

"If they do not refuse to meet Bush, then anything the IRA does to advance the peace

process will be seen as a response to Bush's command. That really would be a step too far.

Refuse

"If they don't refuse [to meet him] then I for one won't be canvassing—or even voting—for them again.

"And I'm sure I'm not alone." Speaking from the platform, Eamonn McCann of the SWP said "if the SDLP and Sinn Fein leaders refused to meet Bush,

the message would go across the world that we in Northern Ireland are part of the global movement against war.

"There are murals on gable walls in this town saying 'one world, one struggle'."

"We have always been inspired by struggles against imperialism and injustice in other parts of the world and we have always shown solidarity with them.

"This is the test for those who say they stand against injustice, against imperialism."

The Eamonn McCann column

What they learnt from Bloody Sunday

LISTENING to evidence at the Bloody Sunday Inquiry over the last few weeks, I've occasionally wondered what Derek Wilford makes of the news from Iraq.

Wilford, commander of the First Paras on Bloody Sunday, has had a torrid time on the witness stand.

At the end of one session of cross-examination by a barrister for the Bloody Sunday families, he turned to the presiding judge, Lord Saville, and pleaded, "My Lord, could I ask your indulgence, I am afraid I have had enough."

I wonder did he slump in front of the television at home later and hear the BBC's Nicholas Winchell explain that no blame should attach to the gunmen who had mown down seven women and children outside Najaf, that these, after all, were "young soldiers operating in a hostile environment, unsure whether their own lives were imminently at risk?"

But there won't be any sworn public inquiry into Najaf's Bloody Monday, Wilford may have muttered, reaching for the remote. In Derry 31 years ago, in the immediate aftermath of the massacre, British politicians and military chiefs felt it necessary to insist that all, or almost all, of the casualties had been gunmen or bombers.

But no need for such bluster in Iraq. No need for a tribunal to discover how come more than 60 Iraqis were blasted to death on

a road outside Nassiriya.

Reuters reporter Sean Maguire described burnt-out buses and trucks higgledy-piggledy along the highway and bodies strewn across the tarmac. US forces in the vicinity weren't certain whom exactly they'd killed. "We have very little time to decide if a truck or a bus is going to be hostile," Brigadier General John Kelly, told Maguire.

There's no reason to believe Kelly's career will be ruined as a result. In contrast, Wilford was reminded at the Inquiry that he'd confessed in an interview some time ago: "I think that day ended my career."

Mark Franchetti of the *Sunday Times* told of another incident near Nassiriya in which 15 vehicles were riddled with bullets.

He saw 12 civilian bodies on the road or tumbled into ditches. A girl of about five lay dead alongside the body of a man, maybe her father.

"Their mistake had been to flee over a bridge that is crucial to the coalition's supply lines and to run into a group of shell-shocked young American marines with orders to shoot anything that moved," wrote Franchetti.

Yet Wilford had to deny heatedly that his men had "shot at anything that moved"—the same phrase exactly was put to him—on Bloody Sunday.

The former para commander might

have have snorted with recognition, too, if he'd seen Lt. Mike Taylor on Channel 4 News as his soldiers emerged from the home of a Mr. Fouad which they'd just searched for arms.

The Fouads hadn't minded, Taylor assured reporter Alex Thompson. "They welcomed us in. They know it's for their protection as well."

There was a local dimension, too, to the bombing of the Baghdad market place in which 62 Iraqis were killed.

Turned out the missile had been manufactured by Raytheon. There's no reason Wilford should have any opinion on that aspect of the incident—although perhaps it will have prompted a thought in the minds of members of the SDLP, the Ulster Unionists, Sinn Fein and the DUP, which have welcomed the arms company to Derry.

The thought which might have occurred to Wilford is that the body count in Baghdad from that one incident was equivalent to four Bloody Sundays.

It's regularly said at the Inquiry that the most important thing is that the lessons of Bloody Sunday are learnt. It's hard to know what lessons Derek Wilford has learnt.

But the people prosecuting the war on Iraq appear to have learnt nothing at all, except, perhaps, that there's less comeback from killing Iraqis than from killing white, English-speaking Europeans.

The Irish government originally tried to hide the fact that US troops were using Shannon. Yet since January 1st over 33,000 US troops have passed through Shannon. Last year 553 foreign military aircraft landed in Shannon and there were 2,460 foreign military overflights. Between February 1st and March 25th, 157 aircraft carrying troops and their weapons were given permission to land.

Shut down Shannon warport!

THOUSANDS of anti-war demonstrators will protest at Shannon on Saturday against the fact that an extra 40,000 US troops are passing through the airport on the way to Iraq.

In recent weeks, the anti-war movement in Ireland has continued to grow as huge levels of anger have been directed against the government's continued support for a war which 68 percent of Irish people oppose.

The Irish Anti-War Movement is now calling for a campaign of mass civil disobedience to force the government to stop supporting the war.

As we gear up to yet another massive demonstration, *Socialist Worker* looks at some of the government's lies on Shannon over the past year.



While the government lies over Shannon, anti war protestors organise

*Nice and Neutral

Last October many people were conned into voting Yes to Nice as they were told by the government that voting yes would put a Declaration on Neutrality into the Irish Constitution.

All nonsense. Less than six months later, the same government is supporting a brutal war which has already killed over 1,000 civilians and has no UN backing. Bertie Ahern and Brian Cowen repeatedly try to get round this by saying that Ireland is 'militarily' neutral but not politically neutral.

But they seem to have forgotten that in February they sent over 120 armed Irish troops to Shannon to defend US warplanes from Irish people.

*No US troops in Shannon

How can the government possibly claim that they are not supporting this war? They have already signed us up to the NATO-linked Partnership for Peace and now they are protecting US war planes in Shannon.

How can the government possibly claim that they are not supporting this war? They have already signed us up to the NATO-linked Partnership for Peace and now they are protecting US war planes in Shannon.

It's now common knowledge that the US military is using Shannon. However, throughout the war on Afghanistan the government denied that this was the case.

It is only because of massive anti-war demonstrations and vigilant observation by local activists of the goings-on in Shannon that they can no longer hide the truth. As the horror of Omagh is visited on the people of Baghdad and Basra twenty times over each night, we have no way of knowing how many of these bombs have passed over Irish airspace or through Irish airports in recent weeks.

*US military landings bring much needed cash to Shannon

Yet another lie. No landing fees or communications fees are charged to the US military. These are paid for by the Department

*Planes passing through Shannon are unarmed

In January, Ahern said it was not correct that military aircraft landing at Shannon were carrying weapons. They very next day, Brian Cowen was forced to admit troops were carrying personal arms. Yet at the same time he rejected calls that gadaí should search planes in line with constitutional requirements saying there was no need as the US is a 'friendly country'.

As the planes are uninspected we have no way of knowing which weapons they are carrying. Furthermore, in January Seamus Brennan exempted some military aircraft from the prohibition on the transit of weapons or munitions (illegal under the 1973 Air Navigation Order). Some of the planes spotted at Shannon

include the US Airforce C-130 Hercules, capable of carrying the massive 15,000lb 'Daisy-Cutter' bomb which ignites a fireball that destroys everything within 900 feet and is so big it has to be parachuted from a plane.

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Can we kick out the US military?

The war is not going as planned for Bush and Blair. Far from liberation, the people of Iraq are facing a humanitarian nightmare. Despite this, they continue to show tremendous resistance to their aggressors.

Over two thirds of Irish people are against the use of Shannon by the US military and thousands have just demonstrated at the disgusting hypocrisy of warmongers in Belfast discussing the 'peace process' while they rain death of the children of Iraq.

By allowing the belligerent powers to continue to use Shannon, our government is complicit in the murder of Iraqi civilians.

A mass campaign of civil disobedience can force them to stop the use of Shannon as a US military base. By making this country ungovernable through mass protests, occupations, and walkouts we can kick the US military out of Shannon.

of Transport (a.k.a. the Irish taxpayers) who pick up the €1.5 million tab for the US military use of Shannon each year.

*There is no strategic benefit to the US in using Shannon

According to retired Army officer Dr Tom Cloonan, 'Shannon is playing a pivotal role in the most vital elements of the operation by helping to get the troops to the Gulf as quickly as possible'.

There are many advantages to Shannon for US military planners. Primarily its location on the western fringe of Europe means that aircraft can carry less fuel (and hence more troops or weapons) when crossing the Atlantic. Shannon has one of the longest run-

ways in Europe (ideal for large military aircraft) and its isolated location makes it easier to defend (from protestors) than airports in more built-up areas.

*Military use of Shannon is a 50-year established tradition

Again, not true. Retired Army Commandant and now peace campaigner Ed Horgan is challenging the government in the High Court over the use of Shannon by Iraq-bound US aircraft and troops.

In his case, Horgan argues that in allowing the use of Shannon the government is in fact departing from practice established over the past 50 years.

In a Department of Foreign Affairs security policy section internal document it was noted that 'on an exceptional basis' a decision was taken to provide landing and refuelling facilities to planes on the way to Afghanistan under UN Resolution 1368.

Other documents show that over the past 50 years Shannon was used by civilian aircraft carrying US troops only where these were not bound for a war or engaged in military exercises.

*The military use of Shannon is legal under international law

False. Under the Hague Convention US troop movements through Shannon and across Irish airspace is illegal. Article 2 states: 'Belligerents are for-

bidden to move troops or convoys of either munitions of war or supplies across the territory of a neutral Power'.

*US investment will pull out of Ireland if we withdraw the use of Shannon

When all else fails the government returns to the red herring of US investment.

'The US', they claim, 'is a "friendly country" which shares our common economic system and values.

'It is in our long-term interests to do the bidding of our US masters'. Again, this is complete nonsense.

US multinationals are in Ireland to make a profit.

They continue to make a higher rate of return on profit in Ireland than elsewhere.

For so long as they continue to do so they will remain.

Once their profit rates take a serious dive (like Fruit of the Loom or Gateway) they will pack up and leave.

Whether or not Shannon closes to the US military will have little impact on investment.

For instance, US corporations didn't pull out of France or Germany when those governments refused to support the war.

If the government really wanted to offer a secure future to those living in Shannon, they would commit to not selling-off the airport or privatising Aer Rianta as planned.

ARAB NATIONALISM

The fire last time

THERE HAVE been massive spontaneous demonstrations throughout the Middle East over the war on Iraq. Around 15,000 people protested in the city of Alexandria in Egypt on Sunday. There have been regular clashes with the police.

'Demonstrators took over Tahrir, the main square in the capital, Cairo. This is close to the British and Israeli embassies.

'Things are exploding every day. The Arab regimes are meeting the movement with massive repression'

This is how one Egyptian socialist described the protests.

Whatever the outcome of the war, it has awoken a giant.

The Arab working class last showed a desire to overcome local divisions and struggle against imperialism in the 1950s.

But that period led to disillusionment as their hopes were betrayed by the nationalist leaders, and from that despair we have subsequently seen the growth of Islamic, rather than secular, opposition movements.

The person who, above all, epitomised the last great upsurge of secular Arab nationalism was Gamal Abdul Nasser.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Britain was a weakened power in the Middle East and the U.S. yet to establish its dominance.

The years 1950-1952 saw huge militancy from the millions of the poorest in Egyptian society.

Workers organised swift mass strikes, peasants took up arms against the rural aristocracy, in the towns students and school pupils threw themselves against the army and police of King Faruk.

Three main opposition groups stood to gain from this unrest, the Muslim Brotherhood, the nationalist Wafdists and the Communist Party.

But the first two of these were terrified of the revolt of the poor, while the Communist Party was paralysed by its political outlook.

They had a 'stages' theory of revolution, where change must first of all be an anti-colonial political change, and only further in the future could there be an attempt at socialist revolution.

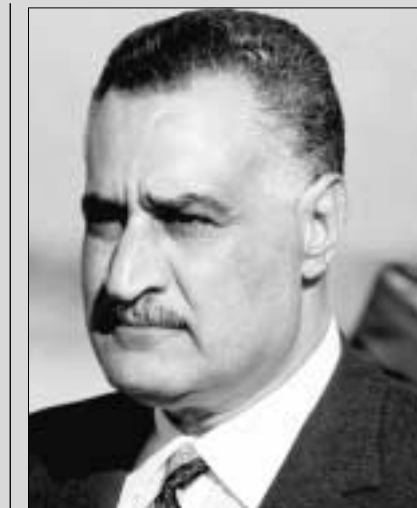
In the meantime there had to be a popular front between progressive nationalists and the working class.

Not wishing to frighten the nationalists with the spectre of riots and seizure of property or by a social revolution, the Communists saw the upsurge of violent class struggle as undesirable.

The timidity of the opposition meant that the radical upsurge was beginning to ebb, when, in July 1952, a small organisation within the army, the Free Officers, mounted a coup against the king and succeeded in ousting him.

It was a classic example of what Tony Cliff described as a 'deflected permanent revolution', where middle-class nationalist organisations took power because colonial power and the working class balanced each other off.

The results of these types of revolution, which occurred in Africa and Asia



■ Gamal Abdul Nasser: Challenged the legacy of colonialism but also attacked working class movement

throughout the 1950's, were not socialist societies, but state capitalist ones, as the nationalist revolutionaries soon found themselves forming a new ruling class.

Nasser was one of the key organisers of the Free Officers and became President of Egypt in November 1952.

Trying to create national development on a state capitalist basis meant that his regime was contradictory.

On the one hand, he found it necessary to challenge the legacy of colonialism.

It was his nationalisation of the Suez canal that thrilled the Arab world.

Hundreds of thousands of peasants and urban poor had been dragged into building that canal which remained in Western hands until 1956.

Britain, France and Israel struck back but their failure to defeat Nasser's popularity across the region. In 1958 the pan-Arab project was symbolised by the union of Syria and Egypt.

But on the other hand, to build up an underdeveloped economy based on the world market meant accelerating exploitation.

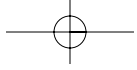
Only a month after coming to power the Free Officers crushed the working class movement, executing one of its key leaders after sending tanks into a major strike only a month after coming to power.

The Communist Party offered little resistance because they had seen the Free Officers as the progressive forces they were looking to work with, and were so confused that even after their leading members were jailed, they still put out literature uncritical of the regime.

The same pressures of the world market also shattered Arab unity at the top, as different elites found themselves rivals for contracts and profits.

The failure of the nationalist movements to organise radical support for the Palestinians and the growing corruption of the new elites meant that the fervour and enthusiasm of the early 1950's slowly dispersed.

This time around the movement has to rely on the independent strength of the Arab working class to lead the anti-imperialist protest, and not to harness their fortunes to a perceived radical section of the Arab elite.



FROM SAIGON TO BAGHDAD

Brutality of Colonial War

By DAVID LYNCH

The scene here is getting eerily reminiscent of one of America's most famous conflicts in a foreign land.

So said James Mates an ITV reporter embedded with the American infantry last week.

Mates was highlighting an obvious parallel between the present conflict and the Vietnam War—young American soldiers fighting in a far off land where they are not welcome; millions of people across the planet protesting against the war; a belligerent President in the White House unconcerned about civilian casualties.

Some 58,000 Americans died in Vietnam during the war. So did between 1.5 and 2 million Vietnamese civilians and soldiers. The war escalated after the American troops started to enter the country in 1961.

They eventually left in the 1970s after they had been defeated by the people of Vietnam.

From 1945 to 1954 the Vietnamese fought the French colonialists until they defeated them. The northern half of the country became a Stalinist regime: North Vietnam.

The southern half became a military dictatorship backed and funded by the US.

In the late 1950s on the National Liberation Front (NLF) in the South began a guerrilla war, against the orders of the Communist government in the North. In the end the North Vietnamese was morally obliged to support the movement in the South.

Then the US troops came, 11,300 in 1961, 185,300 in 1965, 536,000 in 1968.

The more Americans came, the more it became a nationalist war and the less support the Southern government had.

The NLF troops joined with peasant auxiliaries who worked the land during the day and fought as soldiers at night.

They would attack South Vietnamese and American troops and bases at night, and then disappear back into the countryside during the day.

In this form of guerrilla war, there were no fixed targets, no set battlegrounds, and there was no territory to take.

The Pentagon responded with a counterinsurgency strategy called "search and destroy." Without fixed battlegrounds, combat success was judged by the number of NLF troops killed—the body count.

For each enemy killed, for every body counted, soldiers got three-day passes and officers received medals and promotions. This reduced the war to no larger purpose than killing.

Any Vietnamese killed was put in the body count as a dead enemy soldier, or as the GIs put it, "if it's dead, it's Charlie" ("Charlie" was GI slang for the NLF).

This was an inevitable outcome of a war against a whole people. Everyone in Vietnam became the enemy—and this encouraged random slaughter.

Just as in Iraq today the Vietnamese were treated as shifty and untrustworthy and officers ordered their men to "kill them even if they try to surrender—we need the body count."

At the end of January 1968, on Tet, the Vietnamese New Year, the NLF sent 100,000 troops into Saigon and 36 provincial capitals to lead a struggle for

■ The My Lai Massacre in 1968 when US soldiers murdered hundreds of civilians. "This is what you've been waiting for—search and destroy—and you've got it," said their superior officers. Bodies were strewn along the road. Above: a distraught mother looks at the mutilated bodies of her murdered children



the cities. The U.S. counterattacked with savagery.

In Saigon alone, American bombs killed 14,000 civilians. The city of Ben Tre became emblematic of the U.S. effort when the major who retook it announced that "to save the city, we had to destroy it."

But alongside the indiscriminate killing there was constant talk as in Iraq of winning the "battle for hearts and minds."

In 1962, the Strategic Hamlet programme was introduced. This was to move peasants into new villages under the control of the South Vietnamese army.

A stockade was built around the village and these were then patrolled by armed guards.

This strategy failed dismally and some observers claimed that it actually

increased the number of peasants joining the NLF. As one pointed out:

"Peasants resented working without pay to dig moats, implant bamboo stakes, and erect fences against an enemy that did not threaten them but directed its sights against government and American officials."

Another link between the two conflicts is the early signs of growing concern within the military establishment that US/UK troops may become "demoralised" by the huge anti-war protests on the home front.

Already two British soldiers are facing a court martial and imprisonment because they do not want to fight in a war that kills innocent civilians.

British soldiers were denied access

to mobile phones in the days before the invasion because Generals feared their troops were hearing from their family and friends about the huge anti-war feeling back in Britain.

Today's generals are worried about what happened in Vietnam where the huge scale of the anti-war movement led to a spirit of mutiny in the US army.

In 1971, US Colonel Robert Heini, for example, reported that: "By every conceivable indicator, our army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and non-commissioned officers, drug-ridden and dispirited where not near-mutinous."

The class make up of the present US/UK armies is just like Vietnam—overwhelmingly working class.

According to Christian Apply's book

"Working Class War" about 80 percent of soldiers in Vietnam came from blue collar families. About 20 percent had fathers in white collar jobs, but mostly routine ones.

But what unites both conflicts most is the sheer brutality of the US/UK invading forces.

In the village of My Lai in Vietnam, officers demanded that their men kill all inhabitants—more than 400 women, children, infants and old people.

Only one minor officer, Lt. Calley, received a sentence for this Nazi-like war crime. President Nixon quickly pardoned him.

At that point, 32 percent of the American people thought high government and military officials should be tried for war crimes.

Although it is not obvious from the sanitised coverage of the war on FOX and CNN, the same is happening again in Iraq.

An article in the *Sunday Times* by journalist Mark Franchetti exposed the naked brutality of the US military towards Iraqi civilians.

He expressed his shock at how the US marines fighting near Nassiriya had assaulted and murdered civilians.

He describes one incident: "Some 15 vehicles, including a mini-van and a couple of trucks blocked the road. They were riddled with bullet holes. Amid the wreckage I counted 12 dead civilians. All had been trying to leave the town, probably for fear of being killed by the US."

In the face of such brutality the Iraqi people, just like the Vietnamese have shown true courage in resisting this invasion.

AGENT ORANGE: DEADLY CHEMICAL WEAPON

THE US used them in huge amounts of chemical weapons during the Vietnam War. The effects are still felt in Vietnam where two generations later children are born with birth defects. This is the nightmare future which is being handed to Iraq by the US/UK bombers who fire uranium tipped missiles.

Nearly 30 years after the Vietnam war, a chemical weapon used by US troops is still causing hideous damage on each new generation.

Millions of litres of defoliants such as Agent Orange were dropped on Vietnam. But US government scientists and military claimed that these chemicals were harmless to humans and short-

lived in the environment.

The US military argued that Agent Orange was a prototype smart weapon, but just like now the weapon did not turn out to be as "smart" as the Pentagon would have had the American public believe.

Teams of international scientists working in Vietnam have now discovered that Agent Orange contains one of the most virulent poisons known to man.

A strain of dioxin called TCDD which, 28 years after the fighting ended, remains in the soil. It continues to destroy the lives of those exposed to it.

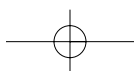
Evidence has also emerged that the US government not only knew that Agent Orange was contaminated, but was fully aware of the killing power of

its contaminant dioxin.

Despite this they still continued to use the herbicide in Vietnam for ten years of the war and in concentrations that exceeded its own guidelines by 25 times.

When US troops directly invaded Vietnam in 1964, the Pentagon signed contracts worth \$57m (£36m) with eight US chemical companies to produce defoliants, including Agent Orange.

According to a report in the *Guardian* "Last April, a conference at Yale University attended by the world's leading environmental scientists, who reviewed the latest research, concluded that in Vietnam the US had conducted the largest chemical warfare campaign in history".



reviews

Irish writers speak out against the war

THE OBSCENE invasion and bombing of Iraq blunders on with its high-tech expensive weapons, claiming daily the lives of innocent people on all sides and creating instability, conflict, and environmental destruction.

Tens of millions of people worldwide have marched to show their disapproval and anger at this violence, and many Irish writers are among them.

This 142-page book is full of poems and prose by 50 Irish writers (and they could have included many more), edited by historian/writer Conor Kostick and Katherine Moore of the Irish Writers Centre

It makes a strong and creative stance against war as it roams through history and geography, showing us the cruelty and folly of wars from the fall of Jerusalem in 1099 to the present conflict. The book is organised alphabetically by author, from Philip Casey to Roddy Doyle to Seamus Heaney to Michael D Higgins, from Eamonn McCann and Jean O'Brien to David Wheatley and Ann Zell, and all of the contributions are worthwhile.

McCann in a prose piece points out that 'the main protagonists of World War I were competing sets of robber-barons,' sending young men to die for their 'right' to rule the waves and rob the

John Lennon the Art Collection



■ Early years, John Lennon in Germany

BEFORE his career with the Beatles took off, John Lennon was a student at the Liverpool Art Institute.

He kept an interest in the visual arts throughout his life, meeting Yoko Ono

for example, through the 'fluxus' art movement, a 1950's version of dadaism. From 1968 Lennon returned to drawing and sketching and the results of his work are currently on show in the Apollo Gallery in Dublin.

Most of the pieces are affectionate, warm, simple sketches that chronicle his wedding ceremony with Yoko, honeymoon and the famous Bed-in for peace.

There are also cartoon-like illustrations, some vividly coloured, which are

child-like and project happiness.

These pieces are well worth seeing and act as a reminder that despite his stratospheric status Lennon managed to preserve his humanity.

But there is something quite distasteful about the commercial nature of the exhibition.

The pictures on show are prints from the originals and have been touring for ten years, accumulating sales.

As you glance down the price sheet you can't help doing the maths, 300 prints of 120 works at an average price of €10,000—means this collection if it sold out would make €360m.

A figure which disperses the atmosphere of love and intimacy that would have stayed with this exhibition if it had been a public, non-commercial exercise. —CONOR KOSTICK

Is this Al Pacino's worst film yet?



■ Pacino: 'I'm just doing this for the money'

POOR Al Pacino. He's been in some good films but this is not one of them. He is the most watchable figure on screen but he's not helped by the script or story line.

At one point his character claims to want lots of money and one can only assume this is Pacino ad libbing to explain to his fans why he accepted the part.

The film starts with a set of clichés, meanders through at a snail's pace, speeds up moderately towards the end but by that time the audience is chatting, leaving or waiting for the credits.

It is about the CIA which is full of decent, good-looking, patriotic guys, and a couple of girls, who know what right is and are thirsting to fight the evil which surrounds them.

The best bit apart from the shambling Pacino is a computer programme called Spartacus which makes a brief appearance.

Unfortunately the writers seem to think Spartacus enslaved others. In a more intelligent film, this might be ironic but here the only conclusion is that it's a result of ignorance.

The CIA won't get many valuable recruits from this film. Don't waste your money.

world.

Raymond Deane translates a 17th century poem which could have been written about the effects of today's conflicts, worse than all the carnage, 'the human spirit robbed of hope.'

Tim Pat Coogan's insightful essay on 'The State of America' concisely sets out

the background to the present war, facts most Americans are not told.

Wasps

Jean O'Brien's war against wasps in the attic echoes how the enemy is dehumanised in language, while Mary O'Donnell tells us

about the 4,051 Children of Drancy, held for four days without their mothers or food before being shipped to Auschwitz.

The aim of the creators is to 'make available a book that inspires and deepens opposition to war,' and they have done so.

Buy it, read it, and know

that in addition all royalties are being donated to the Irish Anti-War Movement.

—GLENDA CIMINO, Steering Committee, Irish Anti-War Movement ■ Irish Writers Against War, edited by Conor Kostick and Katherine Moore, The O'Brien Press, Dublin, €10

Marxist Forums

Big ideas discussed in informal settings



Ballybrack:

8.30pm Thurs 24 April "Martin Luther King and the politics of civil disobedience" Loughlinstown Community Centre

Ballyfermot:

8pm Thurs 17 April "Freedom for Kurdistan" Ruby Finnegins Pub

Ballymun:

Martin Luther King and the Politics of Civil Disobedience 7.30pm Thursday April 10th Axis Centre

Belfast South:

Palestine: The Road Map to Nowhere 10th April 7.30pm Peter Froggett Centre. Contact 07900353816 for more details on SWP activities in the South Belfast area.

Belfast Ormeau Rd:

Truth: The first casualty of war Thursday 11th April 7.30pm Hatfield Bar. Contact 07719632264 for more details on SWP activities in the Ormeau area.

Belfast West:

Palestine: The Road Map to Nowhere Sunday 13th April, 3pm An Culturlann

Bray:

8pm Thurs 17 April "Martin Luther King and the politics of civil disobedience" The Royal Hotel Bray

Clondalkin:

8pm Monday 14th April, St Peter's National School, Cabra

8pm Mon 14 April "Martin Luther King and the politics of civil disobedience" The Oakfield Lodge Hotel

Cork:

Palestine: Crisis in the Middle East - Palestine and the road map to nowhere Saturday 5th April 3pm An Spailpin Fanach

Crumlin:

8pm Wed 23 April "Can Kurdistan be free?" phone 0876988540

Derry Central:

Thurs 10th April 8pm in Foyle Friend, Gt. James St. Topic: Vietnam when America was defeated

Drogheda:

Martin Luther King and the Politics of Civil Disobedience thursday 10th April at 8.30 in McHugh's Bar, Chord Road

Dublin North City:

Truth, the first casualty of war, Wednesday April 9th 8pm The Snug, Dorset St

Dublin South City:

7pm Wed 16 April "Martin Luther King and the politics of civil disobedience"

Dublin North City Anti war public meeting with Joe Costello LP, Pat Clafferty GP, Joe Carolan SWP 8pm Monday 14th April, St Peter's National School, Cabra

Dundalk:

From people power to revolution—politics of the SWP 4pm every Saturday Spirit Store.

Dundrum:

8pm Mon 14 April "Vietnam: When a superpower was defeated" Dundrum Family Recreation Centre.

Dun Laoghaire:

8pm Wed 15 April "Martin Luther King and the politics of civil disobedience" Farrells Pub, Marine Rd

Galway:

Truth: The First Casualty of War April 10th Java's Cafe, Abbeygate St

Harolds X:

8pm Tue 15 April "Martin Luther King and the politics of civil disobedience" Rosie O'Grady's Pub

Liberties:

8pm Wed 23 April "Freedom for Kurdistan" phone 0879584221

Rathmines:

8pm Wed 16 April "Martin Luther King and the politics of civil disobedience" O'Connell's Pub, Portobello

Rialto:

8.30pm Wed 23 April "Freedom for Kurdistan" St Andrews resource centre

Stoneybatter/Cabra:

A world without war or greed—the future socialist society, Wednesday April 9th 8pm Aughrim Street Parish Centre

Tallaght:

8pm Wed 23 April Freedom for Kurdistan Tallaght Welfare Society

Tralee:

Can War lead to Revolution April 10th 8pm in An Cumann Iosaif Community Centre

Waterford:

How do we get regime change at home? Thursday April 10th: Old Rogue 8pm

For details of other Marxist Forums contact (01) 872 2682

Sick of the lying media?

MEDIA coverage of the war has been a disgrace. The bosses at the BBC have told their journalists to keep "anti war extremists" off the air.

Sky has been using reports from ex Colonel Oliver North, relayed from fellow Murdoch channel Fox TV. North, you may remember was disgraced at the time of the "Iran-Contragate" scandal, when he was found to be involved in illegal gun-running on behalf of right-wing terrorists seeking to overthrow the democratically elected Sandinista government in Nicaragua under orders from Ronald Reagan.

RTE's coverage is little better and most of the Irish papers are owned by millionaire Tony O'Reill, whose big business interests mean he ensures his papers maintain a right-wing slant.

Most Western journalists are "embedded" with US/UK troops and report only what their army handlers allow them.

Al Jazeera's website has been put out of action by hackers (guess who?) and American internet companies and its TV station is under constant threat.

Isn't it doubly important then to have a resource which exposes the lies and gives the arguments necessary to back up the anti war movement?

In addition to this Socialist Worker provides analysis and news of struggles. It is the campaigning anti-war paper.

To help the new weekly Socialist Worker be more widely read and to sustain it as a weekly publication we appeal to all our readers to take a couple of extra copies to sell each week among workmates, fellow students or neighbours. You pay only for what you sell and you will be helping get the message out to many more people. Will you help? If you would like to lend a hand to expand Socialist Worker's readership, return the slip below today.



Capitalism is wrecking the lives of millions and endangering the planet. A new society can only be constructed when the workers take control of the wealth and plan its production and distribution for human need and not profit.

REVOLUTION The present system cannot be patched up or reformed. The courts, the army and police exist to defend the interests of the wealthy. To destroy capitalism, we need to remove the present state structures and create a workers' state based much greater political and economic democracy.

AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND WAR War is a constant feature of capitalism today as the imperialist powers try to dominate the earth. Bush's "War on Terrorism" is a crude device to attack

any country which threatens US military, strategic or economic dominance. END RACISM AND OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression and racism. This divides and weakens the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women. We oppose immigration controls which are always racist.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

We stand for workers unity against the Assembly politicians and Blair government. Like great socialist James Connolly, we believe that partition has brought about a 'carnival of reaction' We want to see an Irish workers republic where all workers gain. Our flag is neither green nor orange but red!

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. We call for co-operation between left-wing parties and the formation of a strong socialist bloc. We stand for fighting trade unions and for independent rank and file action.

SWP ACTIVISTS ARE ORGANISED IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

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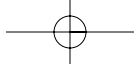
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Waterford strikes for cancer services

NEARLY 3,000 people joined a protest organised by the Waterford Council of Trade Unions to call for the installation of a radiotherapy unit in the South-East.

Most were workers who took part in a two hour work stoppage, ignoring the attempts by both Fianna Fail and IBEC to sabotage the march.

IBEC, the employers body, issued a statement the morning of the protest, encouraging employers to prevent workers from leaving their workplace and participating in the protest.

Fianna Fail Councillor Mary Roche, similarly attempted to dissuade people from taking part, claiming there were 'anti government elements' involved in the organisation such as the Socialist Workers Party, WCTU and others.

The loudest cheer of the day was when she was condemned from the platform.

An expert review group, was established in May 2000

Nurses move over cuts

MORE THAN 50 INO nurses are taking part in a work to rule at St. Patrick's hospital in Waterford.

The industrial action, called to highlight inadequate staffing levels and underfunding at the hospital is now in its second week.

The work to rule began with a one hour protest outside the hospital and

has continued with all nurses refusing to carry out non-nursing duties such as answering phones, making beds, doing administration and portering work.

Following pressure put on them by the INO, the South-Eastern Health Board agreed last year to an increase of 1.5 nursing posts as an interim measure pending the provision

of more additional staffing in the SEHB service plan for 2003.

The Health Board then claimed they could not fulfil this because they did not receive any additional funding from the government, forcing the nursing staff to take industrial action in order to win the most basic services for patients. —ROY HASSEY

by the government to conduct a feasibility study on cancer care provision in Ireland.

Recommend

It is set to recommend that the life-saving radiotherapy units will be provided in

Dublin, Cork and Galway but not in the south-east region.

The findings of the report have been widely known for more than a year.

Despite this, the government has yet to publish the report due to the strength of feeling in the area.

arduous 200 mile round journey which puts huge strain on those who are already gravely ill.

Gary, a factory worker who took part in the work stoppage to attend the protest told *Socialist Worker*: 'It's a disgrace what's happening with the radiotherapy unit.

'There's one reason and one reason only why its not being put in the south-east, because the government won't pay for it.

'People have to pay for their penny-pinching with their lives.

'Fianna Fail couldn't care less about the suffering people here have to go through.'

The WCTU have called another protest for Saturday 26th April and are encouraging people from across the south-east region to come to Waterford and take part.

—ROY HASSEY

It is estimated that 50% of the 1,000 new cancer cases in the south-east every year require radiotherapy treatment, but only 20% receive it due to the 10 week waiting list at St. Luke's Hospital in Dublin (patients need to be seen within 6 weeks) and the

CIVIL SERVANTS LOCKED OUT

NINE hundred members of CPSU working in Dept of Agriculture offices have been on official action for the last three weeks.

The issues involved in the dispute are lack of promotional prospects, poor pension conditions, and the implementation of new work practices without compensation for clerical officers working in these offices.

On week one the Clerical Officers refused to handle phones, faxes, and emails. On week two this escalated to stoppage of counter duties in the afternoons.

On Tuesday 1st April workers in Galway, Mayo, Limerick, and Kerry were suspended and pickets were placed by the locked out staff.

Geraldine Conroy, chairperson of the national agricultural committee of CPSU was on the picket line outside the Galway office on Friday.

She said 'These issues have been raised by our union for over two years and while various reports and surveys have been carried out, management have always had an excuse not to deal with our legitimate concerns.

'The time for excuses is over. We aim to have this sorted out once and for all'.

—SEAN DUNLEAVY

Belfast workers sit in

SACKED Aldergrove airport workers staged a sit-in at ATGWU headquarters in Belfast on Thursday 3rd April.

Shop steward Gordon McNeill told *Socialist Worker* "our protest was about lack of support from the union—and lack of democracy in our union".

The former security workers were advised to go on strike by the ATGWU but then the union abandoned them when the employers used Tory anti-union legislation to claim the strike was illegal.

"What galled us the most", says Gordon McNeill, "is they called the riot police to put us out of OUR building.

"All we were asking was for someone to sit down in a room and talk to us about our situation. Instead they called the police to drag us out.

"When we protest outside the Irish regional committee in Dublin, Jimmy Kelly of Waterford Glass will be raising the issue for us.

"Then we are going to London to protest outside Transport House there.

"People are saying they agree with us that it's time for change, time for democracy in the union."

SAVE OUR MATERNITY UNITS!

LAST Saturday about 350 men and women gathered to protest about the closing of twelve of the only twenty two remaining maternity hospitals in Ireland.

Soon there could be only ten maternity hospitals in the whole country.

Women now have to drive up to two hours just to find a hospital where they can give birth.

If this happens the number of roadside births will increase dramatically.

Already the number of caesareans and induced

births has risen due to women planning their deliveries to order to avoid roadside births.

We need to demand safe, high quality, local maternity services.

One of the speakers at the march was Denise Livingston.

Her baby died as a result of being born on the side of the road after being turned away from one hospital during her labour en-route to another.

She warned that Michael Martin had better

watch out.

A loud cheer went up when one of the speakers said that in Baghdad a maternity hospital had been bombed also and that those babies had the same right to be born safely as Irish babies.

It is ridiculous that this government is spending money on new jets and unnumbered riot police uniforms when there are serious risks to women and children's health by the lack of funding of our hospitals.

—DORINDA SINNOT

ADM workers locked out

THE American employer ADM Chemicals at Ringaskiddy Co Cork has locked out eighty workers, members of SIPTU, since March 5th 2003.

The company, which is fully backed up by IBEC, are insisting on new arrangements, including a new shift roster and Christmas working.

The employer stood at the gate and refused entry to people who refused to accept the new arrangements.

The company are also refusing to meet shop stewards and will only to

talk to full time officials.

They are prepared to go to the Labour Court but only if the outcome is not binding on them. They, of course, expect that a favourable outcome for them to be binding on workers.

This is part of a new offensive by employers to make workers pay for the economic downturn.

Part of their argument is that they have an over-supply of chemicals. They agree that workers have produced good output results.

It is a classic example how crises of over-produc-

tion develop under capitalism.

Capitalists often aggravate these crises by cutting workers living standards, which means in turn that they can buy less of the 'over-produced' goods.

Workers at Finbar's Hospital took up a collection for the locked out men since they have been refused social security.

Union branches can help speed up a settlement by sending messages of support to Anne Marie McIlraith, union official, Connolly Hall, Lapps Quay.

—JIM BLAKE

Do you think this war is about oil and US power?

Do you think people should come before profit?

Had enough of Bush, Blair and Ahern's contempt for democracy?

Do you want to fight racism, and the scapegoating of refugees?

YES? Then you belong in the Socialist Workers Party

To join or for more information: Fill in the form and Send to:
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