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RED ALERT

CHE'S LEGACY ALIVE IN CUBA.

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As you can see we intend to distribute RED ALERT as a Freesheet. Unfortunately it costs money to produce the paper, which is why we ask people to pay a solidarity price. If, like us, you believe that a Left-wing paper is needed please support our appeal. Send your donation to;

RED ALERT
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A NEW TRADE UNION

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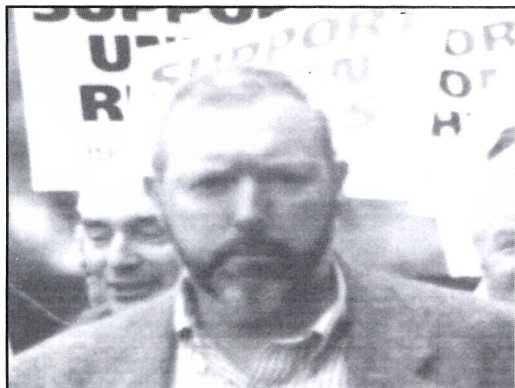
DO WE NEED A NEW TRADE UNION?

ICTU policing trade union movement.

Critics silenced.

By our Industrial Correspondent

Over the course of the last few years, more and more trade unionists have become disenchanted with the leadership of the ICTU, which has become so identified with the interests of business and the government that it is becoming increasingly difficult to see them as an independent workers' organization. Totally wedded to a policy of class collaboration, which they pass off as "Partnership", they act as if their role was one of policing the trade union movement. When left-wing trade union leaders such as Mick O'Reilly pointed out the short comings in the various "Partnership" agreements, it was ICTU leaders rather than employers or government spokespersons who were sent in to bat on the bosses side. They also threw the whole weight of the official trade union movement behind the campaign for a yes vote in the Nice referendum. In spite of the fact that motions opposing the various European Treaties are regularly adopted by the rank and file as Congress policy. A number of train drivers were unhappy with their union, SIPTU, and broke



Mick O'Reilly. Photo: Red Alert!

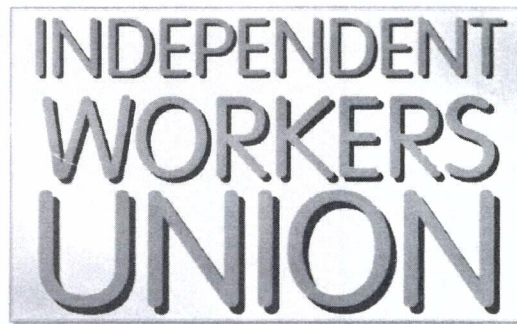
away to form a new union ILDA. Anxious to be part of a larger and stronger union they joined the ATGWU which was led at the time by Mick O'Reilly. SIPTU was far from happy with this development. In Cork the Southern Health Board (SHB) even tried to use the rules of the ICTU to thwart the Home Helps by insisting that another union, SIPTU, held sole negotiation rights. The ATGWU, under O'Reilly, had emerged as the most consistent opponent of ICTU's policy of class collaboration and O'Reilly himself was almost certain to be re-elected to the executive of ICTU at its conference last Summer.

Then, last June, just before the ICTU conference O'Reilly was suspended from his position as Secretary of the Irish region of the (A)TGWU. The order came from TGWU general secretary Bill Morris in London. Morris had opposed

However since the "Partnership" agreements came into being in 1987 dissent is no longer tolerated. Irish workers were dragged into these agreements, often by dubious voting procedures. As a result of this erosion of trade union democracy many trade union activists now feel it is almost impossible to properly defend the interests of their members because of ICTU rules. The possibility of forming a new, non-Congress union has been mooted. Already the Cork Operative Butchers Union has voted to adopt a new set of rules and will change its name to the Independent Workers' Union. COBS has withdrawn from ICTU because it believes that at

present membership of ICTU is inimical to its members best interests. It is generally accepted that other workers, disenchanted with the discredited policies of right-wing union leaders will follow suit.

Normally communists would urge unity and caution against splitting the trade union movement. However the ICTU has almost become part of the state apparatus and does not articulate or agitate in the interests of the working class. Its support for "Partnership" has led the trade union movement into a cul-de-sac. The Independent Workers' Union must be supported as a way out of the dead-end of class collaboration.



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New Referendum a Threat to Democracy

As soon as the electorate rejected the anti-abortion amendment Bertie Ahern stated that as a democrat he would have to accept the decision of the people, even if he himself did not share that decision. The following day the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Brian Cowen told the Fianna Fail Ard Fheis that they (Fianna Fail) would put the Nice Treaty to the electorate in the coming year.

"do the right thing". Ireland was the only EU country to allow its citizens decide the issue. Such defenders of democracy as the governments of Germany, France, Britain etc., who loudly sound off about democracy refused to allow their citizens a say in case they might reject the Treaty. Neither were the citizens of those states which want to join the EU allowed a vote.



This Treaty was rejected by the Irish people last year so following Bertie's line Cowen should accept that decision. As well as being undemocratic it makes a mockery of the consultation process on the EU in which the government is engaged. The political establishment, as well as big business, farming and the ICTU leadership will all support this further attempt to force through the Nice Treaty. The recently elected President of the European Parliament, Pat Cox, will doubtless urge us to

Polls conducted in the Czech Republic suggest it's citizens are not too keen to join the EU. When the Irish people rejected Nice the Eurocrats refused to accept it, telling us that we must keep on voting until we get the "right result".

When the Eurocrats deny the citizens of the EU the right to vote on major issues such as the Nice Treaty, and then reject the decision of the only people who did vote on the issue, the EU project is finally exposed as undemocratic.



Welcome to the 1st. issue of RED ALERT which is produced by the Communist Party of Ireland in Cork. We have felt for the last number of years that the lack of a paper, outlining the Communist Party position on a whole range of issues, local, national and international, hindered the growth of our party and also weakened the broader left in Cork.

Also while many comrades have been very active in trade union, anti-service charges, women's and anti-racist movements, as a party we have largely neglected our political work. Hopefully this has now been rectified and once more a vibrant Communist Party will play its part in left-wing politics of Cork.

Our goal is to produce a copy of RED ALERT every month and we will do everything in our power to do so. However we will be governed by the availability of resources, financial and otherwise. We have no wealthy backers so we are dependent on you!

We aim to produce a paper that will be topical and also will give a clear class perspective on the many issues affecting the working class and progressive movement in Cork. It couldn't come at a more opportune time as more and more workers are re-discovering their militancy as the strait-jacket of "partnership" becomes more oppressive with the turn-down in the economy. RED ALERT will support workers in struggle and give them a platform. Unfortunately racist ideas are gaining ground among sections of the working class, as well as in society generally and must be confronted. RED ALERT will be uncompromising in its opposition to racism.

While RED ALERT will be primarily a communist paper written by communists we welcome your comments, articles and letters. We hope you enjoy reading this 1st. issue and also hope you become a regular reader.

LEGISLATE NOW!

In view of the rejection of the anti-choice referendum by the electorate, the Cork District Committee of the Communist Party of Ireland has called on the government to introduce legislation to allow for abortion in Ireland.

Every day at least 20 Irish women have terminations in the UK proving that abortion is seen as a legitimate option by a large section of the population. Unfortunately as well as the trauma of an unwanted pregnancy these women also have to make travel arrangements to the UK, thus adding to their problems. As a result an unusually high number of Irish women have late terminations. The time has come for TDs and Senators to face down the fundamentalists and legislate. To do otherwise would be moral cowardice.

SIDE- LINES

BY LEFTIE

It has always been the policy of the Capitalist press to downgrade, denigrate and generally tell lies about anything to do with Communist Parties or political systems which promote or have promoted communist ideas. However Jill Colgan the Moscow correspondent of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation must have a neck like the proverbial jockey's b---x when one considers the misinformation she spewed out on RTE Radio recently.

Interviewed by Ryan Tubridy about the freezing weather in Moscow, the bold Ms Colgan informed us that temperatures in Moscow had fallen to around minus 25 degrees centigrade and that 300 people had frozen to death.

When asked by the interviewer if anything like this had happened before, Ms Colgan replied that the last time the temperature dropped so low was 22 years ago in the days of the Soviet Union. There were no deaths back then, apparently because the people had no freedom. They wouldn't venture out because to do so would attract the attention of the authorities. The people of the old Soviet union were thus denied the "right" to freeze to death! It must be of great comfort to the homeless of Moscow, as they freeze in their cardboard boxes, that now they're free.

A lot has been said about the result of the Zimbabwean Presidential election with the British media leading the charge claiming fraud. It has to be borne in mind that sections of the British Establishment have never come to terms with the loss of her colonies. Certainly the British government doesn't like the fact that Robert Mugabe wants Britain to live up to commitments it made to the Patriotic Front during the Independence process.

However George W Bush, in a classic case of the pot calling the kettle black, called it election fraud. George W., one should remember, got less votes than Al Gore in the US Presidential Election and would not today be President except for the fact that Republican party supporters physically stopped the counting of votes in Florida and then the Republican Party dominated Supreme Court in a legislative coup stole the election from the democrats.

The recent goings-on in the US subsidiary of AIB has been explained away as the result of one man's behaviour. Nothing to get upset about then. However, if this had been a state institution instead of a private one you can bet the PDs, IBEC and the usual shower of capitalist apologists would by now claim that this proves that state industries are inefficient and should be abolished. Why then, in the light of AIB and Enron to name but two examples of private sector fraud, don't they call for the abolition of the whole corrupt capitalist system.

IRISH ARMY IS TAKING PART IN NATO MILITARY EXERCISES

The Communist Party of Ireland has become aware that the Irish Army has sent Irish soldiers (Three officer and nearly fifty) soldiers) to take part in NATO - Partnership For Peace joint military manoeuvres with 24 other countries.

They are taking part in a two-week "STRONG RESOLVE 02" NATO exercise. This is the culmination of four years of training and will test NATO's ability to respond to two types of crisis in two different areas simultaneously.

One, is the defence of a NATO country attacked with conventional weapons and will take place in Norway and the other crisis response operation in which NATO led forces are deployed to mediate between two warring countries beyond NATO's area of responsibility. This will take place in Poland. When we joined the PFI the Government stated that the public and the Dail would be kept informed as to the extent of our participation in PFI.

The Irish public was told that we would have nothing to do with NATO. The opposite is the case as we can see from these joint manoeuvres. It is clear that this is just another step away from our traditional military neutrality.

1. The Minister For Defence must give details as to the extent of Irish military personnel involvement in these operations and at what level.
2. Why was the Dail not informed that Irish military personnel would be taking part in these exercises?

3. Can our Government be trusted in what it says in relation to our commitments to PFI?

4. Why is there so much secrecy about these manoeuvres?

The Communist Party calls for a full statement from the Government and clarification as to why the Dail has not been informed.

The Housing Question

By Paddy Wall.

Looking at private housing developments over the past two years has thrown up some interesting results. One development in the city, which was completed in 4 phases, saw the price jump from IR£90,000 per house in the first phase to IR£135,000 in the fourth phase.

This was a 50% increase in cost in less than two years. In the same period of time the cost of wages and materials did not increase by 50% and, since the land for the housing development had already been purchased, the only conclusion one can come to is that the builder hiked up the price of the finished, simply because of demand.

This is far from being an isolated case, but neither the government or the main opposition parties have any intention of putting price controls on the cost of private housing.

In the absence of price control, the only way to house people at affordable prices is for local authorities to build their own houses and apartments. The results of a recent survey puts a figure of 140,000 people throughout the state as waiting for houses.

Of these almost 54,000 are on Corporation and County Council waiting lists.

Cork Corporation's list was 4,219 households in November 2001. Most of the people on the housing list are living in private rented accommodation. Of these, many are on social welfare and thus are in receipt of rent allowance from the Health Board of up to 95% of the total rent. In effect, the refusal of successive governments to allow local authorities build more houses means that substantial sums of public money is being paid to private landlords. Since the bulk of these landlords support the various capitalist parties there is no reason to expect any change.

The Communist Party has long demanded that local authorities build sufficient housing to meet the needs of the people. The vast sums transferred to private landlords by means of rent allowance should be used to build these badly needed houses. Tackle the candidates who come looking for your vote on the issue and find out where they stand on the issue.

Why Join a Trade Union?

Older workers by and large tend to accept as normal the need to be members of a trade union. Unfortunately many younger workers do not hold strong views on the subject. Here at RED ALERT we believe that all workers should be trade union members. Below are a number of good reasons for being in a trade union.

First, bosses never give anything away for nothing. Wage rises, improved conditions and shorter working hours are only achieved by workers putting pressure on their employers. On their own workers are vulnerable and almost powerless in a conflict with the employer. However, if all the workers in a job united in a union spoke with one voice, the boss is more inclined to listen. Withdrawal of labour hits the boss where s/he is most vulnerable, in the pocket.

Unity is strength, by organizing themselves into a union the workers gain more clout. Solidarity is another good reason to join a trade union. Sometimes well paid workers might feel that they have no need to join a union. However a contribution to a union fund, even though it may not give you any direct benefit, can be used to help other workers in less favourable positions. If we improve wages at the lower end it tends to lift overall wages, if the lower paid are not organized in unions their wages stay low and have the effect of pulling wage levels down. Also one never knows when one may need the services of a union. As the old saying goes "an injury to one is an injury to all".

Confused or what?

It is generally agreed that George W. Bush is not the most coherent of talkers. His abuse of the English language would make James Joyce jealous. However it seems that the problem goes much deeper than George W.'s vocal gymnastics. A long time ago Oscar Wilde claimed that the US and Britain were two countries divided by a common language. Today it seems that US policy makers use English words but completely subvert their meaning. Below we give a few examples but there are lots more out there.

DEMOCRAT= a supporter of US foreign policy irrespective of how s/he came to power.

TERRORIST= opponent of US foreign policy.

ACTS OF VIOLENCE= Palestinian kids throwing stones at Israeli troops.

SELF-DEFENCE = Israeli troops shooting unarmed Palestinian kids.

FAIR ELECTION = One won by pro-capitalist candidate.

UNITED NATIONS = anti-US conspiracy.

NATO = Peace-loving armies.

WHEN IN DUBLIN

visit

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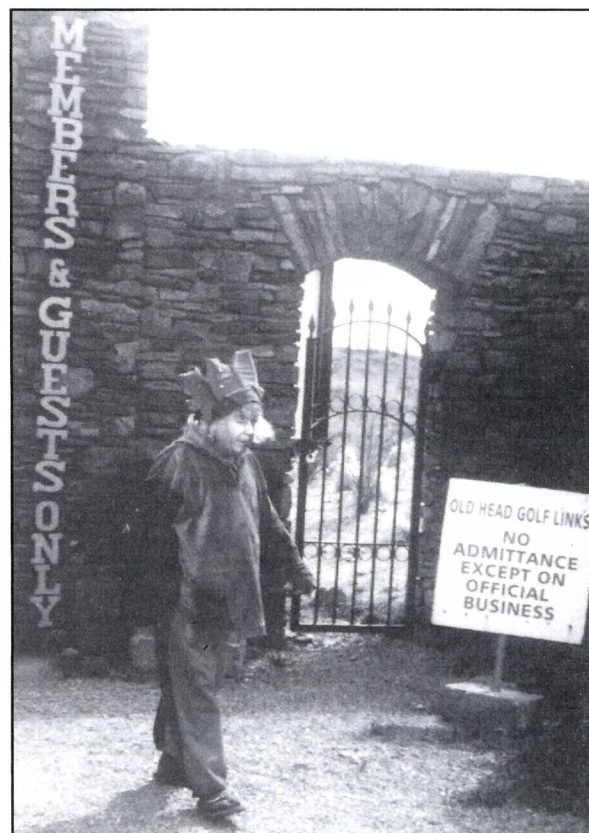
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Pat "The Picket" Allen, protesting at Kinsale. Full story page 5.

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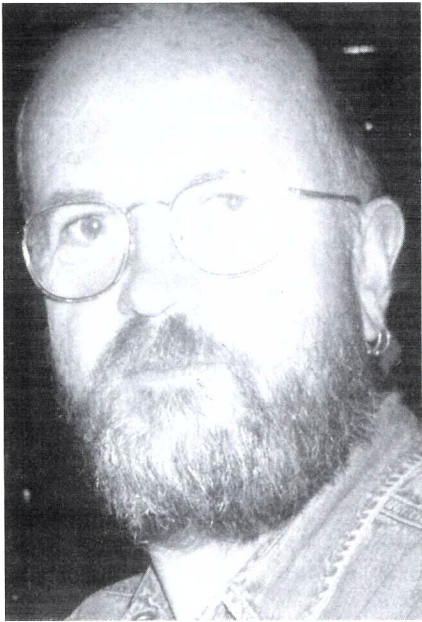
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Humane Prison System Needed



Joe Moore. Photo: RED ALERT!

Last year Joe Moore, member of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party, President of the Cork Council of Trade Unions and anti-service charge activist was jailed for 3 days for his part in the anti-service charge campaign. Here Joe gives an account of his experiences in Cork Prison.

The purpose of imprisonment is firstly to punish offenders by denying them their liberty, and secondly to rehabilitate them, in order that when they re-enter society, the chances of their re-offending are minimal.

My recent experience in Cork Prison demonstrated that this second goal is not being pursued by the Department of Justice.

The conditions under which inmates are incarcerated have not changed since Victorian times. Prisoners are kept locked in their cells for a minimum of sixteen hours per day. The two-man cells measure roughly fourteen feet by six and a half feet and they consist of a bunk bed, two lockers and two chairs. The walls are concrete block on flat, with a steel door. The only natural light comes from a window high up on the wall, consisting of ten glass panes, each measuring 3 inches square. Outside the window is a steel mesh grill.

Cells do not have internal plumbing. There is no running water and no toilet facilities. While locked in a cell, prisoners are given a small stainless steel pot, in which to relieve themselves.

All meals are eaten in this un-hygienic atmosphere. Visiting conditions are barbaric, as no physical contact is allowed. The visiting room is 30 feet long with a four and a half foot wide table running down the centre. Prisoners stand at one side, while their visitors are on the other.

There is no separation between each prisoner. In such conditions it is impossible to hear what your visitors are saying, while at the same time you are over-hearing snatches of conversation from those on either side of you. This does psychological damage to prisoners' families, who are guilty

of no crime.

It is impossible to explain to a young child or elderly parent that they cannot hug their loved ones. Each prisoner is allowed one such 30 minute visit per week.

The exercise yard consists of an area 75 yards by 24 yards, surrounded by 30 foot high walls and covered by a steel wire mesh, giving the impression of a giant aviary. The only physical activity is to continually walk up and down, and when tired to sit on the ground as seating is not provided.

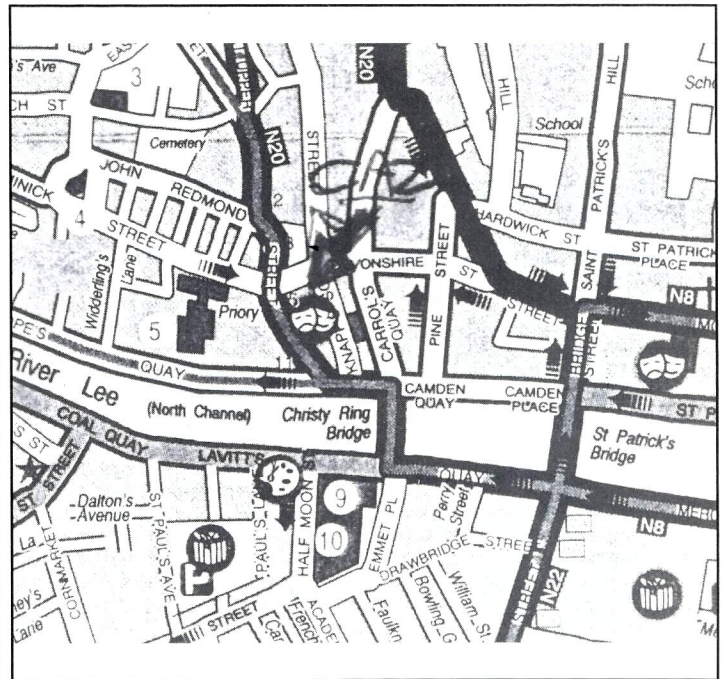
Racism

The racism in Irish society against Travellers is demonstrated by the fact that although they constitute less than one percent of the population, they account for almost 9 percent of the population in Cork Prison. The positive fact is that there is no racism shown towards them by the other prisoners.

Other bureaucratic practices also make life difficult for the inmates, the most frustrating of which is the amount of time from being admitted until a prisoner receives his own clothing. These items of clothing are taken so that they can be labeled. However this can sometimes take up to 6 weeks, during which time the inmates are forced to wear prison issue clothing which are often ill-fitting and in a state of disrepair.

All in all my limited stay has debunked the holiday camp image that is often portrayed in the capitalist media, while the food is far from being hotel standard. These conditions should be ended immediately. A more humane regime should be introduced, with an emphasis on rehabilitation to ensure that people do not re-offend.

What is also very obvious is the class nature of the society we live in, as prison seems to be a "Rich Free" zone.



NEW LEFT VENUE IN CORK

A new venue for Left-wing and Progressive groups has been established in Cork. (see map). For years such groups have had to pay premium rates to hire hotel rooms because SIPTU refused to allow such groups into Connolly Hall. The Cork Autonomous Zone (C.A.Z.) was set up by a number of individuals who contribute towards its rent. The charge for using this space is 50 cents per person. CAZ is big enough to be used for activities such as art and band rehearsals. Anybody interested in supporting this venture can do so by contacting Joe at 087-2237651.

lectures, performances and other events for which the space is suitable. Any other services that may be provided in the future (phone, fax, computer, etc) will be made available at a minimal cost to those wishing to use them.

From this we will house and foster an economy based on connections between people, a true community that supports all involved. All voices will be heard, all talents will be used and traded and information will be shared.

We refuse to accept racist, sexist, ageist, homophobic or otherwise hateful actions or behaviour.

Our primary goal is to raise awareness of community, to encourage and foster collaboration between groups and to provide people with skills (or at least the space to acquire those skills) to build and strengthen community.

In the spirit of this statement, there is a wish list of goods and services required by the CAZ to provide a decent service to those wishing to use the space. These may be traded for free use of the space just donated for the benefit of the community.

The centre was set up by interested individuals and grassroots organizations and decisions will be made on the input of those who make most frequent use of the space or who otherwise contribute towards the running of the centre.

Cork Autonomous Zone Statement of Intent

The primary purpose of this collective is to provide a safe space for the people of Cork to communicate, teach, learn and grow. The space is intended to act as a convergence point for the web of grassroots and community organizations and progressive institutions.

Space and time will be provided for a nominal charge (50 cents per person) and will be allotted to groups for workshops, meetings, classes,

Politics and Culture



Isn't it strange that during this current war against "terrorism" being waged by the US and its allies in defence of democracy and freedom, that one of the first acts of the establishment was to ban certain music from the airways. Songs with any vague references to peace or freedom are included in this ban.

One band however are being singled out for special treatment, in that all their music is not allowed to be played. It will come as no surprise to many of our readers that "Rage Against The Machine" is the group in question. A quick look at their album sleeves explains why this is so. From references to books on Che Guevara, Joe Hill, Malcolm X and sexual inequality to information on campaigns for Mumia

Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier, Amnesty International and pro-choice groups in the US, this band truly wears its heart on its sleeve.

My own favourite "Rage" album is without doubt "The Battle of Los Angeles". Released in 1999, it has lost none of its relevance today. "Maria" is for my money the most powerful song on the album. It deals with the illegal exploitation of Central American workers by US based industry. The explicit lyrics leave little to the imagination, "She stuffed ten to a truckbed, She clutches her cross, Here comes the exhaust, and it rips through her lungs". This story is told in ballad form, and after hearing it all only the braintead will not be angry.

"Voice of the Voiceless" is

another powerful song, dedicated to Mumia Abu-Jamal, still lingering on death row in the land of the free. "Calm like a Bomb" should be adopted by the Anti-Capitalist Movement as its anthem. Classified by some in the music business as Heavy Metal, "Rage Against the Machine" are much more. Tom Morello's use of the guitar is more in line with Jimi Hendrix's pioneering work than with the rock bands groomed for MTV. It is little wonder that this band is ignored by the fashionable music press and banned by the US government. "Rage Against the Machine" are providing the sound tracks for protests from Seattle to Barcelona. Their albums should be bought by all who want to see the overthrow of this evil capitalist system.

JM

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COMMUNIST PARTY ELECTION STRATEGY

By Jimmy Corcoran

With the General Election looming, the question of whether or not we should contest it comes up. Unlike the main parties, which really only exist as election machines, the Communist Party doesn't see elections as the be all and end all of politics. Elections are important as part of the overall struggle for socialism, however contesting elections must not and cannot be our sole priority. As a revolutionary party we are aware of the limitations of bourgeois democracy, however the Left can improve its position and thus advance the interests of the working class by participating in elections. Whichever party or group of parties wins the next election will govern on behalf of big business. The interests of the Irish working class do not feature when governments are being formed. The Communist Party would like to see the emergence of a Left Bloc of TDs in the Dail, a bloc linked to working class struggles outside. However this outcome seems unlikely after the next election. Electorally the Left is weak and divided and the biggest working class party, Labour, has consistently put the interests of its parliamentary party before those of the working class. It is in this context that we have to make our decision. When we stood a candidate it was in the full knowledge that not only would we not win a seat, but that we would also lose our deposit. However we believed that politically it was

worth it. We believed that during the heightened political awareness of an election campaign people were more open to political discourse, and it presented our party with an opportunity to confront greater numbers of working class voters with a socialist perspective. parliamentary party before those of the working class. It is in this context that we have to make our decision. When we stood a candidate it was in the full knowledge that not only would we not win a seat, but that we would also lose our deposit. However we believed that politically it was worth it. We believed that during the heightened political awareness of an election campaign people were more open to political discourse, and it presented our party with an opportunity to confront greater numbers of working class voters with a socialist perspective. We were not naive enough to believe that the working class would rally to our banner once they read our message. However we did expect, at the very least, a substantial increase in membership and more importantly an increase in influence among sections of the working class. Unfortunately the political agenda is set by the media managers of the main parties and they ensure that political discourse remains within very narrow boundaries. While we argue the merits of socialism over capitalism "Morning Ireland" has spokespersons from the main parties discussing the personalities of the various party leaders. And of course small left wing parties such as the Communist Party have very little access to the mass media. Many working class people are turned off by electoral politics. The percentage turnout in working class areas is always much lower than in middle class areas. Is this a manifestation of apolitical apathy or a realization that irrespective of whichever party wins, real power remains with the monied sections of society? We found ourselves encouraging reluctant people to engage with the electoral system and vote for us while at the same time telling them that real change would not come about merely by voting!

There's also the tendency, due to the clientist nature of Irish politics, of many working class and other marginalised groups deciding for whom to vote based on which politician has best helped them negotiate the maze that is state and local government bureaucracy. We lacked the resources to properly canvass the constituency and more importantly we failed to engage in serious political dialogue with any sizeable section of the working class. As a result the return in terms of recruits and influence was disappointing. The reality is that most people who join the party do so as a result of our position in trade union, community and other political struggles. It could be argued that the objective conditions existing at the time meant that our results were bound to be limited. The small size of the Communist Party, plus the undoubted anti-Communist and at that time anti-Soviet bias of the Irish media and churches meant that there was a strong resistance to our candidates. Other Left forces contested elections during this period with far more success. The Workers' Party stood on a platform that was to the Left of the Labour Party while still being social democratic. They were quite successful during the '80s but eventually gaining and maintaining seats became the most important policy of the leadership. This is one of the problems associated with electoralism. It is too easy to see electoral politics as the only real politics. All other campaigns can become subordinate to the task of winning seats. With the collapse of the socialist states in Eastern Europe the parliamentary leadership of the Workers' Party ditched much of their socialist policies as an impediment to electoral success. Eventually the parliamentary led majority split the party and became Democratic Left before ultimately joining the Labour Party. Today Labour is far more right wing than it was during the 1980s with prominent former Workers' Party members among the most conservative. There is no sign of increased class consciousness in areas where the



Communist Party support for trade union rights. Photo RED ALERT!

Workers' Party once held seats. Indeed it would be a mistake to see their electoral success as primarily a manifestation of increased socialist awareness among the working class. In many cases the WP adopted the same tactics as the main parties i.e. select a strong personality and compete with the main parties in clientist politics. This is not to disparage the hard political work that went into these campaigns. However this was not about overthrowing capitalism, it merely showed that skilled negotiators of the system could deliver the goods or the illusion of delivering the goods, however this was on an individual and not on a class basis. Which brings us back to the question. Should we contest the election? In order to run a good campaign a party would need to put in a lot of political

work in the years prior to the election, otherwise what we have is gesture politics. And while many communists have been very active within the main areas of working class struggle in Cork, we have not been very active as an organization. As a result it would be a waste of our resources to contest this election on our own.. However it is important that a socialist alternative to the pro-capitalist consensus be put forward. The ideal situation would be a Left Unity candidate allowing the various small left wing parties and groups have an input into policy and the choice of candidate(s). Unfortunately present it seems that such a proposal is not on the agenda. However, we believe that Left Unity is essential if the cause of socialism is to advance. We will continue to work to that end.

Gardai Soft on Crime?

Over the last few weeks some politicians and a section of the capitalist media have whipped up public hysteria over the issue of street crime. They have accused the Gardai of ignoring the problem. RED ALERT! has no way of knowing the truth of the matter but we do know of a series of crimes that the gardai seem powerless to either prevent or solve. The citizens of Ireland are the owners of all state industries and state property. Over generations Irish taxpayers have paid for these industries. The citizen shareholders receive their dividend in the form of secure employment and proper services. Now however State Industries are being sold off at knock down prices by the government. To date Eircom, ACC Bank, Irish Refineries, Greencore, Team and the Trustee Savings Bank have been sold off. A transfer of assets from all the citizens of the state to a tiny minority has been passed off as an extension of

shareholding. The government now wants to steal more of society's assets to sell to their cronies. Among those lined up for theft are ; Aer Rianta, Aer Lingus, Iarnrod Eireann, Bus Eireann, Dublin Bus, Bord na Mona and the ESB. The usual suspects (those who filled the brown envelopes for our political class) are already lined up to receive the stolen goods.

Surely the time has come for the citizens of Ireland to cry halt to this daylight robbery. If privatization is not stopped we will shortly have no say in the country in which we live. We might as well give up the pretence of being a democratic republic and install one of Bertie's favourite businessmen as a "benign dictator". Why does that sound so familiar?



The Battle of Kinsale

In 1601, the Battle of Kinsale saw the destruction of the old Gaelic order in Ireland and its replacement by a system based on private ownership of property. 2001 saw the 400th anniversary of this historic event and also the commencement of a new battle for Kinsale. Once again the issue was private ownership of land versus the rights of the ordinary people of Ireland. The Old Head of Kinsale is a beautiful headland on the south coast of county Cork.

It is renowned for its beauty and has been enjoyed as an amenity by people for generations. It attracts groups such as bird-watchers, rock-climbers and fishermen as it is home to many species of birds and wildlife. It has long been a popular destination for people, many coming from Cork City, to spend a Sunday afternoon.

All of this has changed in recent years. The previous owner put the property up for sale. It was an ideal opportunity for Cork County Council to buy it for the people.

However this was not to be, the property being purchased instead by John and Patrick O'Connor, trading as Ashbourne Holdings Limited. These people have no interest in the general public, profit being their only concern. To that end they converted a public amenity into an exclusive golf club. Not an ordinary golf club mind you, but one that does not allow locals into membership. It does not enter competitions nor does it have under-age teams. What it is in fact is a playground for the super rich, many of whom arrive on the course by helicopter. To become a member of this exclusive club costs over 2000 Euro per year. To ensure this elite's privacy, barbed wire has been erected on the walls, high gates have been erected and high powered security cameras have been installed. They also employ their own security people. An Bord Pleanála upheld the public's right to use the headland as an amenity. This right was challenged by the O'Connor Brothers in the High Court.

SERVICE CHARGES AN ELECTION ISSUE

By Joe Moore

The fight against service charges was barely out of the news in 2001. Ordinary people have been jailed for their opposition to this unjust tax and then in November came Independent Alderman Con O'Connell's famous victory in the Supreme Court. Establishment politicians have used the media to attack those opposed to Service Charges who have been labeled "freeloaders" who expect others to pay for their services. It is important at this stage as the general election nears to reflect on the origins of the campaign against service charges. In 1977 Fianna Fail were returned to power with the biggest majority in the history of the state. They immediately abolished rates on domestic dwellings. The monies raised from rates funded local services. The future funding of all Local Authorities was now to be carried out by National Government. To cover this cost P.A.Y.E. was increased and both the rate of and range of goods liable for V.A.T. was increased. All local Authorities were to be given full rate support grants.

After 2 years the government began to cut back on the rate support grant. Local authorities had to cutback on services.

As the situation reached crisis point, the government, rather than live up to its word, instead gave local councils the power to levy local charges for the services they are obliged to provide. In effect people were being asked to pay a second time for these services.

Campaigns of opposition sprang up around the country. The full might of the state was used against these groups. Water was disconnected, threatening letters were sent, 3rd level education grants were withheld, people were dragged before the courts, household goods were seized by local sheriffs and finally activists were imprisoned.

In Cork Householders against Service Charges (HASC) has been fighting the charges since 1990 having been formed jointly by the Cork Council of Trade Unions and the Cork Regional Council of the National Association of Tenants Organizations (NATO). Cork Corporation took a headline approach from the outset and jailed 4 campaigners in 1991. In the local elections held that year a majority of the councillors returned were elected on an anti-

service charge ticket. However one by one they reneged on their promise to the people when offered the Mayoral chain.

Amongst those who betrayed the people who elected them was Labour's Joe O'Callaghan.

In 2000 Cork Corporation again tried to break the campaign. Under the regime of Lord Mayor PJ Hourican (Fine Gael) and City Manager Joe Gavin, the refuse of HASC members was not collected. HASC replied by bringing their uncollected refuse to the steps of the City Hall. Gavin used the Litter Act against the protesters. His bidding was eagerly carried out by the litter wardens under Noel Long. These trade unionists took the names of campaigners, photographed them and gave evidence against them in court. As a result seven people were jailed in 2001.

During the year a "novel" suggestion was made by Senator Brendan Ryan (Labour) in his "Evening Echo" column. He suggested the use of Attachment Orders against HASC members. This was taken up by the Corporation following Alderman O'Connell's Supreme Court victory. The motion to pursue Attachment Orders, which allows the Corporation to ask the courts to have outstanding Service Charges deducted from people's wages or social welfare payments, was proposed by Michael Aherne (Labour). More surprisingly, it was supported by Kathleen Lynch who, up to the time she was elected to the Dail, had been actively in the campaign against service charges. The above actions once again clearly demonstrate the treachery of the Labour Party, which purports to represent the interests of the working class.

Service charges are as wrong today as when they were first introduced in 1983. They still constitute a form of double taxation and it is still legitimate to oppose them. Governments which have included Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, Labour, Progressive Democrats and Democratic Left have all stood over the imposition of service charges and the use of the powers of the state against those who legitimately opposed them. RED ALERT! urges its readers to remember this when deciding how to vote in the next election. Politicians should be judged on their past actions, not on their promises. If you want to see service charges abolished join the HASC campaign and make sure the political establishment feel the pressure.

GUEVARA LEGEND LIVES ON



Dr. Aleida Guevara

Photo: Pat Mantle

Report. Noel Murphy.

Over the St. Patrick's weekend Cork City played host to an International celebrity. Dr. Aleida Guevara, daughter of one of the 20th century's most colourful and iconic revolutionaries, Che Guevara, attended a number of functions culminating in her address to a packed public meeting at Jury's Hotel in the city.

Dr. Guevara had been hosted by the Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr. Tom O'Driscoll and by the President of the Cork Council of Trade Unions, Joe Moore earlier in the day. She also met with members of the Cork District Committee of the Communist Party of Ireland prior to her public meeting at Jury's. The Trades Council President presented Dr. Guevara with a bottle of 20 year old very special Middleton whiskey, produced by the Cork Distillery. True to her profession Dr. Guevara admitted to being a very moderate whiskey drinker. However she promised to present the bottle to her "uncle" Fidel Castro, whom she said was fond of a drop.

Later in the evening in her address to the audience which was in excess of 500, Dr. Guevara gave an outline history of Cuba from the time before the 1959 Revolution, through the post 1959 period when the Eastern European Socialist Bloc of states came to Cuba's aid and finally in the present post-Soviet Union situation with Cuba making a gallant effort to determine its own destiny along a socialist path in spite of the illegal blockade imposed on the country by the United States. It was interesting to note that the United States continues to this day to beam television

and radio broadcasts into Cuba 24 hours a day. These broadcasts are essentially designed to encourage Cuban professionals to desert Cuba and to use their skills, acquired through Cuba's completely free education system, to enrich themselves in the United States to the detriment of the Cuban population.

Dr. Guevara also recorded that while many of the world's citizens who tried to enter the United States illegally risked arrest and deportation, Cubans were treated differently. If a Cuban citizen illegally entered the US, they are immediately given an allowance to tide them over while they wait to enter their guaranteed job and move into their guaranteed house. Added to these inducements is the granting of US citizenship after 12 months residency.

The meeting, which was chaired by Labour Party Senator, Brendan Ryan, allowed plenty of time for questions and answers which were in the most supportive of the Cuban regime. Controversial questions posed no difficulties for Dr. Guevara who had no difficulty explaining that Cuba was fundamentally a democratic country with the rights of the citizen guaranteed by a written constitution.

The overall purpose of the visit was to encourage Irish people to engage in acts of solidarity with Cuba, by demanding an immediate lifting of the blockade and by visiting and encouraging others to spend their holidays in Cuba.



Dr. Aleida Guevara with Noel Murphy of the Communist Party. Photo: Pat Mantle.

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The Battle of Kinsale

The High Court however ruled in favour of big business. An Bord Pleanála are to appeal to the Supreme Court.

In the meantime ordinary people have decided enough is enough. Last June a coalition of political activists, environmentalists and local residents decided to reclaim their amenity. A protest picnic was called for Sunday 1st July. This was attended by over 200 people, who succeeded in climbing the perimeter wall and walking to the light-house on the tip of the headland. A second picnic was held on July 29th. This time the numbers

had grown to over 500 people and over 20 Gardai, including members of the Special Branch, were on hand to protect the rights of private property. The protesters were photographed and video-taped. Despite this provocation the protest was both peaceful and good-natured. A further protest in the end of August saw over 1,000 people assert their right to walk to the Old Head. The final picnic took place on the last Sunday in September. Easter will see the re-activation of the campaign. All those who oppose the beauty spots of Ireland being bought for the exclusive use of the super-rich are urged to get involved.

Kinsale Protest

Easter Sunday

**BUS LEAVES
LIBRARY
(Grand Parade)
12.30 PM**

COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

People's Weekly World
Communist Party USA
Mar 23, 2002

On April 20 people of goodwill from across our beautiful land will gather in our nation's capital and demand in one voice that the reckless hand of the war makers in the White House and elsewhere be stayed. They will demand a United Nations-led response to international terrorism, that peace come with justice, not a shredding of the safety net, and that sanity prevail over the lunacy that a nuclear war can be "fought and won."

The Bush administration has unleashed a dangerous war policy that has little to do with "fighting terrorists" or making the world a safer place. Rather, the policy furthers a pro-corporate agenda of expanding U.S. military domination while securing profits for U.S. oil companies.

The war in oil-rich Afghanistan continues, with bombing already claiming the lives of nearly 4,000 civilians. Bush has now deployed U.S. troops in the Philippines and plans the same in Colombia, Yemen, the republics of Georgia and Uzbekistan, and Malaysia. Though couched in the language of his "war on terrorism," the aim is to drastically expand the global network of U.S. military bases.

Now Bush is moving the world to the brink of a nuclear war. Bush's Nuclear Posture Review calls for production and use of a new generation of nuclear weapons against China, Russia and five other nations. Such use would breach a nuclear firewall that has stood since nuclear arms were first used against Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the devastation of which is still felt today.

This crazed proposal comes while Bush is escalating the use of unilateral military force on a global scale. Vice President Richard Cheney warns that the U.S. can wage, alone, this war that will not end "in our lifetimes."

To wage this never-ending war, Bush has asked for a \$48 billion increase in the military budget, including funds for the deployment of his so-called Missile Defense program of nuclear weapons in space. Meanwhile Bush continues to slash funds for much-needed human needs programs such as Medicare.

Will the voices of peace prevail over the shrill sounds of war? We urge people to march on April 20 — our chance to stand up for world peace. Initially sponsored by a broad coalition of student and youth organizations, the April 20 action is gaining support by peace, labor and community organizations.



**Communist Party of Iraq,
Saturday 17/2/2001:**

Stop the Aggression On Our
Country and People

Our people were horrified last night (16 February) as a result of the aggressive air raid that was carried out by US and British planes on the capital Baghdad, as part of the air raids episode which has been going on far too long.

The main victim is our people. Military acts and air strikes will not solve the Iraqi issue, that is if they will not further complicate and prolong it, providing the dictatorial regime with more opportunities to capitalise on the situation with demagogic slogans.

It is time that an end is put to these brutal practices, and that legitimate means are found in accordance with international law to resolve the problems faced by our people, to ensure their salvation from the economic blockade and dictatorial rule, and to establish the democratic alternative.

While condemning this aggression and its painful consequences, we extend our deep condolences to the families of the innocent victims and wish the wounded a speedy recovery.

Let our people's struggle intensify to achieve salvation from their ordeal.

The Communist Party of Ireland is and always has been an integral part of the International Communist Movement. Ever since the first Irish marxist party was established by James Connolly, Ireland's communists have been to the forefront in solidarity with peoples everywhere struggling against capitalism and imperialism. In line with that tradition RED ALERT will print a selection of articles and statements from from a number of our fraternal parties.



James Connolly, founder of Ireland's first marxist party.

SPEECH BY DR. FIDEL CASTRO RUZ, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA, AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT. MONTERREY, MARCH 21, 2002

Not everyone here will share my thoughts. Still, I will respectfully say what I think.

The existing world economic order constitutes a system of plundering and exploitation like no other in history. Thus, the peoples believe less and less in statements and promises.

The prestige of the international financial institutions rates less than zero.

The world economy is today a huge casino. Recent analyses indicate that for every dollar that goes into trade, over one hundred end up in speculative operations completely disconnected from the real economy.

As a result of this economic order, over 75 percent of the world population lives in underdevelopment, and extreme poverty has already reached 1.2 billion people in the Third World. So, far from narrowing the gap is widening.

The revenue of the richest nations that in 1960 was 37 times larger than that of the poorest is now 74 times larger. The situation has reached such extremes that the assets of the three wealthiest persons in the world amount to the GDP of the 48 poorest countries combined.

The number of people actually starving was 826 million in the year 2001. There are at the moment 854 million illiterate adults while 325 million children do not attend school. There are 2 billion people who have no access to low cost medications and 2.4 billion lack the basic sanitation conditions. No less than 11 million children under the age of 5 perish every year from preventable causes while half a million go blind for lack of vitamin A.

The life span of the population in the developed world is 30 years higher than that of people living in Sub-Saharan Africa. A true genocide!

The poor countries should not be blamed for this tragedy. They neither conquered nor plundered entire continents for centuries; they did not establish colonialism, or re-established slavery; and, modern imperialism is not of their making. Actually, they have been its victims. Therefore, the main responsibility for financing their development lies with those states that, for obvious historical reasons, enjoy today the benefits of those atrocities.

...UN agencies and; not...the IMF could supply; direct development assistance..without the need to; sacrifice sovereignty of the; people...

The rich world should condone their foreign debt and grant them fresh soft credits to finance their development. The traditional offers of assistance, always scant and often ridiculous, are either inadequate or unfulfilled.

For a true and sustainable economic and social development to take place much more is required than is usually admitted. Measures as those suggested by the late James Tobin to curtail the irrepressible flow of currency speculation --albeit it was not his idea to foster development-- would perhaps be the only ones capable of generating enough funds, which in the hands of the UN agencies and not of awful institutions like the IMF, could supply direct development assistance with a democratic participation of all countries and without the need to sacrifice the independence and sovereignty of the peoples.

The Consensus draft, which the masters of the world are imposing on this conference, intends that we accept humiliating, conditioned and interfering alms.

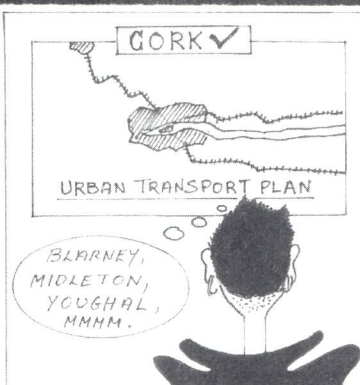
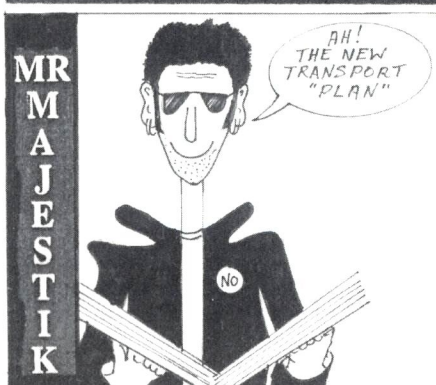
...ever more sophisticated weapons piling up in; the arsenals of the; wealthiest....cannot kill; ignorance, illness,; poverty or hunger....

Everything created since Bretton Woods until today should be reconsidered. A farsighted vision was then missing, thus, the privileges and interests of the most powerful prevailed. In the face of the deep present crisis, a still worse future is offered where the economic, social and ecologic tragedy of an increasingly ungovernable world would never be resolved and where the number of the poor and the starving would grow higher, as if a large part of humanity were doomed. It is high time for statesmen and politicians to calmly reflect on this. The belief that a social and economic order that has proven to be unsustainable can be forcibly imposed is really senseless.

As I have said before, the ever more sophisticated weapons piling up in the arsenals of the wealthiest and the mightiest can kill the illiterate, the ill, the poor and the hungry but they cannot kill ignorance, illnesses, poverty or hunger.

It should definitely be said: "Farewell to arms." Something must be done to save Humanity! A better world is possible! Thank you.

OUR CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT & BANE OF THE GLITTERATI



P.S.

FREE LUNCH?

An irate caller contacted RED ALERT wanting to know how much it would cost to go to the Aleida Guevara meeting. She seemed shocked to discover it was free.

She thought there would be an entrance fee as it cost 250 Euro just to have a boiled egg with Dr. Henry Kissinger earlier in February in UCC. Now doesn't that prove the superiority of socialism over capitalism!

Ole O'Flynn, Ole.

As part of it's series of constituency profiles TG4 came to Cork North Central. Try as they might they could not find any candidate in the constituency who had the cupla focal. At least two of these local heroes have made migration into Ireland an election issue. So patriotic are these fine lads that they can only speak the Queens English. Oh yes, Noel O'Flynn said while he couldn't speak Irish, he was in the process of learning Spanish. Then again wasn't Dev part Spanish!


FLYNNIE

Speaking of which, the Annual Capitalist Pig Draw took place in An Spailpin Fanach on St. Patrick's Day. For those that don't know this draw takes place every St. Patrick's day and the pig is named in honour (if that's the correct term) of the person who has best displayed the greed and pig-like behavior for which capitalism is renowned. This year's pig was named "Flynnie". Does anyone know who it was named after? It was the first ever time a pig with a black face was used. Ah, now you get it.

MUTE MAGGIE?

We have just learned that Maggie Thatcher has been ordered, on medical grounds, to stop speaking in public. Our comrades in the Communist Party of Britain always said that Maggie spoke poison, well now we have official confirmation.

Comments, criticism or letters can be sent to;
**The Editor,
RED ALERT,
55, North Main Street,
Cork City.**



An Spáilpín Fánach
in association with St. Patrick

Presents for raffle

Flynnie

The Capitalist Pig

(Dead or Alive)

Draw will take place at An Spáilpín Fánach on St. Paddy's Day 2002

Flynnie the capitalist pig, see item below.

Racist Candidates

Jimmy Corcoran

Joe O'Callaghan, if he never did anything else, will always be remembered as the man who introduced the race card into Cork's electoral politics. In an attempt to rescue a failed political career Joe launched an attack upon the immigrant community in Cork via the Neil Prenderville show on 96FM. Initially he claimed to be concerned about an alleged attack upon a school-girl in Cork's northside. During his outburst Joe made several references to the fact that the alleged attacker was a "non-national". If the attack took place, the nationality of the attacker should not be of concern but, like the racists in the old South of the US, Joe seemed to think that the fact that the alleged attacker was a Roma added to the seriousness of the offence.

Obviously delighted with the publicity Joe was back on the same show time and again expounding the same racist drivel. It was obvious to all that Joe was using the race to put himself in the running for a seat in the general election. As a failed councillor Labour were not going to risk standing Joe in the election. He recreated himself as a "man of the people" who was merely articulating the fears of an old community that was

being "swamped" by a tide of illegal immigrants! Puffed up by the media attention Joe gave dire warning about the likely future facing Cork's northside. Unfortunately Joe lacks the classical references of his idol Enoch Powell so his rants tend to be boring and monotonous.

For those who might not know it this is the same Joe O'Callaghan who, in the early '80s called people comrade and was associated with the Labour Party Left. At the time Joe appeared to be the rising star in Cork Labour and he also seemed destined for greatness in the ITGWU. His old ITGWU protege Joe O'Flynn is now SIPTU Regional secretary so that route is closed off. Being a Leftie in the Labour Party is no path to promotion so in typical self interest Joe abandoned any pretence of being on the Left. He is of course not the first member of a social democratic party to recreate himself on the racist right. Mussolini in Italy and Mosley in Britain were both leading members of social democratic parties before forming their fascist gangs. Joe, to be fair, seems to lack that ambition.

Noel O'Flynn also joined in the racist abuse on 96FM. It seems his seat was under threat so he resorted to attacks upon immigrants in an

a blatant attempt to to save his political skin. O'Flynn is no stranger to this tactic, in the run up to the previous general election Noel O'Flynn was very vocal in his condemnation of travellers. Every time a factory laid people off, or a proposed factory failed to materialize O'Flynn issued a press statement claiming the reason for the closure etc. was an illegal halting site, which always seemed to be near the factory in question. As if capitalists, who are busy destroying the environment give a damn about the aesthetic beauty of their factories. They would set up a factory in the middle of the city dump if they could make money there.

To date the only candidate in Cork North Central who has come out clearly against racism have been Mick Barry of the Socialist Party. All the others have either said nothing on the issue or else condemned O'Flynn and O'Callaghan while claiming that there are too many migrants being placed in the northside. If you treat the issue as a problem to be shunted around the country so we all get our "fair share of the burden" you will encourage racist attitudes.

The two candidates jointly condemned Amnesty International over an ad which

highlighted racism in Cork. Because the woman used in the ad was not the person to whom the alleged incident happened and also because Amnesty could not prove if the incident cited actually took place they demanded an apology "on behalf of the people of Cork". Even if the incident did not take place one has only to walk into any shop in the Shandon Street area following another of Joe's broadcasts, and if a Black person walks past racist comments will be uttered by someone. A few months ago a mob, led in part by a local drug dealer attacked a Nigerian owned shop in Shandon Street. Despite the racist shouts, which were reported in Court to date the only person charged and fined was one of the Nigerians defending the shop. The comments of Joe O'Callaghan and Noel O'Flynn give legitimacy to these thugs irrespective of what they might say.

Cork North Central has serious problems. Unemployment is higher than the city and national average. The number of school leavers with no qualifications is higher than the national average. It is an area that has been badly served by it's TD's over generations. However instead of dealing with real problems that demand radical solutions Joe O'Callaghan launched his election bid on a clear racist platform. Noel O'Flynn has done the same. Why has SIPTU remained silent when on of it's officials, who is identified in the public mind with the union, launches his racist campaign? And why hasn't Noel O'Flynn been expelled from Fianna Fail? Fianna Fail claim to be a republican party, ideologically in a line from Tone. It was Wolfe Tone who wanted to create an Irish democracy where citizenship was not based on ethnic background. Now Noel O'Flynn wants to reverse this. The former Fianna Fail Lord Mayor of Cork, who represented the northside, Gerald Goldberg, himself the son of refugees from Imperial Russia would not be welcome in Noel O'Flynn's Fianna Fail.

It is important that neither of these candidates be elected so use your vote to keep them out.

KISSINGERWATCH

Kissinger Watch (www.icaonline.org/kissingerwatch) - a joint project of East-Timor Action Network
International Campaign against Impunity
Instituto Cono Sur

In the past few years, the international movement against the impunity of public officials has gained unprecedented momentum; activists worldwide have made significant efforts to assure that these high-ranking politicians and soldiers will be held accountable for their acts, which include crimes against humanity, war crimes, torture, and genocide.

General Pinochet was detained in London for more than 500 days and escaped extradition to Spain only after a dubious medical assessment found him unfit to stand trial. Slobodan Milosevic was extradited last June to the Hague Tribunal (ICTY) on charges of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. A second international ad hoc tribunal (ICTR) has been established for Rwanda and tries suspected perpetrators of the genocide. Support for the establishment of similar tribunals for Sierra Leone, Cambodia, and East Timor is strong. In the last week of February 2002, Portugal and Ecuador joined the International Criminal Court (ICC). Only eight ratifications remain before the ICC treaty enters into force.

Impunity, however, is not limited to those countries that are placed under the label of the "second" or "third world." The West must also confront its criminals; it cannot remain blind to the crimes of its officials. For this reason and with this issue, we launch KissingerWatch.

To many, Henry Kissinger epitomizes the failure of the Western world to pay serious attention to the grave crimes committed by its leadership. In response, KissingerWatch is designed to examine this specific case of impunity, to provide information about Kissinger's alleged role in the violation of human rights worldwide, to kindle debate, and to facilitate the exchange of opinions among experts and

activists KissingerWatch will be published as an email bulletin that will be distributed several times per annum. The first issue aims at providing a comprehensive - but far from complete - overview of Kissinger's past and present activities. It also serves to introduce other initiatives that raise awareness on Kissinger's alleged involvement in crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide. Future issues will be more concise and hence more easily digestible.

To subscribe to KissingerWatch (free of charge), send an email to: subscribe-kw@icaonline.org

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