Oppose the visit of the American War Criminal George W Bush

**DEMONSTRATE!**
Weekend of June 26th & 27th

NOT WELCOME IN IRELAND!

THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING COMMISSION

FAMILY’S STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE GOES ON

IRSM EASTER COMMEMORATION ‘04

DUBLIN’S HOMELESS SHAME

THE VOICE OF IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALISM!
The IMC REPORT — “devolved of intellectual rigour, factually incorrect, politically biased”

The Starry Plough / An Camchéachta

The Starry Plough or An Camchéachta was first established in 1975 as the Irish Republican Socialist Party’s national newspaper. For all correspondence please contact: The Starry Plough or An Camchéachta, BT48 8GX, An Camchéachta The Starry Plough / For all correspondence Party. national newspaper of the The Starry Plough or An Camchéachta then get in touch at the address above or contact a local IRSP representative. The Starry Plough is your paper.

Deadline for next issue of The Starry Plough / An Camchéachta is 30th June 2004.

If you would like to highlight an issue of concern in your area and would like to have it published in the pages of The Starry Plough then get in touch at the address above or contact a local IRSP representative. The Starry Plough is your paper.

Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) and Irish Republican Socialist Party 3.5 The INLA came into being in 1975 as the paramilitary wing of IRSP. Its initial core membership was drawn from members of the Official IRA and the Provisional IRA following the 1972 ceasefire. The INLA is a very resilient organisation that has withstood many diverse terrorist backgrounds. It has a reputation for extreme violence and internal feuding centred round leadership disputes which regularly lead to fragmentation of the group. 3.6 While the INLA may not be as prominent now as in the past it is still a significant terrorist group. It declared a ceasefire in 1998, which still survives after a fashion. The INLA remains active. In January 2004 it carried out an attack on a 14-year old boy in North Belfast and the shooting of a man in Strabane. The group is heavily involved in drug trade, locally drugs and finance itself by extorting money from both legitimate and illegitimate sources. In our view it has failed in its attempt to gain the perception of being legitimate through the threat of re-engagement, either as individuals or as an organisation. (The International Monitoring Commission’s first report)

In 1998 in its ceasefire statement the INLA said “We have accepted the advice and analysis of the Irish Republican Socialist Party that the conditions for armed struggle do not exist. The Irish National Liberation Army has shifted from the position of defence and retaliation to the position of complete cease-fire.”

The INLA was involved in a war of nationalism against British Imperialism and its local allies. In accepting that the conditions for armed struggle against imperialism no longer existed it recognised that a particular stage of struggle had ended. The time for taking the war to the hearts and homes of the British Imperialists and their repressive loyalist allies had come to an end.

But no section of the republican socialist movement thought that the Good Friday Agreement was the end game. The IRSP called for the continuation of the struggle and demanded the inclusion of all Gadiels to the agreement. Six years on the question to be asked were the sacrifices endured by the INLA and the Irish Republican Socialist Movement. The group conceded that after the three years of armed struggle waged by the Irish Republican Socialist Movement and the INLA in the British occupation had been used for political gain for the Provisional Sinn Fein is just slightly ahead of the electoral struggle of Sinn Fein in the 1950s.

Britain still claims sovereignty over part of the island of Ireland. In recent years class people in the North have sharpened their class analysis and economic exploitation continues on both sides of the border. Locally drugs and finance itself by extorting money from both legitimate and illegitimate sources.

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The office at 45 Great James Street, close to the city centre, is a joint project and is being run in conjunction with Teach na Feile, Free Derry Books & Info and this paper and has already been instrumental in raising the profile of Republican Socialist politicians in the North.

The office is open from 11am to 3pm on weekdays and is contactable on (028) 71 262995 (prefix code from 2 Counties: 048) and is located on the first floor of 45 Great James Street.

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INLA in Derry have never used nail studded implements. They have also pointed out to us that the involvement or otherwise in this alleged attack.

Following the spurious and sensationalist reporting said:

The Starry Plough said that they had approached the INLA to ascertain whether or not the INLA prisoners would lead to trouble can be described as neg- lect but certainly not collusion. The INLA can hardly be accused of collusion if they simply took advantage of failures on the part of the authorities.

The background to this is that the local cumann of the IRSP in North Belfast have to stop immediate-ly and we fully support commu-nity initiatives that aim to bring these attacks to an end. "Councillor O’Brien is well aware that loyalist attacks are not reactive and driven by pure sectarian hatred, his attack on Republican Socialists is oppor-tunistic, inaccurate and lends credence to loyalist claims that sectarian attacks by loyalists are merely a response to nationalist attacks. We reiterate the IRSP’s total rejection of sectarian attacks on Northern Ireland and the LVF. further we call on protestant working class communities to support the various community initiatives aimed at eradicating this blight on all our futures.

In the mean time communities need to remain patient and to continue to work with youth groups and local politicians in these marginalised areas. However, any resident has the right to defend their homes from sectarian hatred; his attack on Republican Socialists is opportunistic, inaccurate and lends credence to loyalist claims that sectarian attacks by loyalists are merely a response to nationalist attacks.

The H blocks of Long Kesh and inset Billy Wright

The IRSP in North Belfast have hit out at a Belfast councillor as grossly irresponsible for alleging that the INLA were responsible for recent sectarian attacks in the lignenial area. Councillor Eoin O’Brien stated in the North Belfast News that an incident at the “turn of the road” was the responsibility of the INLA. The IRSP met with councillor O’Brien following his outrageous claims.

An IRSP spokesperson commented: "The IRSP have long said that sectarian attacks in North Belfast have to stop immediately-ly and we fully support commu-nity initiatives that aim to bring these attacks to an end.

Justice For Seamus Doherty

Councillor O’Brien is well aware that loyalist attacks are not reactive and driven by pure sectarian hatred, his attack on Republican Socialists is opport-unistic, inaccurate and lends credence to loyalist claims that sectarian attacks by loyalists are merely a response to nationalist attacks.

We reiterate the IRSPs total rejection of sectarian attacks on Northern Ireland and the LVF. further we call on protestant working class communities to support the various community initiatives aimed at eradicating this blight on all our futures.

The IRSP in the areas affected distributed 3,000 leaflets to local homes. The main point of the leaflet was the ongoing destructive effect of the PSNI’s use of violent thugs and house breakers to paid informers and the free reign given to these young people to wreak havoc in their communities.

An IRSP spokesperson commented afterwards: "The massive response to these leaflets leaves us in no doubt that those charged with looking after the interests and welfare of the people in Camnill, Galliagh and Shantallow have miserably failed in their task.

We have received, responded to and resolved countless issues and one current is running through all these issues and that is the people feel neg-lected and left behind and have no-one to turn to for help. The support shown to the IRSP and our efforts at resolving these problems has been heartening for our members in these areas.

We followed up on one such complaint from a group of pensioners with whom the IRSP and our members had moved in next to them and used his flat to hold parties and as a base for anti-community activ-ism such as burglaries. These went on over more than three months to the Housing Executive, Sinn Fein and the SDLP to have this person moved on nothing was done. The IRSP then visited this individual and told him that his behaviour was not acceptable. He has since moved out. This is just one such instance that we were involved in resolving.”
South Africa

Ten Years On from “Liberation”

Last month marked ten years of ANC rule in South Africa. The South African “transition” is often hailed as an example of a successful economic process, a model for our own “conflict resolution”. But, should we really be looking at South Africa as an example? Who are the winners and losers of the South African ‘peace process’ and ‘transition’?

According to the Chronic Poverty Research Centre at the University of the Western Cape, the average income of black households doubled from 19 per cent from 1995 to 2000, while over the same period the average white household income grew 15 per cent. Absolute poverty levels increased from 20 per cent in 1995 to 28 per cent in 2000. 45 per cent of the population of South Africa survives on less than two dollars per day. Ten years on, poverty has increased by 35 per cent, while interests and dividends of foreign investors have grown fourfold over the same period. While the numbers of the black majority have been reduced, the corporate sector has been on the gravy train.

Corporate tax rates were cut from 48 per cent in 1994 to 30 per cent in 1999. The official jobless rate grew from 16 per cent in 1995 to 30 per cent last year. However, when discouraged job seekers are added in, the actual unemployment rate now stands at 42 per cent nationwide and more than 80 per cent in some rural areas. The process was accelerated from 1996 when the ANC adopted a World Bank plan for South Africa’s “economic recovery”. Among other things, involved commercialising and privatising government services. Many millions of blacks have now lost access to essential services, such as running water, electricity and telephones, because they cannot afford to pay the charges set by the private corporations. (Sources: Le Monde 27 April, 2004, New Zealand Herald 20 April) It is not the hopes of South Africa’s impoverished black majority that have been realised by “democracy”, but those of South Africa’s corporations, global investors and the white minority thanks to the fact that the ANC had adopted ‘pragmatic politics’ towards the black enterprise. Not only that.

“A new black elite has emerged in South Africa, mostly from the ranks of the liberation movement - people who were able to use their political pedigree and connections to amass vast amounts of capital. Trade unions have become instant millionaires, setting up business consortia in the name of union members but then robbing all the financial benefits at the expense of the workers.” (New York Times 27 April 2004)

Now why is this relevant here? Because the local version of the ANC, Sinn Fein is adopting similar stance.

Recently, the Irish Times described Gerry Adams’ presence at the Dublin Chamber of Commerce business breakfast in the Burlington Hotel in the following terms: “Displaying the more complex colours emerging in Sinn Fein’s attitude to business, Adams’s background message was that his party understands the need for pragmatism.”

Asked about public-private partnerships, he acknowledged that Martin McGuinness had reluctantly accepted the need for private investment while in power in Northern Ireland. “Well, we are against them” he said. “Having said that, McGuinness, as education minister, faced the reality that he would either have no schools or an involvement in a qualified way with private finance, went for it. So I suppose you could argue that that is the emergence of pragmatic politics.”

Equally, Sinn Fein’s acceptance of service in Sligo was justified by Adams, despite all of the party’s reservations nationally against such bills, “... Our position is against it. But in terms of the actual practicalities of working out those matters, as part of local government, the party made commitments on it”, he told the gathering. On taxation, Adams offered soothing words that meant little: “I am reluctant to say that we would do A or we would do B. We are not in principle against tax increases, but we have no plans to introduce them. We just think that there should be a far, far better way of doing business.” (The Irish Times, 24 April 2004)

Mr O’Neill further stated that he got some documents some days prior to the inquest but this disclosure was inadequate. The State had agreed to furnish some documents and the coroner had allowed Mr O’Neill and the Morris’ into a room where they had two or three minutes to examine some books of statements running from 600-800 pages.

However this ‘Justice’ Aindrias O Caomhín concluded by saying that the State itself had correctly submitted they could not accordingly show they had been prejudiced or damnified. Adding that the parents of volunteer John Morris had ‘not satisfied him that the State had not been prejudiced’. The State had agreed to furnish some documents sought at the time of the inquest had resulted in a failure to carry out an effective, fair and independent investigation.

Arbroath Rally

Successful Arbroath Rally. Rosie Kavanagh could not make it as she was in Dublin, but wrote and arti- cle on Arbroath in her Sunday Mail column. Tommy Sheridan, incidentally, wrote in favour of “Scotts Not Brits” in his Wednesday (Scottish?) Daily Mail column. I have taken the liberty of sending him one of our “Scotts Not Brits” T-shirts.

We flung a Grenoromage over the Abbey Wa' and had a minute’s pandemonium for the late Fr. Joe Anderson. Chris Sanderson played on the pipes and the Pollak & Thomleibank Republican Band played too. Dave Lobbetter spoke as well as Andy Rosssiter for the SSP and Gerry Cairns for the SRSM. Sandy Marver’s and his “Potted Heid”group played for us all in the Fooindy Bar afterwards. The bus left McGinin’s in Glasgow in the morning leaving Dalby behind who went for a bar of chocolate.

We turned back and found him in Union St. Again we left him and his mate behind in Arbroath. They went for a walk and a single pint in a harbour pub. The Band could not wait an longer and finally left without them, leaving them to get home by train.

We hope we never have to leave anyone behind in enemy territory again and that all will stay in con- tact with the bus organiser in future. Dalby never did get his chocolate.

Scottish Republican Socialist Movement

21/23 Shuna Place, Ruchill, Glasgow, G20 9ED

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JUP

Sectarian!

There is little to be said about the protests in Sandy Row Belfast by some residents against the alleged presence of Catholics in a block of flats in the District. This follows a series of racist attacks in the wider area.

It is sad to see the evil of sectarian- ism and racism grip the minds of working class people. But that was always the intention of those who set out to break the six counties from the rest of Ireland at the turn of the century. It is still the intention of those who dominate unionism today.

The failure of a former Lord Mayor of Belfast and a member of the Unionist Party to condone the anti-catholic hysteria is symptomatic of the sectarianism inherent in the six counties.

We remain convinced that no amount of tinkering with an inter- nal settlement will ever over- come the bigotry in the North.
Europe: Anti-Working Class Agenda

Irish Republican Socialists Party International Department Mayday Statement

The International Department of the Irish Republican Socialist Party issued a statement on the occasion of International Workers’ Day, reiterating their position on the Irish presidency of the European Union and in opposition to the anti-working class agenda of the European Super-state.

The IRSP spokesperson emphasized the irony of an Irish Euro-President ushering in the radical expansion of member states taking place on May Day 2004.

“As the nations of the former Cis-Comecon and Eastern Europe, along with Cyprus and Malta, are brought into a newly expanded Europe, multi-national corporations from Europe and from abroad will once again relocate to wherever they are best able to exploit working people. Transfer their operations to wherever the cost of human labour power can most cheaply be had, thereby ensuring that wages everywhere are eroded and exploitation is increased.”

“Those who amass their wealth through the exploitation of working people – and contribute nothing other than their own self-aggrandizement and their conspicuous consumption of luxuries, while millions endure crippling poverty – that the world can well do without.”

“Putting in context the day itself, the International Department spokesperson added, “The Irish Republican Socialist Party offer our profound solidarity with our class sisters and brothers throughout the world. As we celebrate this holiday today, we celebrate the working people of the world, who are filled with admiration and pride for all that our class has created. It is great advances that have been possible only because of our classes collective efforts.”

“Every victory they make, is an advance for us. Every triumph we gain, moves them forward as well. We have created all the wealth of the world we see arrayed around us. We will continue to fight for the workers’ rights to a fair pay increase for 2003.”

Leader of Iraqi Council Killed in Suicide Blast in Baghdad

In another piece of the long list of “bad days” for the US-led Coalition, the head of the US controlled Iraqi Governing Council Ezzeddine Salim was killed in an attack on Monday. The explosion occurred in front of a hotel in Baghdad. He was on his way to meet with the new US authorities in order to continue his activities.

A former Newspaper editor from the city of Basra he was a leader of the Dawaa Party and was the highest profile Iraqi to be killed by resistance fighters since the US-led invasion.

This attack was a serious blow to Bush and Blair’s plans to install a puppet regime in Iraq on 30th June and also to their political careers in the US and the UK.

Four Bombs at British Banks ahead of Blair Visit to Turkey

The Marxist-Leninist DHKC-P were being blamed for the attacks. The DHKC-P set off bombs at branches of the British owned HSBC bank in Ankara and Istanbul ahead of a visit to Turkey by Blair and the original Starry Plough were held aloft throughout the short ceremony to signify the graves of thousands internationall and in Ireland.

John Hogan from the local cumann of the IRSP speaking at the event gave an explanation as to why the IRSP chose the location of the day’s proceedings; “Amidst the capitalist development of worker unionisation local trades councils took-off during the 1890s throughout cities in towns and cities creating more class awareness.....Here in Derry, over one hundred years ago, the first ever May Day rally was held where we gather today. Although small in number it was a gesture by radical activists of the 1890s to mark international workers day whilst knowing fully that they were not alone. Here too, speakers voiced their objection to the boss class as they called for unity between the skilled and unskilled workers between the ‘trade and the spade’.”

Putting in context the day itself Mr Hogan said, “Today in Dublin the EU, under the presidency of Ireland, is expanding to include ten more counties into it’s fold. It is indeed ironic that the international day of the worker was chosen to mark the EU’s expansion of work- ers and the 26 County’s central role in this sham is to say the least.”

On May 1st back in 1886 the American Federation of Labor had called a general strike with the support of an eight hour day. It was during one such strike in Chicago the imposition of unfair laws flared the police murdered four labour activists. In response, a local workers paper called for a mass demonstration in the Haymarket area of the city the following evening. During this demonstration a police agent threw a bomb into the crowd killing several workers as well as police. This in turn was used by the authorities to further discredit the growth in what was then the Labour movement. Hundreds, as well as many activists were arrested and tortured, eight of them finally wrongly charged with the bombing. As a result four were hanged, one committed suicide and three spent many years in prison before finally being pardoned for a crime they didn’t commit.”

Returning to the plight of present day workers in Derry Mr Hogan said: “Today, poverty and hope- lessness are taking a firm grip despite the by night European investments and so-called peace deals. The growth of employment agencies is increasing and this is a serious threat to the rights of workers across the country. An example of their dubious prac- tices is sickening to say the least. If you gain employment through one of these firms you can expect them to steal up to fifty per cent of your entitlement in wages as their fee for getting that job. This is legalised theft that must be opposed by all workers.”

Turning Up The Heat: NIPSAs Workers Dig-In As Strike Spreads

After 20 weeks of industrial action there is no weakening of the resolve of low paid NIPSAs members to secure a fair pay increase for 2003.

The support from the members for all aspects of the industrial action has been excellent, demonstrating clearly their determination to see the dispute through to a successful conclu- sion.

Selective action over the past week has included a strike at MOT centres, Larn Port and the Child Support Agency. The response amongst the selected groups has been over 80%. The NIPSAs Civil Service Executive meets again on Monday 5 April with a view to escalating the action.

A number of NIPSAs members who went sick with stress because of threats from man- agement over the work rule have had their pay docked.

All of these members had certifi- cates from their GPs and yet management have decided to treat their sick leave as industrial.

This unbelievable action is illegal, and stands, as a further indication of how far Department for Social Development (DSD) management are willing to go to starve date and harass union members.

It is understood that DSD MOT branch were about to process the pay of the members involved in the normal way, until the personal intervention of department director Thomas O’Reilly and personnel officer Pat Magee imposed the illegal sanction on ill NIPSAs members.

Two of the six NIPSAs members who were suspended from duty for one week, and then took selective action for one week, were removed from the payroll by pay branch.

However, when they returned to work, someone “forgot” to put them back on the payroll. As a result they received only one week’s wages for the last month.

In the only event marking May Day in Derry, Republican Socialists in the city held a short ceremony on the spot of the very first May Day commemoration in the city way back in the 1890s.

A few dozen IRSP activists attended the ceremony at the junction of Northland Avenue and Northland Road. The inter- national flag of workers, a plain copy of the original Starry Plough were held aloft throughout the short ceremony to signify the graves of thousands internationally and in Ireland.

John Hogan from the local cumann of the IRSP speaking at the event gave an explanation as to why the IRSP chose the location of the day’s proceedings; “Amidst the capitalist development of worker unionisation local trades councils took-off during the 1890s throughout cities in towns and cities creating more class awareness.....Here in Derry, over one hundred years ago, the first ever May Day rally was held where we gather today. Although small in number it was a gesture by radical activists of the 1890s to mark international workers day whilst knowing fully that they were not alone. Here too, speakers voiced their objection to the boss class as they called for unity between the skilled and unskilled workers between the ‘trade and the spade’.”

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The Starry Plough
"Disruptive Prisoners"
The Scottish Parliament has backed measures allowing Political Prisoners to be transferred from Six County to Scottish Jails. British Governor in Ireland, Paul Murphy wants the power to remove "Disruptive Prisoners" across the Irish Sea in a bid to help with their pacification process. Scotland's Deputy Justice Minister Hugh Henry said the power would only be used in "exceptional circumstances". He added they would have the final say on which Prisoners were transferred.

The Ard Comhairle of the IRSP totally condemned these draconian measures backed by the Scottish Parliament. When Paul Murphy stated that he wants to remove disruptive prisoners, what he is actually saying is he wants to remove those Political Prisoners who will not submit to a criminalisation policy, and have the resolve to organise and execute political protests and any attempts to suppress their political identity. Not only will this measure serve to isolate the chosen "disruptive" Prisoners from their Comrades, but will also cause immense hardship for their loved ones, many of whom would find it extremely difficult to raise funds for visits.

This is a very serious issue that can be resolved around a united broad front campaign involving the participation of all republican and progressive groupings opposed to such draconian measures. If we allow this measure to go unchallenged, what will the secretaries in the future from sending Irish Republicans to prisons in the Isle of Man, Jersey, Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Jersey?

Disclaimer
There is an A4 sheet entitled "Starry Plough Bulletin" which purports to be for a 32 County Irish Workers Republic. It arrives through the post to our offices and with a Newcastle upon Tyne postmark. No doubt there are other people and organisations that also receive this publication. It purports to be an anti Good Friday agreement and regularly castigates the Provisional Republican Movement. We do not know who prints this publication. It has no forwarding address nor is connected to any organisation.

It has nothing to do with the IRSP or any section of the Republican Socialist Movement.

Zionists Wall Up the Lying: Pile Up the Dead!

The International Department of the Irish Republican Socialist Party today condemned the assassination of Hamas founder and leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. Sheikh Yassin was killed along with his son and two Hamas fighters when the Zionist occupying Palestine blew up the car they were driving in with an air-to-ground missile.

"While the Irish Republican Socialist Party has made no secret of its support for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine as the Palestinian revolutionaries most similar to itself in seeking to wed the national liberation struggle in Palestine with the struggle of the working class for socialism," said a spokesperson of the IRSP's international department, "and disagreed with Hamas on many programmatic issues, we nonetheless salute the resolve demonstrated by Sheikh Yassin consistently in resisting the Zionist occupation of Palestine. Sheikh Yassin sought a sectarian, religious state, whereas the IRSP remains strongly secularist and anti-sectarian. Sheikh Yassin was a life-long opponent of the secular, Pan-Arabist, and socialist views that once informed many anti-imperialist movements throughout the Arab Nation, beginning with his opposition to the anti-imperialist regime of Gamal Nasser. These are not views we share and we do not wish to misrepresent ourselves on these matters. That having been said, however, we recognise that the Zionist occupation of Palestine also represents a sectarian, religious state, one that exists to provide a surrogate for the imperial powers of Europe and North America. The Israeli Zionists enslave and murder the people of Palestine, destabilise the entire region, and help to perpetuate some of the most reactionary regimes existent today in the Middle East through their presence.

"Despite our differences, we salute the courage and determination of Sheikh Yassin in resisting the Zionist occupation, as well as resisting the false ‘peace’ talks though which Israel sought to entrap the Palestinian nation. There is only one kind of peace that Israel seeks for the nation of Palestine, and that is the peace of the dead. The wall they are presently constructing is intended to serve as a tomb for the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian nation. This cannot and will not be allowed to happen."

"For many throughout Palestine, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin was an incarnation of the militant resistance to the Zionist occupation. In closing, the spokesperson said, "The IRSP express our solidarity with them, in this hour of their grief and salute the unwavering resistance they and the whole of the Palestinian people have waged.”

Basque Politician Says ETA Willing to Give Up Arms

The leader of a banned Basque political party was quoted as saying he believed separatist guerilla group ETA was prepared to give up violence and negotiate with the Spanish government.

Asked by a Basque newspaper if he believed ETA was willing to abandon violence, Arnaldo Otegi, leader of Batasuna, said: "I am convinced of it."

"Their latest statements, taking a clear position toward the new government of Spain to sit down and talk, point in that direction," Otegi was quoted as saying in the interview, published on Deia newspaper’s Web site.

ETA has killed nearly 850 people since 1968 in a bombing and shooting campaign for an independent Basque state in northern Spain and southwestern France.

Spain, the United States and the European Union consider ETA to be a terrorist organisation similar to how the British consider the INLA and various IRAs who fight for national liberation in Ireland.

Last month it called for dialogue with Spain’s incoming Socialist government but pledged to maintain its armed campaign, according to a commentator carried by the Basque newspaper Gara. The Socialists, elected on March 14, dismissed the offer.

Batasuna, accused by Spanish authorities of being ETA’s political wing, was outlawed last year by a court under a new law allowing political parties to be banned for not condemn terrorism.

Intifada: Some facts!
Since the Intifada started in Palestine the number of dead has been 929. Palestinians who died were 2, 874 and there were 886 Israelis a ratio of 3 to 1.

Of the Palestinian deaths at least 326 were killed in Israel’s targeted assassination attacks.

160 of these were innocent bystanders including 25 women and 36 children.

Kanehsatake Police Station Closed by Community
A police station inside a native American controlled area of Canada has been closed down by members of the community. Community members have closed the Kanehsatake Police station. The Kanehsatake community has decided to shut down the police station after the elections in June. The police vehicle that was taken from the police station has been reported stolen. Kanehsatake has requested that the Kahnawake Peace Keepers come to Kanehsatake and take all ammunition and other police equipment. The police station will not be manned. In the basement of the Kanehsatake police station there were more than 6000 rounds of ammunition and over 80 rounds of tear gas as well as listening devices and Canadian Department of Defense paraphernalia.

Update: Presently there are neither police officers nor a police force operating within the community of Kanehsatake. It was decided after a squad car was stolen by the illegally imposed police sanctioned by James Gabriel, Canada, and Quebec, that the police station should be closed till after the upcoming June elections or till further notice.

Contrary to corporate media reports NO community members stole ammunition or police equipment. It was decided by the community of Kanehsatake to have all the ammunition and police equipment removed from the police station and stored in a secure location out of the hands of community members and out of the hands of James Gabriel’s non-sanctioned police force.

Aside from the risk of theft of the above mentioned items the community also stated that the removal of ammunition and equipment also eliminated an essay force for either local police, the Sureté du Québec, or the RCMP to intervene in order to secure these items. All is calm at this hour however, community members are assuming the duties of controlling the territory of Kanehsatake and also keeping watch for outside police who would try to forcibly enter the community.

Source: Kanehsatake Mohawk Voice
Scottish Socialist Party Conference

Scottish Republican Socialists were honoured to welcome comrade Terry Harkin from the IRSP to speak at a fringe meeting during the SSP annual conference (Edinburgh, March 27/28). Unfortunately problems with printers meant that the meeting wasn’t as well publicised as it might have been and the attendance was relatively small but this didn’t detract from a positive meeting which hopefully paved the way for further republican socialist co-operation and solidarity.

Terry’s talk covered many angles - globalisation and imperialism, left unity and sectarianism - but always tied it in with the struggle at home and the struggle against British imperialism that is sadly lacking in the analysis of the SSP.

The reason for the invitation had been due to a motion from the CWI on “Northern Ireland” calling for protestant and catholic working-class unity, but always tied it in with the struggle at home and the struggle against British imperialism that is sadly lacking in the analysis of the SSP.

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Easter 2004 on Belfast’s Falls Road

The Irish Republican Socialist Movement this year held a commemoration of the 1916 Easter Rising on the Falls Road in Belfast. This was undoubtedly the biggest event in years and reflected accurately the continuing growth in the IRSM and Republican Socialist awareness. The parade was led, as usual, by an IRSM colour party. This year’s parade was the first outing for the recently re-formed Republican Socialist Martyrs Memorial Flute Band, which is based in Belfast. They were excitedly turned out and are a credit to all involved. The parade took the usual route from Costello House, directly to Milltown Cemetery. Several hundred marchers took part also. At the Republican Socialist Plot Andy Gallagher began proceedings by welcoming those present and he proceeded to introduce speakers who read various messages of solidarity. There were messages from the International Disarmament and from the POWs. Gerry Ruddy from the IRSP and Comrade Finucane gave the main oration, portions of which have been deleted for due to space restrictions:

“Once more we gather to pay homage to those who died in the struggle for an Irish Republic. We honour all those who since the emergence of Irish Republicanism at the end of the 18th century fought and died in the struggle for national independence and freedom. We remember also with pride the many thousands, nay hundreds of thousands of people who contributed in many small ways to aid the struggle.

“Still today despite a heroic struggle over the past 35 years by Republicans we have still failed to realise the vision of Connolly, the socialist republic. And like in Connolly’s time we have an imperialist war being waged by the USA/Brits coalition forces in Iraq. Imperialism is still the enemy.

“Today as we stand here by the graves of those of our comrades from both the IRSP and the INLA who fell in the struggle we remember them not as heroes or martyrs but as ordinary men and women who lived in extraordinary times and rose to the challenge of those times. Let us be clear about what the armed struggle was about from the perspective of the movement - it was nothing to achieve equality but to achieve civil rights. The INLA took up arms, and all the comrades who died on hunger strike, in action or by assassination, took up arms to achieve a Republic that cherished all the children of the nation equally. We rejected living under British or Unionist rule for that rule was unjust, discriminatory, arbitrary despotic and imperialist.

“But times change and the strategy and tactics of republicans have to change as well. In the Republican Socialist movement we have accepted the need to modify our tactics to meet the changed times we live.

“But our analysis of the peace process, or as some prefer to call it, the pigwash programme, and the Good Friday Agreement has been and continues to be spot on. Everything that has happened since 1998 has justified our position. Six years on from the CPA British soldiers are on the streets, the British intelligence services continue to cover up past killing, street clashes continue, loyalists continue to tar and feather Catholics and justice is denied. Desie O’Hare is still a political prisoner as the Free Staters reneged on their own Good Friday Agreement. Republican Prisoners in Maghaberry are denied recognition of their political status. Something, which was won by the deaths of the ten republican hunger strikers, was negotiated away by other republicans for the price of seats in an internal Stormont Executive.

“The gap between rich and poor widens. Working class communities disintegrate and are fashioned by poor health, anti-social behaviour, debt and despair. Homelessness has reached crisis point. The education system is failing large sections of our youth. Attacks on minorities are on the increase. Did our comrades buried here today die for that? The one hundred wealthiest Irish people’s combined fortune is worth 2.5 billion Euros. The ten richest people in Ireland are each sitting on an average fortune of 600 million Euros. For most of us here it would take us at least 30,000 years to save that if we banked our weekly wages every week. The Food and Mineral Tribunals have shown the extent of the corruption of political life in the 26 counties. Not a week passes without some new revelation about the corrupting influence of money in Irish political life. Leinster House is in the words of Karl Marx ‘nothing but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie’.

“It is our primary concern to mobilise the working class towards the revolutionary transformation of society and the sooner every one of us here today takes on responsibility to make a difference to our society the better. No one should have to live in poverty, be thrust from reactionary ideologies and for the establishment of a Workers Republic. Comrades there is no finer calling in this world than to stand shoulder to shoulder with the victims of oppression, with the marginalised and with the poor. On to the Republic - On to Socialism!”

(To read this statement in full, along with the Easter messages from Republican Socialist POWs and FIRSCA go to www.irsm.org and follow the link to statements)
Easter 2004
80th Anniversary of Rising

The General Council of the International Workingmen's Association first took up the issue of Ireland generally in 1867. At that time, Marx and Engels were the primary advocates of the cause of the Irish nationalism on the Council. Following the formation of Irish sections within the IWMA and the admission of a corresponding secretary for the Irish sections onto the Council, Marx and Engels attempted to provide unfailing and staunch support to the Irish sections and their representative on the Council.

Marx's strong feelings on the Irish issue were demonstrated often within the General Council of the International, as they were during an early debate concerning Fenianism. In his note to Engels, he had yielded the floor to another member rather than deliver his own speech on the subject as, "our subject, Fenianism, was liable to inflame the passions to such a heat that I (but not the abstract Fox) would have been forced to hurl revolutionary thunderbolts instead of soberly analyzing the state of affairs and the movement as I had intended."

To Marx, the solution of the 'Irish Question'-Irish national liberation was the key to solving the 'English Question' for socialists and he saw that as the revolutionary 'key' for the rest of Europe. Marx viewed England as possessing "all the material prerequisites necessary for the social revolution," but lacking "the spirit of generalisation and revolutionary fervour." The Irish, whom Engels called, "the most revolutionary element of the population," he believed might supply this spirit. Marx viewed the General Council's resolution on amnesty for the Fenian prisoners as only an introduction to other resolutions which will affirm that, quite apart from international justice, it is a precondition to the emancipation of the English working class to transform the present forced union (i.e., the enslavement off Ireland) into equal and free confederation if possible, into complete separation if necessary.

He considered Ireland of such great importance because he believed that Ireland was "the bulwark of English landlordism." Of the demise of this key foundation of feudalism's continued existence in England Marx wrote:

If it fell in Ireland it would fall in England. In Ireland this is a hundred times easier, since the economic struggle there is concentrated exclusively on landed property, since this struggle is at the same time national, and since people there are more revolutionary and exasperated than in England.

Further, Marx argued that Ireland was the "only pretext the English Government has for retaining a big standing army," which could be used against the English workers in struggle.

For Engels, the campaign around the Fenian prisoners had yet another significance, as shown in a letter he wrote to Ludwig Kugelmann:

The Irish, too, are in a very substantial ferment in this business, and the Fenians declare every day more openly for the Fenians and, hence-an unheard-of and splendid thing here-for, first, a violent and, secondly, an anti-English movement.

A sentiment reiterated by Engels many years later in a letter to Edward Bernstein on the actions of the Irish Land League. Engels wrote: "The Irish are teaching our leisurely John Bull to get a move on. That's what comes from shooting." (British Leftists quick to attack the armed national liberation struggle in Ireland, please take note.)

Engels relationship to Ireland and the Irish national liberation struggle went beyond political advocacy. Engels had, during the course of his life, two women as domestic partners-the second, following the death of the first. The women were sisters, Lizzy and Mary Bums, whose father was a leading Fenian in England. Perhaps as a result of these romantic and personal relationships, Engels made several visits to Ireland, undertook to learn the Irish language, and began work on a history of Ireland, which unfortunately remained unfinished, as pressing business of the international socialist movement left him insufficient time to complete it.

Two of Marx's daughters also played significant roles in relation to the Irish nationalist liberation struggle. It was Karl Marx's daughter Jenny who first exposed the plight of the Fenian prisoners outside of the British Isles. She wrote a series of articles under the pseudonym, J. Williams in the French newspaper, Marseillaise, detailing the barbaric treatment of the prisoners, which, according to Engels, won the release of most the prisoners within a few weeks of the articles publication. Jenny went on to become the regular correspondent for the Marseillaise on Irish affairs.

Marx's youngest daughter, Eleanor (Tussy) Marx-Aveling, was, according to Marx in a letter to his daughter Laura, a 'head centre' (leader) of the Fenians. This claim is likely made in jest, but Eleanor devote a great deal of work for the benefit of the Irish during the period of the First and Second Internationals. Later in her life, both Eleanor and her husband and English socialist-Edward Aveling, became initial subscribing members (financial backers) of the Irish Socialist Republican Party, when James Connolly first launched it in 1896.

The work of the Marxes and Engels on behalf of the Irish struggle has yet to be surpassed in the non-Irish socialist community and has, in fact, been largely ignored. Even many modern Irish Marxists have failed to recognise the importance of some of Marx's comments on Ireland. Marx's observation that Gladstone offered his Irish Land Bill at the very moment that the import of cheap corn and cattle from the United States threatened to depress the value of Irish land holdings, has generally not been explored, though it provides an altogether unique perspective on the passage of the Irish Land Bill. Moreover, Marx's conclusions regarding the importance of the resolution of the Irish Question to the English and European social revolts, which might have provided a reason for the international socialist community to take note of Ireland, has received little attention from Irish socialists.

The initial contact between the Fenian movement and the International Workingmen's Association was established in January of 1866, following a series of articles by Marx on the Fenians in the London newspaper, The Worker's Advocate. The articles had come to the attention of the Fenians, and the wife of imprisoned Fenian leader O'Donovan Rossa wrote to Marx thanking him for the articles and sending an appeal for support of the convicted Fenians. The following month, the General Council of the International voted unanimously to oppose the resolution, sent by their British home secretary, Sir George Grey, to request mitigation of the prisoners' treatment. Grey refused to receive the delegation from the International, so the statement that had been drawn up was instead published in The Commonwealth, a newspaper then used as the official organ of the IWMA.

Eugene Dupont, the Corresponding Secretary for the French sections of the IWMA and another follower of Marx's in the International, said in the cause of physical force that the Irish had been forced to this tactics having no other recourse; asking: "Is not this Irish emigration to America by millions that our exalted legal protest?" He went on to to denounced the English workers who faulted the Fenians, arguing that these workers and the Irish revolutionaries shared the same enemy, "the territorial aristocracy of classes and capitalites."

It was during the resumed debate on Fenianism that Marx yielded the floor to the Englishman Peter Fox, because of his own passions running too high on the subject, but more importantly, because he preferred that the resolution in support of the Fenians come from an Englishman. Marx having deferred to Fox resulted in a somewhat watered down resolution compared to the spirit reflected in the debate. It read:

That this meeting desires that a settled peace and amity between the British and the Irish nations should be substituted for the war of several hundred years between England and Irish and with this view, this meeting exhorts the friends of Irish nationality to bring their cause before the British people and advises the latter to accord an unprejudiced hearing to the arguments advanced on behalf of Ireland's right to autonomy.

In striking contrast to Peter Fox's speech, the speech that Marx was to deliver had been a lengthy explanation of the social roots of Irish nationalism and a strong message of support. He described the nature of English rule at that time as the "quite business-like extinction," and the British government as "only an instrument of the landlords." This state of affairs, he continued, contributed to the distinguishing characteristics of Fenianism, making it a "Socialist lower class movement."

The conclusion of his un delivered speech called for repeal of the Act of Union between England and Ireland as "an essential article of any future English Democratic Party."

In 1869 a second campaign was launched to win amnesty for the Fenian prisoners still being held in British jails. In England, this campaign was primarily organized by the International Council organized a mass demonstration around the demand for amnesty, on April 24, 1869, which drew almost 100,000 demonstrators. In a General Council meeting following the demonstration, Marx argued that the "main feature of the demonstration" was that "at least a part of the English working class had lost their prejudice against the Irish."

Engels went on to become the regular correspondent for the Marseillaise on Irish affairs.

Marx, Engels, the Daughters of Marx & the Irish Revolution

Peter Urban

Previous articles in this series have dealt with early Irish figures in the Republican Socialist tradition, and they will be returned to again very shortly. However, a discussion of the early history of the Republican Socialist current in Ireland would not be complete without some discussion of the relationship of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels-who first developed Scientific Socialism-to the revolutionary struggle in Ireland.
We have said that Rosa Luxemburg's chief contribution to Marxism was to remind socialist revolutionaries of Marx's position that only the complete emancipation of the working class must be undertaken by the class itself.

Beyond this, she helped to restore an understanding within the socialist movement that capitalism is internally unstable, to a lethal extent, but that this alone cannot guarantee the success of the socialist revolution. Because of this, she can be seen as a forerunner of the Council Communist movement.

One of the most prominent leaders of the Council Communist tendency was the Dutch revolution- ary Peter Urban. After the First War, the SDAP was led by Anton Pannekoek, who was among the first critics of class collaboration. He observed the model of the workers' councils that emerged after the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, Germany, Italy, Austria, Hungary, and even Ireland. In the case of the Limerick Soviet, between 1917 and 1921.

The council as a living form of organisation was exclusively an organisation of working people, generally based in the workplace, so that the exclusion of other classes was a natural outgrowth of the circumstances out of which it arose.

Unlike the party, the council cannot survive on an ongoing basis within a stable capitalist system. It is literally unstable, and is only possible as long as the class struggle itself is possible. Because its character is so dependent on its context, it functions without the ability to develop into a centralised and governing bodies of capitalist society.

This character of the council makes it an appropriate vehicle to mobilise workers in the struggle for political power and for parallel government while engaged in revolutionary action. It provides both the means to organise to destroy capitalism, and to participate in the administration of socialism.

Another attribute of the council is that it is immediate to the proletariat. Councils arose spontaneously on factory floors, in workshops, etc. There was no mediation between the worker where he worked, as person and the political organisation of the workers.

While the question of the citizens' council in place of the rule of the elite was a natural, it still remains to be seen how far that will mean for his arbitrary will, the arbitrary will of everybody alike was meant to be here. Henceforward, laws established by the common will should regulate the public rights and duties of men. So now, in the realm of labour, the command of the master of the council passed to the council. The council should regulate the social rights and duties, the production and consumption.

To formulate them will be the first task of the workers' councils. This is not a difficult task, not a matter of profound study or even discursive. For every worker, every rule will immediately speak to their mind. For to make the council as the natural basis of the new society: everyone's duty to take part in the production in accordance with his forces and capacities, everyone's right to enjoy his adequate part of the product as a collective.

This perspective on the necessity of the working class creating its own form of organisation in the course of revolutionary struggle leads to a very different concept of the revolutionary party within capitalism. Rather than viewing the party as the single organ of the revolutionary organisation, Council Communism sees the party as chiefly a vehicle for increasing the class-consciousness of working people.
Teagmháil

The Irish Republican Socialist Party has established Cumann in all major cities and towns throughout Ireland as well as Republican Socialist Committees in Europe. United States & Canada. Each IRSP cumann meets on a weekly basis to activate, educate and organise events locally such as public and political education meetings, solidarity protests and activities from our community to workplace struggles. The Irish Republican Socialist Party has active Cumann, as well as individual members and supporters in the following towns and cities across Ireland, to contact and get involved with the nearest IRSP Cumann in your area write to your nearest contact address listed below.

Ireland: irsp@irsm.org

Agallaig, Armagh, Cork, Limerick, Newry, Galway, Sligo, Waterford, Wicklow:
Belfast Central, Belfast North, Lagan Valley:
392 Falls Road, Belfast, BT12 6DH
Tel: 028 90 321024
Fax: 028 90 330786
Email: irsp@irsm.org

Dungiven, Donegal, Letterkenny, Strabane, Derry:
P.O. Box 1981, Derry, BT44 0XG
Bray, Dublin, Dundalk:
Email: derryirsp@hotmail.com
Email: dublinirsp@hotmail.com

Europe: irsp@netwizards.net

IRSP has members, supporters and contacts active in many working class campaigns and prisoner solidarity in towns and cities throughout England, Scotland and Wales, and across Europe, write to our International Department for further details on how you can actively participate.

IRSP International Department: Email: irsp@netwizards.net

North America: irsp@netwizards.net

Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America
2057 10th Street, Suite B, San Francisco, CA 94111, North America.
Tel: 415-861-1350
Email: irsp@netwizards.net

IRSC has members, supporters and contacts active in working class struggles and prisoner solidarity throughout United States, Canada and Latin America. Write for further details on how you can actively participate.

IRSM Online & Other Contacts

Sterry Plough Publications & Free Ferry Books
Hours: 11am - 3pm Weekdays
45 Great James Street (First Floor)
Derry
Tel: 028 71 262 999
sterry_plough@hotmail.com

Official IRSP Website: http://irsp.org/irsp/

IRSM Statements: http://irsp.org/statements/

Ex-Republican Socialist POW Support Organisation:
Teach Na Faisné (Strabane):
31 Patrick Street, Strabane, Tyrone
Tel: 028 71 56 46 16

Teach Na Faisné (Belfast):
392 Falls Road, Belfast, BT12 6DH
Tel/Fax: 028 90 238 321

Teach Na Faisné Online: www.teachnafaisne.org

Prisoner of War Website: http://irsp.org/irsp/po/

Turkish Death Fast Committee:
www.geocities.com/turkishhunger-strike

Free Dessie O’Hare Campaign
www.irsp.org/dessie_ohare

James Connolly Society
www.waxsage.org/irsp

Larkinpirit:
www.larkinpirit.com

Cork IRSP Online: www.irsp.org/irsp/cork

Republican Socialist Forum
www.irsp.org/cumann/cork

Vol John Morris
Dublin Brigade I.N.L.A.
Killed in Action 5th June 1997

Commemoration & Memorial Unveiling
Sunday 13th June 2004

Assemble 2pm
Old Mill Public House
Old Bawn Road, Tallaght
For march to Bohernabreena
Cemetery - Prominent Speaker
Dublin's Homeless Scandal

This Is A Recent Interview Carried Out By A Starry Plough Reporter

Handlessness is a lack of security, lack of belonging, lack of lack of safety. People sleeping out in doorways, parks, in disreputable sites and in abandoned cars experience the most extreme form of homelessness. According to the official Government count, over 350 people on any given night are sleeping rough so in Dublin area, at least one third are under the age of eighteen. In 2002 nearly 1,500 Children were part of Families experiencing homelessness.

But unfortunately this is just the tip of the iceberg. The ‘invisible’ homeless, people who live in emergency accommodation: in shelters, hostels, refuges, in B&Bs or double share with friends and relatives, make up about 10 times the number of people sleeping rough. They are also in need and equally without a home. The Starry Plough visited a number of locations around Dublin to speak to some of the Homeless, the first place we visited was incidentally Dublin County Council, the first People we spoke to were Sue and Pat. The following is the report.

Sue: I have been sleeping rough for the past 5 years and am originally from Athlone. I am living on the streets for the past 2 years and am originally from Athlone. I lost my job, moved to Dublin with no money and a lot of debt. I have been sleeping rough for the past 2 years and am originally from Athlone. I lost my job, moved to Dublin with no money and a lot of debt. I couldn’t afford my rent so I was stuck.

Pat: I am living on the streets for the past 2 years and am originally from Athlone. I lost my job, moved to Dublin with no money and a lot of debt. I have been sleeping rough for the past 2 years and am originally from Athlone. I lost my job, moved to Dublin with no money and a lot of debt. I couldn’t afford my rent so I was stuck.

Social welfare office: Sue and Pat agreed to speak to the Starry Plough out of a group of Four Homeless People huddled together in a makeshift tent.

“Today in Ireland, no one should be hoodwinked by any promise of some kind of ‘Euro Disney democracy’ that ‘gives’ workers the right to celebrate international workers day and demonstrate freely on our own streets.

“While thousands intended to peacefully protest against a capitalist Europe and all that the concept entails, the Irish 26 counties’ regime made their views about such ‘democratic rights’ quite clear, by aiming themselves against Irish workers and attacking them. The PNSI sent water cannon to Dublin on May 1st. This, in stark contrast to the backdrop provided by the Irish state media hype over the past several months, is a continuation of the policies that have produced an atmosphere of fear and intimidation on the streets of our capital.

“Thousands of riot police, Irish military personnel and expanded weaponry-provided to the Dublin regime by the crown forces occupy-"Thousands of riot police, Irish military personnel and expanded weaponry-provided to the Dublin regime by the crown forces occup-...
Republican Prisoners Support Network

A Chara,

Six months ago, the Republican Prisoners Support Network (an independent, non-aligned group of former Republican prisoners, relatives and concerned individuals who campaign for the rights of Republican prisoners, both sentenced and on remand) stated that it would closely monitor the implementation of the Steele recommendations.

Last month, the prisoners were moved to their own wing. We are worried by the fact that conditions of detention have deteriorated in segregated wings. The Republican prisoners now have to face the following: Sentenced and Remand prisoners are separated in contravention of Steele.

Review recommendations: they are held under almost total lockdown. Only two prisoners are allowed out of cells at a time. Restricted to cell leave based on whim of prison staff. Denied Education provisions. Denied facilities of any sort; no tables or chairs. Forced to take exercise in a tiny yard alongside loyalists, separated by short wire mesh barrier. Forced to endure severe sectarian abuse at exercise. Denied hot meals for last half of this week. Denied hot showers. Offered filthy, unsanitary washroom facilities. Denied the right to housekeep their own landings - criminal prisoners from another house will be sent in to clean their living areas. Faced with grave endangerment from such housekeeping staff as loyalists may qualify for “CAMP X-Ray style microphones and cameras in all parts of the prison.

This does not even take into account the continued closure of visits, the use of sniffer dogs and the despicable attitude of prison wardens towards the families. The battle for political status goes on.

For the Republican Prisoners Support Network, Leo Martin (Chairperson), Eddie Duffy (Vice-Chair), Liam O Ruairc (Press Officer)

With Thanks & Pride From Comrade Billy Lynch’s Family

Comrades,

The wife, son, father and family circle of the late Billy Lynch wish to thank all his many friends who sympathised, sent cards, flowers and supported them in any way.

Everything was greatly appreciated. Old friends and new friends from all over the world sympathised together. Billy lived his life as a republican Socialist from the early 70's and never have said “The craic would have been mighty”. Billy always said we would never lose touch and we didn’t, you were all in our thoughts and prayers. Billy will be deeply missed and life will not be the same without him.

You are all in our thoughts and prayers. Billy will be deeply missed and life will not be the same without him.

Patsy and Liam Lynch

Republicans, Martyrs

You are 12 years and over and interested in joining the Republican Socialist Martyrs Flute Band?

If you are in the Belfast area then why not become involved in our flute band?

We can train you in flute, drums or colour party and new members are always welcome so if you are interested or if you know anyone who is then get in touch. If you do not want to join the band but can provide time towards fundraising etc then get in touch also.

For details contact:

Costello House,
392 Falls Road,
Belfast.
Tel 90 238 321

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National W of T one Commemoration

SUNDAY June 27th 2004

Bodenstown, Co. Kildare

Check with IRSP representatives for details closer to the time and for local travel arrangements

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Litreach Dearga

Red Letters

PO Box 1981 - Derry - Ireland plough@erism.org
Despite ten years of crippling embargoes which left the Iraqi populace weakened and malnourished, despite bombings that shattered their infrastructure and destroyed the military, despite a year of occupation by roughly 150,000 soldiers, the Iraqi resistance appears to go from strength to strength, inflicting spiraling casualties on the invaders. The lesson of Vietnam is being learned anew by the armies of imperialism—an army of occupation can never defeat an indigenous national liberation struggle. U.S. soldiers complain over repeated extensions of their time spent in Iraq and their families become increasingly restless and outspoken in wanting their loved ones returned to them, but the Iraq resistance fighters cannot join in the chorus of complaints. This is because they already are home; they have nowhere to retreat to. They have only the choices of death or victory, because they have already determined that life on their knees is an unacceptable option.

The U.S. imperialists now project that the war in Iraq will cost them over $400,000,000,000—a cost that is causing deep cuts to be called for in domestic spending. Britain will spend considerably less, but there too war expenditures are using up funds that might otherwise be spent on the needs of the citizens. The identification with the imperialist adventure that many have been deluded into embracing—the result of class-consciousness having been impeded by capitalist ideology—will soon be colliding with the reality of the situation. The war only benefits the rich, for working people it spells disaster.

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More than a year after U.S. President Bush declared victory in its attack on Iraq, the combined forces of Britain and the U.S. are mired in an ever-worsening quagmire, while a growing and relentless resistance picks off dozens of their soldiers and civilian mercenaries each week.

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