

The Plough

-e-mail newsletter of the Irish Republican Socialist Party

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INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

A recent documentary on the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo broadcasted on Channel 4 brought light on the deadliest conflict since world war two. Four million people have been killed in the Congo since 1998. However, the documentary did not emphasise enough the responsibility of Western powers and economic interests in creating this war.

In May 1997, Laurent Désiré Kabila, a long time Congolese guerilla fighter against Mobutu's dictatorial and kleptocratic regime took power in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Soon, Kabila frustrated the Western governments and multinationals' appetite for 'a second scramble for Africa'. As soon as he settled in Kinshasa, Kabila started to articulate clearly the aspirations of his people and summoning them to take their own destiny into their own hands, politically and economically. This was perceived by Western powers and their African allies as a covert declaration of independence. Kabila's nationalist stance immediately clashed with their interests, as he eventually reviewed all the contracts he had signed with American and South African mineral companies, demanded that they pay upfront for decades of future profits and subsequently nationalised all the mines.

The people of Congo enjoyed a short-lived time of respite during Kabila's first year in power. They could eat three times a day again as prices of essential commodities drastically dropped, roads and bridges were repaired, public transport restored, electricity extended to the suburbs of Kinshasa and people liberated from Mobutu's ill paid soldiers' ransoming (67 members of the new army who resumed the practice were arrested and jailed).

The new currency, the Congolese franc, was launched and the inflation rate dropped from 8.828% in 1993 to 6% in 1997. Embezzlers were thrown into jail. Corruption was severely combated. All this was achieved in the absence of any help from the IMF and World Bank who conditioned their financial support to Congo normalising its relations with the institutions of Bretton Woods and pledging to pay all the debt the old regime contracted.

The new government embarked on an ambitious three year programme of national reconstruction and during the third summit of Comesa (common market community of central and southern African countries) held in Kinshasa on 29 June 1998, Kabila clearly outlined what role Congo would play within the common market and in Africa as a whole. He explained that "more than 40 years of African independence have offered to the world a sad spectacle of a continent looted and humiliated with the complicity of its own sons and daughters". He expressed the wish "to see Africa entering the 21st century totally independent of foreign interference" and declared that the battle for Congo's independence and sovereignty is fought in the interest of Africa as a whole.

"Our country", he said, "has a vocation of exporting peace, development and security to the rest of Africa. A weak Congo means a vulnerable Africa from its centre, an Africa without a heart." The stakes were then raised. America and Britain branded Kabila a 'loose cannon that had to be restrained. But as Colette Braeckman (an expert who is for Congolese affairs what Robert Fisk is for the Middle East) who reports for the Belgian daily, *Le Soir*, wrote in her book, *L'enjeu Congolais - l'Afrique Centrale après Mobutu*, this "sudden animosity against Kabila could only be explained by the fact that his nationalist stance collided with or frustrated their economic interests in Congo Kabila opposed all forms of investments that did not represent the interests of the people of Congo."

Upon Laurent Désiré Kabila's assassination in 2001, Michela Wrong, a former correspondent for Reuters, BBC and *The Financial Times*, and author of *In the Footsteps of Mr Kurtz, Living on the Brink of Disaster in the Congo*, wrote in the *Financial Times*: "Laurent Kabila alienated Western powers and African allies in his three-and-half years in power He was welcomed as a liberator when his rebel forces marched into Kinshasa in 1997, toppling the late Mobutu Sese Seko, but diplomats and statesmen had come to view him as a man impossible 'to do business with', a key factor in central Africa's growing instability The World Bank and the IMF found him so obstructive, talks on new aid were abandoned."

Consequently, on 2 August 1998, a Rwandan-Ugandan-Burundian coalition launched a war of invasion of the Democratic Republic of Congo, logistically supported and financed by well known Western powers and multinationals, as well as with the complicity of the so-called Congolese 'rebels'. They are systematically looting Congo's fauna and flora, natural and mineral resources and destroying or transferring what is left of Congo's infrastructure to their own countries.

According to Wayne Madsen, an American investigative journalist and intelligence specialist, author of *Genocide and Covert Operations in Africa 1993 - 1999*, the US military has been covertly involved in the war in Congo. Madsen on May 17 2002 told the US House subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, that the US was using Private Military Contractors (PMCs). Madsen said American companies including one linked to former President George Bush Snr are stoking the Congo conflict for monetary gains.

It should be made clear that what is at stake in this war is not some "ethnic conflict" between "rival tribes", but a fight between a popular nationalist regime and a Western-backed invasion force.

LOR

Maghera Controversy

The IRSP accused the Northern Ireland Housing Executive of being the political dupes of the SDLP, DUP and others following the smashing of a monument to two INLA volunteers.

The monument to Brendan Convery and Gerald Mallon killed in action on the main street of Dungannon during the 80's was due to be unveiled by IRSP Ard Comhairle member and ex Blanket Man Paul Little. However at 5 AM on Saturday morning August 16th MOD contractors from Henry Brothers construction company, supported by almost 200 RUC/PSNI personal turned up at the back of Mc Atamney Crescent and demolished the plinth for the memorial.

"What price the Good Friday Agreement now?" Said IRSP Ard Comhairle Member and Chairman of the Memorial committee Terry Harkin.

"Was this agreement not meant to guaranteed "parity of esteem"? Was the GFA not meant to enshrine the rights of the indigenous Irish to their own cultural identity? That was what the people were told. When did it change to "everyone has the right to express their identity except the Irp's and those loyalist groups who are anti agreement?" "There has always been, for the most part anyway, a tacit agreement between the local communities not to interfere with how the other side honoured their dead. The murals on the Shankill to Brian Robinson and his ilk have been largely ignored even though they can be plainly seen from Nationalist areas, the payment of 10's of thousands of pounds to the UDA's C Company by a multinational to remove murals from NIHE land went un-noted as did the NIHE's complacency when the same C Coy: smashed down walls in Executive property to create the big brother house in a housing black spot. Why were Henry Brothers and their police escort not brought in to repair the damage or paint out the murals? There are double standards being applied in Maghera due to the unholy cabal that has developed between local SDLP representatives and (Box Car) Willie Mc Cray of the DUP."

"Well, We've a message for both those parties, we do not need their mandate to commemorate our dead, and before the sun sets on Sunday they may want to take a walk up to the estate, they'll be surprised, for they'll find a monument to two brave INLA men who gave their lives fighting for National Liberation and Socialism there." Sure they can send for their MOD contractors and the Henry's can pull it down one more time, but it wont go away you know, it'll be back. I would still appeal to them all the same to step back before they do any serious damage to the community by raising tensions when they do not need to. Let this memorial stand let the loyalist and republican monuments stand. let's have parity not parody of esteem.

Unveiling of Convery/Mallon Memorial Plaque

The Unveiling of the Memorial plaque to Brendan Convery and Gerard Mallon took place on Sunday 17th of August in Maghera. A crowd of several hundred people followed took part in a march to McAttamny Crescent where the memorial plaque was unveiled and wreaths laid on behalf of the families of the two dead volunteers and the various branches of the Republican Socialist movement. Brendan's brother made a moving and hard hitting speech reminding the audience what the struggle had been about and that tho' methods may change the struggle continues. Pol Little speaking on behalf of the IRSP lambasted those in the SDLP who's protests led to the RUC/PSNI sneaking in at 5.30 in the morning to wreak the previous memorial. He paid tribute to the Republican Socialists of South Derry who in the space of 24 hours had rebuild a magnificent tribute to the dead INLA volunteers.

sunday world-sunday liar.

The Sunday World is a tabloid paper which many people believe sets people up for assassination. Over 20 people named in the newspaper have died in violent circumstance. August 17th had an article by Hugh Jordan in which he poured scorn on the INLA, besmirched the memory of two dead volunteers and defended the Good Friday Agreement calling it "the only show in town". Some political analysist he is!!!. The institutions set up under the GFA have failed, having been suspended four times. Elections due to be called were postponed due to fears that Trimble might lose support of the majority of Unionists and the British Government has reneged on its part of the GFA. Sectarianism has incresed massively since the GFA and violence still continues. God help us if this is the only show in town. Wake up and smell the stench of a rotten corrupt statelet, Jordan!

An other article written by John Cassidy repeats the lie that "Eddie Copeland, alleged to be associated with the IRA, and Dark CLoud who is alleged to be associated with the INLA were banned from" the Shamrock GAA Club. That is a lie as both individuals are still members of the club and play a prominent part in its social and cultural activities. Three weeks ago the SW claimed Copeland was dismissed as O/c of the Provos in Ardoyne and now they claim he is on the Northern Command of the IRA. They forget their own lies!!

The following statement was received by the Plough from the leadership of the Irish National Liberation Army on the 5th Anniversary of the INLA ceasefire.

In August 1998 the leadership of the INLA with the full support of the volunteers of the People's Army called a ceasefire in response to the will of the Irish people as expressed through the Referenda on the Good Friday Agreement. Now five years on it is time to take stock.

Nothing that occurred since then has persuaded us to change our minds on the Good Friday Agreement. Four suspensions of the Assembly, a massive increase in sectarianism, the introduction of a neo-liberal economic agenda, the failure of mainstream unionism to actively accept an equality agenda and continuing direct rule by the British Government confirms the correctness of our analysis. The Good Friday Agreement is a failed and flawed agreement. The Northern Ireland State is a failed political entity.

With the increasing disillusionment with in loyalist ranks over the whole so-called peace process and with whole sections of the UDA rejecting the GFA while the UVF re-arms now is not the time for any Republicans to be even considering negotiating any arms surrender. A squalid political deal that exchanges guns for Government was not what the republican struggle of the past was about. Such a deal is in effect an attempt to hide and cover up what has been in effect a defeat for Republicanism. Running Stormont departments does not and will not hide that reality.

However the INLA does not see a return to armed struggle as a viable alternative at this time. Accordingly we have encouraged our membership and supporters to become actively involved in the day-to-day struggles of ordinary people. Such political involvement is following the example of our founder Seamus Costello. A revolutionary army without a clear base of political understanding and activity is no longer a revolutionary Army. The INLA is part of and acts in the interests of the Irish working class.

Five years on from our ceasefire there is still a role for the INLA. We will remain vigilant in defence of working class communities but we will not take offensive action. We will assist in resolving disputes within working class communities but we will not police those communities. The INLA is not a police force and we call on all units of the INLA to desist from policing communities. It is no part of our role to police the working class. However we do reserve the right to defend our membership and the most vulnerable members of our community. It is time to encourage working class communities to take responsibility for their own lives. We will encourage initiatives that give some respect and dignity back to communities living in fear from drug dealers and young disaffected youth. Therefore we encourage all volunteers to actively participate in a positive manner in daily lives of working class communities. The INLA has no interests outside the liberation of the working and the establishment of a socialist society.

There are however those who have abused and exploited working class communities. We warn those who used and abused the name of the INLA within working class communities to intimidate and extort to desist forthwith. We are aware of individuals who use our name as a flag of convenience. Your day is done.

To the gutter press who regularly print falsehoods gossip title tattle and lies about this movement stop. Check your facts with this movement before you go to press.

Five years on the INAL ceasefire is solid. We recognise that the Republican struggle has to take a new direction and we call on all other republican forces to enter into dialogue with us and other republicans to discuss the way forward in the new situation we all find ourselves in.

Now is not the time for the failed strategies and tactics of the past. Now is the time for a new departure.

Statement on behalf of the leadership of the INLA

Migrant workers in Northern Ireland-Research-Mid Ulster readers please note!!!

The Institute for Conflict Research, an independent research organisation, has been commissioned by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister to research the experiences and needs of migrant workers living in Northern Ireland. A migrant worker is defined as anyone working in Northern Ireland who is not from the United Kingdom or Ireland.

The research aims to establish an overview of migrant workers' participation in the employment market in Northern Ireland. It also seeks to document the variety of problems that migrant workers may experience in relation to employment rights, pay, racism, access to health, housing, education and social services. The research will also examine the standard of service currently provided by statutory agencies to migrant workers.

Versions of the questionnaire are available in English, French and Portuguese. All the information you provide is anonymous, and will only be used for research purposes.

If anyone there knows of any migrant workers could they please encourage them to help out with this research by complete the online questionnaire by clicking on web:

www.conflictresearch.org.uk.

For more information, contact Kathryn Bell, Institute for Conflict Research, on tel: 028 9074 2682 or email: research3@conflictresearch.org.uk.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Anti-War Movement- Wynns Hotel Lower Abbey Street Dublin 2.00pm to 5.00PM
Saturday 23rd August IAWM Calls Public Meeting To Decide The Three Representatives From Ireland To The Nov. 2003 European Social Forum and to Mobilise Participation in the ESF.

The Irish Anti War Movement (IAWM) sent a representative to the European Social Forum (ESF) Planning Assembly in Genoa in early July. This gathering was to continue preparation and plans for the 2nd ESF taking place next November in Paris. At this meeting: (a) Ireland was allocated a total of three speakers for the Plenary meetings of the Paris ESF, (b) Ireland was allocated one representative on a new ESF Working Group which will decide the final details of the 250 Seminars of November ESF.

The IAWM has called a public meeting for Sat. Aug 23rd 2003, 2pm, Wynns Hotel, Abbey St., Dublin 1, in order to mobilise people from Ireland to attend the Paris ESF and to address issues (a) and (b) above. The IAWM has asked in their invitation that as many groups, organisations and movements as possible be represented at this public meeting.

Political Status for Republican POWs!

Leafleting to highlight the dirty protest and campaign for political status in Maghaberry prison. The GAA Football semi-final in Croke Park on Sunday, 24th August will be leafleted to highlight the POWs campaign. The Minor is at 2pm and Kerry play Tyrone at 3.30pm.

All interested are asked to come along and give a hand.

Meeting point is the bus stop opposite The Big Tree pub on Dorset Street 1pm. Keep and eye out for a big black banner with the slogan 'Political Status for Republican POWs?', That'll be us.

Organised by: Na Fianna Eireann and Working Class Action and supported by the IRSP

**North East Social Forum One World Centre, Lower Crescent Belfast 7.15pm
Tuesday 26th August Anyone can attend**

Ard-Comhairle IRSP 392 Falls Road Belfast 10.30- 5.00pm Saturday
30TH August A/C members and delegates only.

Anti- Imperialist Camp in Assisi, Italy.

Sunday to Saturday 31st August to 6th September .

Programme of the Anti-imperialist Camp 2003 Assisi, Italy, August 31 to
September 6

Sunday, August 31

10 p.m. inauguration concert

Monday, September 1

10.30 am

Forum 1 *The true story of the Iraqi Communist Party* By Ahmed p.m., leader
of the anti-imperialist opposition within the ICP

Forum 2 *The road map and the political military in Palestine* Meeting with the
Palestinian delegation (PFLP, Abnaa el Balad, solidarity groups,&)

Forum 3 *With Kurdistan* In memory of Dino Frisullo, leader of the Italian
solidarity movement

5 am

Round table *Trial against the war criminals* Liberation movements listed by
US and US as terrorists speak out (Basques, Colombians, Palestinians,
Turkish, Filipinos, Lebanese, &)

10 p.m., theatre

Tuesday, September 2

10.30 am

Forum 1 *The Italian youth between commitment and indifference*

Forum 2 *The empire: a critical analysis of Toni Negri's thesis* by Costanzo
Preve

Forum 3 *Meeting with the Lebanese National Resistance*

5 p.m.

Round table *Beyond Porto Alegre* The World Social Forum and the perspectives of the movement against globalisation with Piero Bernocchi (Italian Cobas leader), Costanzo Preve,

10 p.m. film

Wednesday, September 3

10,30 am

Forum 1 *Kidnapping* Meeting with the leader of defence of Slobodan Milosevic, Vladimir Krsljanin

Forum 2 *From Venezuela to Brazil: reform and revolution*

Forum 3 *Cuba: blockade, socialism and democracy*

5 p.m. Round table *La lucha sigue: Class struggle and anti-imperialism in Latin America* By Elias Letelier (Chile), Mario Maestri (Brazil), ...

10 p.m. Meeting with the Anti-imperialist Poets of America

Thursday, September 4

10.30 am

Forum 1 *Revolutionary prisoners: testimonies from Turkey and Israel*

Forum 2 *Is Maoism still up to date?*

Forum 3 *Against the imperialist occupation* An Iraqi Fedayyin recounts

5 p.m. round table *Christianism, Islam, Judaism* with Hamza Piccardo (leader of the Union of Italian Islamic Communities), Shia leader from Lebanon, Representative of the Franciscans,&

10 p.m. theatre

Friday, September 6

10.30 am

Forum 1 *The collapse of the German left: from anti-fascism to Americanism*

Forum 2 *Without truce: The Basque struggle against Spanish oppression*

Militants from Euskal Herria speak out

Forum 3 *Intifada, Jihad and Arab nation* Meeting with the Arab delegations from Morocco, Tunisia, Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq&

5 p.m. Round table *Waiting for Godot* Transatlantic tensions and the future of Europe

10 p.m. theatre

Saturday, September 6

10,30 am

Forum 1 *Between persecution and integration: Islam in Italy* By the lawyer of the Islamic communities

Forum 2 *The European workers movement and anti-imperialism*

Forum 3 *Armageddon: religious fundamentalism in the US* By Miguel Martinez

5 p.m. Round table *For a resistance movement against the American empire what alternatives to the imperialist transformation of the Western left?*

10 p.m. Closing concert of the Camp

Accommodation Fees Anti-imperialist Camp 2003 Assisi, Italy, August 31 - September 6

Hotel / Bungalow Full Board* E 250

Caravan Full Board*E 200 only night's lodging E 100

Tent Full Board* E 160 only night's lodging - 70

Tent under 25 years Only night's lodging E 50

One day fees Hotel/Bungalow only night's lodging E 25 Caravan only night's lodging E 16 Tent only night's lodging E 12

One meal voucher E 10

PLEASE NOTE: * Includes lunch and dinner (3 courses). Breakfast is not

included

For information and reservation please contact the Reception Service at:

registration form <<http://antiimperialista.org/en/Anmeld2002e.shtml>>

e-mail: reception@antiimperialista.com <mailto:>

Please note that reservations are only valid upon payment of a deposit of 30% of the total amount to the following Italian bank account: Campo Antiimperialista account N°: 679/53 bank name: Banca dell'Umbria transfer codes: ABI: 6235 - CAB: 21800 - SWIFT: CRPG IT 3P

Irish Social Forum Conference Crescent Arts Centre Belfast 10.00 am-5.00pm
Sunday 23rd September .

International Day of Action Dublin Saturday 27TH September

GEORGE MONBIOT

George Monbiot, a regular feature writer in *The Guardian*, is the author of *Captive State* and *The Age of Consent*.

The One World Centre, The New Ireland Group and The de Borda Institute have organised the following events:

1 GEORGE MONBIOT The 2nd One World Centre annual lecture, 12 noon to 2 p.m., Thursday 9th October, Room G07, Peter Frogatt Building, Queen's University. Everyone welcome.

Further information available from The One World Centre, 4 Lower Crescent, Belfast BT7 1NR, Tel 90241879, e-mail stephen@owcni.org.uk

2 GEORGE MONBIOT "Unionism, Nationalism or Globalisation?" 7.30 for 7.45 p.m. on Thursday 9th October, in The Elmwood Hall, Belfast Tickets £5 (concessions £2.50), includes a free glass of organic wine from the Belfast Food Co-op.

Tickets and further information available from either The New Ireland Group, 7 Slievedarragh Park, Belfast BT14 8J sec.newirelandgroup@ntlworld.com or The de Borda Institute, 36 Ballysillan Road, Belfast BT14 7QQ pemerson@deborda.org

European Social Forum Paris , St Denis 12-15 November

If you have not yet received "The Plough Number 1" Please e-mail "request one" to johnmartinps@eircom.net

Comments about the Plough

"Fantastic newsletter -- good work!"

"Overall good, however what is problematic is the lack of uniformity of - colour - letter format (I prefer Times New Roman format 12)- space

If the whole newsletter was like the section included on the Assisi camp, it would be more pleasant to read."

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<http://www.wageslave.org/jcs/> (James Connolly Society)

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/connolly/> (James Connolly Archive)