

The Plough #13
7 November 2003

E-mail newsletter of the Irish Republican Socialist Party

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Dessie O'Hare

Last weekend Dessie O'Hare was granted temporary release from Castlrea Prison. As part of an agreement he spent the time with his family in Glenree. Dessie is the last prisoner entitled to be released under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement. However his release has been stalled by the Free State Authorities because of the demonisation of Dessie. Dessie saw himself as a soldier fighting a war. War is not a picnic and people do things in war that they would never dream of in peacetime. That is a universal fact. Dessie was not convicted of murder, but of kidnapping. He has been in gaol from November 1987 and should be released forthwith. It is interesting to note that another non-INLA republican charged with offences in which two members of the Free State security forces died is out on bail at the moment. Dessie has served his time, is entitled to be released and yet is still waiting a release date. Let know one now say that the law is independent of the politicians. It is clear that the judiciary are but tools of the establishment.

No Light at the End of This Tunnel, George (Toronto Sun, 2 November 2003)

By Eric Margolis

Watching the recent storm of car bombs, rockets, and gunfire in central Iraq gave me nasty memories of the January, 1968 Tet offensive in Vietnam. At that time, many soldiers in my U.S. Army unit were departing for Special Forces camps in Vietnam's highlands. We stood in mute horror as TV reported these very camps being overrun by North Vietnamese troops, and their garrisons killed to the last man.

We immediately understood the bloody Tet offensive was a huge political and psychological victory for North Vietnam. Tet blew away for good Washington's claims of a light at the end of the Vietnam tunnel.

Reacting to last week's Ramadan offensive in Iraq, President George Bush actually claimed it proved things were improving, though attacks on U.S. forces have surged from 20 to 30 daily. He called for more U.S.-run Iraqi militia forces to be deployed, shades of the ill-fated

"Vietnamization" strategy of three decades ago. At times, Bush and his senior aides seem more out of touch with reality than Iraq's former minister of misinformation, "Comical Ali." Consider: Bush was reported shocked and amazed at his mid-October meetings in Bali when moderate, pro-American Muslim leaders complained Washington considers all Muslims terrorists. They warned Bush that his total identification with Israel's right-wing government was ruining chances for Mid-east peace.

Bush was apparently unaware his administration is increasingly viewed abroad as an aggressor and a bitter foe of Islam. We know Bush prides himself in not reading, but being so out of touch staggers the imagination. Is Bush really unaware a mainstay of his administration, the Muslim-hunting Attorney General John Ashcroft, claims, "In America, there is no king but Jesus"? Or that Lt.-Gen William Boykin, a loudmouth he put in charge of anti-terrorism, recently claimed while in uniform that Muslims were akin to Satan, and that his god was "bigger" than the idols he mistakenly said were worshipped by them? Or that some of his neo-conservative advisers, who want the U.S. to destroy all Israel's enemies, keep calling for "World War IV" against the Muslim world?

But Bush was too busy blasting Malaysia's retiring leader, who recently claimed Jews ran the world and the United States, to denounce equally odious canards against Islam by his own administration and its supporters in the media and on the religious far right.

Bush, of course, has never been in touch with reality when it comes to Iraq. Just recall his preposterous claim about Iraqi uranium, "drones of death" and "vans of death," links to Al-Qaida, the imminent threat of mass destruction to the U.S., etc., etc. VP Dick Cheney, who appears to be running Mid-east policy, claimed Iraq had deployed nuclear weapons that threatened the U.S.. He maintains such absurdities though absolutely nothing was found after a five-month, \$300-million search. The rarely seen Cheney sounds increasingly like Mad King Ludwig of Bavaria. Poor Colin Powell, now demoted to TV talk show guest, disgraced himself before the world at the UN by his lurid, nonsensical claims about Iraq.

Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, a prime architect of the Iraq war, went to Baghdad last week where he met the real world for the first time. Iraqi resistance forces rocketed the heavily guarded al-Rashid Hotel, the imperial cantonment where he and other U.S. VIPs were lodged. One was reminded of the Vietcong attack on the U.S. Embassy in Saigon during Tet. The attack left Prof. Wolfowitz visibly shaken. Here was the fire-eating warlord, the tough neo-con theoretician who had sent American GIs into combat in Afghanistan and Iraq, trembling in his brand-new chukka boots after the tiniest taste of real war.

Neither Bush, Cheney, nor Wolfowitz ever served in their nation's armed forces, though all were of military age during Vietnam - unless you count Bush's sporadic appearances at the Texas Air National Guard.

Wolfowitz, and fellow neo-conservative administration hawks like Richard Perle, Elliot Abrams, Doug Feith, Michael Ledeen and John Bolton, who variously call for attacks on Iran, Libya, Lebanon, Syria and Sudan - vividly bring to mind the words of American political thinker and poet, Peter Viereck.

In his brilliant book, *Metapolitics: The Roots of the Nazi Mind*, Viereck detailed how so many of the founders of Germany's National Socialist Party were artists, writers and academics. They were "intellectuals who lusted for brute violence ... a Bohemia in arms," wrote Viereck, who warned of "bloody-minded professors" running amok in politics.

Wolfowitz fits the mould perfectly, not in the sense that he supports Nazism, of course, but rather in his apparent belief in, "brute violence" as a way of resolving most any international problem. He, Cheney, and his fellow neo-cons duped the deeply uninformed and gravely misinformed president into launching two strategically, politically and financially idiotic foreign wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The isolated, unworldly Bush is only now becoming dimly aware he has stirred up an anti-American hornet's nest overseas. Equally disturbing, thanks to the crusades in Iraq and Afghanistan, total U.S. military spending next year will likely hit \$500 billion. Incredibly, this titanic sum is even more in constant dollars than the U.S. spent in Vietnam in 1968, at the height of that war. The light that optimistic George Bush sees at the end of the Iraq tunnel is probably an onrushing truck, loaded with explosives.

Vol. Neil McMonagle - New Memorial

9 November - 2pm

There will be another memorial unveiling, part of the Teach na Failte campaign to commemorate fallen republican socialists, in Derry on Sunday November 9th. The impressive new memorial is dedicated to the memory of INLA Volunteer Neil McMonagle who was killed by the SAS on 2 February 1983. Anyone attending is asked to assemble at Carnhill Resource Centre at 2pm. A march will then take place across Racecourse Road and towards Leafair Park where the new memorial will be unveiled. A function will then be held locally, details on the day. For further information please contact: Derry IRSP <derryirsp@hotmail.com>

Boycott Coca Cola

Save the lives of Colombian Workers! Colombian trade unionist in Belfast Public Meeting, Tue 11th November, 7:30pm, Belfast Unemployed Centre.

Luis Eduardo Garcia - Colombian Coca Cola Worker and member of SINALTRAINAL the Food and Drink Workers Union will address a Public Meeting Belfast Unemployed Centre 7-15pm 11th November.

Senor Garcia a Colombian Coca Cola worker and member of SINALTRINAL will be in Ireland to call on Irish workers and Irish people to support the international campaign aimed at ending the murder of trades unionists in the Coca Cola bottling plants in Colombia. The Belfast visit is

being sponsored by the UNISON trade union and the local Colombian Workers Solidarity Campaign.

Luis will address a public meeting in the Belfast Unemployed Centre at 7-30pm and is hoping to meet local people who have supported the campaign in defence of Coca Cola workers here in Belfast. The John Hewitt Bar and the Cultúrlann were among the first to come out in defence of the Coca Cola workers and Luis is particularly to meet with representatives of these organisations and thank them for their support.

Ireland is the first leg of a worldwide tour to publicise the plight of the Coca Cola workers. Luis will also speak in Dublin on Wednesday to UCD students who voted for the Coca Cola Boycott and in Sandino's Bar in Derry on Monday.

Irish Anti-War Movement Bulletin

The situation in Iraq deteriorated even further in the last week with massive car bombs causing immense loss of life to ordinary citizens and almost killing one of the authors of the war, Paul Wolfowitz. The continuing resistance and appalling lack of security in Iraq give the lie to the US and UK claims that they are liberators welcomed by the Iraqis.

Meanwhile in Palestine, the Israeli army has been crushing and rocketing the Palestinian refugee town of Rafah with ruthless efficiency in a manner, which rivals the destruction of Jenin last year. But it is all in the name of stopping terrorism so the international community has remained silent.

There was very positive news from the US at the weekend with thousands of people marching in Washington DC against the continuing brutal occupation in Iraq. 135 cities across the US sent delegations. Opposition is growing steadily in the US as the people recognize the facts.

Meanwhile in Ireland, it seems too that more and more people now accept that we were right in opposing the war. Many of us watched the RTE Primetime special on Iraq, which showed the devastation, which has led to increasing bitterness and resistance by all sections of Iraqi society. The media is beginning to raise the issue again of Shannon and the continuing transiting of thousands of US troops every month. This was highlighted in the press statement issued by the IAWM announcing the upcoming blockade of the War port on 6 December.

The new steering committee has met and elected the following officers

Chairperson Richard Boyd Barrett

Secretary Colm Stephens

Treasurer Colin Coulter

PRO Fintan Lane

International Secretary Kieran Allen

We have also set up work groups for the following areas: Finance/Fundraising, Legal, Secretarial/Admin, Affiliates/Trade Unions, Communications (Website, bulletins etc.)

If you want to get involved in working for us in any of these areas please get in touch!
infor@irishhantiwar.org or call Colm at 087 294 7100

What's On?

8 November European Social Forum Meeting 1.30pm-3.30pm in the Teachers' Club, Parnell Square, Dublin.

Discussion of what will be coming up at the ESF in terms of debates around the frequency of ESF meetings, where they will be held, proposals on days of action etc and to give practical info.

To meet with interested legal professionals in accordance with the motion passed at conference:

To establish an expert legal committee (either independently organised or in affiliation) to advise the movement on legal strategies to advance its aims.

12-16 November ESF Paris, the programmes have been finalised and can be down loaded from <http://www.fse-esf.org/francais/rubrique37.html> (programmes are given in French, English and Spanish)

16-21 November George Bush Visit to London, if you are going to be in London at any time that week there is a full programme of anti war and anti bush activities (cultural, protest etc.) including...

Tue, 18 November Public Rally at Friends Meeting House, Euston Road

Thurs, 20 November 2pm National demonstration

Check out www.stopwar.org.uk for more details

6 December Blockade of Shannon War port, Assemble at 2 pm at Lidl Carpark in Shannon Town. More details to follow after organisation meeting.

All Anti War groups are requested to hold public meetings, if possible in the weeks coming up to this protest. The public meeting should be used to build for as large a protest at Shannon as possible.

* Red Duster
An Damhair/ October 2003

'All hail the Scottish Workers Republic!'

Contents

Deasachaidh/ Editorial

"... Why are organisations allowed to affiliate to the SSP when they are resolutely opposed to the politics of the SSP and use their membership of the SSP solely to discredit it?"

The Dilemma for the SNP Left

Gerry Cairns

"... There is a stark choice for the SNP Left. They can stand by their party, trying to reform from within. Or they can join a pro-independence socialist party that will revolutionise Scotland from top to bottom... "

Connolly: National Liberation, Socialism, Partition

Liam O'Ruairc" (IRSP)

"Connolly's major achievement is to have grasped the relation between nationalism and socialism, between the national struggle and the class struggle. A lot of socialists saw (and still see) the national struggle as a diversion from class struggle and as being incompatible with socialism... "

The 1820 Radical Rebellion

Donnie Fraser

The next stage of our Radical History column continues with the period 1803-1820, and looks at the republican socialist legacy of the 1820 Insurrection.

Intifada message from Gaza

Message from Dr. Mona El-Farra of the Union of Health Work Committees on the 3rd Anniversary of the Intifada in occupied Palestine

The SSP and the National Liberation Struggle

"... The SSP must advocate the revolutionary solution to the national question - a Workers' Republic - and then indeed not just another Scotland will be possible but another world."

The Scottish Republican Socialist Movement publishes the Red Duster.

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Glasgow

G3 8TE

Scotland

£1 inc. p & p

the_srsrsm@hotmail.com

* European Social Forum Paris, St Denis 12-15 November

Question time and manifesto launch

NICVA is holding a party political Question Time for the voluntary and community sector on 14 November 2003 at 11.00am at the NICVA Offices. Representatives of all the main parties have been invited to set out their manifestos and answer questions about what they plan to do about the issues concerning voluntary and community organisations. The new Policy Manifesto for the sector will also be launched at the event. To register, please contact Cathy Breslin on tel: 028 9087 7777 or cathy.breslin@nicva.org

* NI Anti-Poverty Network Invite you to attend our

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Followed by seminar/speakers and workshops on

WATER INEQUALITY -- THE HUMAN COST

On Friday 28th November 2003 at NICVA, 61Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GB From 9.30am -- 1.00pm

AGM followed by guest speakers on privatisation and the introduction of the Water tax and how this will affect every section of our community.

On low income, in receipt of benefits, if you are a householder you will have no relief from Water tax.

SPEAKERS

Frances Dowds - NI Anti-Poverty Network (NIAPN)

Manus Maguire - Communities Against the Water Tax (CAWT)

Jim Welsh - NI Public Service Alliance (NIPSA)

Alisa Keane - Irish Congress of Trade Unions NI (ICTU NI)

To Register Fax back to 028 9087 5011 or e-mail to info@niapn.org by 21st November 2003.

Short of a bob or two? Seeking a new job opportunity in at the deep end?

The Department for Regional Development recently advertised the post of Chief Executive of the Water Service.

The post was offered at £150,000 a year plus performance related bonus and they added; more may be available for an exceptional candidate.

The advertisement adds that it has been determined that Water Service must become a self-financing organisation outside central government. It further adds that this will require the

introduction of domestic water charges. During the public consultation the focus was on how water tax should be charged, not if it should be charged, so what was the consultation for? Why consult with the community if you have already decided the outcome?

The government is looking to employ an Executive on £3,000.00 per week.

If the water charges are introduced it will take more than 400 families living in poverty to make up this person's wage.

The gap in earnings between the rich and the poor is ever widening. Can you afford to pay an additional £400.00-£600.00 per year for water charges-? Maybe you can, however many people can't and as ever it is the already socially excluded sections of our society that this tax will effect most. One thing is for sure the Chief Executive of the Water Service should have no problem paying his/her water tax bill, after all it isn't even 0.5% of their annual salary.

Please feel free to comment on the contents of the Plough. We welcome political comments and criticisms.

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

The new Republican Socialist Forum from Derry IRSP:
<http://rsmforum.proboards23.com/>