



attac

Newsletter 82- page 1(1)  
Please circulate and distribute.

# Sand in the wheels

Weekly newsletter - n°82 – Wednesday 22 May 2001.

## NICE, IRELAND & GOTHENBURG

### Content

#### 1- Barcelona to Genoa

*The World Bank canceled its meeting in Barcelona and movements all over Europe are preparing for the G8 Summit in Genoa. You'll read from the Newsletter team a little update on both.*

#### 2- Revolt Against World Bank Rule

*In Pakistan movements are starting to fight back the rulings imposed to the country by international financial institutions. You'll read the presentation of the situation written by one of them, Priše.*

#### 3- WTO Tidbits

*In this issue of the WTO tidbits you'll find among other information, expressed concern about international regulation on GMOs and other agriculture products. Qatar is also setting strict rules for people to come in the country at the WTO ministerial time.*

#### 4- Good Havens - The great mutation of capitalism

*Jorge Beinstein explain how the tax havens, the money laundering and the mafias are changing capitalism. Part of the Casino economy is due to their activities helped by the countries of the "center", the big economies. The Bush administration withdrew a week ago from the OECD talks around money laundering and tax evasion. The issue is in fact being more and more linked in obvious ways to the politics held by major industrial countries.*

#### 5- No to the Nice Treaty

*ATTAC Ireland is actively involved in the campaign for a "NO" vote in Ireland's referendum on the Nice Treaty, to be held on June 7th. Speakers from ATTAC have addressed many meetings in Dublin and other parts of Ireland highlighting the dangers to democracy and citizens interests posed by the provisions of the Treaty of Nice. Please help and participate to the campaign.*

#### 6- Welcome to Gothenburg in June!

*The last European Summit under the Swedish government will be held in Gothenburg. ATTAC in Gothenburg is inviting you to join them for several days of actions and demonstrations.*

#### Barcelona to Genoa

By Newsletter team

As the World Bank decided to cancel its June meeting in Barcelona, movements are preparing themselves for the July G8 Summit demonstration in Genoa.

The Spanish movements, helped by the Portuguese and the French ones, have won the

battle without showing a single demonstrator. The World Bank officially withdrew from the city of Barcelona, for security reasons as they say, in fact because it has nothing else to say, to discuss or to promote than the old recipes we all know. Instead of listening even to the hanger, these people from above, far far away in five star hotels and limousines, preferred to move back... to nowhere. The meeting is canceled. Not only it is a sign of wickedness but also a real proof of political emptiness. No plan other than financial managing could be discussed, no alternatives, no ideas...



attac

nothing. The US movements are preparing the Spring meeting in Washington, but where is in fact the World Bank. Behind walls? Sheltered from reality in a building? How many police force, army divisions will it need in the streets of the US capital city to hide from reality?

In Europe in the meantime, with the help of the victorious Spanish, the demonstrations in Genoa are getting more and more real. With the Berlusconi's victory, a far-right conservative government took power in Roma along with strong personal plans for "security", the Italians have a new reason to organize for "Another world", to fight against nationalism and protectionism. Much is not known at the moment, but strategies are being devised to help cope with different realities.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> demonstrations of immigrants will take place to welcome the G8. On the 20<sup>th</sup> civil disobedience strategies will try to stop the summit to start on time. On the 21<sup>st</sup> a huge demonstration will take place.

Demonstrators from out of Italy and especially United Kingdom (probably two trains of demonstrators), Spain, France, Belgium and so on will converge to the South, next to Vintimille, in case the border will be closed: A reminder for the heads of state that the free circulation of people is not a favor that they grant whenever they wish, but a right.

In France a student coordination [vamos-a-genes@ifrance.com](mailto:vamos-a-genes@ifrance.com) is already at work and prepare the arrival of Naomi Klein, the No Logo author, in the end of May, to mobilize in universities around the country. A national coordination is also working to help organize transportation, and the Cote d'Azur border of Italy.

In Russia also, unions and diverse movements are willing to go to Genoa as M Poutine will be the 8<sup>th</sup> of the Gs in the Italian city. They are preparing a bus from Moscow. Of course with difficulties. That is the reason why they have issued an international call for solidarity. If you wish to, you can send messages to show solidarity with their attempt:

Boris Kagarlistki : [goboka@online.ru](mailto:goboka@online.ru)

Iliia Budraitskis : [budrabm@df.ru](mailto:budrabm@df.ru)

If you want to help financially you can contact Denis Paillard 156 rue Oberkampf 75011 PARIS FRANCE or [groupe-est@attac.org](mailto:groupe-est@attac.org)

From all over Europe buses and trains are ready to go to help the "world leaders" to have a clear and

loud sense of reality: Cancel the debt now! All of it and without "conditionality" !

## Revolt Against World Bank Rule

By Shoaib Bhatti

At last Pakistan is in action against the World Bank and its policies. The silence broke when a number of organizations which were invited for the consultation on Country Assistance Strategy (CAS). A large number of people from trade unions and civil society members gathered around the meeting hall in National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) and blocked the way of the World Bank delegation to the meeting hall. It was only first time when such activity was initiated against any financial institution in the country.

The same delegation also got resentment by the hands of the organizations when they were in Karachi three days before. The members of the different organizations boycotted the meetings at both Karachi and Lahore. They also passed a resolution and insisted the Bank officials to respond on the resolution before any further consultation on the new initiatives of the Bank.

Addressing the protesters, Prise President, Shoaib Bhatti said the activists have launched a brave struggle to get rid of International Financial Institutions like World Bank and IMF. He said that short-sighted policies of the Bank had destroyed the economic infrastructure of the country and it was the prime time to break the shackles.

Malick Shahbaz Ahmad Tahir urged the people to wake up from deep slumber and heed to the alarming bells which are real cause of concern. He said that the World Bank's policies had aggravated poverty in the country and were leading the nation to a blind alley from there was no return.

Indeed it was the chain of reaction against the IFIs which started from Seattle and Prague and it was the first such reaction in Pakistan.

The resolution was read as:

"We recognize the key role of the Pakistan decision -makers and the implementers in the economic crisis facing us to day. Nevertheless-and not with standing rhetoric to the contrary- we believe the policies promoted by the World Bank have not helped Pakistan society deal with the crises. Instead the bank policies have contributed to and greatly aggravated the crises. Hence our

reservation about entering a dialogue with the World Bank.

The record of the World Bank and the IMF economic policies and the pressure that have increased poverty and deprivation particularly amongst the most vulnerable sections of effected countries: women and children. This include Structural Adjustment Program and the conditionalities that make every thing dependent on the market mechanism (e.g. withdrawal of subsidies and "market adjusted" utility charges)

The lack of transparency in preparing and implementing policies - including the present consultation process where the criteria for being consulted is unknown. The World Bank policies of not revealing the country assistance strategy (CAS) to citizens without prior approval of the Government, especially since it is the citizens who are made to bear the costs of the loans.

The history of failed projects that the bank so far does not even acknowledge, much less examine, and learn from.

The current push for a corporatization of farming that will encourage the introduction of multi-national corporations, destroy our indigenous seeds and the agriculture basis and wipe out the livelihood of million of more small farmer.

The continuing drive for the privatization, including

Privatisation of the fundamental essentials to life, most importantly water without which life itself is not possible, and

Essential sectors such as health and education that have been provided to their citizens by the state in virtually all developed countries.

To promote good governance (the World Bank's stated aim) and to make a dialogue meaningful requires the following:

The procedures, principles and framework for dialogue are mutually decided upon by those involved;

Consultations are initiated at the beginning of planning; involve a wide audience and the outcomes of dialogue are shared with all concerned;

All actions are transparent and, for example, negotiations and agreements between the Bank (and other financial institutions) and the Government of Pakistan are made public

With respect to planning, future planning (and consultations for this) can only be meaningful when it is premised on an honest review and analysis of past failures as well as successes. Before planning it would be appropriate for the World Bank to review why poverty doubled from 17.3% in 1988-89 to 32.6% of the population in 1998-99 during precisely the period when Structural Adjustment Programs were in place. Equally, we would like to know why the Social Action Program II was introduced when SAP I had already been proved a failure given is huge expenditures and very modest achievements.

Finally, we strongly believe that the burden of debt and debt servicing has reached a magnitude that obliterate any possibility of development in Pakistan, and that there can be no discussion on future development assistance without first negotiating and settling the question of debt - relief/cancellation."

Shoaib Bhatti  
PRISE

The organization may be contacted for further information on the World Bank Boycott in Pakistan at [prise@lhe.orbit.net.pk](mailto:prise@lhe.orbit.net.pk)

## WTO Tidbits

By the Attac work group on International Treaties, Marseille

1)Dispute Settlement Body : the US stands condemned

A panel of judges has just concluded that US restrictions on imports of Pakistani combed cotton thread went against the Agreement on Textiles and Clothes (ATC). According to the US, these imports were a threat to US manufacturers of similar or rival products. But the DSB adhered to the conclusions of the Textile Monitoring Body (TMB) which received the initial Pakistani complaint, and considered that the US had not proved the existence of a serious threat to its manufacturers.

2)No Codex agreement on the Precautionary Principle



attac

The meeting broke up when a certain number of delegates insisted on the removal of any reference to the Precautionary Principle where food and human health are concerned. Before it began, the US had called for these sections to be removed entirely, while the EU demanded that this Principle be clearly defined in international food legislation. An observer remarked that the Codex Alimentarius seems to have become the final battlefield for trade negotiators rather than health practitioners.

3)"It's the first time I've encountered on-the-spot realities"

An Economic Affairs representative at the WTO made this avowal after a meeting on the implications, based on case-by-case studies, of the SPS (Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary) agreements and the TBT (Technical Blocks on Trade) with regard to access to the market of the main exports of developing countries. He even added, "In meetings of the SPS committee at the WTO, we never discuss such cases because we don't have access to on-the-spot realities."

4)China signs a preferential regional trade agreement

China has joined 5 other Asian countries (India, South Korea, Laos, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh) in signing the Bangkok Agreement which dates from 1975. This agreement includes tariff reductions on a certain number of products. The Bangkok Agreement covers foodstuffs, leather products and clothes. Pakistan, Vietnam, Myanmar and Nepal may also join it.

5)The US is favourable to the creation of an energy commission between the 3 Nafta countries.

To ease the petrol prices in the US, the Americans have agreed to the setting up of a commission on the liberalization of gas and petrol prices in the area. The explanation given by Bush is that "The US lacks energy sources, whereas Canada has plenty, and Mexico too if the right policies are followed".

6)Qatar will only accept people with the right credentials

The Emirate states that 4400 visas will be delivered to accredited participants at the Conference in November. That will be all. However, it was graciously added that "Qatar will permit peaceful demonstrations to be held during the Conference."!!!

7)The General Council makes preparation for the coming Conference in Qatar

S. Harbinson, its President, produced a list of possible subjects for discussion during the preparatory conferences. Most of the countries consider that by July it will be clear whether the launch of global trade negotiations can be envisaged at Doha (called Plan A), or if the Ministerial Conference will confine itself to making a progress report on discussions (Plan B). The most urgent present task for Harbinson is to arrange the subjects suggested by Members in the best order for inclusion in the July agenda. Establishing this hierarchical order gives rise to differences of appreciation. Certain countries, like Pakistan, India and the Group of African Countries, stress that the application and counter-balancing of the agreements appear to them an urgent priority capable of affecting progress on other subjects. Tanzania, speaking in the name of the Least Developed Countries, gave as its opinion that the possibility of holding a new round should not even begin to be discussed. These countries should not, as was the case at Seattle, be kept out of the decision-making sessions of important consultations. Harbinson's agenda has given rise to some frustration for countries like India or Pakistan, which consider that the subjects to be touched on in the next two conferences should be those favoured by Singapore, against the desire of many developing countries to give priority in discussions to the application of the agreements. Certain countries wonder whether these subjects will even make it onto the agenda of a possible new round.

Work group "International Treaties".  
[omc.marseille@attac.org](mailto:omc.marseille@attac.org)

## **Good Havens - The great mutation of capitalism**

By Jorge Beinstein

Drug Mafia, center and periphery

The growth of the Mafia is a critical datum of the neo-liberal globalization process. A clear indication of this is drug traffic whose global annual revenue of 500 billion U.S. dollars towards the middle of that decade has risen rapidly.

Toward the end of the eighties, Latin America produced 400 tons of cocaine a year, a decade later it was about 1000 tons. In the same period,



attac

Burma went from 800 to 2400 tons of heroin a year and new important producers were appearing in Africa and Central Asia. Giorgio Giacomelli, director of the UNDCP (United Nations Drug Control Program) stated recently that "The consumption of drugs in the United States, the main destination of narcotics in the world, has risen spectacularly, the increase being such that there are 30 million addicts in this country today, that is to say almost 1/8 of its population.

A conservative evaluation would situate the actual level of world drug sales at about 700 billion dollars, more than twice the commercial deficit of the United States or the gross domestic product of the African economies below the Sahara, more than the sum of the GDP of Mexico and Argentina, and more than the GDP of the Russian Federation.

The UNDCP figured that in 1997 drug consumers represented 4.1 % of the world population, around 235 million people, however we must single out the group with the stronger purchasing power which belongs to the rich countries and to the upper elite of the periphery, they being those who make the system work. In fact the production and distribution of drugs has followed the historical model of center-periphery relationships: poor farmers in underdeveloped areas grow crops for which they receive an infinitesimal portion of the total profits while the rich distribution and consumer poles of the dealers and their associates in the financial world get most of it, more than 90% according to most experts.

In what is essentially a business for rich countries, many underdeveloped nations carry most of the burden of guilt and suffer devastating social and institutional consequences. In countries like Bolivia, Peru, Morocco, Nigeria or Burma drug mafias manage basic, state infrastructures and in many others they have a decisive and growing influence.

The head of the system is not localized in the periphery but in the central countries, there where the final stages of the business are set: most of the consumption and of the investment of profits. The recycling or laundering of drug money always seems unclear, this is due as much to the secrecy and the intricate complexity of these operations as to the action of massive, political and economic interests of the occident which, for various reasons (direct complicity, preservation of their "civilized" image, etc) cover their tracks. As a result the economy of narcotics usually appears in the media permeated by stories about exotic

characters or bloody gang leaders living in (or from) the outskirts of the planet, be it an inhuman Latino-American or Arab godfather, an Asian "war lord" or even more fashionably, a Russian Mafioso (preferably an ex KGB). But these characters from the underdeveloped world are pieces strategically orchestrated by well-established structures of the highly developed countries. John Ziegler has demonstrated the role of the Bank of Switzerland in the laundering of drug currencies and up until the middle of the 90's the French International Relations Institute alluded diplomatically to the fact that "(laundering) operations essential to traffickers cannot be carried out without the obvious complicity or connivance of the banking system. For a long time the banks of developed countries have turned a blind eye to the origins of bank deposits" and it underlined more directly that "a report of the IHESI (The French Institute of Higher Studies for Internal Security) shows that some French banks have used branches established in "tax havens" for operations that obliterate the illegal origin of funds then transferred to European subsidiaries. We can deduce that many banking organizations from developed countries do likewise".

The laundering is funneled through banks and North American financial organizations in the United States, through subsidiaries in Europe or through peripheral transactions in a lesser way. Michel Chossudovsky affirms that "even if numerous cases have been clearly identified the accusations are always leveled at subordinate employees. For example, in 1994 the Houston (Texas) court condemned The American Express Bank to a fine of 7 million dollars in addition to another 25 million for penalties pursuant to its involvement in a dirty-money, laundering operation. The American Express affair got settled when two branch directors of the Beverly Hills Bank were accused of laundering money through American Express accounts that were fed by anonymous deposits from agencies in the Cayman Islands. Federal agents wanting to reach a negotiated settlement renounced their charges against the bank: "We decided that it wasn't certain that the bank itself was implicated in the criminal activity and that it didn't involve more than one department" commented the assistant prosecutor, Mr. David Novak. Regarding the use of banks in peripheral areas, the author cites the example of "private banks (Peruvian) suspected of having been implicated in dirty-money, laundering activities and then went under control of foreign capitals as in the case of Interbank, a state bank acquired in 1994 by Darby Overseas, a consortium



attac

in the Cayman Islands. According to the Financial Times "Darby decided to invest in the sector of high-risk Peruvian banks... Darby was set up by Mr. Brady (former Secretary Treasurer of President George Bush), his head councillor, Mr. Hollis McLaughlin, and Mr. Daniel Marx, former under-secretary of the Argentinean Finance Ministry. The man in charge of Interbank is Mr. Carlos Pastor, Minister of Economy and Finance in Peru in the early 80's" (S. Bowen: Ex-U.S. Secretary's Company Buys into Bank, Brady Investment in Peru", Financial Times, July 22, 1994).

#### A large and complex framework

The narcotic economy is an important component, but not the only one, in a wide- ranging system of a great number of well-knit businesses controlled by Mafioso networks of varying stability (in certain cases they are short-lived associations subject to occasional "uprisings"). In the mid 90's, the United Nations evaluated at about one trillion dollars the annual world revenue derived from narcotics, arms traffic, prostitution, "protection", kidnapping, illicit games, large scale smuggling, nuclear matter smuggling, black market currencies, etc. However, as stated by numerous experts, the real figure is much higher and could reach between 1.5 and 2 trillion dollars U.S. To this illegal business we must add legal activities rooted in industry, commerce, tourism, real estate, transport, financial speculation, etc. and controlled with money obtained illegally. Both rubrics summed would yield more than 3 trillion U.S. dollars (more than 10% of the World's Gross Product).

But this legal-illegal universe isn't a hermetic zone and it might prove useless to look for its frontiers. For example, the arms and drugs traffic is closely linked to the devastation of the public patrimony of peripheral countries (privatization, misappropriations of different kinds, etc.) and in many cases it has been possible to observe the connivance of international personalities well-identified with the underworld with chiefs of state and high-ranking civil servants at the international level. This "business mixture" could be used to confirm the theory of a hypothesized "invasion" of capitalism by clandestine Mafioso groups, its much simpler version (marked by a certain racism) portrays its emergence from the periphery, gangsters from the Third World would use criminal means to usurp the global economy. But a more careful analysis would easily show that for the bigger countries it originates in the center of the

world, in the rich zones, especially in the G7 countries.

However, profuse propaganda belabors the thesis of the external source (to the developed societies), the Mafiosa tide. In that way the guilt is transferred unto the scum of the world and the big puppeteers can continue without being disturbed.

#### Heaven and hell

In the case of the narcotics traffic a real component (the delinquents from the periphery) is pinpointed exclusively, overwhelming the whole scenario. The noise created makes the process of investigation difficult. A similar case is that of "tax havens". Their discovery highlights a key component of the Mafia-finance network: this is where numerous illegal transactions are settled, where dirty money circulates, where ghost organizations are created, etc. However, their existence depends on superior international forces that bring them to life, draw their outline, determine their dates of birth and death. Most of these forces are neither illegal nor unknown. On the contrary, they are large institutions, huge global businesses, respectable public figures from the "developed democracies". These "havens of evil" occur because they are useful to the world's power circles. A good example of that is the FIMACO affair, a shadow finance corporation created in the early 90's on Jersey Island and through which the Yeltsin group diverted almost 50 billion dollars from the Russian treasury. The operation went on for close to a decade and was known by the highest international, financial authorities (beginning with the IMF) and obviously by the governments of the United States and the European Union. That enormous fraud profited many beneficiaries, the "Yeltsin family", for one, was thus able to enrich itself and support its political power, for another, stock markets and other financial organizations in developed countries received dividends, but it also profited occidental powers who could in this way reinforce their domination over Moscow through their local servants. Jersey Island played an important but secondary role in all of this.

#### Delinquency and dynamism of financial capital

Under the image of the growth of the power of the Mafioso networks and the proliferation of tax havens, one meets the irresistible wave of financial parasitism (with its center in the G7 countries) whose rising thirst for revenue incites them to straddle legal norms. According to John



attac

Ziegler, illegal practices constitute "the higher stage", "the paroxysm" of capitalism characterized by the cumulation of enormous profits at breathtaking speed. This is true to a large extent, but that mutation cannot be understood fully if we don't take into account the financing mechanism of the corporate world which seeks super gains through speculation, gains which compensate for the drop in profits observed through production activities confronted by markets that get harsher day by day. The growth of "capital gangsterism" is also related to generalized deregulation, to the decline of the state, to its powerlessness (or complicity) under economic tendencies that have broken the time barriers of the old processes for accruing wealth and whose speed pushes them towards social depredation in its much larger sense (economic, political, cultural, etc.).

From an historical perspective the crisis begun in 1997 appears to be the deepening of a process begun in the 70's when the growth rate of the gross national product (GNP) of the G7 countries started to slow down, confirming a larger tendency. The world economy became more and more polarized (center-periphery) geographically in terms of corporations and profits, throwing into misery most of the inhabitants of the under-developed countries and impoverishing significant sectors of the population in richer countries: consequently, the growth rate of global demand slowed down but the productive capacity continued to grow, pulled by the technological race (a decisive factor in the fight for the conquest of markets). This couldn't prevent the onset of imbalances which led to the potential for overproduction which, with national and sectorial fluctuations that became chronic, laid the base, the final foundation of financial hypertrophy and of the crisis.

The resulting imbalances triggered the phenomenon of the plundering of productive forces which the neo-liberals presented as "creative destruction", however the liquidation of companies, jobs and markets has taken precedence over the creation of new areas of production and consumption. We could describe that as a "logical sequence" which starts from the diversion of funds emerging from the sphere of production (with diminishing profitability) towards "classical" financial operations (the buying of public titles, shares, etc.) and from there (as these became saturated) toward faster, more confused forms of speculation ("derived" products, etc.) to arrive finally at illegal businesses, looting, etc.(from the demolition of peripheral public

companies to the traffic of narcotics). The decay of societies and state systems, high, durable unemployment, excessive financing, Mafioso looting, damaged the global system and developed the phenomenon of entropy which after an initial stage (in the 70's and 80's) from which they developed, metastasized in the late 90's. The 1997 breaking point was an inevitable result of the process of globalization. The financial sector, unable to grow indefinitely, would sooner or later enter into a crisis, its dynamic of the appropriation of patrimonies and of the transfer of funds widened the gap between productive systems dominated by parasitism and the growing masses of the poor and the excluded.

Almost three years after the rout of the Asiatic ex-tigers, the forecast regarding the indefinite progress of liberal capitalism has been relegated to the background. The succession of recessions and peripheral collapses, the prolonged stagnation of Japan, the weak growth in Western Europe (with rising social and economic unsteadiness) and the imminent end of North American prosperity could announce the arrival of an imminent crisis much deeper than those known previously. Distant and almost forgotten is the image of the young, liberal entrepreneur travelling through a peaceful world without borders that the gurus painted for us in the 90's. There now appears the face of Al Capone dominating the financial cyberspace over the degradation of the productive economy.

Good Havens is a day of action that will take place in France June 9 in Andorra and Jersey. If you want more information on it, please refer to <http://attac.org/jersey2001>

Translation: Jean Mc Comber and Emile Polic, volunteer translators [coordinat@attac.org](mailto:coordinat@attac.org)

## No the the Nice Treaty

By ATTAC Ireland

ATTAC Ireland is actively involved in the campaign for a "NO" vote in Ireland's referendum on the Nice Treaty, to be held on June 7th. Speakers from ATTAC have addressed many meetings in Dublin and other parts of Ireland highlighting the dangers to democracy and citizens interests posed by the provisions of the Treaty of Nice. While many groups advocating a "No" vote are campaigning around issues of military neutrality, ATTAC has based its campaign on the proposed changes to Article 133 of the Amsterdam Treaty,



attac

Article 2.8 of the Nice Treaty, and it's particular relevance to the forthcoming GATS negotiations.

We have had several letters published in the Irish press on the implications of the proposed changes to Article 133 and the GATS and our position paper will be submitted to the Irish Referendum Commission, the body responsible for circulating a booklet to each household outlining the arguments for and against the Treaty.

At present the advantage is with the "NO" campaign, latest opinion polls show that only 52% of voters will vote "YES" with 48% either voting "NO" or are as yet undecided. However the Irish political establishment are throwing their full weight into getting a "YES" vote, and are using arguments of dubious merit.

In particular opponents of the Nice Treaty are being persistently portrayed as only interested in depriving the people's of Central and Eastern Europe of the benefits of European Union membership. ATTAC has been the subject of this criticism and emphatically rejects it. We point out that this part of Europe is paradoxically seen by the "YES" campaign as both an opportunity, in the form of a huge market, and a threat, in the form of the peoples of this part of Europe. In the words of one member of ATTAC Ireland the "YES" campaign's approach to the applicant countries can be summed up as "Give us your markets but not your people".

As part of our campaign we want ATTAC members in each European Union member state and each of the applicant states to write to Irish newspapers advocating a "NO" vote. We have drafted a sample letter, below, which broadly conforms with ATTAC Ireland's position on the Nice Treaty. Of course if you wish to send your own text, in English, please do so. We would ask that ATTAC groups and individual ATTAC members submit letters between now and June 7th. A full list of links to the Editors of each of the most important Irish newspaper can be found at the end of this piece.

Remember the Nice Treaty is very close to being rejected by the Irish people. Only about 40% of the Irish electorate will turn out to vote and it will take only a small number of these voters to swing it towards a "NO" vote. A large part of the debate is taking place in the letters pages of Irish newspapers. If letters from ATTAC members succeed in playing a part in the rejection of the Nice Treaty it will be a tremendous victory for the citizens of Europe. If Nice is not ratified by Ireland

it can not be ratified at all - a new treaty will have to be drafted - should this arise ATTAC can campaign for a Treaty that incorporates the interests and concerns of citizens across the European Union and not just the corporations and business interests. Therefore we urge ATTAC members to support our campaign by writing letters to the newspapers listed below.

Ciaran Mc Kenna  
ATTAC Ireland [Ireland@attac.org](mailto:Ireland@attac.org)

Dear Editor,

As citizen's of the European Union we strongly encourage the Irish people to vote No in the June 7th referendum on the Nice Treaty. No other member state of the European Union will allow its citizens a chance to ratify, by a referendum, the changes proposed in The Treaty of Nice. We believe this fatally undermines the democratic legitimacy of the European Union. Of particular concern are changes in the Union's common commercial policy under Article 2.8 ,which will amend the terms of Article 133 of the Amsterdam Treaty. These changes will serve to exclude citizens, and their democratically elected representatives, from the critically important area of trade policy. This is a dangerous development in the context of the World Trade Organisation's proposed General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) which, if agreed, will launch an onslaught of deregulation and privatisation of essential public services across the European Union. The terms of GATS actively exclude the interests of citizens and democratically elected institutions. However they greatly strengthen the power of business interests and multinational corporations. Finally, GATS is effectively irreversible. If the Irish people ratify the Treaty of Nice they will empower the European Commission's efforts to bring the GATS agreement to life across the European Union. A No vote will keep many areas of trade policy, areas of critical public interest, subject to influence by citizens and their representatives. Voting No and rejecting the Treaty of Nice in the June 7th referendum will send a clear signal that citizens cannot be sidelined by the European Union and its institutions.

Yours Sincerely,  
(Name)

\*\*Please mark in the subject field "Letters to the Editor"\*\*\*

The Irish Times [lettersed@irish-times.ie](mailto:lettersed@irish-times.ie)



The Examiner [exam.letters@examiner.ie](mailto:exam.letters@examiner.ie)  
The Sunday Business Post [sbpost@iol.ie](mailto:sbpost@iol.ie)  
Ireland On Sunday [p.drury@irelandonsunday.com](mailto:p.drury@irelandonsunday.com)  
The Irish News [n.doran@irishnews.com](mailto:n.doran@irishnews.com)

## Welcome to Gothenburg in June!

By ATTAC Gothenburg [sverige@attac.org](mailto:sverige@attac.org)

As you know, there will be an EU summit in Gothenburg, Sweden, during June 15-16. The meeting will not only bring the heads of European Governments to Gothenburg; U.S. President George W Bush is also scheduled to arrive. Some 25.000 activists are simultaneously conducting a counter summit. Because of this, Attac Gothenburg hereby invites all Attacers out there to join us. Let's protest, learn and have fun together!

The organization Fritt Forum (Free Forum, [www.forumgoteborg.org](http://www.forumgoteborg.org)) will organize "The Festival of Free Speech" in central Gothenburg June 13-17. In their tents (of which the biggest has room for up to 1000 people) there will be about 70 seminars, some of which will be in English, and also various cultural activities. Attac will be responsible for three of the seminars. One will focus on the Trade and WTO issue, another on the question of Debt and a third will focus on the Tobin Tax. Furthermore, Attac will participate in a seminar discussing Global Ethics with the Swedish trade unions and churches. The WTO seminar is the only seminar in English (the rest are in Swedish).

Attac will also have its own tent at Free Forum, with room for about 100 people. This tent will be the meeting point for all Attacers, and also a place for information, where anyone interested can learn more about Attac as well as activities during the week. If you have your own ideas on how to further take advantage of this tent, please let us know!

A counter-conference will be organized by Gothenburg Action Network 2001 For a Different Europe ([www.gbg2001.org](http://www.gbg2001.org)). This is a network consisting of about 70 grassroot movements, unions and political parties, primarily from Scandinavia and Finland (the programme is attached as a PDF file).

From the program of events, some highlights are worth mentioning:

June 13, Wednesday: Attac will organize a big outdoors concert with a multitude of Swedish artists (possibly, depending on circumstances, this event will be moved indoors).

June 14, Thursday: A march against Bush. The Bush network does not yet have its own homepage, but more information is being prepared, and can soon be found on the web, linked to the Gbg2001 homepage at [www.gbg2001.org](http://www.gbg2001.org) Another group is planning "the world's biggest mooning" against Bush. Those who wish to express their heartfelt opinion this way are welcome to join the group's mailinglist by sending a blank mail to [TheMoon-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:TheMoon-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) Attac, as an organization, will not take part in this action (although individual members may plan to do so).

June 15, Friday: A meeting of protest in the morning at the opening of the EU-summit. There will also be a White Overalls action, with people trying to make their way into Svenska Mässan, where the summit is held. See [www.j15.org](http://www.j15.org) for more information. Attac, as an organization, will take part neither in this demonstration nor the White Overalls action (although individual members may plan to do so).

June 16, Saturday: Attac will participate, in full strength, in the main march during the week: "For a Different Europe". This march is organized by the Gothenburg Action 2001 network. We will all gather at 9.30 in Slottsskogen, a park in central Gothenburg. See [www.gbg2001.org](http://www.gbg2001.org) for more information.

June 17, Sunday: The whole week's activities will be concluded by a great ATTAC INTERNATIONAL MEETING!

During the last year, Attac has grown significantly and several new national Attac movements have been born. Since we operate within many different societies and contexts, we believe that there is great need and value in exchanging experiences, meeting, talking and co-ordinating common strategies for the future. We would like to offer you a creative meeting place for learning and sharing views, both on practical issues such as creative actions, organizing, campaigning but also on more theoretical issues concerning globalisation and our role in it as a social movement. Of course, it is also an excellent opportunity to meet fellow Attac members from all over the globe.



During the day, two different types of meetings will be held simultaneously: (I) An open meeting for all members of Attac present in Gothenburg and (II) A representative meeting to which each national Attac movement is invited to send two delegates.

**I. ATTAC INTERNATIONAL MEETING** - The open meeting: This meeting is for all members of Attac, and aims to create an arena for dialogue where we can share and learn more about what is happening in local and national Attac organizations.

In order to make the most out of this meeting, we ask you to present to us beforehand any issues that you would like to see included in the program. Subjects to be presented or discussed could, besides our classical issues, be cultural activism; public relations; media; research; demonstrations and other campaigns and actions; civil disobedience; finances; organizational structure; co-operation with other organizations; relations to institutions like the police, the political parties and the parliament; how to deal with opposition to Attac, etc.

Individual members, as well as local groups, networks and organizations are welcome to contribute - in the form of brief ideas, full-fledged scripts or anything in between. Contributions should be sent to [brightideas@attac.nu](mailto:brightideas@attac.nu) no later than May 25.

With your input, we will create a forum that will enlighten, inspire and build new venues of creative action!

Since it is very difficult for us to estimate how many people will attend this meeting, it is important that you notify us in advance to [june17@attac.nu](mailto:june17@attac.nu) so that we can make the necessary arrangements. You will find the latest news and information about the meeting at [www.attac.org/sverige/gbg/](http://www.attac.org/sverige/gbg/)

**II. ATTAC INTERNATIONAL MEETING** - Representative meeting We welcome each national Attac movement to send two delegates to participate in a round table meeting. This meeting will have its own agenda and will focus primarily on specific future events and strategies such as the G8 meeting in Genoa and the Porto Alegre summit of 2002.

We ask each national Attac movement to write a brief paper on the situation of Attac in their native

country, regarding membership structures, priority campaigns and political environment. Please include confirmation of the names of the two representatives you have chosen to attend the representative meeting, and send this paper to [roundtable@attac.nu](mailto:roundtable@attac.nu) before May 25. These papers will be compiled and distributed before the meeting. The detailed agenda for the round table meeting will be sent out as soon as it is ready. English will (for practical reasons) be the primary language at this meeting.

#### Practicalities

**Accommodation:** Unfortunately, Attac Gothenburg will not be able to cover your expenses for accommodation. We would like to remind you that due to the EU summit, hotels will soon be booked up. If you are unable to find accommodation, please contact us immediately at [accommodation@attac.nu](mailto:accommodation@attac.nu)

However, we are negotiating with local authorities about renting schools for Attac visitors to stay in. Staying in a school with your own ground sheet and sleeping bag will probably cost between 20 and 40 Swedish crowns (2-4 Euro) a night. Would you like to stay in a school during the summit week? Please let us know at [accommodation@attac.nu](mailto:accommodation@attac.nu)

Do you have any ideas for the use of our Attac tent, or are you planning any specific actions during the week? Please let us know about your views or plans at [brightideas@attac.nu](mailto:brightideas@attac.nu)

**Demonstrations:** If you arrive in a big group, we ask you to prepare your own march co-ordinators and functionaries. We hope to create a big Attac bloc at the front of the main march on Saturday the 16th. For more information on the Attac bloc, this demonstration, and the roles of functionaries, send an e-mail to: [demo@attac.nu](mailto:demo@attac.nu)

#### Checklist:

Please do the following as soon as possible:

- Confirm that you have received this letter and are forwarding the information: [roundtable@attac.nu](mailto:roundtable@attac.nu)
- Send us the information requested, including the names of your two representatives, for the ATTAC INTERNATIONAL representative meeting (Sunday the 17th): [roundtable@attac.nu](mailto:roundtable@attac.nu)
- Tell us if you plan to take part in the ATTAC INTERNATIONAL open meeting (also on Sunday the 17th): [june17@attac.nu](mailto:june17@attac.nu)



attac

*Newsletter 82- page 11(11)*  
Please circulate and distribute.

Send us your suggestions and ideas for contributions for the ATTAC INTERNATIONAL open meeting: [brightideas@attac.nu](mailto:brightideas@attac.nu) - Start mobilizing your group and appoint functionaries for the march: [demo@attac.nu](mailto:demo@attac.nu)

Be creative... and Another world is possible!  
Change Europe - change the world! / Attac  
Gothenburg