

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

Inside:
Can Protestant and Catholic workers unite?
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Solidarity action can win

STOP THIS UNION BUSTING



A Nollans striker

"Our strike will be won by officials encouraging super market staff and the public in general to completely black the bread"
--Alan Collins
Pat the Baker Strike Committee

Eighty years after the Dublin Lockout of 1913 the bosses are still trying to break our unions.

The workers at Nollans in New Ross and Pat the Baker in Ballyfermot are all fighting for the basic right to form a union.

And now Shell, the giant oil multinational, are running a campaign to derecognise the unions.

How can these attacks be stopped?

The experience of the Pat the Baker workers is instructive.

Here we have a small time employer, an associate of Albert Reynolds, determined to stop the largest union in Ireland, SIPTU, organising in his company.

He is willing to do everything to win. He has installed video cameras to spy on the workers. He has tried to cover Dublin with posters denouncing the strikers and their "socialist" allies.

But our union leaders are not fighting with the same determination.

There is huge sympathy for the Pat the Baker workers, but it is not being organised.

The strike would be over in the morning if SIPTU and the ICTU issued an instruction to all their members to black Pat the Baker bread in every supermarket.

But they haven't done this because they are afraid of breaking the law.

To these we reply that it is better to break the law than to break the workers - the bosses have never been great respecters of the law when it didn't suit them.

Connolly and Larkin, the leaders of the Dublin workers in 1913, were fighters because they were socialists. They wanted an end to the horrors of capitalism.

The leaders of the ICTU and SIPTU are mainly members of the Labour Party.

Instead of fighting the system, they want to make it work. They want consensus and partnership with the bosses. This is why they never fight with the determination shown by Larkin.

His politics were summed up in the slogan which his paper, the

Irish Worker, carried in every issue: "The great seem great because we are on our knees. Let us arise."

Today, the Socialist Workers Movement stands in the same tradition of struggle.

If you are sick of the sellouts of the Labour Party, if you want to see a trade union movement fighting like that in 1913, if you want to end the threat of war and facism that stalks the world like it did in the 1930's, you need to get ORGANISED.

Bigot of the month

New attempt to attack the Brook Clinic

The bigots are again trying to close Belfast's Brook Advisory Centre.

Family and Youth Concern have invited Victoria Gillick to address their conference in Belfast on 11th September.

Gillick is well known for her view that "sex is for making babies, not for fun".

In the 80's she tried to have the law changed to force doctors to inform the parents of under 16 year olds if their daughters were sexually active.

Gillick will be in

good company with Family and Youth Concern, who have spent the last few years trying to imply that the Brook Centre would FORCE young people into sexual activity.

The reality of growing numbers of teenage pregnancy means

nothing to these people - they see pregnancy as 'punishment' for having sex.

These bigots must be stopped. It's been shown before that the majority of young people oppose their ideas and want the Brook

Centre in Belfast.

The SWM, together with the Campaign for Information and Choice, has called a picket of the bigots' conference from 12 to 2p.m. on Saturday 11th September at the Wellington Park Hotel.

BE THERE!

THIS month's award goes to Scottish solicitor Angus Diggle who was convicted of the attempted rape of a woman solicitor, a partner in his firm.

"I have been out with her. I have spent £200 on her. Why can't I do what I have done to her?" he asked police.

To the woman and her friends he said: "This is so ordinary and you people are so boring. You obviously did not go to public school."

Stop the Public Order Bill

An attack on all our rights

"In recent years there were serious inner-city riots throughout Britain.

There was also serious public disorder occasioned by the miners strike and strikes in the printing industry as well as public demonstrations and unrest on a large scale against the poll tax. We do not have problems of that kind in Ireland, however legislation should be in place in advance of such problems"

Mary Harney of Progressive Democrats supporting the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Bill

Fianna Fail are making their most serious attempt to crack down on democratic rights since the 1960s.

And the Labour Party are giving them full support.

In October the Dail will debate the draconian Public Order bill.

Many of the provisions of this Bill follow exactly a proposal that FF tried to introduce in 1968 to crack down on demonstrators who demanded more housing and trade union rights.

They had to back down then after even their own rank and file denounced it as too dangerous.

The Criminal Justice (Public Order) Bill allows for:

■ 6 months imprisonment for distributing leaflets which contain 'abusive words'. Gardai could use this measure to silence socialists or any one whose views they claim are 'extreme'.

■ Unlimited Garda powers to move people on from any particular area.

This gives the Garda powers to break up attempts to hold meetings in areas such as O'Connell St.

■ £200 fines for preventing free passage of cars.

This could be used against pickets who want



A recipe for more harassment

to stop scab lorries or demonstrators who do not want to see their marches broken up.

■ 5 year prison sentence for obstructing a Garda.

■ Removal of the right to trial by jury for

charges of obstructing the police.

■ 10 year prison sentence when there are groups of 12 or more acting in a way where someone of 'reasonable firmness' claims that their safety is under threat.

■ 6 months imprisonment for public drunkenness.

This Bill has to be fought so that Fianna Fail do not get the power to crack down on the struggles that are coming in this country.

SCAM OF THE CENTURY

REAGAN'S STAR WARS project was a massive scam. Scientists had carried out preliminary tests on the system but they all failed.

Reagan's Defence Secretary, Casper Weinberger, set up an elaborate hoax to convince Congress to put up \$30 billion for the project.

"We rigged the test", was how one of the scientists put it. "We put a beacon with a certain frequency on the target vehicle. On the interceptor we had a receiver."

"In effect the target was talking to the missile saying, 'Here I am. Come and get me.' The hit looked so beautiful, so Congress didn't ask any questions."

It was nearly seven years before the project researchers hit a missile with a missile again and that too was partly faked.

"You're always trying to practice deception," Casper Weinberger explained. "You are obviously trying to mislead your opponents and to make sure that they don't know the actual facts."

Rise in vandalism

The British army and the RUC has caused almost £3 million worth of damage to personal property in Northern Ireland.

Most of the damage is believed to come from smashing up furniture and tearing up floorboards.

Quarterly statistics that have been released by the N.I. Office, show that there has been an increase of 50% paid out in compensation over last year's figure.

From Civil Rights to socialist struggle

A weekend of discussion and debate to mark the 25th anniversary of the Civil Rights march in Derry in October 1968

Highlights include:

On Friday 8th October, 8:00pm Paul Foot on BRITISH INJUSTICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

On Saturday 9th October, 8:00pm Eamonn McCann on TWENTY FIVE YEARS AFTER THE CIVIL RIGHTS STRUGGLE

For details of venue and tickets write to : SWM Po Box 1648, Dublin 8. or Po Box 103, Belfast 15 2AB

STEVENS MARK II

THE Stevens Inquiry into alleged collusion between the security forces and loyalist death squads has been reopened.

According to the *Sunday Life* this is the result of revelations made by the army agent and UDA commander Brian Nelson, who claims that the security forces and in particular the army:

■ were complicit in the re-arming of loyalists in 1988

■ colluded in the murder of Belfast lawyer Pat Finucane

■ encouraged the UDA to bomb Dublin.

Following his last investigation in 1989, during which his "secure" offices were inexplicably burnt down and after 44 people had been convicted, Stevens concluded that collusion was not "widespread or institutionalised".

Yet the claims made by Nelson were known by the security forces during his last inquiry.

As the Relatives for Justice Group has said, how can Stevens be trusted when "it is still the police investigating the police - it should be an independent body".

Quotes of the month

"The bombings offered a new opportunity for peace."

US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, on Israel's bombardment of Southern Lebanon.

"It is humiliating. The anti-semitism here is worse than in the Soviet Union. It is as if we Russians were from another planet."

Life was more democratic and liberal in Leningrad."

Russian Jew living in Israel

"I could make an issue of principle of this now and put myself in a position where I would have no option but to resign and thereby rule all the other initiatives I can effect as minister, just as they're getting started."

Labour's principled minister, Michael D Higgins, explaining why he is doing nothing on Section 31. By the way what are his other initiatives?

"We have too many priests in Ireland. Everywhere we go now, we're tripping over each other."

Most of us seem to spend most of our time answering invitations to social functions, playing golf, breeding horses, training juveniles, celebrating jubilees, pricing cars and reading death notices in case we can't find a funeral to attend"

Father Brendan Hoban writing in INTERCOM, the magazine for priests.

"For me, U2 is simply an outstanding band!"

Albert Reynolds Surely this must be the kiss of death.

Hunger strike

A hunger strike by left wing prisoners in South Korea has ended. The prisoners went on hunger strike to force an apology from the authorities to Choi Il Bung.

Choi Il Bung is a member of the International Socialists of South Korea.

The hunger strike started after a prison officer told Choi, "a bastard like you doesn't need correction. You deserve to be executed".

The prisoners ended their protest only after they won an apology from the authorities.

Bosnia: West has no solution

It would be difficult not to be moved by the latest pictures of the war in Bosnia. All the barbarity of a mediaeval siege is applied to the cities of the area with the latest in 20th century technology.

The most basic acts of humanity such as getting water or burying the dead are subject to military attack.

Yet politicians who meet in Geneva offer little chance of bringing peace to the area. David Owen, the right wing British politician who is now an international mediator, admits that his proposals for a three way partition is a 'peace made in hell'.

The partition recognises the ethnic cleansing of Bosnia. It is designed to establish ethnically pure regions dominated by one grouping or another.

Thousands of Muslims who have been driven from their homes will never be able to return in peace.

The 20,000 Serbs who live in and around Sarajevo will be forced to accept a pariah status in a Muslim state.

The cynicism of the new peace plan is seen in the proposals for Mostar. Here it is recommended that the EC be given a role in running the city for two years. But the British *Independent* has revealed that the plan is to appoint a German governor who the Croats can regard as an ally to run the town. That way they hope to ensure that the Croats get at least one major town from the carve up of Bosnia.

Recent revelations have also thrown a new light on the activities of the United Nations. Officers of the Ukrainian contingent are running a full scale black market operation - including a sizeable heroin racket - to make their

fortunes from the misery. The French contingent have organised a major prostitution ring.

The UN army is drawn from the major imperialist powers and their allies. They are involved in Bosnia partially to try to contain the conflict and partially to jockey for power and influence against each other.

The French and British worry about German involvement with the Croats. The US try to prove by pathetic stunts that it alone can lay claim to be the world's policeman.

Expecting the UN to bring peace is like hoping that Lucifer re-joins the angels. The armies of the UN can only behave in the brutal way of all colonial forces.

Embargo

As the conflict has deepened and gotten more sickening, a number of voices have been raised demanding a lifting of the arms embargo to help the Muslims. The call has won support from people as varied as Robert Dole, the right wing Republican Party leader in the US, to Noam Chomsky, the leading US intellectual who opposed the Gulf War.

The call arises from a false view that what is being fought in Bosnia is a war for national liberation - rather than what it really is, a drive for profits and land.

But sending more arms to Bosnia hardly offers any hope.

As soon as an arms embargo was lifted, the conflict would intensify as Serbs and Croats tried to wipe out their Muslim enemies before they got hold of weapons.

The weapons could only get there through the involvement of the US army and airforce.

More weapons would only encourage the Muslims to turn the tables and impose ethnic cleansing on the Croats and Serbs.

As Misha Glenny, the BBC Balkans correspondent and author of the best book on the war put it,

"It would be worth asking the Croat civilians of Travnik their thoughts on the subject, as they experienced first hand the tactics of the Muslims when they enjoyed weapons superiority"

All sides have been egged on by their respective war lords to impose ethnic cleansing. Arming the present underdog of the conflict would only change the composition of the victims of ethnic cleansing.

Socialist Worker has consistently argued that only the working class can stop the carnage. For this we have been regarded as dreamers. The more practical politics we were told was to look to the UN.

Yet the First World War, which began with the workers of Europe marching under national flags to slaughter each other, ended with those same workers rising up against their respective rulers. While many others called for support for 'plucky little Belgium' or international peace conferences socialists like Connolly and Lenin called for revolution to stop



Milosevic and Tudjman

the war. Today there are small signs of working class resistance emerging in Serbia, in particular. These protests have been largely unreported by the Western media.

Miners in Kolubra, chemical workers in Montenegro, car workers at Zastava- Automobili, air line workers at JAT have all taken or threatened strike action.

And it is no wonder. Signs in Belgrade supermarkets now warn "Prices are a thousand times higher than marked". Total production in the country is now only a tenth of its 1989 figure and 40% of that production is geared to the war effort.

One journalist, Aleksander Vasovic, who works for the independent radio station, Belgrade 2, reported:

"The number of enormously rich people is increasing. Everything can be found, but at a price. Food riots are likely"

Similar pressures will undoubtedly also build up in Croatia.

Popular bitterness against the politicians and war profiteers can only grow if the war continues.

Here lies the real hope in the former Yugoslavia - not with Western troops, Western arms, or Western sponsored partition, but action by ordinary Serb, Croat and Muslim workers.

Feeding off misery

"LOYALISTS TO HIT STREETS" ran a banner headline in the Belfast Telegraph in August. On the 28th September, Ulster Day, which is the 81st anniversary of the signing of the Ulster Covenant, a major demonstration is planned on the issue of deprivation and poverty in Protestant areas.

Of that deprivation there can be no doubt. A recent survey showed that over half of households in the largely Protestant estate of Clarendon in Belfast were on an income of less than £90 a week.

In another estate, Taughmonagh, the unemployment rate stood at 31.8%. Loyalty to Queen and Country has brought nothing to Protestant workers.

For their bosses it is a different

story. When the textile and ship-building industries of the North stagnated, the Orange bosses simply transferred their wealth to the London Stock Exchange. Today their political representatives in the Unionist Party are delighted to be back on side with the Tories, propping up Major's government in Westminster.

The class divisions are opening up as never before inside the Unionist community. But those who have organised the march on 28th September are determined to use the misery and poverty in Protestant areas to promote their own brand of sectarianism.

Among those supporting the march is the DUP's Sammy Wilson whose contribution to local government includes statements such as "Taigs don't pay rates". Another supporter of the march is the former

deputy Unionist Mayor, Rev Eric Smith who proclaimed that "If I am a bigot, I am proud to be a bigot."

The aim of these sectarians is to make Catholic workers the scapegoat for Protestant misery. Instead of fighting the Tories, they want to turn worker against worker.

But, potentially, the strongest demonstrations in the North recently were the joint marches of Protestant and Catholic health workers to defend the NHS. If these marches had been the springboard for industrial action, the Tories could be beaten back.

The task in Northern Ireland is to build a socialist organisation which targets the Tories as the real enemy of every worker. To do that means taking on loyalist bigots who try to build a sectarian base under the guise of a concern for working people.

STOP THIS NAZI

It is reported that David Irving, a Nazi revisionist historian is coming to UCD. Irving argues that the Holocaust never happened.

He has apparently been invited to speak at the Commerce and Economic Society's Freshers' Week meeting on 21st October.

All conferences at which Irving has previously spoken have been attended by Nazis. Former SS officers attended a conference in Germany and leaders of the Ku Klux Klan and white supremacist organisations were at a conference in the USA.

Irving has been banned from speaking in Austria and Australia.

Though Irving is not a member of any organisation he himself has said "you can call me a mild Nazi". He

frequently speaks at conferences organised by neo-Nazi groups.

When he speaks in Britain all the security is provided by the fascist British National Party.

Today we are seeing the emergence of far right neo-Nazi groups all over Europe who want to see the return of the days of the Third Reich, the death camps and the gas chambers.

But the memory of the Holocaust hangs round their necks like an albatross. As long as people remember what the Nazis stood for they can never organise as they would like to.

Irving seeks to make the views of Nazis acceptable by claiming that the Holocaust never happened.

He says:

"The Jews are very foolish not to abandon the gas chamber theory while they still have time" and "I think the eye witnesses are an interesting problem for psychiatrists".

Irving hasn't visited any of the

Nazi concentration camps. He has said he will only visit them like a conquering general when the Holocaust is forgotten.

David Irving idolises Hitler and wants to see a return of fascism in Europe. For this reason we should give no platform for his Nazi lies. He should be stopped from speaking at UCD.

A spokesperson for the Anti-Nazi League said,

"David Irving tried to speak in Trinity College in November 1988. It was obvious that he had come over to organise a small fascist cell in the college. More than a thousand people turned up to stop his meeting. They were completely successful and Irving had to skulk away at 2 am in the morning."

The Commerce and Economics Society in UCD should immediately withdraw this invitation. If they go ahead, we intend that Irving should be met by mass protests"



End of the Japanese 'Miracle'

After 38 years in government, the Liberal Democratic Party have been thrown out of office in Japan.

Charges of scandal and corruption had gone to the very heart of Japan's ruling elite. One survey found that the average LDP politician had assets of 1.2 million dollars through kickbacks.

One of the leading LDP powerbrokers, Shin Kanemara, was put in jail on graft charges after gold bars were found in his office.

It was these revelations that threw the LDP out of office. They also uncovered the degree of crisis affecting Japan's rulers.

Japan's rulers - like their counterparts in Italy or Ireland - are finding that recession is eating into the political certainties that were taken for granted.

The new prime minister, Hisokawa, has grandiosely promised an era of "quality and culture". All the indications, however, are that Japan's rulers will be in for something far more unsavoury.

The eight-party coalition which has replaced the LDP has already been riven by squabbles over electoral reform. Many were formerly in the LDP and jumped ship to avoid the charges of corruption.

The new coalition has already pledged to follow the economic, defence and foreign policies of the outgoing government.

racist

These consisted of openly racist policies. In May, police rounded up 102 foreigners, mostly Iranians, in a park in central Tokyo. This gave fascists the go ahead to put up anti-immigrant posters.

The rapid growth that Japan experienced in the 1970s and 80s has come to an end. Industrial production fell by ten percent in 1992.

The Sony Corporation lost

two hundred million dollars and NEC six hundred million. Nissan has been closing down factories. Far from Japanese capitalism being a wondrous miracle, as bosses here would have us believe, it is riven by the same crisis that is affecting capitalism worldwide.

Against this reality, Japanese rulers are fumbling for a new strategy. One key politician, Ozawa, has argued for a change in the constitution for Japan to take part in "peace keeping" operations.

His motives are crystal clear. By pulling its weight in the UN, he argues, Japan could ensure that its own interests are looked after. "Peacekeepers" might be sent to China, for example, if violence threatened Japanese investments.

slump

As Japanese rulers attempt to revamp their image, workers are feeling the effects of the slump. Far from Japanese workers being the docile obedient workforce that Japanese bosses pretend, they have a history of struggle.

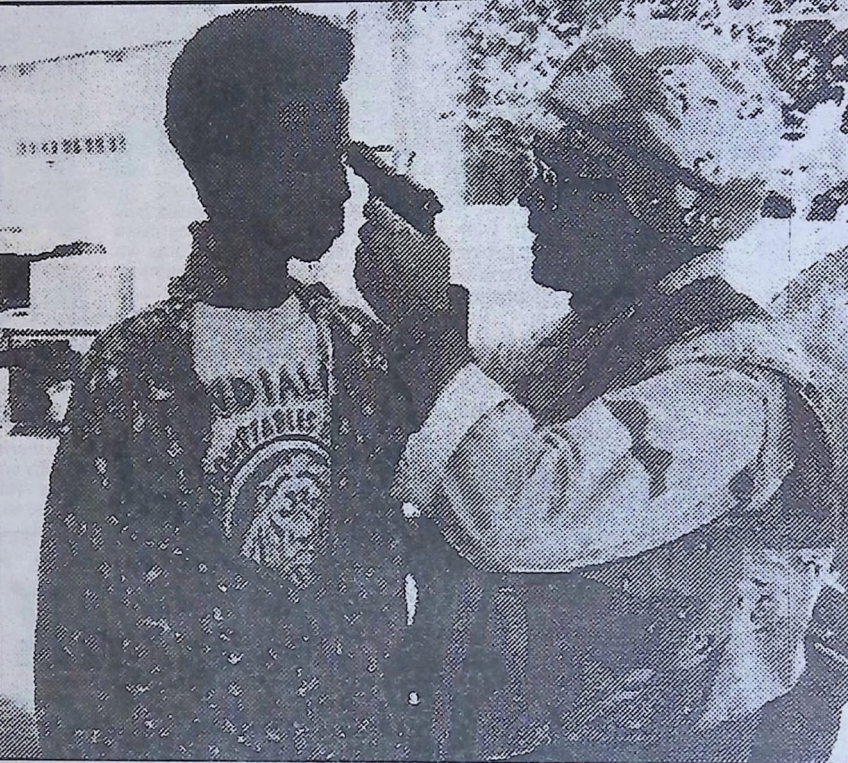
In the late 1940s trade union and socialist activity peaked in the aftermath of the war.

Forty percent of the workforce was unionised in 1940 and the Communist Party vote stood at ten percent.

Even today the rejection of the LDP at the polls reflects the anger of ordinary people at the conniving greed of the politicians.

The continuing economic crisis and the inability of the traditional parties to offer any way out can only provide further fuel to that anger.

Somalia



Un peacekeeping in action

UNITED Nations forces in Somalia are engaging in widespread abuses of human rights and intimidation of Somali people, according to a report published by the London-based African Rights Group.

In the words of the report, "increasingly Somalis regard UNOSOM as another faction and (UN commander) Admiral Howe as another warlord".

The group visited Somalia in June and July and while investigating human rights violations was not their primary aim, "the abusive behaviour of the troops was so blatant (and impinged upon the mission's planned activities to such an extent) that the issue was impossible to ignore".

When David Mason was executed in San Quentin gas chamber in August, there were 20 journalists present to witness the man's death.

U.S. President Clinton, will be providing more of these "sensations" for the media hacks.

He has just agreed to a measure which adds 46 new offences to the list for capital punishment.

And he is insisting that prisoners on death row get only one chance to appeal.

Despite his Liberal image, Clinton has always been willing to sacrifice life in order to boost his opinion poll ratings.

During the Presidential election, he returned to Arkansas to sanction the execution of a brain damaged person.

There are already 2,600 prisoners on death row in the U.S. They have waited an average of 8 years each for their execution.

But capital punishment does nothing to solve crime. Texas has carried out twice the number of executions than any other U.S. State.

But in 1991 the rate of increase in violent crime in Texas was three times that of the rest of the U.S.

Capital punishment is simply the way the rich celebrate their power over the poor.

UN CHIEF IS 'ANOTHER WARLORD'

Even Somalis generally supportive of the UN are outraged by continuing harassment and thuggery by the UN troops.

The report documents instances of brutality which range from massacres to beatings and robberies carried out by US, Belgian, Canadian, Pakistani and Italian troops.

At least 54 people were killed in the attack by US helicopter gunships on a house belonging to a senior aide of General Aideed on 12 July.

On 17 June French and US troops killed a civilian during an attack on Digfer hospital in the centre of Mogadishu.

Over 12-13 June Pakistani troops opened fire on two civilian demonstrations and killed twenty people.

On 2 July Italian soldiers killed nine civilians

in north west Mogadishu.

In Kismayo the Belgian UN troops have killed up to two hundred people since their arrival last December. Local people have been subject to constant racist abuse from the troops and harassment including throwing young children into the Juba river. Luckily the children were rescued. The report states that the local people "shudder with fear when approached by Belgian soldiers".

While Canadian troops were stationed in Belet Wyne they killed four Somalis. Two Canadian soldiers are currently facing murder and torture charges. After the Canadians withdrew in May, Italian, German and Nigerian troops arrived. Since then there have been a number of beatings and looting of Somali homes.

Nigeria

NIGERIAN workers have the power to end military rule. Two 3-day general strikes last month showed that.

Only the timidity of the opposition leaders has prevented the dictator General Babangida from being toppled.

Instead he has been able to set up a puppet civilian government. As one civil rights leader put it, "General Babangida will still pull the strings whether he officially holds power or not".

The strikes brought Nigeria's two largest cities, Lagos and Ibadan, to a complete standstill. Banks, shops, government offices and markets were closed while public transport was brought to a halt.

This was despite a massive campaign of intimidation by the regime. Heavily armed police were stationed all over Lagos and police helicopters patrolled the skies.

Workers also had to overcome the cowardice of their own trade union leaders. "We are trying to call off the protest but we cannot persuade the workers and unemployed to stop," explained one.

Elections in June were supposed to introduce a civilian government, but when the Social Democratic Party's Moshood Abiola won, the military refused to give up power.

In recent years a wave of revolt has swept Africa's one-party regimes. Many have been forced to concede democratic reforms. In Mali the Traore government was overthrown.

But in each case the movements have been hijacked by other sections of the ruling class, often former government ministers.

The power of the Nigerian working class points to a different solution.

Most of this has not been reported in the western media and the UN Press Office has constantly downplayed Somali casualty figures. Somalis find it almost impossible to gain recourse or even a hearing for their complaints. Aside from the two Canadian soldiers only a handful of UN troops have faced disciplinary action.

One US soldier was arrested following an incident where he used electric shock torture on a Somali who tried to steal his radio.

The only conviction of a UN soldier was of US marine sergeant Harry Conde who shot dead thirteen-year-old Ahmed Abdi who tried to steal his sunglasses. Conde was demoted in rank and fined one month's pay.

Now Irish troops have joined the UN operation and are under control of the UN chiefs in Mogadishu. They will find themselves not "peace keeping" but performing the same role as the rest of the UN forces. They should be pulled out now.

Gas chambers in US

SELLAFIELD: Poisoning the Irish Sea

The British government decision to allow testing to start at the new processing plant at Sellafield has caused a storm of protest. THORP, which stands for Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant, is intended to deal with waste plutonium. If it goes into full operation it will produce 10 times more waste emission than presently comes from Sellafield.

British Nuclear fuels have refused to install an extraction system that would prevent emissions of Krypton - a poisonous gas - on the grounds that it would be too expensive.

The plant is expected to take over 45 tonnes of plutonium from Japan alone in its first five years. It expects to make a profit of £500 million. The Tories have pushed the plant into production before an official inquiry has been completed.

BNF assurances of the safety of the plant should not been taken seriously.

The proposed plant will add further pollution to the Irish Sea which is already the

most radioactive stretch of water in the world.

Sellafield already releases 6,000 tonnes of waste every year.

In 1989 due to an instrument failure the plant released, in the companies words, "Excessive amounts of waste" into the Irish Sea.

In 1992, 30 litres of plutonium leaked from the plant. At the same time BNF kept assuring the public that Sellafield was safe.

One out of every 200 people around Sellafield suffer Leukaemia. In the rest of England only 1 in 2500 suffer.

The workers at the plant



Fighting against Nuclear Disaster

have been told that they should not have children even though BNF denies any link between the reprocessing plant and cases of Leukaemia.

The response of the Irish government is filled with

hypocrisy.

Though issuing a protest to the British government, Fianna Fail dropped the call for the closure of Sellafield in 1990 under pressure from the rest of the EC.

When Reynolds was presi-

dent of the EC, the council of finance ministers increased aid to the nuclear industry in Europe to the extent of £3 billion pounds.

The lesson should be that there is no such thing as safe nuclear power.

Chemical Plant Chaos

The spate of accidents at chemical plants in Cork and Waterford have highlighted the scandal about safety standards in one of the IDA's prize industries.

There are fifteen chemical companies in Cork. Only seven of them have fire water tanks. These are huge tanks of water that operate automatically in case of fire.

None of the companies have any facilities for dealing with the polluted water that results from putting out a fire. This has led to gallons of polluted water being pumped into Cork Harbour.

notorious

A notorious smell hangs over the harbour day and night.

The reason the chemical firms are in Ireland, is because of attractive deals by the IDA. More than a £100 million was paid out in grants by the IDA to help the chemical industry set up in Cork. The companies

are guaranteed lower wages and fewer safety standards than the rest of Europe.

In many cases they have set out to break union organisation. Penn Chemicals offered workers higher wages if they left the union. But half of the workers stuck with their union, SIPTU.

The government is trying to attract companies regardless of whether they operate safely or not.

Firms heading for disaster

□Hickson Chemical Plant:

This non-union firm dumped 100,000 gallons of polluted water into Cork Harbour, after the recent fire. Twenty firefighters had to be taken to hospital after putting out the fire.

The firm was also fined £250,000 for an accident at a plant in England where 5 workers died. In 1990 the plant in Cork was fined £1,000 for illegal pollution.

□Sandoz:

Are currently building a plant in Cork. They have been granted a license to emit Dioxin into the atmosphere. This is one of the most toxic chemicals known and recently discovered to cause cancer.

□Merck Sharp Dohme:

Lost a damages case against a Tipperary farmer after 220 of his cattle died. They have not been prosecuted by the council for any of the license violations.

□Louisiana Pacific:

A timber processing firm about to setup in Waterford. Fined \$11 million (the biggest fine in an Environmental case) for running a illegal plant in America exactly like the one they want to build here.

For instance all companies have to apply for a pollutant license.

However if their license is under review the practice is not to prosecute for breaches of the license. So companies constantly reapply for licenses.

Firms are also allowed to withhold information on the grounds of keeping commercial secrets from their competitors. This lets them keep us in the dark

about what they are doing.

The FF/ Labour government claim that the Environmental Protection Agency can keep the chemical companies under control. But the EPA has no power to make unannounced visits to the chemical plants.

After the recent accidents in Cork. The FF government Minister Michael Smith claimed that the ADM company would not reopen until after the EPA gave permission.

Despite this, the ADM simply went ahead and re-opened at the end of August.

The recent accidents around the country are not freaks. They are the result of the ruthless pursuit of profit without regard to the environment or human need.

Greed

The same greed for profit means that greenhouse gases are emptied unchecked, that factories produce acid rain, and nuclear waste dumped into the Irish Sea - making it the most radioactive in the world.

Yet not everybody suffers equally. Millions of tonnes of oil have been spilt in Alaska and the Shetlands by the worlds biggest oil companies.

Both of those oilspills could have been prevented by the fitting of double hulls to the tankers. But the companies refuse to do it on the grounds it is too expensive.

They know that they can continue to cream off profits after the livelihoods of local fishermen are destroyed. It is not industrial production itself that is the cause of environmental problems but the capitalist organisation of it.

There are enough resources to provide for everyones needs without doing damage to the environment.

The United Nations estimates that \$125 billion a year spent on safety measures would virtually stop environmental damage. The World Bank estimates that it would cost \$75 billion. Such figures sound a lot until you remember that \$950 billion is spent on military spending each year. \$ 1.7 billion a day was spent in the gulf war.

Bosses won't introduce measures to clean up the system because it would mean them making less profit than their competitors.

Every change in cutting back on pollution and increasing safety has been forced through pressure from below.

Jobs or the Environment

'Jobs or safety for the environment but not both' that is the argument of the employers.

After the accidents in Cork a survey found that a majority of people would rather have safety in the environment than jobs. Socialists argue that this is not a choice we should have to make.

There is plenty of money and technology to make production safe and efficient but it's creamed off to give more profits to the management. The solution is for workers to organise to fight for better working conditions.

In 1990 ADM in Cork sacked 70 people in order to rationalise. In 1992 200 workers there staged a sit-in over Health and Safety. The recent fire there has proved them right in their protest.

The working class is not only at the receiving end of pollution both outside and inside the workplace but more importantly is in the best position to do something about it.

Countless times workplace action takes place over health and safety and prevents management from risking lives and the environment.

For instance asbestos was removed from many workplaces by workers taking action.

In Poland in the early 80s workers managed to close some of the worst chemical plants in the world while improving safety conditions at others and defending jobs.

It was Liverpool dockers who struck in 1989 to prevent to importing of the waste products, PCBs, into Britain.

The way to safeguard the environment and jobs is for workers to take action and drag changes out of the bosses.

Out Now
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Political Correctness Myth and Reality

ACCORDING to our media pundits Ireland is about to come under an intellectual jack-boot. Political correctness or PC will have us all watching our words and running the risk of being censored and censured by a new Thought Police.

The IRISH TIMES has been running stories about how people are not allowed to say 'small people' but must instead refer to 'vertically challenged people' in some universities. Terms like 'fat chance' are also supposed to be banned as 'sizeist'.

Much of these stories are rubbish. The term "political correctness" originated in America to attack the laudable desire to replace offensive terms with more appropriate words.

In the 1980s, Reagan and Bush slashed public spending. But they tried to keep up a populist rhetoric by pretending that the real elite in American society were the likes of university professors who were indoctrinating youth with radical values.

In 1989, George Bush declared that "political extremists roam the land abusing the privilege of free speech, setting citizen and citizen against one another on the basis of race and class."

The "extremists" on the campuses were those who believed that the works of blacks, women and third world writers should be studied in college courses. They were the people who challenged the myth that Columbus 'discovered' America or argued that cultural history was not just based on 'great white men'.

Bush's campaign was built around a tissue of lies. Far from the universities being dominated by PC, they remained centres for promoting conservative ideas. A survey of US professors found that only 4.9% of them described themselves as 'far left'.

Supposedly learned studies in university still contained the most racist filth. Arnold Toynbee's *A Study of History* argued that "When we classify mankind by colour, the only one of the primary races ... which has not made a single creative contribution to any of our 21 civilisations is the black race"

The attack on PC has been a cover for cracking down on any progressive ideas and making sexist and racist ideas respectable. The Bush inspired Campaign for Freedom of Expression has demanded an end to the funding of "homoerotic art". The gay photographer Robert Mapplethorpe had his 'X portfolio' exhibition driven out of several galleries.

Student supporters of the anti-PC campaign have also shown what they mean by 'freedom of expression'. They advertised a story on the Ku Klux Klan with a staged picture of a black man hanging from a tree!

The campaign against Political Correctness is not about freedom of speech or expression. It is about restriction of free speech by those who wish to maintain the status quo and the discrimination that goes with it.

Language does not exist separate from material reality. The words we use reflect our experiences, hopes and fears. The struggles that people find themselves in not only encourage and force them to examine their previously held ideas but also the language they use.

The reclaiming of the word "black", which had been previously used as a term of abuse by white racists, by the civil rights struggle of the 1960s is an example of this. Black Pride and Black Power now meant something positive.

Similarly the challenging of words such as chairman and spokesman by the feminist movement reflected part of the struggle for equal rights and pay in employment.

The collapse of the women's and black movements led to an over-concentration on language. Many who had given up on the possibility of changing society, settled for token change.

As they went down to defeat, the movements still threw up small sections of the new middle class who gained chairs in universities or research establishments. A small academic left was created. It was in the interest of this layer of society to argue that 'cultural change' was the key. Theory became an end in itself, divorced from a real fight.

For socialists in Ireland the issue is quite clear. We are completely against derogatory and insulting language, but we realise it is merely a reflection of the oppressive and discriminatory system we live under.

The real fight has to be against oppression itself and not just the linguistic expressions that arise out of it.

A campaign for proper facilities in shops, cinemas, pubs, offices etc and a decent accessible transport system would, for example, improve the lives of those with disabilities far more than calling them "differently-abled" ever will.

Overfocussing on language allows the Right to distort the genuine fight against oppression. Far from defeating the bigots and racists it can play into their hands.

-- Brendan O'Donohoe

Can Protestant Catholic workers

IN an editorial in August the *Belfast Telegraph* commented about the sectarian set-up in Northern Ireland. It said:

"The population is starkly divided... in politics, culture, attitudes and national allegiances. They might well live a thousand miles apart instead of cheek by jowl."

In some respects the situation does seem bleak. Workers' housing is now almost completely segregated along religious lines.

In Belfast there are thirteen specially constructed walls - "peace lines" - which separate Catholic and Protestant areas. In Derry the river Foyle divides the town into two with Catholics living on its west bank and Protestants living on the east bank.

In education it is a similar story, with two different education systems, one Protestant and one Catholic.

But if we look at the whole picture there is some cause for hope.

For one thing, although workers live separately they do so reluctantly, out of fear rather than choice.

The recently published *Social Attitudes Survey for Northern Ireland* shows that the overwhelming majority of Catholics and Protestants say that they would prefer to live in a mixed area and work in a mixed workplace. It also shows that fifty percent of Catholics and Protestants would prefer to send

their children to a mixed school.

However, there is one crucial development that has the potential to help rid Northern Ireland of sectarianism completely.

The North's work places are becoming increasingly integrated at the shop floor level. The 1992 Fair Employment Commission Monitoring Report showed that although Catholics are still under-represented, Northern Ireland has an integrated work force.

In companies employing between fifty and a hundred workers, on average Catholics made up 37 percent and Protestants 63 percent of the workforce.

In those companies employing between 100 and 250, Catholics made up 35 percent and Protestants 65 percent of the workforce. Those companies employing over 250 workers, Catholics made up 34 percent of the workforce and Protestants 66 percent.

Despite the continued under-representation of Catholics this is a more integrated workforce than has

ever existed in Northern Ireland.

Workers might live in segregated housing estates but they come together where they have the most power - at the point of production. The potential for workers' unity has never been greater.

The need for workers' unity has never been greater either.

I AM against bigotry in any form. The Catholics fought for many years for their civil rights and rightly so, but it was the politicians and not the ordinary Protestant people who kept them down.

I know what they had to put up with and have every sympathy for them but what I find hard to stomach is that I am not even being offered the chance to mix with my Catholic neighbours.

A woman resident of a Protestant housing estate on the outskirts of West Belfast complaining about the building of a "peace line" between her and her Catholic neighbours in Lenadoon. Quoted in the Ulster Star, 20 August

The experience of fourteen years of Tory government has dealt a series of blows to workers of both religions in Northern Ireland.

The loyalty Protestant workers undoubtedly feel towards Britain has

not shielded them from the ravages of Thatcherism. Indeed the Thatcher decade of the 1980s hit Protestant workers particularly hard. By 1982, 110 major manufacturing firms either went bust or left Northern Ireland.

This included firms like Grundig, Courtaulds, British Enkalon, Goodyear and Leafan - all major Protestant employers.

The Thatcher decade saw forty thousand manufacturing jobs lost from Northern Ireland, a full third of the manufacturing sector.

Today there are Protestant areas where deprivation and poverty have become particularly bad. Areas like the Shankill in Belfast face problems similar to the Falls or the Bogside. The latest two incidents of children dying from glue sniffing both occurred on the Shankill Road.

A local community newspaper, *The Shankill People*, polled people on the Shankill Road asking what were the main problems the area faced. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents said either vandalism, unemployment or bad housing. The other 22 percent said paramilitaries. *Socialist Worker* spoke to a community worker in the Upper Shankill who said:

"We face the worst kind of living conditions imaginable. We have blocks of maisonettes without heating. In my area of Glencairn unemployment is sixty percent and 85 percent of people are on housing benefit. We don't even have a youth club."

The Tory attitude to this suffering can be summed up by Thatcher's comment during the 1980s when she was asked about more funding for Northern Ireland:

"More money for these people? Why should they have more money? I need that money for my people in England."

Needless to say, the only people who got money from Thatcher were the rich, her own people. The same issue of the *Belfast Telegraph* quoted above also carried another story about growing levels of debt in Northern Ireland:

"The recession is forcing poverty-stricken Ulster people into a debt-ridden nightmare."

The article referred to the growing number of people in Northern Ireland who are seeking advice and help from the Citizens' Advice Bureaux because they have fallen into debt with their mortgages and hire purchase. Fifty-four thousand people from every part of Belfast have sought help.

Of course the *Belfast Telegraph* did not make the connection between the poverty and hardship that people face and the fact that workers in the North are divided, but both things are inextricably linked.

The only people who benefit from the sectarian division are the bosses.

A Bosses State

NORTHERN Ireland from the very beginning was designed in the interests of the very few at the top of society.

The first cabinet in the 1920s, under the old Stormont system, was full of rich fat cats. John Andrews, the Minister for Labour, was a company director and chairman of

a linen company. Hugh Pollock, Minister for Finance, was managing director of the Belfast rope works and a major importer of foodstuffs.

Milne Barbour, Minister for Commerce, was head of one of the biggest linen companies in the world. The first Prime Minister, Sir James Craig, was the son of a millionaire and one of the richest people in Ireland.

Apart from all being in government and being very rich men, they had

another thing in common - they were all members of the Orange Order. This was - and still is - a bigoted, sectarian organisation that sought to keep workers divided along religious lines while those at the top laughed all the way to the bank.

As part of their strategy of "divide and rule" these people built a state that was viciously anti-Catholic, through discrimination, rigged elections and police violence.

Catholics were treated as second class citizens. Despite the abolition of Stormont and the reforms that have taken place, Catholics are still oppressed in Northern Ireland. A recent British government report that was published last month in the *Independent* in London stated:

"On all the major social and economic indicators, Catholics are worse off than Protestants. They are more likely to be unemployed, less likely to hold managerial or professional positions.

"More Catholics than Protestants leave school lacking any educational qualifications. More Catholics than Protestants live in public sector housing and experience overcrowding.

"Catholic households have a lower income than Protestant households. Almost double the proportion of Catholic households are dependent upon social security.

"Catholics suffer higher levels of ill health. Nearly seventy percent of the long-term unemployed are Catholics."

But Protestant workers suffer from this situation as well. In 1989 the average weekly income of Protestant households was £235.10. This was 18 percent higher than Catholic households but 23 percent below households in Britain, which had an average income of £303.84.

The lesson is clear. The sectarian state of Northern Ireland hurts all workers. It is in the interests of all workers to unite and fight against it.

Out Now

Latest Socialist Worker Pamphlet "Can Protestant and Catholic workers unite?"

Just £1 Available from SW Books PO Box 103, Belfast BT15, or PO box 1648 Dublin 8.



and s unite?

By Sean Mcveigh



Marching to defend sectarianism.

Workers action is the way to beat sectarianism



Marching to defend the NHS

WORKERS' UNITY - A HIDDEN HISTORY

LIKE workers all over the world, workers in Northern Ireland have a hidden history that they are not taught in school.

This is a history of struggle, when ordinary people began to fight back against this rotten system and began to take control of their own lives. In the course of these battles unity was forged between women and men, Catholics and Protestants.

The high points of this history were the 1907 dock strike, the Belfast general strike of 1919 and the outdoor relief riots of 1932.

In each of these cases many thousands of workers were involved and the ruling class used the police and in some cases the British army to help put down the "Bolshevik menace".

In recent years there have been a whole series of struggles involving Catholic and Protestant workers.

In the 1980s members of the public sector union NIPSA struck in response to sectarian threats to dole office workers from sectarian groups like the UDA and the IPLO. In April of this year bus drivers at Belfast Citybus struck twice in one week after bus drivers had been threatened and attacked by the UVF.

There are many other less publicised examples, such as women from the Shankill Women's Centre travelling to meet community groups and shop stewards on the Falls to discuss a strategy to save the Royal Victoria Hospital from Tory attacks.

In the history of Northern Ireland there is no shortage of examples of working class unity. Workers have struck together for

"The fact is that in the 1960s, to take an example, a young Roman Catholic man starting out in life had nothing like as good a chance of success as a young Protestant man because of the system... It was a way of life... which was inherent in the setting up of Northern Ireland."

- Michael Mates, ex Tory Secretary of State for Security, quoted in the Belfast Telegraph, 12 August 1993.

better wages, they have demonstrated together in defence of hospitals, they have rioted together against the RUC and against poverty, and they have come to each other's defence when they have been threatened.

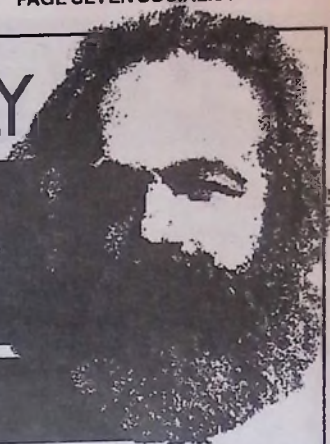
But what there has been a shortage of is revolutionary organisation that can build on this unity, deepen it, and bring it forward to overthrow the whole rotten system.

BRIAN HANELY



Teach
yourself

Marxism



Is Israel a 'haven' for Jews?

FIFTY years since the Nazis' mass murder of six million Jews in the holocaust, anti-semitism is once again on the political agenda in Europe.

In trying to look respectable, today's fascists are attempting to whitewash the Nazis' crimes last time round.

In France, Jean Marie Le Pen claims that the holocaust was a minor detail of history. "Historians" like David Irving tour Europe expounding theories that the massacre of the Jews was a myth.

This Holocaust denial has given the green light to Nazi gangs to attack Jewish cemeteries and synagogues.

In this atmosphere many people were horrified at Martyn Turner's recent "Jewrassic Park" cartoon in the *Irish Times* following Israel's bombing of Lebanon.

The cartoon seemed to blame all Jews for the bombing which drove thousands of Arabs from their homes.

It is tragic that an angry response to Israel's aggression should be turned in an anti-semitic direction.

Socialists oppose the use of Turner's cartoon. In publishing it the *Irish Times* played straight into the hands of both anti-semites and defenders of Israel's warmongering.

But many people remain confused about the behaviour of Israel. How can a state supposedly established to defend Jewish people from racism behave in such a way to another people?

The Israeli state is based on a political ideology called Zionism. The basic idea of Zionism is that the only defence for Jewish people against anti-semitism is to have

their own state.

Zionists argue that the persecution of Jewish people through the centuries means that they can never be safe in non-Jewish society. Israel, they argue, was created as a haven for Jews which has had to defend itself for forty years against invasion and terrorism.

Zionists therefore claim that criticism of Israel is itself anti-semitic.

In reality, for most of its existence the Zionist movement was a minority among Jews. When it began in the late nineteenth century it was a reaction to growing anti-semitism in Europe.

Anti-semitism

From the 1880s to the 1930s there were successive pogroms and outbreaks of anti-semitism in Russia and Eastern Europe. Millions of Jews fled or were forced to emigrate due to loss of livelihood.

The vast majority emigrated to the United States. Only a tiny minority wanted to go to Palestine.

In 1933, out of four million Jews in the US, only 88,000 considered themselves Zionists. Even in Poland, where anti-semitism was rife, the vast majority of Jews voted for the anti-Zionist Socialist Bund.

What changed this was the horror of the Nazi holocaust.

The Zionist argument that only a Jewish state could defend Jews suddenly seemed the only sensible one to make.

The Zionists said simply: "Give to a people without a country, a country without a people."

But this argument ignored both the failure of the Zionists to actively fight anti-semitism and the fact that Palestine was not a "country without a people".

Zionism accepted the racist argument that Jews

had no place in non-Jewish societies. Rather than arguing to stay and demand their rights, it said leave.

The Allied powers, who had refused to help Jews fleeing Hitler's Holocaust suddenly swung to backing the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

The reason had nothing to do with defending Jews. The US in particular wanted a regime in Palestine that would defend Western oil interests by acting as a bulwark against upheaval in the region.

In 1947 the United Nations came up with a partition plan which handed Palestine to the Zionists. But Palestine was already home to 800,000 Arabs.

Their removal was accomplished by terror. Arab villages were burned, towns shelled and in some cases people were massacred.

Once over 700,000 Arabs had been expelled, the new Israeli government instituted the law of return, which states that any Jewish person can become a citizen of Israel.

Any non-Jew (except Palestinians) can visit Israel. No Palestinian, born in Palestine, or their descendants, has a right to return. It is racism of the highest order.

For the last forty years Israel, heavily armed and subsidised by the United States, has carried out systematic repression of the Palestinians.

It has supplied arms to some of the most brutal regimes in the world - the Chilean dictatorship, El Salvador, Haiti and apartheid South Africa. It is no haven for Jewish people.

Socialists stand with all Jewish people in the fight against anti-semitism. We are determined that another holocaust will never again be unleashed on the world.

But Zionism as an ideology based on accepting anti-semitism as natural and today justifying the oppression of the Palestinian people does not aid that fight.

20 Years after the Chilean coup:

Everyone is taught from school onwards that if you want change, you have to work through parliament.

But what would happen if a majority of socialist deputies were elected to parliament. Would they be able to pass laws which took the workplaces and wealth off the rich?

Twenty years ago, on the 11 September 1973, an attempt to re-distribute some of the wealth of Chile by an elected government led to a bloody coup. General Pinochet's coup won immediate support of the USA, the employers federation and the hierarchy of the Catholic Church who held a special mass in Santiago to celebrate.

But for workers it was a different story. Trade unionists and socialists were rounded up and taken to the national Football Stadium. Many were tortured and raped. 30,000 people were killed.

Before 1973, Chile had the longest tradition of parliamentary democracy in South America. The country had experienced decades of electoral and government change without any hint of what was to come.

In September 1970 a Popular Front (UP) coalition, made up of socialist, communist and radical liberals, narrowly won the general election. The election had taken place against the background of a rising wave of disputes. On the land, peasants were organising to get their property out of the hands of the large landlords.

In the towns workers were fighting to improve their pay and conditions. In 1969 there were 2,000 strikes involving 23,000 workers this rocketed to 5,300 involving 320,000.

The new president of the UP government was Salvador Allende. However, to become president he tried to gain the support of the right-wing Christian Democratic Party.

Their price for that support was a Statute of Guarantees in which Allende agreed not to interfere with the police, the army, the press, the mass media, education and the church.

Allende accepted this because he believed it was worth having governmental power in order to legislate for a socialist society. As he said at the time:

"It is a challenge for us to accomplish everything in legal terms. It is neither easy nor a short-term task to build socialism."

In its first year the government tried to appease both sides. Economic activity grew and workers' pay rose. However, the shutting off of American aid and the bleaker world trade situation put huge pressure on the economy.

The landlords and capitalists became more determined to take drastic measures to restore profits by quashing workers' organisations. Yet the number of strikes rose again as the workers resisted all attacks.

The media raged against the workers. The radio station, Channel 9, became the province of an extreme right-wing priest called Hasbun who was hysterical in his attacks against workers and who even began calling for the military to overthrow Allende.

At the same time the Army and the police took repressive measure against left-wing demonstrations. For example, in August 1972 four hundred armed police invaded the poor working class district of Lo Hermida in Santiago. Two people were killed.

Allende prevaricated. He offered apologies to the people of Lo Hermida and at the same time condemned the



WHEN THE GENERALS TOOK OVER

by Conor Kostik

activities of the "ultra-left". In other words, he gave support to the employers' idea that the demands of some workers and peasants were going too far and that it was right to stop them.

The unhappy position of the government, attempting to reconcile the irreconcilable, continued through 1972. The arguments that developed amongst the government parties centred on how to achieve a consensus for change.

The Communist Party and the right-wing of the Socialist Party argued that the government should prove itself a responsible one by accepting some of the demands of the capitalists and showing that it could restrain workers. By this strategy they hoped to appease the employers and the administrators of the state.

The left urged more nationalisations, more reforms and to be more challenging in publicity in order to win more support. Both left and right of the UP believed that by being in government they were in a position of power. Both failed to see that the decisive struggles were taking place outside of parliament.

In October 1972 the wealthy lorry owners began a "strike" to topple the government. It was well organised, and had backing of the rest of the em-

ploying class. Armed gangs, backed up the rightwingers. They would have met with certain success but for the resistance of the working class.

The workers rose magnificently. Factories were taken over by committees to ensure the supply of food and necessities. Vigilance committees were formed to guard against attacks from right-wing gangs.

Stores, which closed in support of the lorry owners, were taken over by local communities. Journalists, sickened at the support the media gave to the right-wing, occupied the offices of two national papers.

In challenging the employers the workers' own views developed dramatically. A textile worker described the change in her factory: *"Politics was never discussed at the El As factory. Today, a few weeks after the take-over, the workers are organised in committees and vigilance brigades, and are discussing the statements of the CUT (Chile's ICTU) and disagreeing with them."*

The highest form of organisation achieved by the workers were the cordones. These were committees that workers created across whole districts and towns to co-ordinate their actions.

The two largest cordones, Cerillos-Maipu and Vicuna McKenna, involved around six hundred factories. They involved hundreds of thousands of workers and controlled the tremendous power that workers have when they take charge of production.

Just like the soviets in the Russian Revolution, the cordones could have become the basis for a workers' government and a socialist society.

The tragedy of Chile in 1973 is that there was no socialist organisation, even a small one, which had a strategy of revolution based on the cordones. The main left parties' commitment to constitutional change led them to condemn the development of such organisations as a threat to stability.

Although the lorry owners were beaten and the government survived thanks to the workers, the victory was undermined by the government's efforts to appease the right.

What the UP could not understand is that either the capitalist class controls production, or the workers do. There is no middle way.

Giving concessions to the employers simply demoralised the workers who supported the government without satisfying the rulers' desire to restore full control over society.

The employers had no respect for the government and nothing but contempt for parliamentary democracy. They were fearful of the possibility of losing everything in a revolutionary take-over by the workers.

The next twelve months were in-

creasingly full of fascist attacks, bombing and military operations against the working class in an effort to break their organisations by force, including a half-hearted coup which was again stopped by a mass movement of workers.

Having rejected a strategy of building up workers' own organisations, the government was helpless, doing more to demoralise and divide its own supporters than those of the right wing.

In an effort to keep the military on the government's side, Allende introduced three generals into the cabinet. One of them was General Pinochet. This was a confusing move in the eyes of workers. It reinforced the idea that the state could be used by the left, a message backed by even the most left-wing party in Chile, the MIR.

The army in a capitalist society is dominated at the top by members of the ruling class, and the ordinary rank and file soldiers are under the strictest discipline to obey them.

All revolutions which have succeeded have done so when the soldiers have broken away from the generals to join the movement.

Having army generals in a socialist government does not mean that the army has come over to the control of the working class - it simply gives them more confidence and more power.

A few months before the September coup a numbers of soldiers and sailors risked court martial to warn the government that a coup was being planned by their officers. Instead of heeding their warnings Allende, allowed the officers to lock them up.

On 4 September 1973 over half a million people demonstrated in celebration of the anniversary of the victory of UP in the elections of 1970. The mood was bitter. Demonstrators demanded arms to be able to stave off a coup.

Allende refused. Luis Corvalan, the Secretary of the Communist Party, argued that there was no need because the Chilean armed forces would always respect the constitution. A week later the blow fell. At nine in the morning Allende made his last broadcast before the Moneda Palace was bombed and he was killed. In his speech he said:

"Workers of my country, I want to thank you for the loyalty you have always shown me, the faith you have shown in one man who was merely the interpreter of your search for justice, who gave his word to respect the Constitution and the law, and who kept his word."

The principle of the democratic constitution that he died for blinded him to the realities of class rule: that the employers are prepared to dispense with democracy if it no longer suits them.

It is also a principle which led him throughout the three years of government to clash repeatedly with workers' own efforts to change the world.

The argument that using parliament is a more peaceful, easier road to socialism than revolution was tried in Chile and proved disastrous. No socialist today should support the same beliefs as Allende's.

Instead the only way workers will ever take over society and achieve socialism is through a revolution which smashes the old state and replaces it with the power and accountability of a government based on the working class's own organisations.

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What's On

Branches of the SWM meet around the country at the following times and venues

Athlone

Meets every other Tuesday at 8.00pm, upstairs in Hooker Bar. See paper sellers for details of meetings.

Belfast

Meets every Tuesday. Socialist Worker on sale Royal Avenue every Saturday 1-2pm. See sellers for venue.

7th Sept: Do genes determine our sexuality?

14th Sept: How do we get workers power?

21st Sept: Was the civil rights movement successful?

28th Sept: Do animals have rights?

Cork

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Anchor

Inn, Georges Quay.

7th Sept: Do genes determine our sexuality?

14th Sept: Can Protestant and Catholic workers unite?

21st Sept: 1930s...1990s: is history repeating itself?

Derry

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in Badgers Pub?, Orchard St.

7th Sept: Can the Tories destroy the welfare state?

14th Sept: Who won the War of Independence?

21st Sept: Is a socialist revolution possible?

28th Sept: Art and revolution

DublinNorth

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in Conways Pub, Parnell St.

8th Sept: Human Nature- Do genes play a part

15th Sept: Can Protestant and Catholic workers unite

22nd Sept: Can parliament change society... the lessons of the Chilean Coup

29th Sept: How relevant are Marx's ideas?

6th Oct: Is there a working class culture?

Dublin South

Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse St.

9th Sept: Can change come through parliament

...the lessons of the Chilean Coup

16th Sept:

Can the IRA ever win?

23rd Sept: 1930s...1990s: Is history repeating itself?

30th Sept: Crime who is

to blame?

Galway

Meets regularly See SW sellers for details or phone (01) 872682

Tallaght

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm. For details telephone 872 2682

7th Sept: 1913: The politics of Jim Larkin

Waterford

Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in ATGWU Hall, Keyzer St.

2nd Sept: 1913: The politics of Jim Larkin

10th Sept: Environment in crisis: The socialist solution

17th Sept: Can Protestant and Catholics unite in the North

24th Sept: Socialists and Religion

To contact the SWM in Bray, Coleraine, Cookstown, Drogheda, Dundalk, Kilkenny, Limerick, Navan, write to SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Phone (01) 872 2682 or PO Box 103 Belfast 15 2AB

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SWM News

The summer months have been highly successful for the SWM. Right across the country people have been joining the organisation.

Six joined in Dublin, three joined in Derry while one each joined in Dundalk, Cork and Belfast.

The SWM has now established a new branch in Tallaght. Tallaght is a huge working class area in Dublin. Despite being the same size of Limerick, it has been deprived of the most basic facilities for years.

In the past there has been

big support in the area for the Workers Party and Labour Party left.

But the collapse of these politics has created an opening which the SWM is determined to fill.

People are moving to SWM because it is willing to fight back. Some local activities over the summer show just what we mean by that:

□ DERRY: The SWM organised a protest at an hour's notice when they heard that the US Ambassador, Jean Kennedy Smith was visiting the town. She wanted to see some projects sponsored by the International Fund for Ireland. This is a fund that is sup-

posed to encourage peace. But Kennedy Smith came as the ambassador of the country that had bombed thousands in Iraq and imposed murder in Somalia.

SWM placards with "US troops out of Somalia", "Clinton is the real war lord" and "Military intervention cannot bring peace to Bosnia" won considerable support.

□ BELFAST: In August, 10,000 people marched into city centre to commemorate the anniversary of internment. SWM carried a banner calling for workers unity against the sectarian state and distributed hundreds of leaflets. 50 copies of Socialist Worker

were sold.

□ DUBLIN: SWM have been working hard to build support for the Pat the Baker strikers. Stalls have been held in the city centre and Tallaght to win solidarity.

Leaflets have been distributed outside many of the supermarkets calling for a boycott of KVI bread. SWM members throughout the unions are also campaigning for official blacking of Pat the Baker by union members.

Now is the time to build a fighting socialist party that can change the face of Ireland. If you want to join the SWM, fill in the coupon on this page.

What we stand for

Workers create all the wealth in capitalist society. A new society can only be constructed when they collectively seize control of that wealth and plan its production and distribution.

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be reformed out of existence. Parliament cannot be used to end the system. It has to be overthrown.

The machinery of the capitalist state—parliament, courts, army, police etc.—is there to defend the interests of the capitalist class, not to run society in a 'neutral' fashion.

To destroy capitalism, workers need to smash the state and create a workers' state based on workers' councils.

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST:

The SWM welcomed the break-up of the USSR and the end of the East European dictatorships. These states were not socialist but were run by a state-capitalist class. Workers' revolutions are needed to win real freedom in the East.

We are against the domination of the globe by imperialist powers and we oppose their wars. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women.

We stand for: free contraception and free, legalised abortion and the right to divorce; the complete separation of church and state, an end to church control over schools and hospitals; an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians; an end to racism and anti-traveller bigotry.

We argue for working class unity in the fight against oppression.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH:

Northern Ireland is a sectarian state, propped up by the British Army.

Catholic workers are systematically discriminated against by the state. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers weakens the whole working class.

Workers' unity can only be won and maintained in a fight to smash both the Northern and Southern states.

We stand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. Violence will only end when workers unite in the fight for a workers' republic.

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT:

Trade unions exist to defend workers' interests. But the union leaders' role is to negotiate with capitalism—not to end it.

We support the leaders when they fight but oppose them when they betray workers. We stand for independent rank and file action.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY:

To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party. This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system. The SWM aims to build such a party in Ireland.

Join Us!

If you would like to join the SWM or receive more details, send this slip to: SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Tel: (01) 872 2682 or PO Box 103 Belfast 15 2AB

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

DON'T CROSS THE LITTLE SISTERS!

ON FRIDAY, 27th August a dispute between Mrs. Ann McDevitt and the Little Sisters of the Poor was fought in a chamber of the Employment Appeals Tribunal.

Ann was represented by Brendan Archibold of IDATU. The Little Sisters by IBEU's Maria Cronin.

They sat across a table from each other; Ann and Brendan Archibold on the left; Ms. Cronin, Sister Stephen, Sister Estelle, Brother Niall, a secretary and a third nun - who took no part in the proceedings - on the right.

Ann worked for more than twelve years in an exclusive retirement home run by the order in Clonskeagh, Dublin.

The home caters for retired military officers and the upper echelons of the Catholic Church.

The Sisters complained that Ann was often untidy, out of uniform and given to profane outbursts.

Consequently, she was served with verbal and written warnings.

Ann claimed that working in the Home had become intolerable and that the constant nagging from her employers left her wondering "if I could do anything right at all".

Sabotage

While she worked in the kitchen, under Sister Estelle, she was accused of smashing delft and breaking the dishwasher. There were even hints that she had sabotaged the gas pipes!

Whatever about this rather bizarre accusation, anyone who has ever worked in a kitchen knows broken delft and problems with the dishwasher go with the territory.

As regards untidiness and bad temper, Brendan Archibold pointed out that kitchens are by their nature trying places to work in. And it's a bit difficult to work in one without getting dirty.

Ann was transferred to the laundryroom by the personnel officer, Sister Stephen.

Sister Stephen said she had decided to put her on "light physical work" out of concern for her health. Ann underwent open heart surgery in 1985. She was shifted to the laundry room in 1992!

Some of her new duties



The Farwell Card Ann sent

included cleaning what Sister Stephen described as "a lovely little chapel" twice a week.

The icing on the cake, as Sister Stephen put it, came when Ann presented flowers and a card to Sister Estelle, who was leaving for Scotland.

The card had a drawing of a nun on a cross with a message of farewell and thanks underneath it.

The sisters took offence.

They suggested the drawing was an attempt to ridicule Sister Estelle, the flowers were dead and the message meant the opposite to what it said.

Offense

In doing so, they revealed a level of paranoia usually only encountered in outfits like the CIA.

Sister Estelle broke down at one point, sobbing that she couldn't understand why Ann behaved so badly when she had been treated so well!

Ann takes home £100 a week. She has a son and her husband is unemployed.

Sister Estelle claimed her name, spelt "Asstel" on the card, had been misspelt intentionally.

Ann McDevitt has had no formal education whatsoever. She cannot read or write.

Ann was suspended for twentyfour hours pending "an investigation" but the decision to fire her had clearly already been made.

The chairman of the tribunal overruled an attempt to put Brother Niall forward as a witness and, after Ann told her side of the story, the Board adjourned.

When they returned the chairman gave their verdict.

Ann is to be reinstated on the First of October. The Little Sisters disappeared almost immediately - perhaps ascending on a cloud back to Clonskeagh!

--Mick Doyle

THE SNAPPER reviewed by Natalie Stringer

The Snapper, un like most films you'll see this year, is that rare phenonenon, a film about ordinary working class life.

It is the story of a young single woman who finds herself pregnant after an episode of drunken sex in a car park.

From the same trilogy of Roddy Doyle's books as "The Commitments". "The Snapper" is a very different film, without the glamour of song and dance numbers.

It is a stronger film for it as we get a closer and more realistic look at the lives of its characters.

It is well acted, not by beautiful superstars but by a strong and believable cast.

What really lights up the film, though, is Roddy Doyle's brilliantly funny script which draws deeply on the humour of everyday life and events with hilarious results.

"The Snapper" is set in a working class suburb of Dublin where unlike the myth of idyllic Catholic Ireland people are having sex outside marriage, are (but not



always) using contraception, do consider abortion as an option and do not always live happily ever after with the fathers of their children.

Things can get tough. Friends and neighbours all have something to say about the pregnancy and speculations to make on the identity of the father.

The whole family gets put under pressure during the course of the film.

The central character is most definitely Sharon's father. He is a brilliantly funny

and sympathetic character. We laugh and cry as he becomes drawn into Sharon's pregnancy, discovering the wonders of childbirth and sex through books from the library.

Working Class

But in a film about the reality of working class people's lives and about unplanned pregnancy, it is slightly disappointing that although the women are strong the action of the film

focusses on the father while Sharon's mother is making sandwiches in the background.

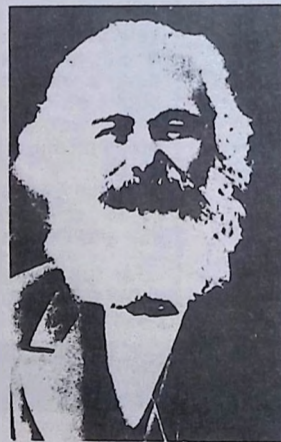
None the less, "The Snapper" is a strong film and what leaves an impression in its humour and its warmth.

The message is that life is hard, with a lot of fights to face up to, but you may as well see the funny side while you're about it.

So why not go and see "The Snapper" if you haven't already - you won't be disappointed.

Marxist Classics: The Communist Manifesto

1848 was the year of revolution in Europe. Barricades appeared in Paris, Italian nationalists threatened the power of the Pope, free parliaments were set up in Germany.



At the start of the year, a small book appeared which few noticed at the time. It was the Communist Manifesto written by Marx and Engels.

They had been commissioned to write the manifesto by a tiny organisation, the Communist League.

It had originally been known as the League of the Just. Then, its members saw themselves as a secret society working in the cause of revolution. Their inspiration was the activities of an impoverished writer Weitling, who was one of the first to develop the term 'communism'.

Weitling was a utopian. He had

all the vision about what a future society might look like. But he knew of no way to connect that vision to the struggles of any class in Germany at the time.

Marx and Engels wrote the Manifesto to point to a new way of fight for socialism.

The Manifesto starts by saying that all history is the history of class struggles. At present, this takes the form of a struggle between the bourgeoisie or capitalist class and the proletariat or working class.

Ironically enough, Marx and Engels praise the capitalists highly, pointing out their fantastic achievements. But these very achievements lead to economic crisis: capitalist has become a fetter on the development of society.

Downfall

So capitalism leads to its own downfall and at the same time inevitably creates the working class: "What the bourgeoisie, however, produces, above all, is its own grave diggers." It brings isolated labourers together in large scale industry, creating a working class who "have nothing to lose but their chains", the force that can overthrow capitalism.

Marx and Engels deal with the position that socialists should take in workers' struggles. Firstly, socialists must never stand apart from the rest of the working class and its struggles in a sectarian manner.

But also, we must be "the most advanced and resolute section" of the working class, "that section which pushes forward all others", with a clear understand-

ing of the class struggle.

The Manifesto shows that the workers have to take power in order to put an end to capitalism and establish a socialist society "in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all".

Marx and Engels wrote 25 years later that, while parts of it could be improved here and there, the general principles of the Manifesto were "as correct today as ever".

Today, a century and a half after its publication, the Manifesto still holds true. The crisis of capitalism is becoming

more chronic every day.

The working class, the grave digger of capitalism, is now bigger and more powerful - in Ireland and internationally - than ever.

The Communist Manifesto maintains all its great importance. It is one of the best weapons our class possesses in the fight for socialism. We still "have a world to win".

--Aindrias O Cathasaigh

The Communist Manifesto
Just £1.75
Available from
SW Books,
Po Box 1648, Dublin 8.

Rage against the Machine

Rage against the Machine, it's all in the name. This band are certainly not bombarding the senses with love ballads or country and western.

Hailing out of Los Angeles, they are a combination of rebellion, real musicianship and a ferocious delivery. Along with other bands such as Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy, they reflect the anger that exists in the US today against police brutality, racism and oppression.

At their gig in Dublin's Tivoli Theatre, the rage and fury spilled out on the stage. Vocalist Zack de la Rocha delivered the lines which tear at the system like a deranged preacher with a message for the masses.

The Machine on stage re-create the same tension that exists in US society which boiled over into the L.A. riots of 1992 when blacks, whites and Hispanics took to the streets together to vent their anger against the system. Their song 'Township Rebellion' pays homage to that uprising.

Zack de la Rocha cries "Take the Power Back". Their message can be summed up in one word: Revolution.

Music and words alone won't change the world. But Rage against the Machine are worth listening to.

--Eamon McLoughlin

If you have a story from your workplace phone (01) 872 2682

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

WATERFORD DOCKERS WIN VICTORY

Waterford dockers forced the government and Department of Social Welfare to withdraw social welfare cuts which cost workers hundreds of pounds over the last few months.

Following McCreevy's "Dirty Dozen" cuts, if casual dockers worked one day in any week, they lost all their social welfare entitlements for that week. Before now, they lost only the days they worked in that week.

The dockers mounted a campaign of pickets and protests outside local politicians' clinics and government offices in Waterford.

Brian O'Shea, the local Labour TD, was especially reminded of his party's election promise to reverse the dirty dozen cuts if they got into power.

Contact was made with other dockers around the country who were similarly affected, and they attended a conference in Waterford to decide on a national

campaign involving strike action.

Within two weeks, Joan Burton, Junior Minister for Social Welfare, had contacted the dockers' union, the ATGWU, to tell them that the matter was being given "immediate and sympathetic attention." She also indicated that these cuts would be reversed.

The campaign was put on hold, but with a threat of port stoppages if nothing happened.

In August, the dockers were told that legislation would be introduced to alleviate the effects of the cuts. In the meantime, "a temporary scheme of compensatory payments" will be set up.

John Clunno local dockerman, told *Socialist Worker*:

"This was a great result for us. It shows that with a bit of unity of action and purpose, plus a level of class consciousness, a lot can be achieved. Without action, there will be no reaction."

NOLANS

Dockers in Rosslare and Cork could be set to follow the lead of Dublin ports and black Nolan's trucks.

Nolan's is a small time company which has forced its workers out on strike because they won't let them join a union.

The dockers in both ports have now voted to tell management that 'in conscience' they cannot transport Nolan's lorries.

If the blacking goes ahead, Nolan's could be in deep trouble.

Meanwhile, SIPTU officials, are bending over backwards to enforce the disgusting Industrial Relations Act.

When 40 socialists from Militant Labour joined the Nolan's picket line they were ordered off by union officials.

The officials claimed that "few of them were legally entitled to picket under the Industrial Relations Act 1990".

It is this disgraceful attitude of respecting laws copied from Thatcher's Britain which has prolonged the strike.

WITCH HUNT IN NIPSA

A trade union activist has brought the public service union NIPSA before a Fair Employment Tribunal in the North.

They refused to appoint him to a full-time post because he is a member of the Broad Left section of the union.

This blatant political discrimination shows the conservative nature of the union leadership. But instead of relying on the tribunal the Broad Left should organise an open defence campaign among the membership.

PAT THE BAKER:

BLACKING CAN WIN

Six months after it began, the long and bitter strike for union recognition at Pat the Baker in Ballyfermot is still going on.

Twenty five SIPTU members went on strike at the end of March. Since then they have had to contend with video surveillance which monitors every visit or to their picket line.

Pat the Baker have also hired two PR companies to try to defeat the strike.

Conditions at Pat the

Baker were appalling. Workers were on wages as low as £139 a week. They were denied a pension or a sick pay scheme.

When workers first tried to organise a union, they were told not to take any action until the matter had gone to the labour Court. But even after the Labour

Court recommended to Pat the Baker that they should recognise the union, they refused.

When the Dublin workers travelled to the main plant in Longford, management thugs beat up six pickets outside the bakery

in Granard.

The physical attacks continued at the end of August when the pickets' caravan outside the Ballyfermot depot was smashed up.

One of the strikers told *Socialist Worker*: "It was well planned and organised. They broke all the windows, and took every leaflet, poster and placard in the place."

However the strikers have continued to leaflet shopping centres calling for a boycott of Pat the Baker, Five Star and KVI bread.

They still feel that they

can win. Their own determination, and the support they have received from other workers, has rattled management and its scabs.

This support needs to be built on - by SIPTU and other unions issuing a directive to supermarket workers not to handle the company's products.

Strikers have travelled to areas such as Cavan and Athlone to ask shop workers to black these products. Workers in many shops have said they will vote in favour of blacking.

This is a magnificent start. But the SIPTU officials should act on this sup-

port and issue a blacking instruction..

Strikers took an active part in the 1913 Lockout commemoration in Dublin. Their struggle today is similar to many of the battles Larkin had to fight eighty years ago. Some officials tried to discourage them from upsetting the pageantry with a demonstration for workers' rights.

But the strikers and their supporters held a feeder march to join up with the pageant.

The huge sympathy this strike has built up amongst trade unionists has to be turned into action.

AER LINGUS :

WHO'S FOOLING WHO?

While talks continue between Aer Lingus unions and management over the Cahill hatchet plan, union officials are pushing for a share ownership scheme for workers.

They argue that if workers make sacrifices now to return the company to profitability, they should share in those profits (if they ever arise!)

However, Aer Lingus workers are less enthusiastic.

One TEAM worker told *Socialist Worker*: "We were talking about this in work - it's a joke. You could get shares now and then the company you own could lay you off. Then who'd be laughing at who?"

While management try to defuse employees' anger over the plan, workers should remember that it was militant action, including a wildcat strike, that won 300 TEAM workers their jobs back - not talks or share swindles.

We Think

The strike has received tremendous support from other workers. Supermarket employees would be willing to black Pat the Baker products if they got a directive to do so.

SIPTU leaders fear that breaking the law will result in court action. But this is to put the union's assets over the interests of its members. Every

rank and file activist knows that a union is only as good as its members.

In fact, where workers have broken the law in the past they have won.

A victimised NBRU shop steward at Heuston Station was reinstated when NBRU members on the buses defied an injunction and put unofficial pickets on a number of garages. No action was taken against them.

Nor were Aer Lingus workers punished for staging a wildcat strike

in July over the Cahill Plan.

The Pat the Baker strikers can win, but only if they push their officials into taking real action.

This will only happen if they and their supporters in the trade union movement publicly call on the unions involved to issue a blacking directive.

In 1913, Jim Larkin's slogan was "Break the law not the unions." The same slogan applies in 1993.

BT WORKERS FIGHT BACK

British Telecom recently announced profits of £96 per second. However management are still complaining about having to make huge redundancy payouts.

Workers have been offered a mere 1.65% pay rise, at a time when the Tories have introduced VAT on fuel bills, a 10% rise in rail prices and the likelihood of increases in electricity charges.

One person at BT who will be able to afford these increases is Ian Vallance, who recently received a £90,000 bonus on top of his £536,065 annual salary.

Telecom bosses are now demanding that engineers work

a seven day week, while overtime is abolished and working hours are increased.

Engineers who are "surplus to requirements" will be sacked.

Engineers are not the only ones being attacked.

BT bosses are trying to rob operators of their nightly and weekend allowances, which are crucial for workers forced to work long and unsocial hours.

One UCW member at the Derry Exchange said: "BT workers have had enough, and are fed up with Telecom's repeated attacks on our hard-won rights."

Operators who would

never previously have considered strike action now feel cheated and are willing to take action in defence of their jobs.

In the past, management have put workers off from taking action by threatening to close the exchange and transfer operations elsewhere.

The Derry worker said: "This is a blatant ruse and an attempt to divide us. We must stand together and argue on the shop floor for immediate action within our unions."

A national strike of all Telecom workers would break the back of BT. Workers have the strength to make BT fold to their demands. They need to push for action now.

STUDENT MAINTENANCE GRANT CUT

At the start of the summer, the government cut thousands of students off the dole.

Instead, they were forced onto workfare schemes paying £40 a week.

Now, as students prepare to return to college, the government has attacked their living conditions again. Students' maintenance grants are to be frozen at 1992 levels. This

means students will be forced to try to live on just £44 a week. This is the latest in a series of clawbacks of grants.

Last year, payment of ESF grants for first years was made subject to a means test. Even then, payment of the grants was delayed for months.

It will be important for students to mobilise quickly at the start of the new term to reverse these cuts.

Issues for the labour movement

by Dave McDonagh

WHY THE PESP HAS FAILED

THIS month unions will begin to have meetings and special conferences to decide on entering another PESP-style agreement with the government.

Many workers have become disillusioned with the Programme for Economic and Social Progress.

Public Service workers had to threaten industrial

action to secure the pay rises due to them under the deal. Many of them are still in a low pay trap even though the PESP was meant to help low paid workers.

Irish workers still pay huge amounts of tax - a bigger share of the tax burden now falls on PAYE workers. And the Irish rich still pay the lowest tax in Europe.

Far from bringing serious "tax reform", as it promised, the PESP's lifetime saw workers faced with a new one per cent

levy while the rich enjoy a generous tax amnesty.

And far from reducing unemployment the period of the PESP has seen the dole queues swell from 245,000 to over 300,000.

Dole

There is no reason to believe that a new PESP will be any better.

Albert Reynolds is talking about the need for £280 million in spending cuts.

And unemployed workers face the possibility of

being forced into "workfare" programmes, for which students have already been used as guinea pigs.

A crisis that is getting deeper will only prompt employers to be less generous with pay increases this time round.

Many workers already see through the hypocrisy of "social partnership". They only have to look at Aer Lingus, where workers face sacrifices while their "social partner", Bernie Cahill, lives in luxury in the Westbury

Hotel in Dublin.

But workers also wonder if they can survive outside of a national agreement. Union leaders claim that low paid workers in "weaker" areas need such a deal in order to guarantee even miserly increases.

Cuts

They go on to argue that national deals offer a "united" approach by workers where the "stronger" groups don't leave the "weaker" groups

behind.

This ignores the possibility of real unity in a fight for decent wages. Victories won by more powerful groups of workers can have a knock-on effect in all areas.

The bosses look to PESP-type agreements as a way of slashing wages for all groups of workers.

ICTU leaders accept the idea of wage restraint and sacrifices. That is why they have looked to PESPAs trade union bureaucrats their interest

lies in having a "working relationship" with the bosses and government.

But they are also under pressure from their rank and file. If they wish to sign another deal Attlee, Cassells and company will have to secure some reforms, like a repeal of the one per cent levy.

But the way forward is to reject any new form of PESP and to increase this pressure on the union leaders to lead a real fight for real improvements.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

Inside:
Can Protestant and Catholic workers unite?
See pages 6 & 7

As Unionist Party back the Tories:

NOW JOIN THE FIGHT FOR THE NHS



The Tories' attacks are killing babies.
Child poverty activists blame rising infant mortality on welfare cuts, poor housing and the decimation of the National Health Service.
The ONLY intensive care ward in the whole of Northern Ireland that caters for older babies and toddlers is in the RVH's Hospital for Sick Children - a hospital

threatened by the Eastern Health Board's proposed cuts.
The Special Baby Care Unit at the Waverley Hospital in Ballymena also faces closure.
And while the Tories' policies put our kids' lives in danger, John Major cries crocodile tears for the children of war-torn Bosnia.
Last month Major pulled off a cheap publicity stunt by having baby Irma flown into London for treatment. But the Tories' "compassion" for war victims can be turned on and off like a tap. There were no banner

headlines about Belfast baby, Caolan McDonald, who spent the first eleven months of his life on a waiting list for a liver transplant.
Only when he was at death's door was a bed found for him in Birmingham Children's Hospital. Doctors said that by then irreparable damage may have been done to his brain.
Hypocrites
Caolan's father reacted angrily to Major's hypocrisy. He called it 'a sick stunt'. He described their long wait for a bed for

Caolan and then said 'John Major makes a phone call and the Bosnians are here in two days'.
While Major used the children of Bosnia to try to improve his public image, Tory policies are set to close maternity wards all over the North.
Maternity units in Omagh, Dungannon, Downpatrick and Belfast all face closure.
The Tories are being propped up by the Unionist Party. Although some Unionist politicians may try to protest against closures in local areas they are help-

ing to make sure that the vandals of the NHS stay in office.
But the Tories can be stopped.
The workers at University College Hospital in London have shown the way.
Strike
At the end of August, nurses and porters at the hospital started an indefinite strike to save UCH from closure.
"The money is there to fund our hospital," said one striking nurse.

"If they can fork out £60 million for Windsor Castle, they can fund the National Health Service".
The strike at UCH is inspiring. But it can only succeed if workers at other hospitals - including here in the North - also take strike action and spread it to a national fightback.
A national day of action to defend the NHS is planned for 11th November. That day must be brought forward and the ICTU needs to build seriously for it.
This could focus the anger and disgust millions of people feel about the decimation of the Health Service.