

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

inside

Racism and IQ tests—page 8

Another government of the rich—centre pages

RUSSIA: Why Yeltsin bombs Chechens —page 5

## Courts ban Nolans strike

# DEFEND OUR UNIONS



**THE HIGH Court has banned workers at Nolans Transport in New Ross from striking for pay, conditions and union recognition.**

After two years of resistance, hardship and violence against them, the Nolans strikers have been threatened with jail if they continue to picket.

The High Court Judge Barron has ordered their union, SIPTU, to pay the Nolan truck company:

■ £600,000 for loss in their prof-

its and legal costs.

■ £25,000 for printing leaflets which revealed the filthy tactics the company was using to break the strike.

■ £8,000 fuel costs for every month of the strike because the company had to make longer journeys after being blacked.

### Outcry

The judgement represents the most serious attack on union rights in decades. It should be met with a massive outcry of protest from workers.

Judge Barron allowed the bosses at Nolans the right to challenge the way SIPTU conducted its ballot for strike action.

The union brought ballot papers to the court but the bosses claimed that the ballot was rigged.

After hearing the evidence Judge Barron claimed that Patricia Nolan and her brother Seamus Nolan were 'more reliable' witness than those of the union officials Margaret de Courcey and Tony Ayton.

**Judge Barron belongs to the tiny elite of Irish society who have gone to an exclusive private school.**

He went to the high class St Columba's school in Rathfarnham.

When he found the word of the bosses 'more reliable' he was saying that he finds *his* class more trustworthy than the working class.

From now on all union ballots can be challenged by bosses who can expect to get a sympathetic hearing in the courts.

According to the *Irish Times*, union members can now be "put on the stand and asked to indicate how they voted".

If workers are intimidated by the threat of the sack into denying that they voted for strike, their union can be sued for damages.

■ Continued on page 2

# Tories refuse cash for Irish school

**THE TORIES** have refused to fund the Irish language secondary school on the Falls Road.

The school—Meanscoil Feirste—applied to be recognised by the Department of Education after consistently increasing its numbers.

The DOE refused claiming that the school was too small as it has less than 300 pupils.

Yet 18 per cent of secondary schools in Northern Ireland have less than 300 pupils and still get funded.

One teacher at the school told *Socialist Worker* what the lack of a state grant meant.

*"The school is only kept going by voluntary funding. It really is disgraceful."*

*"We reckon that the government has saved themselves £400,000 in the three years that this school has been opened"*.

## Suffering

She also explained how the students at the school are suffering.

*"A lot of parents in this area are on income support."*

*"If they were at any other school, their children would be entitled to school meals and travel allowance."*

*"But here they are denied these rights"*.

Support for the school has come from a group based in the Shankill Women's Centre who are learning Irish.

150 teachers and pupils picketed the DOE's headquarters in Bangor in protest at the decision and a campaign has been mounted in support of the school.

The refusal to fund the school has shown that talk of investment is a sham and that the Tories are content in the bigotry.

# SERVICE CHARGES: Action forces concessions

**AFTER NEARLY** a year of marches, pickets and organised or spontaneous demonstrations against the service charges the government seem to be getting the message at last.

It was announced in December that they recognise there is strong opposition to the charges.

They have promised to publish a white paper suggesting a 'more equitable'

means of funding local authorities.

There will also be a tax allowance for service charges paid, at the standard rate of up to £150.

And the 1962 Sanitary

Services Act will be amended to curb the power of local authorities to disconnect water supply for non-payment.

## Anger

In the meantime there will be no more disconnections.

According to Deirdre Cronin of the Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Anti

Water Charges Campaign: *"This proves that militant action works."*

*"It puts pressure on the local authorities and demonstrates the level of anger out there to the government."*

She said: *"The best way to fight by far was on the estates themselves, where the community stuck together and physically stopped disconnections."*

It was the actions of ordinary people that forced the government to climb down.

In Ashbourne Co. Meath, in November the council had attempted to isolate individuals and intimidate them into paying.

Having disconnected one woman a work gang moved on to a second house. But an angry crowd gathered.

The workmen became so flustered that they burst a mains, cutting off the water to 400 houses.

In Waterford in September a huge crowd surrounded a van-load of scabs. The scabs were powerless to do anything.

After the Gardai arrested three demonstrators the residents marched to the local police station and demanded their release. They were released without charge.

The government are shaky on the issue now but the charges are not gone yet. The campaign should continue until they are scrapped altogether.

# Jailed for 40 years by garda fit-up

**PETER PRINGLE, the man jailed for 40 years for supposedly shooting a guard, is innocent.**

Pringle says he was the victim of a miscarriage of justice 14 years ago.

This month the Court of Criminal Appeal will hear that his murder confession was invented by gardai.

The entire legal system, especially the gardai, are running scared at what will happen if Pringle's appeal succeeds.

## Jailed

The case may be a miscarriage of justice the likes of which has never been seen in Ireland before—on a par with the Birmingham Six and Guildford Four cases.

Pringle, who has always maintained his innocence, was jailed for the murder of

Garda Henry Byrne in 1981.

One barrister said there was an "omnibus of complaint" in relation to Garda behaviour before, during and after Pringle's arrest.

The litany of complaints includes the most damning: that during his interrogation by gardai, his "confession" was invented by gardai.

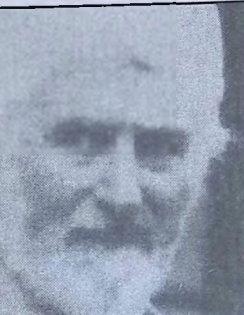
Gardai claim Pringle

said: *"I know you know that I was involved but on the advice of my solicitor I am saying nothing and you will have to prove it all the way."*

## Evidence

Pringle says his words were simply: *"I know you think that I was involved,"* and that the second part of the sentence was added on.

Strong evidence during Pringle's appeal in Decem-



Peter Pringle

ber by a British "authorship attribution" scientist backed up his claim.

The appeal was put back to January 23 because the guards were accused of being slow in producing evidence.

Taken along with other evidence, Pringle should never have gone to prison.

His appeal may show that the Irish legal system of injustice is just as corrupt as any other.

# Susan O'Keefe in court for exposing Beef fraud

**SUSAN O'KEEFE, the World in Action journalist who drew attention to fraud and tax evasion in Goodman International comes to court on January 26th.**

She is pleading "not guilty" to a charge of contempt for not revealing her sources. Susan O'Keefe faces a fine of up to £10,000 and up to

two years in jail for her stand.

The National Union of Journalists is backing her stand. Owen Ronayne, Irish Secretary of the Un-

ion said that "you couldn't get a better journalist. Her stand is quite justified. We will be mounting a protest meeting and pickets in her support."

"Our hope is that we see a 'Ponting' judgement. Where the Jury express their disaffection with what's going on by a 'not guilty' verdict regardless

of the strictly legal considerations."

Before she was charged Susan O'Keefe told *Socialist Worker*:

*"I will never reveal my sources. It's up to the Judge to decide if there is a penalty. Whatever the Judge decides will not move me from my position."*

Her stand should be supported.

It is an outrage that the only prosecution emerging from the Beef Tribunal is that of the person who exposed the corruption. It is clear that Ireland's "Golden Circle" want to intimidate anyone who sheds light on what they are up to.

# DEFEND OUR UNIONS

Continued from page one

The bosses forced the union leaders to agree to their demand for a secret ballot before all strikes in the Industrial Relations Act of 1990.

But now they have put the unions in a catch 22 position: because there are no names or signatures on the ballot, no union can fully prove its members voted for strike action at a particular time.

Workers have now to act urgently to defend

their rights. Nolan's Transport should be blacked as a vicious anti-union firm.

If it wants to take on the Irish trade union movement, then it should start to feel, the real strength of organised labour.

SIPTU members should also tell the union not to pay the fine. Instead the union should be calling for a massive round of protests.

## WHY NOLANS ARE ON STRIKE

**STRIKERS AT Nolans had to work up to 15 hours a day for as little as £2.50 an hour.**

Jimmy Halligan organised his fellow workers into a union to improve their conditions. He described what happened after he approached the manager, Jim Nolan, "He told me I was only

a reject from my previous employer and that if I did not leave the place I could fuck off out of it" After this Jimmy was dismissed.

## Support

He took his case to the Employment Tribunal and won.

But Judge Barrons's judgement cuts across this.

The strikers had widespread support but had to put up with intimidation and abuse.

■ Their caravan was stoned and its windows broken.

■ rubble was dumped at the caravan at night.

■ One striker was assaulted with a mallet.

■ Another strikers was threatened with 'a taste of lead' by the chief organiser of the scabs, the

former Fianna Fail councillor Jim Dwyer.

Dwyer was later bound to the peace for his activities

■ In March 1994, one of the striker's car was shot at with a bullet from an air rifle found lying on the passenger seat. It appeared to have been fired through the window.

But the judge ignored all these events and instead fined SIPTU for 'defamation'.

## What you can do

□ Raise this resolution in your union branch:

"This branch believes that the judgement in the Nolan's dispute represents a grave assault on union rights.

■ Calls for a campaign of protests and stoppages

■ Urges SIPTU to refuse to pay the fine."

□ Order petitions from PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

what we think

# This weak right wing government



PHOTO: MIKE HEFFERNAN

Part of the Disability Pride march in Dublin last month

## THE POLITICAL crisis over the Fr Smyth affair has ended in a farce.

Instead of revealing the truth behind the cover-up, the politicians in Dáil Eireann tied themselves up in legal knots and procedure.

They will never reveal why it took seven months to extradite a child abusing priest when it only took days to extradite republicans like Dominic McGlinchey.

The main result has been to produce a new government without having a new election.

There have hardly been any losers from the last election in 1992. Every party has had a turn at government except the PDs. Elections in modern Ireland now come down to who is going to be the odd one out.

The new Coalition will continue the old right wing policies of the last Coalition.

They will target public sector workers and maintain the taxes on welfare benefits. They will be rabidly pro-business.

During the Packard

crisis they took the side of General Motors and told workers that they would have to solve 'the industrial relations problem'. This meant accepting that they should work two hours longer a week.

The fact that some Labour and Democratic Left ministers are in more powerful positions will make little difference.

Labour's new Finance Minister, Ruairi Quinn, told the *Sunday Business Post*, that he was leaving

a Department of Enterprise and Environment that was "far more sympathetic towards small business than when it was managed by predecessor Des O'Malley of the Progressive Democrats."

## Problems

But the Rainbow Coalition is also a weak government. John Bruton got the support of only 10 per cent in the opinion polls two weeks before he became Taoiseach.

His party, Fine Gael is like a team that is drawn

from the subs bench when the major players, FF, are having problems.

It is a mainly rural party that only polled 16% of votes in urban areas—usually in the middle class suburbs. It is despised for its pro-Unionist rhetoric.

This means that they can be beaten when they attack workers. Real active resistance to their plans can work.

In the new year socialists have to point to the divisions and weakness at the top of Irish society to encourage the growing resistance from workers.

## Where is the opposition?

### THE LAST 1982-87 Fine Gael-Labour government was hated.

Fianna Fail were able to rebuild themselves in opposition by attacking its "Thatcherism". Even the far right bigots of SPUC could make gains with slogans like "Jobs not divorce".

Could it happen again? Those who think that Irish politics works like a pendulum believe so.

But they are wrong. Fianna Fail are entering opposition in a far weaker position than ever before.

They have lost many members and supporters over the past years.

Their whole leadership—not just Reynolds—is implicated in the Smyth cover-up. Many have seen them for the liars and crooks that they are.

FF is also deeply divided. The "Country and Western" wing around Geoghagan-Quinn, Reynolds and Cowan want a return to an open alliance with the Bishops but many of the city deputies sense the danger of this strategy in a changing Ireland.

Next year these tensions will grow with the divorce referendum and the Abortion Information Bill.

## Bigots

The bigots in SPUC and Youth Defence are also a lot weaker than they were in the 1980s. Even before the Smyth affair the candidate of the clerical right in the recent Cork by-election got less than 2 per cent of the vote.

Now that the hypocrisy of the bishops on child abuse is exposed, even fewer will

turn to the bigots.

These after all are the people who campaigned against the "Stay Safe" programme in schools because it was warning against child sex abuse. They pretended that child abuse did not exist in holy Ireland.

The real opposition to this government has to come from socialists.

That opposition will be built outside Dáil Eireann. Revolutionary socialists have now a golden opportunity if they can link up with workers whose confidence and militancy has started to revive.

The right will grow in this country only if socialists fail in that task. *Socialist Worker* supporters now provide one of the largest networks of opposition to this rotten Coalition.

We have a responsibility to build a strong party quickly.

## Tory hypocrisy on peace

THE BRITISH Tory government is determined to exploit the weakness of Irish republicans.

While Adams has been feted in the White House and Dublin Castle, the Tories have been increasing the pressure on him.

■ Sinn Fein are to be excluded from full negotiation until IRA weaponry is "de-commissioned".

While they make these demands the To-

ries give a free hand to the armed forces of the RUC and British army to continue their harassment.

■ The Tories insist on treating Sinn Fein and the political representatives of the loyalist paramilitaries as equals.

But a third of Catholics in Northern Ireland voted for Sinn Fein—while a handful of Protestants voted for the loyalist death squads.

The new Sinn Fein

strategy of trying to win friends and influence in high places has brought many token gestures but few concrete results.

The danger now is that a section of the republicans will look for a return to the tactic of the armed struggle.

But armed struggle ended after 25 years because it was a failure. The only concessions were won when masses took to the streets. An attempt to revive this tactic now

could only lead to more intense sectarian conflict.

We need to unite both Catholic and Protestant workers to fight the corrupt states of both Northern and Southern Ireland.

Working class politics rather than nationalist politics offers the only way forward.

And we need to construct a working class party based on these politics—that is the alternative *Socialist Worker* is fighting for.

## Socialist Worker goes fortnightly

FROM THIS issue onward *Socialist Worker* will appear every two weeks.

Up to now we have produced a monthly paper but this is no longer enough.

The depth of the crisis in Irish society means that socialists can no longer just sit back and comment on the world.

We have to intervene in the struggles and debates that are taking place around us.

*Socialist Worker* has a proud record of intervening and in some cases leading struggles. We stood with the workers in TEAM Aer Lingus when Tony O'Reilly's papers were calling their shop stewards 'Aerheads' and 'dinosaurs'.

We made links with workers on Premier Dairies and helped to win an argument for solidarity between Premier

workers in Finglas and Rathfarnham. We set up groups to fight the water charges and built angry protests outside council offices.

Our growing branches in the North are fighting to make workers' unity more than just a slogan.

To offer a way forward in workers' struggles and to respond to the changes that are happening all the time requires a fortnightly *Socialist Worker*.

With Democratic Left joining coalition along with Labour there is now no left wing opposition in the South.

In the North Sinn Fein are firmly wedded to the nationalist establishment and there is no alternative for workers who want to break from communal politics.

*Socialist Worker* does not believe in sitting on the fence.

We want to get stuck into organising a real opposition on the ground

instead of looking for the mercs and perks of government.

The fortnightly paper is the key to



building real roots in the working class.

People no longer see us as eccentrics but look to our paper to give the truth about what is happening in society.

We aim to spread the circulation of *Socialist Worker* in two ways:

■ Regular sales outside workplaces

### Help build up *Socialist Worker's* circulation

- I want to take \_\_\_ copies to sell each fortnight\*
- I would like a copy dropped off to me each fortnight
- I would like to take out a six month subscription\*\*

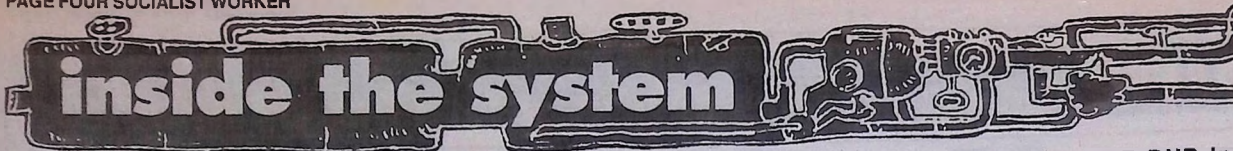
Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....

\*You pay only for the copies you sell \*\*£6.50 for 12 issues post free

Return to *Socialist Worker* PO Box 1648 Dublin 8



**THINGS THEY SAY**

**"To be a Fianna Fail Cuman member is only one step above a convict. They are demoralised, disgusted, annoyed, rudderless, headless chickens, lost, hopeless and heading for opposition"**—Daily Star

**"I had a soft spot for Haughey but I was a Dev man myself"**—Fr Brendan Smyth

**"It's called doing your own thing. It's the '90s"**—Spokesperson for US skateboard manufacturer, EL Segundo, who named one of its skateboards 'Bitch' and used a logo of a man pointing a gun at a woman's head.

**"We are on the barricades now and the enemy is just about to rout us"**—Youth Defence sponsor Richard Greene on the tribulations of the bigots.

**DAIL EIREANN** has recently given us some high quality entertainment as the liars and hypocrites stumble from scandal to scandal.

Unfortunately the British House of Lords has not been as animated. During the reading of Chancellor Kenneth Clarke's budget speech Lord Bernard Donoghue nodded off to sleep on the shoulder of his neighbour.

When he woke up he was about to apologise to his neighbouring Lord only to discover that he was asleep too.

# Torture by UN troops

**ANYONE who thinks UN troops can do much good in Bosnia should look at a recent court case in Canada.**

The court heard how the country's UN troops in Somalia tortured a Somali boy to death last year taking photographs as they did so.

Sixteen soldiers arrested teenager Shidane Arone as a "suspected looter". He was punched in the face, kicked with heavy army boots, beaten with batons and burned on the soles of his feet.

The Canadian soldiers played Russian roulette holding a gun to the blindfolded boy's head and smashed his shins with a metal bar before he finally died after several hours of such torture.

Other soldiers heard the screams but did nothing—some of the troops boasted of the Somali "peacekeeping" mission as a chance to "kill niggers".

The court incredibly found only three of those involved guilty of any crime. One got five years in jail and another just 90 days, while the commanding officer was merely reprimanded.

**★ THE DUP in Craigavon are determined to prevent people enjoying themselves on Sunday.**

Not content with banning swimming and bowls, they have now blocked a proposal for guided walks.

However their ban on Sunday recreation does not extend to that "gentleman's game"—golf.

**★ THE Northern Ireland Office must be desperate for friends judging by the amount it spends on Xmas cards.**

Out of 12 government departments, the Northern Ireland Office spends the most on cards.

The bill so far runs to £2,048

## Bank home hypocrisy

**THE BANK of Ireland is a major sponsor of the Big Issue magazine which aims to help the homeless and long term unemployed.**

But a recent report by Focus Point throws some light on the bank's concern for the homeless. It showed that the number of homeless families receiving emergency B+B accommodation had risen from 5 in 1990 to 500 in 1993.

The report found that 1 in 30 of the homeless people were made destitute after their homes were repossessed.

By who?—By the big banks like the Bank of Ireland. Next time you hear of the "social concern" of the bank of Ireland have a look at their profit margin.

Last year they made £280 profit. No wonder they can give out small grants to cover their sick activity of kicking people out of houses.

## Shark gets black eye

**HORSEY Desmond Shark a barrister got on the 39 bus in his full riding gear and came across a woman who made 'lewd' remarks about his appearance.**

The bold Desmond's blood was up and he smacked the woman across her bottom with his riding whip.

Imagine Desmond's surprise when the woman 'gave him a whack or two'. He claims that he received 'a marked blacking and swelling on the right orbit'.

When he took a case for damages to the High Court he lost. Seems like the plebs are in revolt these days and even the judges dare not help.

**★ IRELAND and the US are the two most unequal countries in the industrial world in terms of the gap between rich and poor.**

A survey by the government's Economic and Social Research Institute shows that the bottom 50% of Irish households have only 12% of the total wealth while the top 10% of the population have 42% of the wealth.

In other words each person in the top 10% is on average 20 times richer than those in the bottom 50%.

## Dr Sprinkenstein's monster



## HACKS MISS JUNKET

**POLITICAL** correspondents of main Southern newspapers were all set for an all expenses paid three day junket to Britain.

The trip, to be paid for by the British government's Foreign Office, was to include a special briefing with John Major and Douglas Hurd.

The political journalists were sadly not able to avail of the Tory government's hospitality because they had to stay in Ireland and report on the prolonged Fianna Fail/Labour crisis.

Why would supposedly objective journalists accept what amounts to a large bribe from the Conservative government?

Why is the so little coverage of incidents of British army harassment given in the national papers?

Socialist Worker welcomes **letters**  
PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

## LET THE CHURCH CRUMBLE

**IF ANYTHING** of any use comes to us out of the current ongoing disgrace and exposure of the Catholic church, it may well be the total undermining of its detrimental power in Irish society.

It is of little credit to us that so many have been conned by this institution of power for so long.

Essentially the few good priests, the genuine Christians were/are being used by the power hungry monsters at the centre of power to insure the loyalty of the flock.

It's hard to walk away from that church, but it's a walk you must take. The Catholic Church is irreformable.

If you have need to believe in a god then your spiritual needs should be fulfilled without associating with an institution as corrupt and power hungry as the Catholic Church.  
JAMES MC BARRON, CORK

## Public Order Act stops demo

**I TOOK** part in a number of protests on National Anti-Fur Day on 26th November. We encountered harassment from the gardai.

In one incident outside Vard's Furriers in South Anne St, eight of us gathered to hand out leaflets.

We were only there ten minutes when a garda approached us and told us we would have to leave.

I asked him why and he mentioned Section 8 of the Public Order Act. I asked what that meant and he said it was failing to comply with a garda's request.

I felt this to be a very wide-ranging power for an individual to have and also probably unconstitutional. The garda agreed and added that most gardai believed the Public Order Act to be unconstitutional.

The garda mentioned that he was off-duty at 2.00 pm so we waited until then to set up

again. Later we returned to Barnado's Furriers in Grafton Street, where earlier in the day a ban garda had ordered us to move on from. We continued our protest



here until 4pm when we returned to the AFAR stand outside the Central Bank on Colleage Green.  
CATHERINE LYNOTT, DUBLIN

## Health care denied

**I live in Tallaght with my family, Margaret my wife, four daughters, one son and I am unemployed.**

Our eldest daughter Susan is aged 14 and a keen Irish dancer who has won 17 trophies and 33 medals in 18 months.

Recently Susan developed a condition called Bursitis -- a very painful knee problem which prevents her from dancing and walking any distance.

The doctor sent Susan for physiotherapy. There are only two hospitals which the doc-

tor recommended. But both hospitals refused.

The Adelaide Hospital said "Go private - but it will be expensive. At the moment we are not accepting referrals from GPs."

The Meath Hospital refused outright saying they are accepting no GP referrals.

Since then my doctor has told me he has a letter from St James Hospital refusing physiotherapy treatment for people from Tallaght and Clondalkin.  
LUKE O'REILLY, TALLAGHT, DUBLIN

# behind the headlines

by LAURA CANNING

## Major's jobs boost fraud

**"HUGE BOOST for jobs". This is how one Belfast newspaper described the outcome of the investment conference held in Belfast last month.**

John Major flew in especially to meet business delegates at a £200 per head dinner in the Europa Hotel, where he "discussed ways of bringing prosperity to Northern Ireland".

The 'huge boost' which came out of the conference was a £75 million deal which brought 313 jobs.

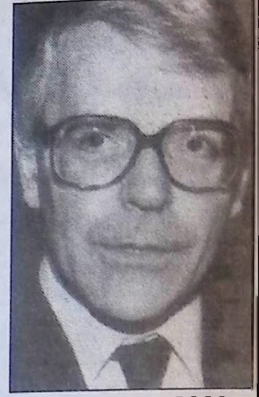
Major was praised by British and Irish politicians for this success. But the reality is that there is little to celebrate.

It works out at £240,000 per job created.

None of the workers who get employed could expect to earn anything like this even if they worked for their whole lifetime.

This matters little to the companies that have invested.

They are interested in grants and tax breaks—as well as cheap labour. Northern Ireland does well on all counts.



John Major: £200 dinners

the new approach represents a form of 'realism' and that jobs cannot be turned away.

Ironically, the same point used to be made in the South a decade ago by the Workers Party when they frothed at the mouth at the sight of a multi-national who would carry through Ireland's industrial revolution.

## Organise

Socialists should be encouraging workers to organise unions in the multi-national firms.

They should be telling workers to resist every attempt at blackmail by these companies who constantly use the threat of leaving to enforce low wages.

But you cannot do that effectively if you are cosying up to them even before they arrive.

What Sinn Fein will however end up doing is lobbying multi-nationals to move to Catholic areas rather than Protestant areas.

This will all happen in the name of 'helping deprived areas'.

And, of course, it will be countered by others who find equally deprived Protestant areas.

The new sectarianism is going to be built around arguments of whether the Falls or the Shankill gets to have the Burgerland or McDonalds on their side of the peaceline.

The only action which exposed the investment conference was a picket organised by the Belfast and Derry Trades Councils and supported by the Socialist Workers Movement.

This picket made it clear that the real issue in the North is not about one area getting more jobs than another but about the need for decent, unionised jobs for all areas.

The picket showed up the real possibilities that exist for a left wing alternative that cuts across the sectarian divide.

## Grants

Companies who invest in the North get 50% grants for buildings, 50% cash grants for machinery and equipment, 50% off training costs, and subsidies on interest payments.

And when it comes to low wages, a divided workforce can offer the bosses lots of benefits.

One of the main investors in Northern Ireland is Seagate.

Despite being described as 'high tech', the basic rate of pay is only £3.60 an hour. Lollipop workers who escort children out of schools get £3.62 an hour.

The reason why Seagate workers receive this amount is because they are called individually into the manager's office and told that they would be sacked if they joined a union.

Anyone with the slightest amount of radicalism should be exposing these multi-nationals instead of grovelling at their feet.

During the investment conference, Sinn Fein held a demonstration outside.

They were not protesting at the fact that there are 92,000 unemployed in the North—or the fact that many of the multi-nationals inside the conference had a non-union policy.

Instead, they were protesting about the number of Sinn Fein delegates invited to the conference. No one explained what was the point of having more Sinn Fein delegates at the £200 per head meal.

Sinn Fein will claim that

around the world

# Why Yeltsin bombs Chechenia

**BORIS YELTSIN** marked the new year by unleashing what he claimed would be the final assault on the Chechin capital Grozny.

Bombers flew sortie after sortie against the city, dropping 800lb bombs four at a time, creating craters 12 feet across and six feet deep, and destroying blocks of flats and hospitals. Then several hundred tanks tried to move in.

But, the Chechin resistance was

continuing to hold out against incredible odds as we went to press. Three weeks after Russia's top general Grachev claimed it would take a brigade of paratroopers a couple of hours to seize the city, it was still holding out.

Meanwhile, such alleged defender of "freedom" in the West, Bill Clinton said nothing, while his spokesmen told journalists what happened in Chechenia was an "internal matter" for Yeltsin.

from this.

So far, however, Yeltsin's manoeuvre has backfired completely. The Chechins' bitter historical memories have caused them to fight back heroically, so that the Russian troops have taken much longer to seize Grozny than they did Prague in 1968 or even the Afghan capital Kabul in December 1979.

This has caused deep splits inside the Russian military. A key top general, the conservative and right wing Afghan veteran, Gromov, has opposed the military action, and reports tell of Russian units on the ground ignoring orders.

## Dislike

And in Moscow all sorts of political forces have come out against Yeltsin. Among these are his former prime minister Gaidar, the former Soviet president Gorbachev (who took military action himself against the Baltic republics and Azerbaijan five years ago) and even some of the "Red-Brown" Russian nationalists.

All these are motivated by opportunistic dislike of Yeltsin and his key advisor, secret service chief Korchakov. None of them really give a damn for the fate of the Chechins, any more than Clinton does.

But they voice opposition because they know Yeltsin's military escapade is disliked by vast numbers of Russians who remember the horror and humiliation of the Soviet defeat in Afghanistan. And



A Chechen woman holds an automatic rifle in the republic's capital, Grozny

this must give hope to all of us who see that the only secure future for the former Soviet Union does not lie in the market, militarism and dictatorship, but in a free

association of peoples planning their own future through real democracy.

The Chechin fighting shows that the huge upheaval which began with talk of

perestroika just eight years ago is not over and that Russia's workers and oppressed national minorities will continue to make their mark on history.

**YELTSIN HAS** chosen to use the Russian Federation's armed forces to bomb the ground one of the Federation's cities.

Yet three years ago, when he became president, he claimed to stand for democracy.

It was a claim that all the West's leaders and the whole of the West's media accepted.

But democracy for the Chechins and the other minority nationalities inside the Russian federation—30 million people altogether—means the right to determine their own future.

They never agreed to be ruled by Russia. They are part of the Russian Federation because the armed forces of the old Russian empire of the Tsars conquered and colonised them in the last century, just as Britain colonised India and Africa.

Stalin returned to this policy of repression and colonisation, turning his

back on the Russian revolution's promise of freedom for such peoples. In the 1940's he deported every single Chechin thousands of miles to the Soviet far east.

## Rose Up

The Chechins showed their opposition to continued Russian rule when they rose up at the time of the attempted military coup in Moscow in 1991 and seized power for themselves. They were an integral part of the democratic movement that Yeltsin claimed to lead.

Now he has turned his back on them for two reasons.

Firstly, his economic policies have failed dismally right across the Russian Federation. Three years ago he promised that the market and privatisation would end the deep crisis into which

Stalinist state capitalism had led Russia.

Today the crisis is worse than ever, with production down by about half and inflation regularly at more than ten per cent a month.

Yeltsin is deeply unpopular and desperate to divert attention on to other matters.

So a month ago he saw waving the Russian nationalist big stick over Chechenia as the easy option—particularly as the both 'Red Brown' alliance of Stalinists and fascists groups and the Nazi Zhirinovskiy base their opposition to Yeltsin around such nationalism.

Yeltsin's second motive is exactly as that behind the Western war against Iraq three years ago—oil.

Grozny sits bang in the middle of the main pipeline bringing oil from the immense Azerbaijani oil fields to Western Europe. And Yeltsin is determined that Russia's rulers, not Chechenia's people, benefit

## ITALY:

# Berlusconi's government collapses

**"I HAVE aged seven years in seven months". So said right wing Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi as he resigned just before Christmas.**

Berlusconi and his ruling Freedom Alliance which included the separatist Northern League and the fascist MSI has collapsed after Italian workers refused to pay for the crisis of Italian capitalism and took to the streets in their millions.

Billionaire business and Thatcher fan Berlusconi was sworn into office only last May in a meteoric rise to power, and feted across Europe as a "new kind" of politician. He promised a "clean pair of hands" after the previous governments dominated by the Christian Democrat and the Socialist parties sunk

in a mire of corruption.

Berlusconi also promised to create a million jobs in the impoverished south to cut taxes.

But seven months later there are no new jobs. He has been exposed as more of the old kind of politician and now under investigation for bribing tax officials. His brother who helped run Berlusconi's huge Fininvest business empire has already been found guilty of corruption.

## Attack

Berlusconi and his allies also went on the attack against the Italian working class when they proposed a 1995 budget which planned to take away the pension rights of millions of workers and to slash public spending.

Workers responded with a huge wave of unofficial and official strikes affecting both the public and private sector.

In October ten million



Berlusconi: Brought down by huge wave of anger

workers struck and three million demonstrated during a one day general strike. Trade union leaders rushed to back workers' action rather than lose control of the mass movement altogether.

The following month the trade unions called a mass demonstration which saw one and a half million workers fill the streets of Rome.

Last month a planned general strike was called off by the trade union leaders, after Berlusconi shelved the attack on pensions.

If the strike had gone

ahead it would have brought down the government there and then.

Instead the trade union leaders gave the Italian ruling class a breathing space. Berlusconi—the target for workers' hatred—has been forced to step down as his coalition abandoned him.

## Blame

Now Italian President Scalfaro has to try and form a new government or call a general election in the next couple of months. It is possible, although unlikely that Berlusconi will head a new coalition.

If he does then the trade union leadership who pulled back in the "national interest" last month from allowing mass action to bring down the government will be to blame.

Fascist leader Fini is courting respectability. He has officially dissolved the MSI and is calling himself "post-fascist", despite his

praise of Mussolini and the support of the black shirted thugs who carry out his policy on the ground.

At the moment Fini hasn't got the electoral base to come to power—with twelve per cent of the national vote. He was also sidelined by the workers' struggles, especially after he came out and condemned the strikes and demonstrations.

However, he could pick up in the future. Fini is hoping that disillusioned Berlusconi supporters will switch to vote fascist.

That Berlusconi has been forced to resign is down to the militancy of the working class.

However that militancy must be carried forward in the next months to oppose not only a new government which whatever it's make up will be back on the attack at some point, but also to fight the fascist threat which is waiting in the wings.

## New attacks on single parents: The return to Oliver Twist

by CATHERINE CURRAN

THE "REPUBLICAN revolution" in US politics has allowed some odious reptiles to swim to the surface.

One of them is Newt Gingrich, the newly-elected speaker of the House of Representatives, who is spearheading a campaign to scapegoat single parents.

His proposals are being watched by right wingers all over the world who want to champion 'family values'.

Under the proposed Personal Responsibility Act, the Republicans propose a series of legislation to eliminate the existing welfare entitlements of the poor.

This means repealing the Food Stamps Act of 1977, the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, and the School Lunch Act of 1946.

Every effort by the state to help children of the poor is supposed to produce a 'dependency culture'.

Instead the right wingers want children to suffer the full effects of their parents poverty.

Gingrich personally favours the removal of welfare benefits from single parents under the age of 18, and from cases where the paternity of a child is unknown.

With the money saved in this way, he proposes to build orphanages for the children whose parents cannot feed them.

For Gingrich, orphanages are "the best way to end the culture of poverty."

Under his plan, the number of children committed to orphanages in the US could be higher than in Victorian England, with living conditions just as bad.

### Deprived

A spokesperson for the Child Welfare League of America said that the number of children in "out of home" care had already risen from 275,000 in 1986 to 500,000 last year.

Gingrich's attack on single parents is a clear attempt to direct public anger away from the rich and onto the most deprived groups.

The actual cost of the main welfare programmes in America is already tiny.

Aid to Families with Dependent Children and Food Stamps, amount to only 2.7 percent of the US budget.

More money is spent on a farm price support scheme which pays farmers to take land out of production so that food prices can be kept high.

Scapegoating welfare recipients is a strategy designed to divide the working class by encouraging racism and bigotry.

"Welfare recipient" is used by right wingers as a code word for black.

But the right wing cry for a return to 'family values' is riddled with hypocrisy. The people who make these calls know full well that society cannot be rolled back to the ideal pictures of suburban America or rural Ireland in the 1950s.

They shout about 'family values' only because they want to impose discipline on a wider working class. Just like Irish bishops they themselves never live by the rules they preach for others.

America's warrior for 'family values' is a real case in point. Gingrich tried to persuade his wife Jackie to sign divorce papers while she lay in hospital recovering from cancer therapy.

"The bottom line is Jackie isn't young enough or pretty enough to be the wife of a President of the United States" Gingrich told an associate.

The proposed return to Dickensian orphanages is completely unworkable for US capitalism. The cost to the state would be enormous.

According to a study carried out by the National Association of Child Advocates, the annual cost of a child living with its mother is \$2,655.

The same child living with a foster family costs the government \$4,800 annually, while a group home, similar to an orphanage, costs a massive \$36,500 per child.

More importantly, there is no evidence that the plan has the support of the public.

Even *Time* magazine called the orphanage proposal "punitive".

It revealed that the majority of Americans felt that it would be unfair to remove welfare benefits after two years.

People also felt that the government should retrain people for jobs rather than simply cutting off benefits.

Gingrich's proposals show the viciousness of a ruling class that is divided and crisis ridden.

It is a weak ruling class, and one that can be beaten back by the present rise in workers militancy across the United States.

"The business community have no need

# Another government the rich

"The business community have no need to worry" said the new Labour Minister for Finance Ruairi Quinn after his appointment.

The Bank of Ireland's leading economist, Jim Power, agreed. He said that "There is nothing in the programme of government that will scare the markets".

Labour and Democratic Left have come very close to Fine Gael's outlook on the economy.

The programme of the Rainbow Coalition shows why no real change can be expected.

### TAX CUTS FOR THE RICH:

The owners of large houses will pay less tax as the Residential Property Tax is cut back.

Someone with a £130,000 house will pay only £585 in tax compared with £700 this year. Fine Gael have fulfilled their promise to their upper class supporters to reverse the property charge.

### TAX ON SOCIAL WELFARE:

There is no clear commitment to scrap the taxes on social welfare. Some people may benefit from a 'restructuring of the tax'.

But the unemployed will still pay extra tax when they go back to work and many part time workers may see their earnings cut back.

In opposition, De Rossa pointed out that £15 million was being robbed from those on social welfare while the rich were only paying £5 million under the property tax.

But now as the tax on social welfare is hitting thousands on unemployment benefit, de Rossa is taking office as the Minister for Social Welfare.

### WATER CHARGES:

Labour and Democratic Left councillors have voted against water rates on local councils while Fine Gael have usually voted for.

The new government has promised to stop the councils disconnecting people who have not paid water charges.

This is only because they are frightened of the confrontations like that in Hillview in Waterford where 400 people drove away scab plumbers.

But the Coalition have not abolished water charges. Instead it is granting tax relief on water charges up to the limit of £150.

This sounds like a reform—but it could easily have the opposite effect.

The tax relief only amounts to a mere £40 back.

### Limits

As most councils are now charging less than £100 at the moment, they will be encouraged to raise the charge on the basis that there is a tax relief available.

Dublin Corporation is also now likely to press ahead with the water charges.

CUTS. The Coalition agreed to the spending limits set by the



Maastericht Treaty.

These limits have already been the excuse for major attacks on the TEAM and Irish Steel workers.

The offensive that the last government was preparing against Telecom and ESB workers is now set to continue.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS: The new Coalition has won praise from the bigots of SPUC because they have refused to legislate on the 'substantive issue' of abortion. Pressure is now building up within Fine Gael to limit access to abortion.

## BRUTAL BRUTON

JOHN BRUTON is leading a declining party.

Fine Gael's Dublin vote has fallen from 40% in 1979 to 21% in 1986 to 18% in 1991.

The party's registered membership has fallen to less than 18,000 from 40,000 in the early 1980's.

Bruton himself is symbolic of the roots of Fine Gael.

He is a wealthy farm owner from Co. Meath.

His father was prominent in the IFA, he chaired the livestock committee, the Port and Docks Board and Cork Marts.

John Bruton went to Clongowes Wood College, a private boarding school.

He was a member of the Guard of Honour of the FCA and became a corporal.

### Small feet

He took Political Science and Economics at UCD then law at King's Inn.

He earned the nickname "Brutal Bruton" in 1982 for his budget which proposed taxing kids shoes.

In an effort to defend the idea Garret Fitzgerald pathetically said that it covered a loophole for women with small feet!

The government promptly collapsed as the budget was voted down.

It took Bruton some time to recover from this.

On a speaking tour of America he proudly told a Washington audience:

"A member of the family also did a good business selling mules to both sides in the American Civil War.

"This showed the family's fair-minded approach to politics."

Unfortunately for Fine Gael a spokesperson has admitted that "John Bruton still writes some of his own speeches."

## Their old schools

A MAJORITY of the new Cabinet have gone to exclusive private schools.

Five Fine Gael Ministers and four Labour party Ministers have attended fee paying secondary schools.

The Bruton brothers went to the most expensive school in the state, Clongowes Wood which is run by

the Jesuits for Ireland snob classes.

Quinn and the Attorney General, Gleeson, went to Blackrock College famous for its rugby and old school ties networks.

### Spongers

Only 2% of the Irish population at large have attended these schools which charges anything up to £4,000 a year in boarding fees.

One issue which this cabinet will; not

be looking at is the way that Irish taxpayers are subsidising the spongers who go to these schools. The state is paying out £3 million a year in teacher's salaries in these schools.

The money is used to provide tiny class sizes and better equipment for the pampered sons and daughters of the rich.

Next time you hear them demanding sacrifices from workers, tell them to look at their old schools.

## The bo

FINE GAEL have always been party in Ireland. Whenever

ble, they got called to office

Despite some myths, there is nothing liberal about Fine Gael.

Their history shows why they are just as right wing and bigoted as FF.

1933: Fine Gael formed from group of three parties including the fascist Blueshirts.

Its first leader was Eoin O'Duffy the head of the Blueshirts.

## De Rossa to the C

THE DECISION of Democratic Left to join the Fine Gael dominated Coalition is a huge change in previous policies.

In the 1980s, De Rossa, Gilmore and Rabbite were leaders of the Workers Party and denounced the Labour party for joining FG in Coalition.

The party gained massively from the disillusionment with Labour performance in the 1982-87 Coalition.

Hundreds of trade unionists supported Rabbite and Gilmore when they were victimised as trade union officials by the right wing leaders of the ITGWU.

One of the best stances that Gilmore and Rabbite took up was to denounce the Industrial Relations Act which stops secondary picketing.

They said that the Act would "make workers enter the economic struggle with one hand tied".

But now they are part of a government which has given no commitment to abolish this law.

no need to worry"—Ruairi Quinn

# Government of



## BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

THE RECORD of the last Labour - Fine Gael Coalition of 1982-87 is a warning to anyone who believes that this government will improve the living standards of workers.

The 1982-87 Coalition began the housing cuts which are at the root of the shortage of public housing today.

The public housing budget was cut by 7.5% and similar cuts took place in the building of new schools and hospitals.

The rich got richer, with Corporation tax falling 1%, while workers shouldered more of the tax burden. Tax was introduced on social welfare and children's allowance. A 1% levy was introduced.

The fact that Bruton is stressing the need to control public spending should sound the warning bells. The last time he was a Minister, public sector pay was cut for five years running.

When the government took office unemployment stood at 170,000 which they said was so high a figure it was "unsustainable". When they left office in 1987 the figure had risen to 210,000.

Repression worsened, with the introduction of the Criminal Justice Bill. It gave the police the right to hold someone for 48 hours without charge. This allows them to intimidate people and increased the chances of miscarriages of Justice.

The Labour-Fine Gael Coalition justified these miscarriages. Nicky Kelly, a man framed for the Salins mail train robbery, was not declared innocent by the government, which refused to stand up to the Judges and Gardai Chiefs.

By the end of their period of office the Labour Party vote had fallen to 7%. There is every chance that it will happen again.

## the bosses' B-team

have always been the second right wing called to office.

1950: Fine Gael leader John A. Costello withdraws a proposed scheme of free health—the Mother and Child Scheme

### Expresses

He expresses the government's "complete willingness to defer to the judgement given by the hierarchy".

1973: Fine Gael leader Liam

Cosgrove votes against a Bill to allow contraceptives to married couples because it is against his conscience.

1982: Fine Gael leader Garret Fitzgerald is the first party leader to agree to a constitutional referendum to give a one day old foetus the same right to life as a mother.

1992: John Bruton opposes the setting up of a Community College in Asbourne because the Church are not involved.

## Rossa—from the Curragh to the Cabinet

Two main issues drove Democratic Left pushed towards more right wing policies. First, they have always believed that they had to defend the institutions of the state against republicans. Democratic Left always denounced the Provos as 'fascists'. Their main allies in this policy was Fine Gael. Both parties called for tougher law and order policies to smash republicans.



De Rossa: Former Curragh internee, now cabinet minister

USSR and the countries of Eastern Europe were socialist.

When they were in the old Workers Party they claimed that the 1956 revolt in Hungary "was a last ditch stand by fascists".

They denounced dissidents in Czechoslovakia as a "small lunatic fringe".

As late as November 1989, de Rossa argued that "socialists in capitalist countries should not disclaim the progressive achievements of the socialist world over the last 70 years".

But when the full horrors of the Eastern European tyrannies were revealed, the leaders of Democratic Left were in a state of shock and did an about turn to embrace

the capitalist market. They argued that they stood for an "enterprising and competitive economy in Ireland". The new pro-market policies meant having to attack workers.

They joined in an all-party Dail resolution to denounce ESB strikers in 1991.

De Rossa who is now the Minister for Social Welfare even argued that "dole spongers" and "short day shirkers" had to be penalised.

Today DL has joined a right-wing government that will attack their own supporters.

It shows why a new tradition of revolutionary socialism has now to be built to fill the vacuum.

## what do socialists say?

### Why publish a socialist paper?

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

WHEN James Connolly came to Ireland in 1896 one of his first political tasks was to publish *Workers Republic*.

This was a lively paper which carried reports of struggles and a series of brilliant articles on the fight against colonialism.

Ever since then every serious socialist organisation that tried to mobilise workers has had a paper.

In the 1930s, Revolutionary Workers Groups produced the *Irish Workers Voice* which was sold in many factories throughout Ireland.

In the 1980s, the Workers Party produce the *Irish People* which played a major role in organising the tax marches and tax strikes.

Why do left wing organisations put so much effort into producing and selling a newspaper?

One reason is to counter the lies of the capitalist press.

For example Ireland's richest man, Tony O'Reilly, has a major financial stake in *The Independent*, the *Star*, the *Sunday Tribune* and the *Sunday World*.

Today four out of five papers that are sold on a Sunday in Ireland are owned or part owned by O'Reilly.

These papers promote the values of greed and profit and seek to maintain the existing order. They are weapons in the hands of the wealthy.

The *Sunday Independent* carries columns from the stockbroker Shane Ross where he denounces workers who strike or Conor Cruise O'Brien where he demands more repression against those who resist the British army.

In the face of the mass media pumping out anti-working class attitudes a publication presenting the case for socialism is obviously useful.

The politics of a socialist paper stays the same over long periods but the style can change depending on the audience which is available.

During the 1980s very few workers were involved in strikes and most of those who were suffered bitter defeats.

This meant that *Socialist Worker* could not hope to do much more than present socialist arguments to the relatively small number of people who were prepared to buy our paper.

As a result the paper often had long analytical articles where it tried to keep the message of socialism alive.

But now we are at the start of a period where working class militancy is reviving. A socialist paper now has to be more concrete and direct. It has to be the voice of struggle. It has to appear on a more regular basis and win a reputation giving working class militants news of struggle.

One of the best examples of a paper that won tremendous respect from workers was Jim Larkin's *Irish Worker*.

During the 1913 lockout, it was selling 100,000 copies a week and vastly outstripped the rival republican papers.

Where the usual papers concentrate on the lives of the film stars and personalities, a socialist paper reflects the experience of working class people.

The difference is that while the *Star* and the *Sun* are papers produced for the mass of working class people *Socialist Worker* aspires to become a paper of the workers.

It exposes scandals and injustices and points to where working people are fighting back.

### Reports

We aim to make *Socialist Worker* the place to find reports of strikes, activity against water charges or the Criminal Justice Bill, which are rarely found in the commercial papers.

In Russia the Bolshevik Party was built around Lenin's *Pravda*. It devoted more than half its space to letters from working men in women in factories reporting day to day conditions and the resentments against them.

It is in these days that struggles against capitalism that workers build up their strength and organi-

sations. But for all these struggles to be brought together into a fight against capitalism itself, it is necessary to link them up with broader Marxist ideas.

If the paper simply reported the struggles of workers it wouldn't overcome the dominance of capitalist ideas.

After all it is possible to believe your boss is a swindler who must be fought but still believe that other bosses might be fairer.

It is possible to fight for better conditions in your workplace but think that there can be no alternative to capitalism.

This Marxist tradition expresses a system of ideas that confront and demolish the "everyday common" sense of capitalism.

Where the rest of a media assume that there is a 'human nature'

which is greedy and violent, a socialist paper has to challenge this idea.

The Marxist tradition is all about the experience of working class revolution. Therefore the paper must carry articles on great movements of the past and the lessons for today.

Finally, a socialist paper has to be an organiser.

It must argue what must be done, what is the next step, what are the best tactics to employ in any fight. In this way the paper not only reflects the struggles of working class life but draw them together and organise struggles.

For this to work the paper must build up an intimate relationship with the militants in the workplaces, unions, estates and colleges. These people must be encouraged to take the paper, write for it, sell it to their work mates and support it.

Lenin's *Pravda* sold 40,000 copies of each issue in 1913 and had over 2,000 factory groups taking up collections to sustain it.

Out of this work the Bolsheviks were able to build a party of workers that could organise for workers to take power in 1917.

The new fortnightly *Socialist Worker* also aims to become a major weapon in building a mass socialist party in Ireland today.

## INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM ★ 65

### THE REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS OF FREDERICK Engels

A SPECIAL ISSUE TO MARK THE CENTENARY OF ENGELS' DEATH  
 \*Frederick Engels: life of a revolutionary by Lindsey German  
 \*Engels' Marxism by John Rees  
 \*Engels and the origins of human society by Chris Harman  
 \*Engels and natural science by Paul McGarr



Order your copy now for only £4.50

Send all orders to Bookmarx, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Behind the right-wing lies about intelligence

# Why our rulers need racism

by DAMIEN  
McLOUGHLIN

**ATTEMPTS** are being made in the US to revive a discredited and dangerous argument about "race" and "intelligence".

The authors of a new book, *The Bell Curve*, argue that blacks are poor because they are inherently less intelligent.

One of the authors, Charles Murray, is already famous for his attacks on single parents and those on welfare.

The other Richard Herrnstein, is a psychologist who has long argued that, "Poverty is linked to genetic defects."

In 1971, he claimed that "The tendency to be unemployed may run in a family about as certainly as bad teeth do now".

The book is not based on any original research but relies on the work of neo Nazi academics such as Richard Lynn, Professor of Psychology in Coleraine.

Lynn is described in the book as a 'scholar of ethnic and racial difference'.

Lynn has in fact a very long record of using academic respectability to promote racist views.

In 1966 he argued that "if a nation with a more advanced, more specialized or in any way superior set of genes mingles with, instead of exterminating an inferior tribe, then it commits racial suicide".

Murray, Herrnstein and Lynn share more than just shoddy research and racist views.

Their research has also been subsidised by one source: the Pioneer Fund.

The Pioneer Fund was founded by millionaires in 1937 to promote racist views in universities.

Lynn is the only academic in Britain or Ireland to have accepted its funds for research.

Instead of exposing the fraudulent claims, the media has treated the book as a serious piece of scholarly research.

A cover story appeared in *Newsweek* and the British magazine *The Economist* described it as 'fascinating'.

*The Irish Independent* has given Richard Lynn a half page to promote the book.

But the fabric of lies which pass for scientific evidence is really the agenda of two life-long racists.

*The Bell Curve* argues that US society has become more egalitarian in the twentieth century, and that we now live in a society based on merit.

## "Naturally"

They say this means intelligence is what increasingly determines who is rich or poor, with the best and brightest, "naturally" ending up on top.

Their second argument is that intelligence is determined by our genes—and that we can't change this, so the poor can never change themselves or society.

Thirdly they say blacks have specific genetic roots and are therefore less intelligent than whites.

Their "solutions" are horrific. They want to stop the poorest people producing generations of inferiors by 'manipulating their fertility'.



Racism was invented to justify slavery

They want to abolish special education and remedial programmes and spend the money on "talented" people. They want to end all social welfare, because it encourages women with low

IQs to have babies.

*The Bell Curve* is riddled with flagrant contradictions.

It points to the fact that there are now black judges as examples of how the effects of poverty can be discounted.

## Poverty

But it never mentions that while circumstances may have improved for a small layer of black people, the situation for the vast majority has worsened, with a third living below the poverty line and blacks twice as likely to be unemployed as whites.

US society is more unequal now than ever before, with money and privilege determining who gets ahead.

Working class people are forced to attend inferior schools, which teach them their goal in life should be to secure boring, repetitive and low-paid jobs.

*The Bell Curve* is part of a long tradition of pseudo-science which has tried to give cover to the racists.

In 1851, a Dr SA Cartwright claimed African's intellectual inferiority made them suited to slavery.

In the 1860s a pseudo science of craniotomy developed which claimed to link intelligence to the size of the brain.

The same scientists also claimed that black people had smaller brains.

In the 1960s right wing scientists such Jensen and Eysenck revived these theories.

Eysenck also argued that the Irish 'race' was less intelligent than the rest of Europe.

In reality, there is no basis for the idea that there are biologically distinct races.

The genetic differences between two black people can be much greater than between a black person and a white person.

According to the scientist Stephan Rose, "The genetic variation between one Spaniard and another, or between one Masai and another is 85% of all

human genetic variation, while only 15% is accounted for by breaking people up into groups"

Groups of people can score differently in IQ test because the questions are culturally biased.

They are also assessed in a totally artificial situation that has no relation to how they function in real life.

Immigrants to the US used to be shown a picture of a house and asked to supply the missing part.

When Italian immigrants added a cross they were deemed to be less intelligent because they had not added a chimney.

## Baseball

Polish immigrants were described as feeble minded after they failed to answer questions about baseball and American food.

The cultural bias was so obvious that in 1971 the US Supreme Court outlawed the use of standardized tests by employers because they acted as a 'built-in head wind' which discriminated against minorities.

In 1972, the National Education Association called on schools to stop using them because "a third of American citizens are intellectually mutilated before they get a chance to get through elementary schools as a result of standardised tests"

But standardised tests haven't changed in the US since the 70's — they are still racially and culturally biased.

The average IQ scores of black Americans may lag behind those of whites.

But this proves nothing about the relationship between intelligence and race.

The IQ scores of Catholics in Northern Ireland also lag points behind those of Protestants, but *The Bell Curve* authors don't argue that religion plays a determining role in intelligence.

Lower IQ scores only prove that Blacks suffer discrimination in every area of society.

## The myth of IQ

IQ TESTING was developed by French psychologist Alfred Binet in 1905 to identify children with specific learning disabilities.

But he did not believe that intelligence was inherited nor could IQ testing be generalised.

Intelligence he claimed "cannot be measured as linear surfaces are measured".

He protested at the idea that 'intelligence is a fixed quantity' which cannot be increased.

He said "We must protest and react at this brutal pessimism: we must try to demonstrate that it is founded on nothing."

Most people have a variety of talents but they are rarely able to master every area of human science or art.

Great novelists are not usually brilliant at maths, and brilliant mathematicians do not always make wonderful novelists.

Deciding which particular aptitude forms the basis of intelligence is therefore arbitrary.

It is wrong to think of intelligence as a single substance in the brain.

### Prove

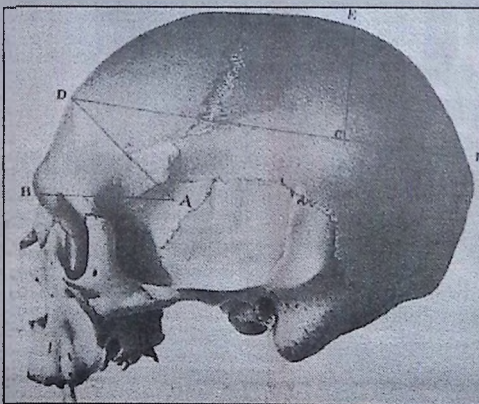
But after Binet's death IQ testing fell into the hands of right wing scientists who wanted to prove that the tests measured an "innate" intelligence.

Instead of seeing the tests as a way of letting teachers spot particular problems, they saw them as a measure of "educational capacity".

One of the scientists who used IQ testing in this way was Cyril Burt. Burt claimed to have taken 53 pairs of separated identical twins to prove that intelligence was hereditary.

He used his results to press for the establishment of the 11+ test which graded children at a young age.

In his diaries Burt displayed his true



"Brain size" used to justify racism

views about the poor when he wrote about the need for "forcible detention of the wreckage of society to prevent them propagating the species".

### Fraud

After his death, Burt's 'research' was discovered to be a fraud.

He had invented names and case studies to give respectability to his hatred of the

poor. Despite this, IQ testing in Irish schools is still very common.

It is used to stream pupils from an early age into different ability classes.

These tests discriminate against working class students.

All they really measure is someone's ability to do IQ tests.

This is why they should be opposed by teachers and parents.



## comment

### Don't waste your compassion

CALL ME a hoary old traditionalist but I've always been under the impression that the victims of child abuse were the children who've been abused.

But apparently not. You see it's all gone too far. It's all very well exposing these child abuse scandals, but now it's turned into a media circus.

Enough is enough. Where is the concern for these unfortunate clergy men? Let he who is without sin cast the first stone. Rather than pointing the finger, now is a time to look to our own lives, a time for introspection, forgiveness and above all compassion.

This quaint little message has been peddled by a numbers of clerics recently. But it has also been given support by John Waters, the *Irish Times* columnist who claims that the liberals have won the war against church domination and that it is time to call a halt to attacks on Bishops.

Now socialists are generally regarded to be fairly generous on the compassionate front.

Even your most rabid right winger would concede that we're a load of soft pinko sissy's, what with getting upset about poverty, starvation exploitation and the like.

We're all for compassion. Yet you could fit the amount of compassion I have for the paedophile



Brendan Smyth

priests that have been popping out of every half open confessional in the excess space of Boris Yeltsin's drinks cabinet.

You see, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church on the other hand has never been unduly hampered by an excess of understanding and compassion.

The burning of the witches, the Spanish inquisition, the pogroms against Jews, the torture of heretics, the collaboration with Nazis might spring to mind as examples from the past.

Or let's take it closer to home, the hell of the Magdalene laundries where unmarried mothers were consigned, the misery forced on people by having their sexuality regulated by a group of distorted and repressed sickos for centuries, the day to day fear and dread of communities under the watchful eyes of the moral police.

It wasn't a padded shoulder the bishops proffered "sinners".

It was stigmatisation, humiliation, and ultimately the eternal fires of hell and damnation that was on offer to those who strayed from the path.

Ah, but that was in the dark ages, in the 1950s before Vatican 2—the Church nowadays is a different organisation, strict but flexible—a modern understanding institution, changing with new times, and meeting the demands of the twentieth century.

Anyone remember the 1980s? Eileen Flynn was fired from her teaching post for the heinous sin of becoming pregnant outside marriage.

### Fear

The witch-hunt against Joanna Hayes unearthed frightening statistics of infanticide in Kerry, where the lack of contraception and women's fear of the moral climate forced them to kill their babies.

Anne Lovett died at 15 years of age giving birth at a grotto in a town where even to recognise teenage pregnancy was a taboo.

In the good old days everything was hushed up, you couldn't say boo to a priest and you certainly couldn't accuse him of child sexual abuse.

The recent revelations have not just been the unearthing of the odd bad apple in an otherwise healthy institution. For centuries the Church has been in charge and control of children's welfare as the educators of Irish kids.

It has consistently been involved in creating the authoritative climate which denies children the confidence and the right to stand up against physical and sexual abuse.

The Brendan Smyth case was not admitted by the clergy—it was exposed. If they had their way child abusing priests would carry on behind closed doors, as they've always done and no-one would be any the wiser.

When Bishop Laurence Ryan told the *Sunday Tribune* "It never dawned on anyone that the victim was going to suffer because of sexual abuse", you get an inkling of the type of secrecy and cover-ups which the Bishops dealt in over the years.

And given half a chance, they would be back to their old habits again. Contrary to what John Waters thinks the Bishops are still running our schools and many of our hospitals.

They still have their friends like Justice O'Hanlon on the High Court bench where he dispenses justice 'according to the law of God'.

The war against the hypocrisy of the Bishops is by no means over. That is why I've better things to do with my compassion at the moment.

by CATHY BERGIN

## reviews

# The revolutionary ideas of Frederick Engels

by CONOR KOSTICK

FREDERICK Engels, who died 100 years ago, is often remembered as Karl Marx's sidekick.

But Engels was a great revolutionary in his own right and the new *International Socialism Journal* celebrates his life and work on the centenary of his death.

Like Marx, the young Engels became a rebel because of the injustice of the dictatorship that existed in the 1830's and 40's in Germany.

Although he was from a rich industrial family, Engels opposed the way that free speech was taken from religious and philosophical dissenters.

Many students at the time were also radical.

What marked Engels out from other students was his experience of going to work for his father's firm in Manchester.

There he witnessed the aftermath of a bitter general strike.

In his first major work, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, Engels saw workers not just as victims, but as fighters.

This led him to look back at all struggles in history and realise that beneath the bat-



Frederick Engels 1820-1895

tle of ideas was a fight between classes.

Marx had independently come to the same conclusion from speaking to French revolutionary workers in Paris.

He and Engels met, and together worked through

their ideas.

From this point onwards the two of them devoted their lives to worker's revolt.

### Revolution

Their book *The Communist Manifesto* appeared just in

time to connect with the outbreak of revolution in 1848.

The uprisings against the aristocracy eventually petered out because the middle classes were too afraid to carry the revolution through.

Engels fought as a soldier in a revolutionary group in

the Rhineland until his unit were driven into exile.

For the next twenty years Engels made a massive sacrifice.

He did a job in his father's firm to support Marx and allow him to write his masterpiece, *Capital*.

During this time Engels contributed marvellous essays in support of revolutionary socialism.

He defended nationally oppressed countries such as Hungary, Poland and Ireland.

### Research

He took up a campaign to prevent Britain supporting the South in the American civil war, and later, in 1871 rallied to the defence of the Paris Commune when workers took over the city.

One of Engels pioneering works was *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*.

It shows how the rise of women's oppression was connected to the break up of society into classes.

In this journal Chris Harman tackles the critics of Engels book and uses new research to show why Engels was right.

Another article by Lindsey German explores the development of Engels ideas against the backdrop of the 19th century.

A final article by Paul McGarr looks at Engels contribution to science.

If you want to learn more about the real socialist tradition then this book is a wonderful introduction to the life and thought of one of the greatest socialists.

## Dublin's 'rare oul times'

*Dublin Tenement Life: Kevin C. Kearns Gill and MacMillan*  
IN THE first half of the 20th Century, Dublin had the worst slums in Europe.

Owned by rackrenting landlords, crumbling Georgian buildings were occupied by thousands who poured into the city to escape rural Ireland after the Famine.

The retreat of the wealthy and the advance of the poor in the inner city created a vast gulf between the social classes.

The rich saw the slumlands as a cancer

spreading through the heart of the city.

The poor were desperate to find a shelter of any kind and the tenements became a ghetto from which escape was practically impossible.

### Notorious

By 1900, one third of Dublin's population lived in single-room dwellings. Parts of the city were notorious for their squalor—the Coombe, Church Street, Beresford Street, Cumberland Street and Gardiner Street.

The dilapidated buildings became

deathtraps for the hundreds of families crowded into them.

Apart from the risk of fire, the tenements were in such bad repair that many were liable to collapse at any time.

Diseases such as TB and typhoid were rife due to the poverty and lack of sanitation.

While the middle classes denounced the slums, they contributed little towards reform.

The 1913 Dublin Housing inquiry finally revealed that members of the Corporation itself, as well as five aldermen and eleven councillors,

were tenement owners.

Respectable Victorians argued that slum dwellers should be sterilised, on account of their alleged mental and moral inferiority.

### Stigmatised

Even the children of the tenements were stigmatised.

One man, John Gallagher from the Coombe, described how tenement children went to the "poor" school run by the state, while the children of tradesmen and shopkeepers went to a private school run by the nuns.



"If you went to the national school you weren't as well dressed and you weren't as well fed and you looked inferior...you felt inferior."

"And the children, they weren't even supposed to talk to each other."

Despite the appalling living conditions, the tenement people established strong traditions of class solidarity.

One woman, Nellie Cassidy, spoke of the contempt for scabs among the dock workers on City Quay.

"One of our next door neighbours worked on the docks and he went down (during the 1920's strike) and took me father's job—he scabbed it."

"And me father was

a great union man.

"Oh, the union men used to throw them into the river and everything."

"Decent people stuck together and they'd know if you were a scab, that you were no good."

"And the women, once you took any husband's job, they wouldn't look at you."

This book shows the reality of tenement life in the words of the people who lived there.

It is a testament to the brutality of Irish capitalism and the incredible resilience of those who endured the hardship of inner city life.

It is a brilliant book and well worth a read.

—V FELDMAN & CATHERINE CURRAN

## Video: Daens—The rebel priest

A RECENT video release is a must for every socialist.

*Daens* is a film about a Catholic priest who takes up the cause of workers in the Flemish town of Aalst.

The film opens with small children crawling under big mechanical looms to pick up spare pieces of cotton. The next scene shows the Belgian bosses planning wage cuts against their workers.

Into this scene comes Fr. Daens. He is a rebel against

the Church hierarchy who takes seriously what Pope Leo XIII says in his encyclical about workers' rights.

### Harassed

At the centre of the film is a young woman textile worker who comes from a Catholic family. Her brother is a member of the bosses' band of thugs. At work she is sexually harassed by her foreman.

She mocks the young socialist who sells newspa-

pers, believing that the Reds offer no way out. Instead she looks to Fr. Daens' agitation on behalf of the workers.

But both she and Fr. Daens find out that appealing to the conscience of the employers gets them nowhere.

By the end of the film Daens has been expelled from the church. As Daens himself puts it, the workers have no friends above them and can only rely on themselves.

# where we stand

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.

The courts army and police are 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. 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.

# news & reports—politics; the unions—

## Packard

# Resistance Can Win

**"EVERY year its the same. The Company keep coming back for more and its time we resisted them".**

This was the reaction of one woman at the 500 strong mass meeting at the Packard plant before Christmas.

Packard are demanding major sacrifices from their workforce, using the threat of closure to try to stop any resistance.

Packard bosses are determined to repeat the exercise carried out at TEAM and Irish Steel.

They are trying to force through a 41 hour working week with workers "banking" the extra hours to soften the blow of possible lay-offs in 1996.

This shows that the Company has a long term aim of "coming back for more".

ATGWU leader, Michael O'Reilly claimed that "the workers are in a no-win situation".

But workers have already shown their willingness to resist the attacks of the bosses when they voted three to one to reject the pre-Christ-

mas deal. The union were wrong to recommend acceptance of this deal.

It's little better than what was originally on the table.

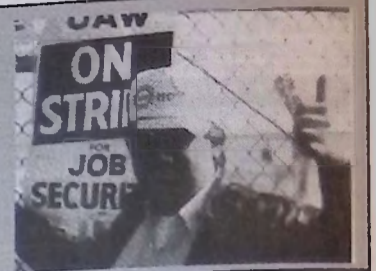
## Pay Freeze

The company are also demanding a pay freeze for two years and a dropping of all industrial relations claims.

This is not the first time that Packard went all out to attack

**General Motors workers show the way...**

**THE PARENT company of Packard, General Motors, was shown recently by 11,000 striking workers in their car manufacturing plants in the USA that they cant have it all their own way. Workers there struck against compulsory overtime and forced the company to employ another 800 people.**



workers conditions.

During a bitter strike in 1987 they used helicopters to remove components from the factory.

That dispute re-

sulted in a "no strike clause" being forced on the workforce.

Packard, a subsidiary of General Motors, has factories in Turkey, Portugal

and Eastern Europe, where workers pay and conditions are far worse than in Ireland.

They are attempting to reduce workers' standards here to

maintain their own profits.

## Unity

Many of the proposed changes will

not effect all sections of the workforce.

But unity in defence of conditions is essential to win.

# Anti Nazi League demonstrate against Lynn

**THE ANTI Nazi League held a demonstration in Coleraine on December 7th against Richard Lynn, a professor of psychology at University of Ulster, Coleraine.**

Lynn receives funds from the Pioneer

Fund, an American far right organisation, to try and "prove" that blacks are less intelligent than whites.

He also says women are less intelligent than men.

His lectures are compulsory for first years. Students have to sit and listen to his racist and sexist ideas.

This is contradicting the university's supposed policy of equal opportunities.

The Anti Nazi League are campaigning to have Lynn sacked.

Around 100 demonstrators marched

into the Students' Union at Coleraine shouting for Lynn to be sacked.

They were told that nobody from the ad-

ministration was in the building to explain why Lynn was still being employed at Coleraine.

A sit-down protest was held outside Lynn's office until a representative of the university collected the petitions calling for Lynn to be sacked.

## Delay

The Anti Nazi League were told that the university "will look into the matter".

This is despite the fact that Lynn has been employed there for 15 years.

The administration of Coleraine know Lynn's views but hope to delay the Anti Nazi

League until Lynn retires.

The Anti Nazi League are not prepared to let this happen.

A vote was taken calling for another demonstration within a month if there is no response from the university.

Lynn should not be allowed to retire with credit.

He should be sacked from Coleraine University.

The next demonstration should be even bigger, and branches need to start building for it now.

Lynn should be sacked and if we mobilise enough people he will be.



PHOTO: JONATHAN PRATSCHE

# SWM branch meetings—all welcome

## Belfast Central

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm contact national address for details of venue

Wednesday 11th January: Prospects for socialism in 1995

Wednesday 18th January: The revolutionary ideas of Engels.

## Belfast South

Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm contact national address for details of venue

Thursday 12th January: Why we need a revolutionary party

Thursday 19th January: The revolutionary ideas of Frederick Engels.

## Cork

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Anchor Inn, Georges Quay

Tuesday 10th January: Why are there wars? Speaker: Adrian Cubbin  
Tuesday 17th January: Can workers plan society? Speaker: Billy O'Reagan

## Derry

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm Contact national address for venue  
Tuesday 10th January: Tories on the Run—time to finish them off  
Tuesday 17th January: How to save our hospital Speaker: Goretti Horgan

## Dublin Clondalkin

Meets every Wednesday in the Treasure Box opposite Boss Hogs  
Wednesday 11th January: Can Socialist Worker replace The Star?  
Wednesday 18th January: The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

## Dublin Drimnagh

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Half Way House

Tuesday 10th January: 1905: The first Russian Revolution

Tuesday 17th January: Islamic fundamentalism: Why is it on the rise?

## Dublin North Central

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in Conways Bar, Parnell Street

Wednesday 11th January: Are all men sexist? Speaker: Ann Marie O'Connor  
Wednesday 18th January: The Revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

## Dublin Phibsboro

Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm contact national address for details of venue.  
Thursday 12th January: The revolutionary ideas of Engels  
Thursday 19th January: Nationalism or socialism?

## Dublin South

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in Clarks Bar, Wexford Street  
Wednesday 11th January: Can Socialist Worker replace the Star?  
Wednesday 18th January:

The Revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

## Dublin South Central

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

Thursday 12th January: Islam: Threat or Promise? Speaker: Marnie Holborrow

Thursday 19th January: The revolutionary ideas of Frederick Engels Speaker: Jonathon Pratschke

## Dublin: Tallaght

Meets every other Thursday at 8.00pm in Killinarden Community centre

## Dun Laoghaire

Meets every Tuesday in Purty Kitchen  
Tuesday 10th January: Can Socialist Worker replace

## The Star?

Tuesday 17th January: Why Susan O'Keefe should not be sent to jail -- who controls the media?

## Maynooth

Thursday 19th January, Class Hall B, Maynooth University, 6pm: What did Marx stand for?

## Newry

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm—contact national address for details

## Waterford

Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in the ATGWU Hall Keyser St  
Thursday 12th January: Are all politicians corrupt? Speaker: John Kiely  
Thursday 19th January: Why we defend Susan O'Keefe

## JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

If you want to join **Socialist Worker**, fill in this form and send it to: PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Tel: (01) 872 2682

Name .....

Address.....

Phone.....

**For further details and information of the SWM in Athlone, Coleraine, Dundalk, Galway, Letterkenny contact the national address: PO Box 1648 Dublin 8 or Phone (01) 872 2682**

send in your reports telephone: (01) 872 2682

## An Post

# Strike threat forces back off

**MANAGEMENT in the Ballsbridge Delivery Office suspended 30 workers in early December for "overstaying their tea breaks".**

An Post have been trying to break agreements at local post offices and used the tea break excuse to try to force through cuts in working conditions.

But Dublin postal workers have once again given a decisive blow to the Company's plans.

The threat of Dublin-wide industrial action forced the company to reinstate the 30 workers.

The company then refused to pay the three days lost to the workers and the Communications Workers Union took a ballot vote for strike action to secure payment of the wages.

93% of Dublin postal

workers voted in favour of strike on the issue of the 3 days pay.

This forced the company into the Labour Relations Commission who agreed that the three days owed should be paid.

## Twist

But there was an extraordinary twist when the LRC

recommended that two and a half days pay should go to the workers and half day to a "suitable National Charity"—possibly the Vincent de Paul.

As one postal worker put it:

*"Charities need the money at Christmas time but we earned it and it is up to us how we spend it."*

*"The Government should*

## N.I. Post Office

**MANAGEMENT at Northern Ireland Post Office received an early Xmas present.**

A 24-hour strike by counter staff in response to back door privatisation was called off by leaders of the Union of Communication Workers.

They claimed the strike would only have taken place in the west of Northern Ireland and therefore would not have been successful.

However the marches against privatisation earlier this year and the success of the strike in Britain showed the anger is there to beat the bosses.

Effective picketing could have spread the action and prevented scabs from Belfast being used to undermine the strike in Scotland.

*take care of the poor in Dublin and not with our wages."*

The CWU was not prepared to resist this farce and instead agreed to pay the other half day from union branch funds.

This was wrong. It meant that workers were really being forced to pay themselves by the use of their union subs.

But the huge vote in favour of strike action to secure the wages is a marker that shows the resistance in the company for what's ahead in 1995.

An Post plans to "maintain the quality of service" and at the same time "reduce costs" mean they will adopt a hard line to attack wages and conditions of all postal workers.

But these workers know that "a row is a row" and that rank and file organisation can win even when the union is unwilling to lead.

# Letterkenny students show the way



**LETTERKENNY RTC struck for a day over the unfair docking procedure of ESF grants.**

College authorities were docking grants by half a day for missing five minutes of the first lecture and keeping the money in their own kitty.

When students finally got their grants, 30 per cent received only half their grant and 10 per cent no grant at all.

With the ESF grant already well below the poverty threshold, any dock-

ing of grants results in massive hardship.

But students organised against the greedy college authorities holding a one-day strike in the college and a demonstration of

1,300 students in the town.

The reaction of the authorities was to reimburse the docked grants and put a new system of grants in place.

## Irish Steel

**THE FUTURE of Irish Steel still looks uncertain. In August, SIPTU workers accepted a plan which included 111 redundancies.**

All but a few of the 111 people have now left the plant with redundancy payments of between £10,000 and £35,000.

Management claimed that these redundancies were vital if the plant was to be made viable.

To everyone's amazement the same management decided to put on an extra shift in the rolling mill in November and it was made clear that this extra shift was long term.

To work this shift, management had to employ 35 people. This practice has made a mockery of the redundancy plan. Would it not have made more sense to keep 35 people from the existing workforce instead of having paid them an average of £25,000 per man and then immediately replace them?

It seems that the Irish Steel plan is to have a temporary workforce where workers can be laid off and called back whenever management decide.

The workers have accepted all these plans on the basis that the government would invest £35 million of EU money in the company and guarantee its future for ten years. In fact the government have not even applied to the EU for the money and will not do so until April 1995.

The politicians have been too busy telling lies and stabbing each other in the back to worry about workers' future.

## Galway Bus Eireann

# Lightning strike



**LESS THAN two weeks before Christmas a temporary driver for Bus Eireann in Galway city was dismissed after management accused him of crashing his bus into another one and causing it damage.**

The driver insisted he wasn't responsible. But management refused to budge.

Over ninety of his work mates went on unofficial strike in sympathy with him, staging 'a show of solidarity' at the Fairgreen exit of the bus depot and rightly ignoring the Industrial Relations Act.

One worker put it this way: "It takes a lot to get ninety men out at a time like this."

This is the week when we'd normally be trying to earn a bit of overtime, trying to make a bit of money for our wives and kids for Christmas."

They stopped all city and county buses running for three days.

Management attempted to bring in private drivers but after the strikers explained their case most of them turned back.

Gardai were called when strikers prevented one private bus from taking on fares but despite their presence the bus left empty.

Pickets also toured the city in cars to prevent private operators from picking up passengers.

The workers were determined that they would win. As one of them said:

*"We're really worked up about this. There are men on this picket from as far away as Clifton and Longford."*

## Aer Lingus

**THE NOTORIOUS Aer Lingus "Cahill Plan" has run into trouble again, this time in the baggage handling area of Dublin Airport.**

Three weeks before Christmas workers took unofficial industrial action when the company threatened the suspension of one worker.

The dispute happened because of the tight scheduling of Winter flights and the company's idea of what "flexibility" means.

Workers were run off their feet covering for both baggage handling and catering duties.

"Where we were normally rostered for either baggage handling or catering, now

we are running all day from one flight to the other", was how one worker described their frustration with the new "flexibility" arrangements.

## Official backing

SIPTU have been forced to give official backing to the workers in their dispute.

This followed the resignation of four Shop Stewards, angry with their union's approach to the dispute.

Seventy-five per cent of the workers have now voted in favour of industrial action at the Airport and are determined if talks between the union and the company fail that they will resist Aer Lingus' attempts to make them take on the extra workload.

## Belfast City Bus

BUS drivers in Belfast are balloting on industrial action after the company disciplined a driver for giving a passenger the wrong ticket.

Initially City Bus sacked

the driver but a threatened walkout made them quickly withdraw the sacking.

However management suspended the driver for two days and out him on 18 months probation.

Although the decision to

ballot should be welcomed it should be remembered that it was immediate strike action that got loyalist paramilitary threats retracted.

Management threats should be met in the same way.

# Premier workers fight 100 job losses

**PREMIER DAIRIES planned to "celebrate" their centenary this year by destroying 100 jobs at their plant in Finglas, North Dublin.**

But the workers have forced management to postpone their programme of cuts.

The bosses say the cuts are needed because of a sixteen per cent drop in profits.

But they had no problem finding £40 million to buy up plants in Spain and Germany.

On top of that they spent £2 million to get Zig and Zag to advertise Yoplait yoghurt on TV.

Premier bosses wanted to shut everything at the Finglas plant except the glass bottle line.

This would leave only 26 jobs at the plant. Already the workforce in their two Dublin factories has been cut from 1,600 in

1984 to 330 at present.

Many of the workers have given long years of service to Premier.

Members of one family have worked 250 years between them for the company.

In 1984 the workers agreed to forego a pay rise of 5.5 per cent "for the good of the company". They were told they would get it back when things improved but after more than ten years there is still no sign of the increase.

## Ignored

Management have ignored this loyalty and expect the workers to pay for their crisis. Their aim is to double productivity and halve the workforce.

The Company White Paper demands a pay freeze this year,

complete flexibility across all grades and cuts in meal allowances. The document warns that "further major change cannot be avoided".

Management have tried to split the workers at the Finglas plant from their colleagues in Rathfarnham but so far their divide and rule tactic has failed.

One shop steward told Socialist Worker: "The shop stewards in Finglas and Rathfarnham had not met for twenty years until they went out together for a drink recently to talk about defending jobs."

The result was a 95 per cent vote by the Rathfarnham workers to support the workers in Finglas. This forced the management to put back the cuts planned for the 31st December last.

The workers say they are prepared to take immediate industrial action if management resume their attacks in the next few weeks.

# The stink of profit

**IN DECEMBER a serious accident took place at Philcoat plastic powder plant in the Cork marina.**

Sixteen workers were seriously injured and one worker was in a critical condition in hospital for several

## Waterford Glass

# Cutters sit down

**THE CUTTING section in Waterford Glass took two days of industrial action in December.**

They held a sit-down on the job and got tremendous support from other workers. It was sign that confidence and militancy is returning to the factory.

The action started after workers found that they were being required to cut greater

quantities of heavier glass. As much of their wages is made up by a payments by results system they found that their earnings had decreased.

After the action management made some concessions.

Waterford Glass has started to return to profit. Up to now the fat cats around O'Reilly and Morgan Stanley have been creaming off the results. Now workers are demanding their share.

weeks.

Philcoat had been warned by staff at the adjoining Raillink plant of obnoxious smells coming from their plant on several occasions.

The fumes caused Raillink workers to get severe migraine, vomiting and sore throats.

One of the workers Dave Downey said that he had to get off work on several occasions because of the smell he had worked near a wall that linked his plant to Philcoats.

"We had been complaining for over two years about the smell and nothing was done", he said.

What made the tragedy worse was that when firefighters came on the scene, they had not been given a list of the dangerous chemicals at the plant.

As result two firefighters also had to be hospitalised.

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

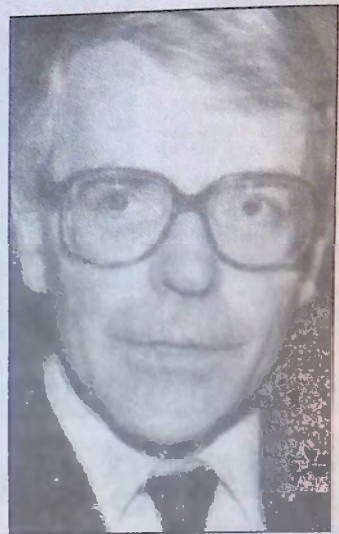
inside

Racism and IQ tests—page 8

Major's jobs boost fraud—page four

RUSSIA:  
Why Yeltsin bombs Chechens  
—page 5

# MAJOR GAMBLES WITH PEACE



**THE NEW year began with hopes for continued peace in the North.**

**But those hopes are being put in danger—not by the IRA but by John Major.**

Over four months since the IRA ceasefire and almost three months since the loyalists ended their sectarian murder campaign, Major still hasn't made any move to advance the chances of peace.

Instead Major, Mayhew and the Tory mandarins are acting as if the ceasefires had never been called.

The only changes have been largely cosmetic. British soldiers patrol Belfast in berets instead of helmets. Security barriers have been removed in some areas and border crossings are easier.

But the British army continues to harass civilians, particularly young men from Catholic areas.

A Committee on the Administration of Justice survey published in early December reported that half of all 18-year old Catholics had been harassed by the security forces in the previous three months.

Just days before Christmas, Martin Mechan, a veteran republican, was assaulted by soldiers near his North Belfast home and left with a badly cut face and a possible heart attack.

The prisoners' question is causing most concern in working class areas. There are several hundred political prisoners in Northern jails. None of them would be in prison were it not for the political turmoil of the last twenty five years.

Major, like Thatcher before him, tries to label these men and women common criminals and refuses to grant an amnesty or even to relax the parole regulations.

In fact, this Christmas, they imposed a very strict interpretation of the parole regulations and refused Christmas parole to prisoners who would have expected it on the basis of last year's rulings.

## Sectarian

To make matters worse, the prisons are operating a blatantly sectarian approach to requests for compassionate parole. Gerard Loughlin, a republican on remand in Long kesh, was refused compassionate bail to get married. Yet two loyalists on remand for similar charges were each given parole to attend separate weddings. One of them wasn't even getting married but was groomsman to a friend.

Now Major says that no further progress can be made with the peace process until the IRA have handed in or decommissioned their weapons. This is nonsense and he knows it. The majority of political parties on this island—Fianna Fail, Fianna Fail, Democratic Left, Official Unionists and Paisley's DUP—had an armed wing at some point in its history. None of these groups ever handed in their arms.

Major knows that arms don't have to be, and are unlikely to be, handed in. Senior sources in the RUC told the *Observer* newspaper that it could prove "counterproductive for the British Gov-

ernment to insist on the IRA and Loyalists surrendering their arms".

Even Cardinal Cathal Daly warned that there was a danger the opportunity for peace would be "frittered away in our hands. There must be some sense of urgency", he said, arguing that the two governments must DO something to encourage peace.

Major and his Tory mates are not doing anything to encourage peace because they can't agree on what to do. That's not surprising since the Tory party has been unable to agree on anything except hanging onto power for some time now.

The *Daily Telegraph* last month said of Major's government: "If any previous administration was ever held in such total contempt by the electorate, history has left no record".

The Tory government is paralysed by

disunity within its ranks and by fear of the anger of ordinary people who face poverty and unemployment because of their policies.

When it comes to its policy on Northern Ireland, it is even more boxed in. Since the Maastricht debate over a year ago, Major's government has been in hock to the Unionists. Without the votes of Molyneux's Unionists, Major would be out of office. So he won't do anything to upset them.

## Delight

Fortunately, the IRA ceasefire will probably hold for some time. The mood on the ground in all working class areas is of delight at the ceasefires, so any renewed armed struggle would be deeply unpopular.

But the underlying sectarianism built

into the Northern state is always a danger to peace.

The savage murder on December 22 of Noel Lyness, a Catholic student at Queens, by a sectarian gang brought this fact starkly home.

If peace is to last and sectarian killings to stop, workers must unite and fight for our own interests against Tory policies, and against sectarianism.

Nobody can predict what's going to happen in 1995. But we do know that working class people, Protestant and Catholic, are angry at low wages, poor working conditions and lack of trade union rights. And people are very angry at the way Major is gambling with peace.

If that anger bursts into a fightback against Tory policies, it will do more for lasting peace than any amount of talking.

## Stop Altnagelvin Opting Out!

**ALTNAGELVIN Hospital in Derry is to opt out of the NHS and become a Trust in April 1996 if the Tories and health bureaucrats have their way.**

The move was announced before Christmas when Tory health minister Denton revealed that Altnagelvin was to become a "shadow Trust" on 1 April 1995. This means that from this April it will start to act like a Trust.

The move to Trust status is opposed by most of the doctors and all the nursing ancillary workers' unions. Experience of Trusts in Belfast and in Britain shows that it will mean job losses for the people like nurses, auxiliaries, porters, etc and huge pay rises for the army of managers who are pushing the privatisation.

A report published on 2nd January by the Independent Labour Research Department in London found that 11,000 extra nurses could be employed by the health service for the money spent paying the directors of Trusts.

Earnings for Trust chief executives ranged from £62,000 to £112,000 a year.

Consultants at Altnagelvin have already told patients that once the hospital goes Trust, they won't be able to provide the same kind of service. The Trust will be operated on market principles.

As one Trust boss in England said last year, that means that cost and efficiency comes first and second and the patients a poor third.

One Unison member told *Socialist Worker*: "I want to fight the move to Trust status—for the sake of my job, but also for the patients."

Unfortunately, many of the workers in the hospital have been influenced by the attitude of union officials who seem to think the privatisation can't be fought.

But Post Office workers have already shown that privatisation CAN be stopped.

Keep Altnagelvin in the NHS! It can be done.