

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

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PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC WORKERS UNITE...

Don't let Paisley and Trimble play the Orange card!



RUC show what 'religious and civil liberty' means in Drumcree

ON AUGUST 10th, the Apprentice Boys have announced that they will march through Derry.

For the least few weeks Trimble and Paisley have used the marching season to whip sectarian feelings.

They are sending out a signal that 'not an inch' will be given to any accommodation with Catholics.

The majority of the people of Derry are totally opposed to Apprentice Boys march.

After Drumcree, many of them were victims of a sus-

tained assault from the RUC when hundreds of plastic bullets were fired.

In this situation it has become obvious that the Apprentice Boys march has little to do with commemorating a cultural heritage.

Dissent

It has everything to do with lording it over Catholics and that is why it should be stopped.

But Paisley and Trimble do not just want to deny rights to Catholics: they want to crush all signs of dissent and questioning

among Protestants.

They are trying to whip workers into line behind their sectarian flag.

They want to get away with hiding their Tory policies behind an Orange sash.

Workers should unite and oppose this new attempt to divide us.

We need united demonstrations of Catholic and Protestant workers to save the peace.

As Northern Ireland moves to the brink of a new period of conflict, it is vital that these mobilisations happen immediately.

Crisis in Northern Ireland...
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NORTHERN IRELAND IN CRISIS...NORTHERN IRELAND IN CRISIS

Orange Bigotry...and

The Orange march at Drumcree has thrown the North into turmoil. Here *Socialist Worker* reports from across the province on the reality of intimidation—and the growing scale of resistance.

Derry: It was an uprising

SIXTEEN year old Kevin McCafferty is still in a critical condition after getting a blood clot in the brain from an RUC plastic bullet.

He was unfortunate to be walking home late in his native town of Derry on the night before the 12th July.

After small scale clashes between Catholic and Protestant youth, RUC officers raced into Shipquay street and within seconds they were firing plastic bullets wildly.

Their targets were young people who had come from a disco and who had nothing to do with any disturbance but they became the butt of the RUC frustration.

Kevin McCafferty was one of their injured.

On the 12th the city boiled with anger as news of the RUC attacks mingled with reports that the Orange Order had been allowed to go through Drumcree.

What followed was nothing short of an uprising.

In the centre of the town 2,000 people gathered to take on the police.

One by-stander saw grown men teach their sons how to make petrol bombs and throw them.

Target

According to another participant, the rioting was highly political.

The rioters wanted to target council offices and unemployment exchanges.

But when local Provos tried to restrain them, many turned on local business premises.

When rioters moved to attack the Bank of Ireland, Republicans demanded that they do not 'attack their own'.

The media has tried to pretend that the riots were simply a drunken orgy. But there are very few Friday nights in Derry when 2,000 people take on the RUC.

This riot arose from the rage against the Orange bigots and their friends in the RUC.



BIGOT MAYOR STAYS ON

ON Wednesday July 17th 1,000 people turned up outside Derry's Guildhall to demand the resignation of the mayor, Richard Dallas.

Just before the Twelfth of July, Dallas took off his chain of office and donned his sash to join an Orange blockade of Derry.

Alongside seven or eight other Orangemen he was able to cut off the main bridge linking the two parts of the city. The RUC stood aside and joked with the protesters.

"It was unbelievable. A taxi driver told me that he was driving a nurse to work when he saw this small blockade. The RUC told him to turn around and go backwards", a local resident told *Socialist Worker*.

Obvious

"They stopped a person going to one of the emergency services rather than move this tiny blockade aside. It

was obvious that the RUC supported the Orangemen".

Even before this incident Dallas had a terrible record of sectarianism. He objected to the name of Declan O'Hare appearing on a publicity brochure for an investment project because his name was "too Irish and too Catholic".

The 27 year-old right wing politician hopes to get enough fame to be able to inherit the Unionist seat of William Ross.

The protest in July at the Guildhall was mainly a quiet affair as the local Republicans who organised the event were interested in playing down militancy on the streets. The real action was supposed to take

place inside the council chamber.

But a request from the Bogside Residents Group to address the council

they joined with Sinn Fein to pass a vote of no confidence in Dallas.

Majority

But despite the fact that the clear majority of the citizens of Derry and the local council want him to resign, Dallas announced that he was staying on. His hold on the mayoral office shows his contempt for democracy and the people of the city.

"It showed me that quiet, dignified protests achieve very little. Dallas is a bigot that has no right to office. We should be organising militant protests wherever he appears", one protester told *Socialist Worker*.



Richard Dallas

was refused when SDLP councillors voted against them. Later, however,

Stop these sectarian attacks

SOME OF those who have fought back against the RUC have vented their anger against individual Protestants.

In one case a memorial to Protestant workers who were murdered by the IRA bomb in Teebane was destroyed.

In Fermanagh a disabled woman, Olive Kerr, was forced out of her home by a gang of 150 nationalist youths.

Attacks have also

They play straight into the hands of Trimble and Paisley who want to pretend that the conflict in Northern Ireland is about removing Protestant rights.

The Orange Order has everything to gain from a heightening of sectarian tension.

Catholic sectarians who mimic them should be thrown off all protests.

Newry: The barricades appear again

ULSTER Television reported that the Orange marches passed off in a "nice, friendly atmosphere" in the largely Catholic town of Newry.

Nothing could be further from the truth. *Socialist Worker* spoke to Ciaran who was actively involved in the events.

"The night before Twelfth we attended a massive protest meeting over cutbacks in the Newry hospital.

"Everyone was united against the plans to turn our hospital into a shell.

"The Orange Order has always been about breaking unity between Catholics and Protestants and this year it was no different.

"They wanted to march through Catholic estates like Derrybeg and Camaghat but after Drumcree people were

not having it.

"They began to gather in the estates early in the morning to protest.

"Suddenly five minutes before the Orange march was due hundreds of police descended on us hoping to intimidate and arouse fear.

Stones

"A few young fellas started to throw stones up at the RUC officers above on a bypass but they could not even hit them because they were so high up.

"The RUC responded with a barrage of plastic bullets on the crowd.

"Later we counted over 60 plastic bullets on the ground although they only admitted firing 30.

"People started to really fight back.

"Old people dug up their gardens to provide stones. It was fantastic. People fought them so hard we had them on the run.

"Barricades were built on the Camlough Road to keep them out of the area.

"It was a real example of how mass resistance was the best way to defend the area.

"You could also see how disastrous the strategy of the leading Republicans was. They went around telling people not to throw stones and advised against confronting the RUC.

"Their message was always 'do not rely on yourself but look to either the armed struggle or a pan-nationalist front'."

STOP THIS SECTARIAN MARCH!

Protest at the Apprentice Boys' parade in Derry

SWP bus leaves Dublin Friday 9th August and returns Saturday
Book tickets early
Phone (01) 872 2682 for details

...NORTHERN IRELAND IN CRISIS...NORTHERN IRELAND IN CRISIS

Resistance...

Protestants against Orangeism

AS THE Orange Order does its best to increase sectarian tension across the North, one of the least reported aspects of their campaign has been the intimidation of Protestants who have begun to question their role.

Socialist Worker spoke to three Protestant socialists from Belfast.

"It is important to realise that the Orangemen are a minority who hope to rule by fear.

"Glengormley, for example, is a largely Protestant estate.

"In the run-up to the Twelfth a few thugs began to cause trouble towards midnight.

Hooded

"Most of the rest of the estate did not want to know.

"People are intimidated—but they also

have contempt for them," according to Dave.

Moirra lives in East Belfast tells a similar story. "Hooded men have visited a Protestant household near my estate.

"They pushed them out of the area because they were supposed to be too 'soft' on the union.

"Trimble and Paisley are trying to whip us all back into line.

"During the ceasefire many Protestants

began to question their politicians.

"They may still have voted for them—but they did not trust them.

"The politicians are using the new tensions to crush all dissent among Protestants."

Signal

Niall agrees with this assessment. "The meeting between Trimble and King Rat was very significant for the signal it sent out.

"The Orange Order

no longer has the moral authority to make us toe the line. They need the bully boys to instill some fear.

"Before these events it was obvious the Orange Order had begun to decline.

"Ten years ago there were millions of flags up for the marching season but there are far fewer today.

Desire

"The ceasefire allowed many Protestants to give a more political edge to their normal desire for some sort of accommodation with Catholics.

"This frightened Paisley and Trimble and that is why the last weeks have exposed the real links that exist between the Orange Order, the Unionist Party, and some of the paramilitaries.

"We need to start organising that growing minority of Protestants who are sick of what the Orange Order leads to—before they too get intimidated by the bigots."

How my street fought back

by A NORTH BELFAST RESIDENT

NORTH Belfast was extremely tense the whole week leading up to 12th July.

On Monday, Orange mobs went on the rampage and Catholic families were forced out of their homes in the Torrens Avenue area of Ardoyne.

The Order attempted to march into Ardoyne, Short Strand, the Markets—it even attempted to march into the Falls.

I live in the Newington area of North Belfast which borders on the Protestant Tigers Bay.

People feared the loyalists might try to repeat 1969 when tens of thousands of Catholics were driven from their homes.

But people said this time the area would be defended and Catholics wouldn't allow themselves to be walked over.

No-one trusted the RUC to keep the loyalists out of the area, so every night the residents gathered at the bottom of the street, waiting in case they tried to come in.

We had gathered up sticks and stones to use as weapons. Most of the time people just stood and chatted—for many it was the first time they had talked to people who lived just doors away.

Every now and then plates of sandwiches would arrive. People just waited for something to happen—they were determined to put up a fight if the loyalists tried to get in.

Every night the RUC positioned themselves between Tigers Bay and the Catholic area, they kept their guns pointed at us and chatted and laughed with the loyalists.

On Monday about 100 loyalists with masks on, armed with sticks, ran into the area breaking windows.

On Tuesday about a dozen of them did the same again. On both occasions it was so early in the evening, there was nobody there to stop them.

But on "the 11th Night"—the night of the bonfires—it was different. News of what happened at Garvaghy Road had brought hundreds of people onto the streets of the area.

Escape

Then at about 1.30am the RUC, without any provocation at all, opened up with plastic bullets on the Catholic residents. The crowds scattered as people ran for cover and to escape the RUC baton charge.

At the same moment a loyalist mob ran in behind the RUC and began attacking local people and smashing windows.

Within minutes we began collecting bottles for petrol bombs, someone went away and returned with a container of petrol.

Over the next 30 minutes 17 year-olds and 45 year-old family men attacked the RUC with petrol bombs.

People's anger at what was happening in their street as well as what had happened in Garvaghy Road earlier that day just meant they wanted to hit back.

Over the next 30 minutes the RUC bombarded the area with plastic bullets and lit up the sky with flares.

Four people were injured with plastic bullets, two of them were taken to hospital in an ambulance and one man received hospital treatment after hand to hand fighting with loyalists.

The next day 60 plastic bullets were collected in Newington Street.

As news spread of what had happened people from other Catholic areas began to arrive.

Some of them had a lot of drink on them and wanted to burn down the Belfast Royal Academy—a local Protestant Grammar School. Myself and another local resident told them to clear off, that we didn't want that to be happening.

It was as if when people's anger exploded—it went off in all sorts of directions, that wouldn't help anyone and only make things worse.

I don't believe that the mobs that attacked our area are representative of the people of Tigers Bay. The Tigers Bay area has a population of 5,000.

The mobs numbered only about 100 and that included members of Scottish Orange bands over for the Twelfth.

In many ways they are victims of loyalism as well. One Protestant woman in Tigers Bay who complained about the mobs was beaten up and put out of her home.

As well as this there are loyalist politicians who turn a blind eye to the poverty and hardship that exists in Tigers Bay.

As a socialist, I support mass defence of our area from sectarian attacks but I am also for uniting with working class Protestants to take on the real enemies who benefit from sectarian hatred.

RUC let off 6,000 plastic bullets

PLASTIC bullets kill.

In 1981 alone nine people in Northern Ireland were killed by plastic bullets.

One woman, Emma Groves, has been permanently blinded by a plastic bullet.

Nicola Duffy was hit by a plastic bullet and was left unable to walk when RUC riot officers started randomly firing in North Belfast in July.

Another young man, Kevin McCafferty, is still fighting for his life after an RUC plastic bullet caused horrific eye injuries.

"Many of the plastic bullets were fired at upper body level, some at point blank range", said an observer from the Committee for the Administration of Justice.

The committee said their observers were "visibly shaken" after taking more than 60 eyewitness accounts of the shootings.

In all the RUC fired 6,000 plastic bullets in the week of Garvaghy Road.

The vast majority were fired at nationalist protesters who were angered by the decision to allow the Orange Order to march through Drumcree.

Only 600 were fired at loyalist protesters in the week of the conflict.

One man, Dermot McShane, was murdered and 200 people have been injured as a result of the RUC actions. So much for their concern for human life.



RUC lays into Catholic residents

what we think

Drumcree: RUC backs bigots

NORTHERN IRELAND has been brought back to the brink of war because the British government has refused to face up to the intimidation of the Orange Order.

The RUC police chief Hugh Annesley claimed that the Orange march at Drumcree had to go through because he feared 'a loss of life'. Yet two days later his officers crushed to death a young Catholic man, Dermot McShane, and recklessly fired 6,000 plastic bullets in nationalist areas.

In most instances the 'blockade of Ulster' undertaken by Orangemen before Drumcree was fairly small. Thin lines of people managed to stop the main thoroughfares of the North. And even though Drumcree was hailed as a great battle for Orangeism, only 10,000 managed to turn up.

The Orange 'victory' at Drumcree was not secured by force of numbers: it only happened because there was an unofficial mutiny in the RUC. They actively connived in the blockades and showed themselves up to be a blatantly sectarian force

Business

Drumcree has punctured the notion that a genuine settlement to the Northern conflict can be delivered from on high. Today, most of the ruling class of Britain and Ireland want a move away from an Orange state.

Leading business figures like George Quigley of the Confederation of British Industry has advocated 'an island economy' with closer links between North and South.

Both governments want new structures which give 'parity of esteem' for the Catholic middle class. They believe that these changes will produce the type of stability that will allow the multi-nationals to invest in the cheap labour that flows from a divided workforce.

But it is one thing to draw up plans for a settlement—it is quite another to actually deliver on them. The historic problem that the ruling classes face in Northern Ireland is that the very agents which they rely on to implement their new proposals are those who stand most to lose.

The RUC, for example, is a bloated, over-paid force that has gained from the militarisation of the

conflict.

The top civil servants at the heart of the Northern state see themselves at a disadvantage if room has to be made for their Catholic middle class counterparts.

During the events at Drumcree these forces came together unofficially to make a political decision to give their backing to the Orange Order. They insisted on a march that insulted Catholics to indicate that they want little to change in Northern Ireland.

In the process they showed all the talk of liberalising Unionism, of breaking its links with the Orange Order, is a sham. When it came to the crunch, Trimble needed both the Orange Order and sections of the UVF around Billy Wright to get his way.

Drumcree also showed that the British government lacks the will to face up to Orangeism—even if its own interests dictate that it should. It has become obvious that we will have to look elsewhere for a way of bringing peace to Ireland.



THE WEAKNESS OF ORANGEISM

THE AIM of the Orange establishment has never been just to hold down Catholics. It has also been to wipe out dissent among Protestants by stirring up sectarian hatred.

At key moments in history such as in the 1930s, when Catholic and Protestant unemployed fought together in the Outdoor Relief agitation, the Orange Order was used by the upper class to crush any sign of independent class politics among Protestant workers.

The events at Drumcree show that Trimble would like to repeat this pattern.

audience among Protestants who are sick of where Trimble's bigotry is leading.

They care more about an accommodation with Catholics and peace in Northern Ireland than they do about the ranting of Trimble and Paisley.

That sentiment is often ambiguous and needs political direction.

But nevertheless it is there. If socialists understand that Drumcree arose from the weakness of Trimble and not his strength, then it is possible to start organising those Protestants who want an alternative to Orangeism.

Even among those who voted for Trimble and Paisley there were many who began to question where their actions were leading.

Trimble's enthusiasm for the Drumcree march was an attempt to crush this dissent and prevent further fragmentation. By beating the sectarian drum he hoped to drown out the new complaints against 'the fur coat brigade'.

But 1996 is not like 1969 and there have been major changes in the relationship between the Protestant working class and the Orange establishment.

In the 1960s, membership of the Orange Order brought a virtual guarantee of a job or a house before Catholics. Today, it cannot even pretend to give these favours and can only offer 'the thrill' of marching through Catholic areas.

Backward

In the 1960s, the identification of the Orange Order with Britain translated into an attitude of superiority that scorned the backward Catholic South.

Today British capitalism is a fifth rate power that competes with the South for jobs from multi-nationals.

Orange leaders try to frighten Protestants by pretending that their condition will worsen if equality is given to Catholics.

But these claim sound hollow when poverty stalks Protestant areas as traditional industry lays off more workers.

The new weakness of the Orange Order is reflected in the dramatic decline of its membership from 125,000 in the late 1960s to 80,000 today.

It is also shown by its failure to repeat anything like the Ulster Workers Council strike action which destroyed a power sharing executive in 1974.

The growing contradictions of Orangeism hold the key to the present situation. There is a new

The way forward

IN THE Catholic working class there is a renewed confidence that they will not be treated like they were in 1969.

Thousands of people have engaged in all forms of resistance from building the barricades to mass rioting as happened in Derry on the night of the 12th.

Sinn Fein has sometimes found itself arguing against mass resistance and has even won praise from Dublin government sources for their 'calming influence'.

Organised

Some on the left have backed this approach by arguing that mass resistance inevitably translates into a new armed struggle.

But socialists need to understand the more organised and militant the resistance is, the better it is for puncturing the myth of Orange superiority.

If Catholics passively succumb to Orange threats, this will only strengthen Trimble's project of re-building Unionist solidarity.

Mass action by thousands can also inspire a solidarity in the South and Britain in a way the armed struggle never could. When socialists are actively engaged in supporting the resistance, they can argue against the militarists who want a return to bombing.

Defence

But the defence of Catholic areas is only one step.

The key to the present situation lies in forging links with those Protestants who are sick of the bigotry of the Orange order.

Here the trade unions should have taken a stance. Yet tragically the union leaders do little when it comes to confronting Orangeism.

Just as they refused to condemn internment in 1971, so too do they fail to condemn Drumcree today.

In this situation it is down to socialists to provide a focus, no matter how small to begin with, that shows that there is a mood among both Catholics and Protestants to stand up against Orange bigotry.

Two wrong responses

THE POLITICAL crisis in the North has also sharpened the tensions within the Republican movement.

Republican leaders were heckled in West Belfast as they stopped a confrontation with the RUC and faced a bitter cry for a 'return to war'.

Catholics have every right to fight back against Orange and RUC thuggery but a call for a renewed IRA campaign offers no real way forward.

The IRA leaders have admitted that the reason why they called a ceasefire was that they could not defeat Britain by purely military means. There is nothing to indicate that anything has changed.

The militarists claim that IRA bomb at Bishopsgate in 1993 forced the British ruling class into the peace process. But there was already a 'back channel' between the IRA and the British government since 1990 and the elements of a possible agreed settlement had been discussed in elite circles even before that. To make their case, the militarists ironically have to exaggerate what was on offer in the 'peace process'.

Strategy

But if the armed struggle offers nothing, neither does the Adams strategy of moving into conventional politics.

The events around Drumcree show that even if a new settlement emerges again it will be unstable and unable to tackle the roots of sectarianism.

The idea that the Southern establishment can be used to pressure Britain into acting as a persuader for a united Ireland looks preposterous when they cannot even be persuaded to stand up to an Orange march.

A pan-nationalist alliance or a new bombing campaign can only help to drive doubting Protestants back into the hands of David Trimble.

If the future is to be an Ireland dominated by flag waving nationalists like Albert Reynolds, it is little wonder that many Protestants conclude that 'the boot was on the other foot' and so succumb to the argument that they should 'stick with their own'.



news of the world

Clinton's vindictive move against Cuba

by PAUL McGARR

A MAJOR row between the US and countries normally its close allies was, temporarily, averted last week.

US president Bill Clinton postponed parts of a new law aimed at hitting companies which do business in Cuba.

Behind the row stands US rulers' vindictiveness towards Cuba, which they have never forgiven for daring to stand up for its independence, won in the 1959 revolution.

American rulers consider Cuba, like all of Central America and the Caribbean, to be their "backyard".

US troops have intervened militarily in the region on over 20 occasions this century.

Regimes which even mildly challenged US big business domination have been overthrown by American backed coups.

Cuba was run by US backed dictators until 1959 and was little more than a US colony.

In 1959 the hated US backed dictator, Batista, was overthrown by a guerilla army led by Fidel Castro. The revolution, only 80 miles off the US coast, drove American rulers mad.

In US eyes Cubans must be taught a lesson to ensure no one else in the region dares to stand up to the power of "Uncle Sam".

The CIA has repeatedly plotted to assassinate Castro and in 1961 the US backed an armed invasion by right wing Cuban exiles.

The US has maintained a savage economic blockade of the island for over 30 years.

FRANCE



IMMIGRANTS IN Paris staged protests last week to demand full residency status. Their campaign, which began several weeks ago, has spread around the country and received wide support

The result has been hardship for ordinary Cubans, with basic commodities and medical supplies hit by the blockade.

Now the new US Helms-Burton law aims to tighten the screw even more.

It says any company which "traffics" in the assets

of US companies confiscated after 1959 can be taken to court and sued by the former owners.

The plan has outraged big business in countries like Canada and across Europe.

Some have long been doing business in Cuba. More have moved in since the

Cuban economy plunged into deep crisis in the late 1980s with the collapse of the USSR.

Castro's answer to the crisis was to implement harsh austerity measures and seek to open Cuba up to the world market.

European and Canadian companies moved in hoping

to make a killing. But now they could fall foul of the new US law.

That was why last week the European Union was ready to retaliate with sanctions against the US.

President Clinton has now postponed some of the law, but has signed one section which has infuriated big businesses with investments in Cuba.

Heads of these companies could be barred from entering the US. Victims could include top British bosses like Sir Patrick Sheehy of the BAT conglomerate.

The rum giant Bacardi played a key part in drafting the new law.

It had distilleries in Cuba confiscated after the 1959 revolution. French drinks company Pernod Ricard has since moved to run them in a joint venture with Cuba's government.

Pernod now fears it could find itself sued for billions in US courts by Bacardi. That was why France was in the forefront of opposition to Clinton.

The Cuba row is a tale not only of US vindictiveness, but also of old fashioned cut throat rivalry between giant firms—each of which will look to its national state to fight for its interests.

BOSNIA

Karadzic goes but brutal leaders remain

UNITED STATES government officials are proclaiming a "historic breakthrough" in Bosnia following the resignation of Radovan Karadzic as leader of the Bosnian Serbs.

But the move hides the reality of a fragile peace with brutal leaders still in charge on all sides.

If Karadzic had remained in office, the Bosnian elections, scheduled for 14 September, might have been boycotted by the Bosnian Muslims.

The US has forced him out to allow the elections to go ahead.

The move was seen as a triumph for US envoy Richard Holbrooke, who rammed through the Dayton deal which ended the fighting in November last year.

Holbrooke is honest about how false the whole process is. "First we will have elections—then perhaps we might get a bit of democracy", he says cynically.

Criminal

Karadzic may have gone but he is far from the only "war criminal" on the scene. He will be replaced by Biljana Plavsic.

In the early stages of the war she called on "six million Serbs to be prepared to die" to win a Bosnian Serb state and was an enthusiast for "ethnically cleansing" the Muslims.

In Croatia, President Tudjman rules what one journalist recently called "the most right wing state in Europe since the death of Spain's General Franco".

There is no press freedom, the opposition is under constant attack and Tudjman has ignored elections which rejected his party.

The Bosnian Muslim leaders are increasingly nationalist and ethnically exclusive.

A report in the *Guardian* spoke recently of how leaders of Bosnian president Alija Izetbegovic's party had assembled an armed force to "terrorise potential

political opponents, to harass Serbs and Croats and to pressurise Muslims who might not support Mr Izetbegovic".

Eight months after the Dayton peace agreement nothing has changed for the vast majority of people in ex-Yugoslavia. Fewer than 100,000 of the 2.5 million refugees have returned home.

The situation in the city of Mostar is typical of the ethnic divisions that have, if anything, got worse since the peace deal and the intervention of the 60,000 troops to back it up.

Mostar saw some of the worst fighting between Bosnian Muslims and Croatian fighters during the war.

It was given to the "Muslim-Croat Federation" under the Dayton deal. Yet the city is still utterly divided.

Around 50,000 people were driven from their homes in Mostar during the war.

Two years after the European Union was awarded a "mandate" to ensure "peace and an end to ethnic tension" in the city, just five Croatian families have been able to return to their homes and not a single Muslim family has gone back.

Meanwhile the German government has begun to repatriate refugees who fled there to escape the fighting. The United Nations has welcomed the move.

Build

In Britain the Tories have no need for such plans because so few people were allowed entry in the first place.

The only hope in the present situation is the small revival in strikes during the last two months.

Workers in Serbia and all the different carved up chunks of Bosnia have taken action to win improved pay and wages they are owed from months ago.

If workers can build unity against bosses of all sorts and against outside intervention, real change is possible.

WHY CASTRO'S REGIME ISN'T SOCIALIST

EVERYONE should oppose the US blockade on Cuba.

A US victory in imposing its will on Cuba would be a defeat for anyone wanting to stand up to the power of Western governments and the big businesses they work for.

But no one should make the mistake of believing that Cuba is any kind of socialist regime.

Castro and a small band of guerillas toppled the US backed regime in 1959. But the mass of the people and workers played little role in the revolution.

Because of the US blockade Castro nationalised much

of industry and agriculture and turned to the USSR for support.

His regime has enjoyed popular support for most of the time since 1959. It instituted many basic reforms—on land, health and education.

But all decisions and power in Cuba remained in the hands of a narrow state bureaucracy headed by Castro. There is little democracy and all opposition is repressed.

The ruling bureaucracy, with their luxurious lifestyles, have sought to develop

Cuba's national economy by exploiting workers.

Cuba is little different to the former regimes in the USSR and Eastern Europe. It is a state capitalist, not a socialist, society.

Castro has moved to embrace the world market as Cuba has plunged into crisis following the collapse of the USSR, and workers have paid the price.

The alternative lies in the working class of Latin America, from Cuba to the giant working classes in countries like Mexico and Brazil.

Olympics: Sport, flag-waving

Snobbery and Greed

JIM THORPE won two gold medals at the 1912 Olympics, but had to return them when it was found that he had played baseball in his school holidays for \$25 a week. The aristocrats who ran the games refused to allow their event to be tainted by the professionalism that had taken hold in games like soccer. But the 'noble tradition' of amateurism was based on nothing more than class snobbery. The gentry had plenty of leisure time in which to take part in sport. But workers could only excel by playing fulltime in return for a wage. Snobbish amateurism has now been replaced by greed and commercialism. What

really drives the Olympics today is money and television. NBC are paying \$450 million for the rights to the Atlanta games. Television has become the main revenue source for the IOC. Since 1984, when the Los Angeles Olympic Committee made a profit from shameless corporate marketing, the IOC has followed suit. We now have "official" sponsors such as AIB in Ireland, and major corporations like Coca-Cola, Panasonic and Visa marketing the Olympic rings. An International Management Group in 1992 predicted, "An Olympic athlete running in a Hertz uniform is not far away".

POVERTY AND RACISM: THE REAL ATLANTA

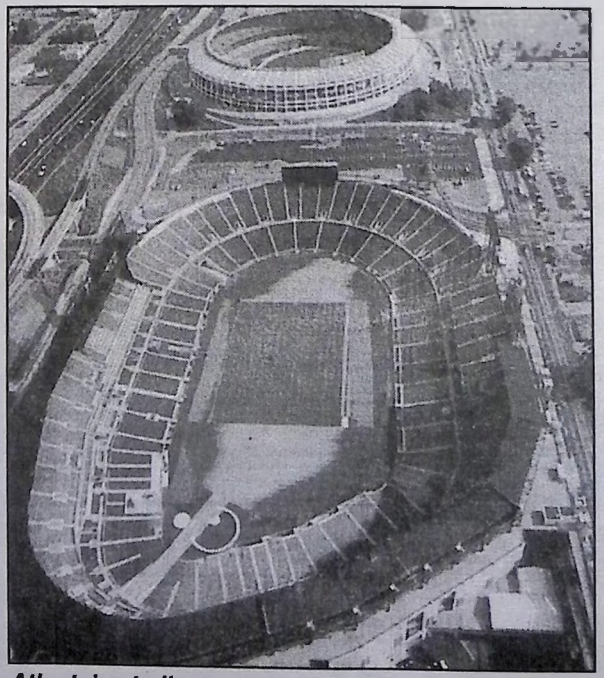
BEHIND the glitz of the Atlanta Games, the city's poor and vulnerable have been swept aside in the pursuit of as much profit from the Games as possible. The *Economist* magazine writes: "First the day care centre went, then a long-established restaurant, then a shelter for the homeless. "All were razed to make way for the Olympics." Thousands of poor and homeless families have been driven out of one area to make way for the park catering for corporate entertainment. The park will not be open to the public. By the end of the Games, more than 2,000 people will have been forced out of public housing to

make way for the event. And private landlords put up the rents all over the city.

Protests

And to ensure there are no protests in response, a special security force of 20,000 guards has been hired to police the Games—the largest such force ever assembled in the US for a

peacetime event. Atlanta has long been associated with slavery, racism, the Klu Klux Klan and segregation. In the 1950s and '60s people fought back, with Martin Luther King leading the Civil Rights Movement. But the racism continues. Only last year new evidence revealed "unconstitutional racial gerrymandering" in allocating housing.



Atlanta's stadium excludes the poor

What do socialists say?

What is the Proletariat?

PROLETARIAT IS not a word in common use today. However, in Marx's time, in the mid-19th century, proletariat was the normal term used to describe the newly-emerging modern working class. The proletariat, or working class, differed from the mass of working people in previous periods because it lived by the sale of its labour power. In earlier times the mass of ordinary people had been, variously: ■Slaves who were wholly owned by their masters. ■Serfs—small farmers tied to their land and rendering dues to their lords. ■Peasants—small farmers paying rent to the land owners. ■Artisans—small traders selling the products of their labour.

also the questions of consciousness and power. Marx's argument for the revolutionary role of the proletariat was never based on the existing consciousness of workers. This he recognised would, in normal times, be dominated by the ideas of the ruling class. Marx based his idea of the revolutionary role of the proletariat on its economic position under capitalism and its potential power. The exploitation of the proletariat—the daily extraction of profit from its labour—puts it in permanent conflict with the capitalist class. The capitalist class is utterly dependent on the labour of the proletariat, not only as the sole source of its profits but also for all the operations that sustain its existence. This gives the proletariat immense potential power. In addition the nature of capitalist production concentrates workers in large workplaces, big companies and vast cities, and forms them into collectives.

Steel

This is based on a complete misunderstanding of both capitalism and class.

Capitalism, by its nature, is always changing the structure of industry and with it the composition of the proletariat. When Marx was writing, the largest group of workers were domestic servants followed by agricultural labourers and textile workers.

Power

This further increases the economic power of the proletariat and is the basis of tremendous political power as well. The combination of these factors gives the proletariat the motive and capacity to paralyse capitalist society, overthrow the capitalist state and establish a new state of its own—to make a revolution.

The development of capitalism and the industrial revolution meant that for the first time the majority of people became proletarians who gained access to the means of production only by selling their ability to work.

It was, he said, "the only really revolutionary class", the class which would overthrow capitalism, put an end to all class divisions and liberate humanity from oppression. Moreover, he insisted, the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class. When we speak of the proletariat or working class today two questions always arise: who makes up the proletariat and is it still a revolutionary force?

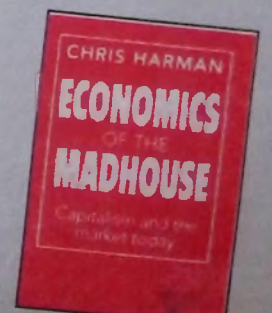
They still live by the sale of their labour power and are therefore proletarians. The category of white collar employees does include a managerial layer whose main role is to supervise and control the work of others. These people are agents of capital, not workers, but they are a definite minority. The question of numbers is important but there are

All of these factors operate even more strongly in the world today than they did when Marx first analysed them. This is not just a matter of theory. The history of the 20th century proves it is living reality—from Russia in 1905 and 1917 to Poland in 1980. The real problem is not whether the proletariat will be revolutionary but whether it will find the political leadership to ensure the revolution wins.

— JOHN MOLYNEUX

Out now!

Economics of the Madhouse—Capitalism and the Market Today by Chris Harman £3.50 + 70p p+p from: SW Books PO Box 1648, Dublin 8



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FRANCE 1936

by MIKE SIMONS

Struggle returns, but who will lead?

IN JUNE 1936 France was rocked by a massive wave of strikes and occupations that erupted after the election victory of the left of centre Popular Front government.

"Building after building—small factories and large factories, even comparatively small workshops were flying red, or red and tricolore flags—with pickets in front of closed gates," reported one journalist.

The revolt followed a long period of defeats for the working class.

The Great Depression brought wage cuts, short time working, mass unemployment and a massive increase in the levels of exploitation.

The unions were pitifully weak and divided. Strikes were few and successes fewer.

After the Nazis took power in Germany in 1933 many thought France would soon go the same way.

But workers began to resist. In February 1934 France's far right tried to storm parliament.

Union leaders issued only a half hearted strike call but five million workers struck and a million of them joined demonstrations.

The Nazis' rise was blocked by united action. But a year later action was replaced by parliamentary manoeuvres—the formation of the Popular Front.

This brought the Communist Party, the Socialist Party and the Radicals (the main middle class party) into an electoral alliance.

Popular Front leaders promised to defend workers against the ravages of economic depression and the French constitution against the fascists.

The political temperature soared in February 1936 when Leon Blum, the leader of the Socialist Party, was almost lynched in the street by a gang of right wing thugs.

The attack raised the spectre of February 1934 and more than half a million took to the streets of Paris in a hastily called protest.

A month later the two main union federations, the CGT and CGTU, united and held their first joint conference since 1922.

And in April the Popular Front triumphed in the elections. After a second round in May the Socialist Party won 146 seats, up from 97, and the Communist Party won 72, up from ten.

With other smaller affiliated parties, the Popular Front had a clear majority.

In just 30 months France had gone from the brink of a fascist coup to the investiture of Leon Blum, the country's first Socialist Party prime minister.

But workers' expectations extended far beyond the Popular Front's official programme which had nothing to do with socialism or workers' control of society.

Nor were workers prepared to wait for the Popular Front government to hand down reforms from above. They wanted the fruits of victory—immediately.



Workers who occupied their factory in 1936. The placard has the boss hanging from a scaffold.

THE FIRST sign of the storm breaking was in the aircraft industry. On 11 May in Le Havre and on 13 May in Toulouse, workers occupied the factories and won the reinstatement of workers sacked for striking on May Day.

On 26 May strikes erupted in two engineering factories near Paris and over the next three days spread throughout the heavy engineering plants in the capital.

By 28 May 70,000 workers were out in the Paris area. Many went back when the bosses made significant concessions, but after the Whitsun holidays a new wave of strikes erupted.

When Socialist Party leader Leon Blum took office as prime minister he was confronted with the biggest strike wave in the country's history.

In Paris everything—from chocolate factories to printworks, from building sites to locksmiths and the big department stores—was occupied.

Across the country it was the same story. The strike wave even spread to France's North African colonies.

Official statistics record 12,142 strikes involving 1.8 million strikers in June 1936 alone. The real figure was probably far higher.

Union membership soared from a little over one million in the spring of 1936 to five million by the summer.

As he handed over office, the outgoing conservative prime minister implored Blum to "do something".

Blum believed that change should only come through parliament. On taking office he immediately urged workers to "submit to the law of the land".

But the strike wave continued to grow, with workers not just controlling the factories but the streets of whole cities too.

Bosses who a month earlier refused to recognise unions were now begging Blum to convene talks. On 7 June union leaders met to thrash out an agreement.

Terrified of the strikes, bosses conceded the 40 hour week, paid holidays, rises averaging 12 percent with the lowest paid getting most, and the immediate establishment of collective bargaining.

These were tremendous gains but much more was possible.

Capitalist rule was being directly challenged in the factories and on the streets—even if the leaders of the Socialist and Communist parties did not think so.

In fact the strikes grew even bigger and bolder after the agreement between union leaders and bosses.

The real saviour of the French ruling class was Maurice Thorez, leader of the Communist Party.

The Communist Party had been built through working class struggle and had been inspired by the Russian Revolution of 1917.

But it had long since abandoned revolutionary aims.

Its policies were dictated by Russia's new dictator, Stalin, who had abandoned the idea of international socialism and turned the world's Communist parties into agents of Russian foreign policy.

In the Popular Front Stalin ordered the Communist parties to subordinate workers' demands and form alliances with what were claimed to be the anti-fascist sections of the ruling class.

When workers threatened to go beyond Stalin's conception of the Popular Front they were reined in.

On 11 June Thorez made a speech—not on the need to drive the movement forward—but calling for it to be thrown into reverse.

"It is necessary to know when to end a strike," said Thorez. "To seize power now" he insisted, "is out of the question."

ON 14 June the Communist Party paper, *L'Humanité*, emphasising the need to return to work, carried the headline, "The Communist Party is Order!"

Party militants who had played a key role in driving the movement forward were ordered to initiate the back to work process.

The occupations ended as quickly as they began with workers celebrating the gains they had made, but confused about why the movement was ending.

The Popular Front government declined further very quickly.

In mid-July 1936, with the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, Blum capitulated to international pressure and the demands of the French ruling class and refused to help the democratically elected Republican government.

In September Blum reneged on his promises and devalued the franc. Workers returning from their first ever paid holiday found inflation had eaten away many of the summer's gains.

By 13 February 1937 Blum was trying to appease bankers and businessmen by announcing a "pause" in new reforms. Two weeks later, the government ordered cuts in public spending.

As he tried to appease the right, the Paris police attacked an anti-fascist demonstration, killing six and wounding many more.

By June Blum was forced to resign and the Popular Front government was effectively dead, though it staggered on in name until 1938.

The potential of 1936 had been squandered. Workers were spared neither the ravages of economic crisis nor the horrors of fascism.

When war broke out in 1939 the same Popular Front deputies who came to office three years earlier voted to outlaw the Communist Party.

Then in 1940 the majority of deputies elected on the Popular Front ticket voted to hand power to Marshal Pétain, whose Vichy regime collaborated with Hitler.

It was a tragic end, the total reversal of what should have happened.

There are two key lessons. The first is that workers' struggle will return even after the hardest defeats. The second is that the rebirth of mass action intensifies the need for political clarity and revolutionary organisation.

However big the strikes and protests which we see in the future, there will always be people calling for faith in parliament, the Labour Party and "democracy".

The working class will be won to revolutionary action only if the core of an organisation is built in advance of the struggle which has a clear set of political ideas and which has learnt the lessons of history.

Occupied with joy

RENAULT WORKERS were among the earliest to take action. One striker told a journalist:

"Our tactic is to occupy, to hold out at any cost, as in a besieged city. Outside the factory we would be nothing more than unemployed, incapable of maintaining our unity against the company unions and fascists."

But workers' confidence grew as the occupations spread and the movement turned into a real festival of the oppressed.

One former factory worker recalled the mood inside her occupied workplace. It was, she wrote:

"Pure joy. Unadulterated joy. Joy at entering the factory with the smiling authorisation of a worker who guards the entrance."

"Joy at freely passing through these workshops where everyone had felt so alone at their machine. Joy at forming groups, chatting, eating together. Joy at hearing, instead of the pitiless din of the machines, music, singing, laughter."

music

The rise and fall of punk

"GOD save the Queen...She ain't no human being. God save the Queen...It's a fascist regime." Twenty years ago, in the summer of 1976, Punk rock burst onto the scene.

With lyrics like the above and outrageous clothing, bands such as the Sex Pistols, The Damned and the Clash scandalised the establishment and won thousands of young working class fans.

Punk was at first a reaction against the tail end of 1960s hippy music, now increasingly devoid of its earlier radicalism and embodied in 'Supergroups' like Yes, Supertramp, and Genesis.

Rebellion

The new sound injected a much needed energy and spirit of rebellion back into music.

Punk was firmly anti-establishment in the political as well as the musical sense.

As well as denouncing the boring hippies, songs like 'Anarchy in the UK' and 'White Riot' also raged against a class-divided society which offered nothing to ordinary people but injustice, monotony and commercialism.

The politics were, of course, always somewhat confused and occasionally downright dodgy. Nowhere more so than with the Pistols themselves.

Sid Vicious' donning of the Swastika was more designed to shock than offend, but against the backdrop of the rise of the National Front, it was dangerous and stupid.

Steve Jones, the band's guitarist, seemed to think being a raving sexist git made him something of a rebel when in fact it simply made him a raving sexist git.

Even where the anger of punk was directed at the right targets, such as the police, the record bosses or the system itself, the band offered little in the way of alternatives.

World

Whether it was drugs, clothes, ripping off record companies, or just making trouble the Pistols never got beyond the idea that by changing your lifestyle you could change the world.

The demise of the band amid a welter of financial wrangles and the death of Sid Vicious exposed the naivety of this view.

There were of course other bands that developed a more worked out and serious set of politics. The Clash in particular, aligned themselves with the radical left and were one of a number of punk bands who played for the Anti Nazi League at the Rock Against Racism gigs in the late 70's. In the early and mid 80's

The politics were, of course, always somewhat confused and occasionally downright dodgy.

a whole series of bands around the CRASS independent record label adopted a brand of anarchist politics that centred around mass confrontation with the state and the establishment of egalitarian communes.

However, as with anarchism itself, their failure to take seriously the issue of building serious working class organisation meant that movement never went beyond a tiny minority of mohican clad punks.

The commune which CRASS established in Epping Forest in London, collapsed in the late 80's, unable to cut itself off from the pressures of the society that surrounded it.

As the initial explosion of the late 70's died away and the era of Thatcher, Reagan and yuppyism took off in the 80's punk became an essentially underground movement of a small minority.

Margins

A few of its stars like Rotten and the Clash enjoyed some commercial success in the 80's but as a whole punk was relegated to the margins. In this sense the demise of punk reflects the more important defeats suffered by the working class and the left in the 1980's.

The recent resurgence of a more gritty anti-establishment music and even the reunion of the Pistols themselves is probably an indication of the growing discontent that exists with capitalism in the 90's.

However the deeper problem with punk is one that has been faced by every brand of radical music since Mozart. Music, lifestyle and even radical ideas can't in themselves defeat the system.

Unless it is linked to a wider movement and organisation set on overturning the entire system it will eventually be marginalised or incorporated into the system.

Lets hope the politics and music of the 90's can make the 1970's look like the 1950's!

— RICHARD BOYD BARRETT

film

The spy who came in from the Cold War

Spy movies are short of bad guys, all the old certainties are gone and all that is left is confusion.

As John Voight—Jim in *Mission: Impossible* ("Your mission Jim should you choose to accept it etc.")—puts it:

"The Cold War's over, the president thinks he runs the country, the only people we are keeping secrets from are ourselves and \$62,000 a year doesn't seem that much any more."

Exploration

So what we get is an exploration of those uncertainties.

The drive is not politics but money, the traitors are betraying only themselves, and you just can't trust anybody anymore.

But the problem is that it is not just the spies who suffer from uncertainty at the end of the Cold War, but the people who make the spy movies as well.

A lack of new ideas and

by **SIMON BASKETTER**

demands for more and more expensive blockbusters means that in the desperate search for the next *Speed* or *Die Hard 38* Hollywood has retreated to television for ideas.

Old TV programmes provide a ready made scenario, an audience that thinks the programmes were better than they really were, and an opportunity not to have to think of anything original.

Brian De Palma, who has explored more themes than the plots of his movies would suggest, tries to play around with the idea of the spy movie.

Sixties

But unfortunately *Mission: Impossible* becomes nothing much more than a

homage to sixties TV kitsch with flashy special effects.

So we end up with all the usual stereotypes - the untrustworthy femme fatale and the cheery-but-tough 'black guy' sidekick are particularly annoying.

The twists and turns are all a bit predictable, and in the end the good guys of the CIA win out and the world is once again safe for democracy.

The effects and the chase scenes are dazzling, the computer wizardry means that Apple got a good deal for its product placement.

Tape

And we can hum along to the theme tune and - yes - a tape self destructs in five seconds.

Unfortunately that is all. The violence is harmless, and sanitised.

Tom Cruise is at his worst and John Voight is looking old.

The whole thing is done with style, but like the large overpriced popcorn you are



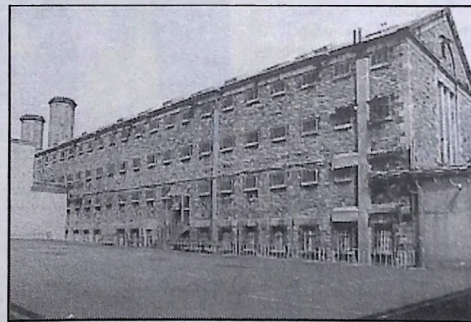
supposed to eat while you watch it. *Mission: Impossible*

leaves you feeling a bit ripped off and far from satisfied.

Book

Not much joy behind these walls

BY DAVID SCOTT



"Sure Mountjoy is just a holiday camp", said the caller to the late-night radio programme. Hearing it prompted journalist Paul Howard to write a book about the notorious Dublin prison.

He was introduced to a man who had spent most of his adult life in Mountjoy and who confirmed that little had changed since the days of Brendan Behan.

Paul Howard interviewed the ex-prisoner who is a reformed drug addict with HIV. This man describes St Pat's young offenders' institution as his primary school and nearby Mountjoy as his secondary.

which allegedly makes prison easy to cope with, the narrator told the author:

"It doesn't matter whether you're serving one week or one year. When you're looking at the door from the inside it doesn't revolve fast enough."

Far from reforming people *The Joy* is shown as a place where the worst ideas that capitalism produces are allowed to thrive.

Sexism is rife as reflected in the language of the narrator himself. Travellers are treated as the lowest of the low, being made to clean up after a dirty protest by the other prisoners.

Beatings

In his own words the ex-prisoner describes the humiliating practice of slopping out, the regular beatings among the inmates and the long hours of confinement to cells. He recalls the suicide of another prisoner and his own cry for help.

It soon becomes obvious that not only is prison far from being a holiday camp but it is the last place for someone trying to kick a heroin habit.

The sheer boredom and lack of drugs treatment means that if you are not an addict when you go in, you are likely to emerge one. A report by the prison visiting committee in May of this year stated that about 65 per cent of Mountjoy's male population are using illegal drugs.

Drugs

One prison worker told the author: "*Drugs are the only thing keeping the lid on the prison. Without heroin, we'd have dozens of strung-out addicts walking around here every day and the place would be unmanageable. It would explode.*"

When asked about the 'revolving door syndrome'

Books for summer

If you manage to get to the beach this year you might like something to read. Here we look at some of the best socialist books and novels available this summer:

□ Probably the best bargain of the year is SW Books' special offer of seven Marxist classics for £10 - *The Communist Manifesto; Socialism Utopian and Scientific; Reform or Revolution; Left Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder; Lessons of October* and finally *Labour in Irish History*.

Although some were written over a hundred years ago they still provide the best introduction to the theory and practice of marxism. Just the thing for your back pocket.

□ A mere repetition of the terrible statistics of the First World War can just leave you cold and without

any real understanding. It is her ability to describe not only these horrors but also their effect on participants and their relationships that makes Pat Barker's *The Regeneration Trilogy* so powerful. These three books are among the best written about that war. Highly recommended.

□ *Battle Cry of Freedom* by James M. McPherson is a brilliant history of the American Civil War. He clearly demonstrates that it was not military strength but politics that was central to Lincoln winning the war.

The major turning point was when after numerous defeats Lincoln was forced to declare the abolition of

slavery.

□ If you like detective novels take a look at *Berlin Noir*, a trilogy by Philip Kerr. They feature an unusual hero, Bernie Gunther - a detective in Nazi Germany.

As well as all the usual ingredients there is a good depiction of a society under fascism and how after the defeat of Hitler, the Allies were quite prepared to work with former Nazis. Hard-boiled with a trace of politics.

□ Finally the book that I will be reading this summer is the newly published biography of *Spartacus*, the leader of the great slave revolt in Ancient Rome, by Lewis Grassic Gibbon.

All books can be ordered from SW Books, P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8.

Role

These ideas go unchallenged because the real role of the prison is not to create better human beings but to turn out more subservient ones.

But there is humanity and humour in this book. Read how prisoners used Father Cleary's radio show to pass on requests for drugs! Read the narrator's favourite way of getting drugs past the warders and you will never eat butter again!

As one individual's account of life inside, *The Joy* does not attempt to be the definitive book on the causes of crime. But it provides a strong challenge to any notion that locking people up is the way to deal with the problem.

The Joy by Paul Howard, O'Brien Press, £6.99.

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 SWP 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 SWP aims to build such a party in Ireland.

Return of the heavy gang

A SHOCKING report has emerged of garda brutality against people arrested after the murder of Detective Gerry McCabe in Adare.

The Irish Council for Civil Liberties is preparing a dossier on allegations of threats and physical intimidation by gardai.

Arrests

The guards arrested about 25 people in the three weeks following the death of Garda McCabe on 7th June.

The arrests happened in Limerick, Cork, Kerry, Westmeath, Monaghan and Dublin.

It was soon reported that one man was taken to hospital four times in three days of questioning.

Prison warders in Portlaoise sent another man

for examination apparently to prove that his injuries had been inflicted before gardai brought him to the jail.

The other reports being investigated by the ICCL tell a horrifying story of what it really means to give the gardai extra powers:

■ A woman arrested in Co Tipperary said she was continually slapped by Special Branch officers at Henry St station in Limerick.

Abuse

She also reported racist abuse referring to her two adopted children who are from Eastern Europe.

She said gardai called the children wogs and half-castes

and "alluded to myself and my husband's inability to produce children".

■ A Limerick woman who went to visit her son while he was detained in Henry St was herself arrested.

She has given the ICCL an account of extreme and humiliating sexist abuse and said she was accused of being "the top IRA woman North and South".

■ A Dublin man told the ICCL that he was arrested and brought to Henry St where gardai taunted him about his brother and girl friend who had died in a fire in Ballyfermot last year.

Taunted

The man said gardai told him that unless he made a statement he would be charged with IRA membership and involvement in the McCabe mur-

der. He said a detective told him "he didn't give a fuck about (me) staying silent".

The man said he was then slammed against a wall and slapped repeatedly about the face and head.

Notorious

These reports bring back the worst memories of the notorious 'heavy gang' which operated in the Garda during the 1970's.

The granting of new powers of seven day detention and restrictions on the right to silence will result in more horrific reports like these.

That is why the new 'law and order' measures must be opposed.

358 people own as much as half the world's population

A NEW United Nations report shows that a tiny number of super-rich people have as much wealth as half the world's population.

The 1996 Human Development Report says that the world's 358 billionaires have more assets than the combined incomes of countries representing 45 per cent of the world's population.

The gap between rich and poor within countries is widening fast. The richest 20 per cent earn ten times more than the poorest 20 per cent.

The impact of the market is plunging the world's poorest people into deprivation.

Report

Ninety countries report lower income per head than ten years ago.

As the poor get poorer, the merchants of death get richer. World military spending has now reached over two billion dollars a day.

James Spenth, an administrator of the UN Development Programme, says, "An emerging global elite, interconnected in a variety of ways, is amassing great wealth and power while more than half of humanity is left out."

"For poor people in this two class world it is a breeding ground for hopelessness, anger and frustration."

£900,000—WHAT A SEVERANCE PACKAGE

EDDIE O'Connor, the former boss of Bord na Mona, has walked away with a severance package that is worth nearly £900,000.

Yet this same individual ran up an expense account of over £66,000—with no receipts being provided.

But if a worker in the Bord na Mona sales department was a few pounds out in their accounts, they would have been sacked immediately.

O'Connor was so arrogant that he got his legal team to "inform Mr Lowry's Department of his requirements" for a

goodbye package.

In the end he got a year's salary, a £600,000 pension deal and payment for the expensive lawyers who negotiated for him.

During his time in office, O'Connor cut over 2,000 jobs in Bord na Mona.

Afford

Even this year he was still telling workers that the company could not afford to pay them a 3 per cent pay rise.

Yet O'Connor ensured that:

■ His fee for membership of the Elm Park Golf Club was paid.

■ That he and fellow

executives enjoyed a £2,000 wine bill at the company expense.

■ That he got free health insurance, that his home phone bills were paid and that his wife was given a free car on lease.

O'Connor's case shows that the managers of semi-state companies who preach restraint to their workers are crass hypocrites.

The facts only came because there was a split in the board over new plans to cut the costs of the company by 50 per cent.

While O'Connor has walked off with a fat package, the remaining workers will face a more assaults on their conditions.



Eddie O'Connor—laughing to the bank

SWP branch meetings—all welcome

BELFAST

Meets every Wednesday at 8pm Central Hall, Rosemary Street.

CORK

Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Dennehy's Pub, Cornmarket Street.

DERRY

Meets every Tuesday in Badgers Bar at 8pm

BRAY

Meets Wednesdays at 8pm Mayview Hotel, Florence Terrace.

DUBLIN NORTH-WEST

Meets every Tuesday at 8:30pm in The Old Brogue, Dorset Street.

DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK

Meets every Thursday at 8:30pm Telephone 872 2682 for details

DRIMNAGH

Meets every Tuesday at 8:30pm in the Bentley Pub, Drimnagh Road

DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL

Meets every Wednesday at 8:30pm in Conways, Parnell Street.

DUBLIN RATHMINES

Meets every Wednesday at 8pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond Street.

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL

Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse Street.

DUBLIN TALLAGHT/CLONDALKIN

Meets Tuesday Tallaght Welfare Society, Tallaght

Village.

DUN LAOGHAIRE

Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Smyths Pub.

GALWAY

Meets every Thursday at 6pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square

MAYNOOTH

Contact 8722682 for details

WATERFORD

Meets every Thursday at 8pm in ATGWU Hall, Keyser St.

There are Socialist Worker members in:

ENNISKILLEN; COLERAINE; LURGAN; CAVAN; DONEGAL; NAAS; LIMERICK; KILKENNY; DUNDALK; ATHLONE; DROGHEDA. If you would like to get in touch, contact our national office at (01) 872 2682, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

JOIN THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

AS THE political crisis in Northern Ireland grew, SWP members took an active role in opposing Orange intimidation and seeking unity between Catholic and Protestant members.

A special bulletin was rushed out and sold throughout the North. 50 copies of the special *Socialist Worker* were sold at the big solidarity protest last Sunday in Garvaghy Road.

In Dublin 70 people turned up to a hastily convened meeting and over 300 papers were sold on the streets. Several people have joined the party and many more have left their names looking for more information.

A strong socialist organisation can make a major difference in this

period by offering an alternative to the dead end of Republican politics.

The SWP is opposed to a pan-nationalist alliance with right wing politicians or a return to the armed struggle

In the North, it unites Catholics and Protestants in opposition to all forms of sectarianism.

We appeal to our readers to get active in the next few weeks by joining the socialists.

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

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news & reports—politics; the unions
 send in your reports telephone: (01) 872 2682, fax: (01) 872 3838

Dunnes Stores ballot for strike action

WORKERS in Dunnes Stores all over Ireland will be balloted during the month of August for strike action.

The union plans to call a strike for September if Dunnes Stores continue to refuse to implement the terms of the Labour Court deal.

The company have re-neged on a deal that gave much less to the workers than they fought for last year.

Management have continually frustrated attempts by union officials to carry on with real negotiations. But a meeting between the union and the company finally took place in early July.

Delivered

So far this meeting has delivered nothing.

Workers in the shops are more than willing to strike again for guarantees of full-time jobs, increased hours and full payment of back money due under the PESP.

Because of the high turnover of staff many younger workers who didn't participate in last year's strike are now joining the union. And as one shop steward told *Socialist Worker* "There is still a real

feeling for fighting the company.

"Even the few workers who passed the pickets last year are now applying to join the union and regretting that they didn't come out last year".

Vote No to CPSU deal!

INFORMATION meetings for thousands of civil servants have been taking place throughout the country.

Workers are being asked to vote "Yes" to a pay deal agreed by the union with Ruairi Quinn, Minister for Finance.

But this deal which was supposed to address the issue of low pay is an absolute sell-out.

Since 1992 the CPSU has been trying to negotiate with the Government to deal with low pay in the service.

A national campaign of industrial action had dramatic effects on the running of government departments.

But this action was called off by the union with consultation with the members.

Already union activists in many government departments have been issuing

Many of the workers continue to wear their MANDATE badges and are getting a very good response from the customers. "People will come up and tell you how they still hate Margaret Heffernan and

their own bulletins in opposition to the deal.

One union rep told *Socialist Worker*, "I am delighted with the response we are getting. Most workers are very unhappy with the deal and union officials have been getting a lot of flack at information meetings. They can't give satisfactory answers to the members. This package has created more difficulties and anomalies than it solves".

Low Pay

Socialist Worker has distributed hundreds of leaflets to workers in the Civil Service, arguing for a "No" vote and a return to industrial action.

As one member pointed out, "The response has been very good. We don't want to accept this package. It does nothing to deal with low pay but ties us to more flexibil-

would support us just as much if we went out again", according to one worker in a major Dunnes outlet in Dublin.

Building

But a small number of the 62 stores are still weak in union organisation.

One shop steward told *Socialist Worker* that she felt the union should be

concentrating on building up the weaker stores.

"There's no point in continually visiting the stores that are solid.

"I think the union officials should haunt the stores where the membership is weakest in order to strengthen them up for the possible strike.

"And next time round we will have to stay out until we get a real victory."

ity and new work practices.

"We should be getting a separate pay rise for such productivity."

The question of where we go from here is now key. Workers who are angry with the deal reached by the union are also asking what is the alternative.

But we must remember that it was the effect of industrial action that brought

Quinn to the negotiating table in the first place.

Now with Ireland in the role of EU Presidency civil servants have a golden opportunity to put them under pressure.

Imagine the power of pickets on Dublin Castle and other departments while government is bending over backwards to impress the EU dignitaries.

An Post: Strike threat forces 11th hour bosses' climbdown

A MAJOR strike in the Dublin Mail Centre (DMC) was averted in the Labour Relations Commission late on Monday 22nd July. The DMC handles over half of the country's mail.

The latest row centred on the local branch secretary of the CWU, Brian Shanny.

Brian's trade union activities were not to the company's liking and they refused to have him in on negotiations.

But like Dave Beggs, the General Secretary pointed out, "We don't choose for the company who represents them and they cannot dictate to us or our elected representatives."

Workers in the DMC have told *Socialist Worker* about the heavy-handed management conditions at the centre:

"Big Brother is watching you out here. Management are really top heavy and breath over our shoulders all the time."

"The most recent addi-

tion to the personnel management team is Maurice Fines who has been brought into the company as a Trouble Shooter", according to a local shop steward.

Fines started his career in the personnel department of Quinns worth / Crazy Prices—a company notorious for breaking deals with the unions. Fines has continued the way he started by insisting as he puts it on "management's right to manage".

In practice this means that he ignores existing agreements with the unions and rams through changes in work practices.

Ignored

Another shop steward told *Socialist Worker* "An Post have ignored a Labour Relations Commission deal that the union have held by."

"It's a crazy situation. "On the one hand there is a third party recommendation, the company don't honour it and then they say

Victory for sit-in ship crew

THE CREW of the Euro-Power—five Filipino, three Irish and one Scottish—ended their occupation in Waterford after four months.

The occupation began when their employers failed to pay them their wages. The crew enjoyed huge local support through petitions and benefit nights.

They also received international solidarity when four of the companies ships were tied up in ports as diverse as Rotterdam and Avonmouth near Bristol.

The occupation was victorious as the workers received back pay and wages for leave.

The dispute arose when the company, Bell, ran into financial difficulties.

Employers

Bell is a subsidiary of Bell Lines, who are the largest port employers in Waterford.

They have been involved in attacking trade unionists, sackings and redundancies for a large section of the workforce and taking on contract workers.

The workforce has been cut from 150 to 50 in the last four years.

The victory shows that fighting back gets results.

Defend Daisy Hill hospital

DURING THE height of sectarian tension in the run up to the Garvaghy Road seige Catholic and Protestant people from all over Co. Down gathered in Newry to launch a campaign in defence of Daisy Hill hospital.

A crowd of over 1500 was addressed by speakers from the local Council and workers from the hospital. The cuts implemented by the Tory Government have meant that Daisy Hill hospital will lose 3% of it's budget each year for the next three years.

Already services for the mentally ill, the meals-on-wheels and outpatients have been severely cut.

As one local woman

pointed out, "When your GP refers you for treatment it's to Craigavon or Belfast. Try getting a bus from here to Craigavon and back in the one day. You just can't do it."

One speaker from the floor said "I would have no problem blocking every road in and out of Newry if it was to save Daisy Hill."

Fight

And as a nurses shop steward pointed out, "These cuts are hitting the staff and the public.

"The Tory party should never be voted back in to Government but we have no guarantee that a Blair Government wouldn't give us the same treatment.

"We have to fight this

issue on the ground."

Unfortunately the weakness of the Council's strategy means that they have not pushed for any initiative from below. Instead they have set up a working party which also includes members of the Hospital Trust who are actually implementing the cuts.

Socialists at the meeting called for mass demonstrations to save the hospital and industrial action backed up by the entire public sector.

As one SWP member pointed out "The cuts in Daisy Hill are part and parcel of cuts by the Tory Government on education, services and all areas of public spending.

"We need a campaign that links all workers in a fight against the cuts."

Derry Community workers win victory

FIVE WORKERS at Pilots Row Community Centre in Derry who were sacked in February have won a victory.

Their boss, the Chief Executive of the Western Education Library Board, sacked the workers after allegations that they had smoked cannabis while on a weekend in Donegal last year.

The workers argued that the Board had no right to investigate allegations about their time off.

Support

Community support was mobilised in the Pilots Row Action Group and the workers themselves organised lunch-

time protests at the centre.

The Derry Trades Council took up the issue and a day of action was organised which received huge support from other workers.

The Labour Relations Agency ruled last month that the workers should be taken back.

They were put on the payroll

from 1st July.

A member of the Action Group told *Socialist Worker*.

"We've won a small victory for the sacked workers.

"The centre serves the community and there was huge anger in the community at the actions of the Education Board." claim for full reinstatement in their old jobs.

Psychiatric nurses strike ballot

STAFF IN the Psychiatric Nurses Association were balloting on strike action over understaffing in the Eastern Health Board as we went to press.

The low level of staffing means not only means that patients cannot get the attention they need, but it also puts staff at greater risk, of being in situations without any back up.

The Union has tried to negotiate with management to increase the numbers working to safe levels.

It has become clear from this dispute, and from the other disputes in the Health service, that management will only listen if they are pushed.

The Nurses balloted should vote yes for strike action, and all the workers in the Health service should follow their lead.

Socialist Worker

**ULSTERBUS/CITYBUS:
Time for
action on
the buses**

TWO thousand bus drivers working for Ulsterbus and Citybus are balloting for the second time on industrial action.

The ballot is being conducted from 23 July to 6 August is over the fine print of a pay offer.

Strings attached to the offer have angered Citybus and Ulsterbus workers.

The unions have already secured a 75% rejection of a pay offer of 3.5%.

Postal ballots which are required under the Tory anti-union laws are being issued over the next week.

Busworkers are looking for a pay rise in excess of 5%.

Transport

Strike action would close down public transport in the North and bring together Protestant and Catholic workers in a fight against low pay.

"For a 38 hour week we take home £150. This is so typical of the low pay economy of Northern Ireland.

"The offer of 3.5% is supposed to be a sweetener to us while the company prepares for privatisation.

"But it goes nowhere near addressing our low pay", a bus driver from Craigavon told *Socialist Worker*.

An ATGWU shop steward told *Socialist Worker* "It's the strings that has everybody worried.

Management want to amalgamate services and if this happens there is bound to be job losses.

"So the mood at the moment is for all-out strike action.

"We don't want to be messing about with one-day stoppages."

Similar attacks on the pay and conditions of busworkers in the Republic are taking place as Bus Eireann are shaping up for privatisation. Strike action North and South of the border is needed to push back the attacks on workers by both governments.

**NO TO TEAMWORKING,
NO TO A SELL-OUT...**

Unite to fight the Royal Mail bosses

Media lies provokes Derry walk out

POSTAL Workers throughout Northern Ireland are right to strike.

The Royal Mail are trying to introduce a system of teamworking whereby if any worker was sick or on annual leave, the rest of the team have to cover for their work.

As one worker explained, "The team might have to take out twice as much mail and get no extra pay or overtime.

Management have offered a rise but when you take account of all the strings, it is tiny and a lot of postal workers would be worse off."

The Tory government have condemned the action.

But many postal workers would be delighted to settle for the new pay and conditions the MPs have awarded themselves: a £43,000 basic, £50,000 in expenses and 18 weeks

holidays a year—with no team working!

Even before they get into government, Tony Blair and the Labour Party are doing their best to betray their supporters.

Refuse

They refuse to back workers who go on strike and are doing everything to exert pressure on the union leaders to stop escalation.

The tragedy is that the CWU union leader Alan Johnson has been listening to Blair for too long.

He has dragged his heels and even looked for a cool-

ing off period.

But the bosses at the Royal Mail have not budged.

All-out strike action is now the only way to win. Three percent of Royal Mail customers, the big firms, generate over 75% of business. These are the people who would be screaming if the strike hit hard.

The postal strike comes at a very important time in Northern Ireland. Sectarian politicians like Paisley and Trimble are trying to stoke up divisions during the marching season.

They know that during the ceasefire, the first voices for working class politics began to be raised among both Catholic and Protestant workers.

Many began to ask why were they being repre-

sented by dinosaurs who helped to keep John Major and the Tories in office.

The postal strike helps to show that the real divisions in Northern Ireland are those based on class. Protestant and Catholic workers have far more in common with each other in fighting for decent wages and condition than they do with the communal politicians who only want to represent 'their side'.

But we need to move from economic unity on the picket line to a real political unity. That will happen when workers from both tradition stand up against oppression and sectarian bigotry.

It will happen even quicker when we start to see that the real fight is against capitalism and for a socialist Ireland.

On July 12th the Derry Post Office was burnt down during rioting in the town.

In the days afterwards, postal workers spent up to twelve hours a day trying to get the deliveries back to normal.

As a goodwill gesture their union even agreed not to join a strike on July 18th to help restore the service.

But the Royal Mail management tried to claim that they were against the strike.

The Derry workers did not fall for this management propaganda.

Insist

When they heard the early reports on the radio they immediately walked out and marched together to the offices of the BBC and the *Derry Journal* to insist that their story be told.

One of the strikers explained, "There had been a lot of anger against the wrong people

during the week.

"Some of the men blamed the rioters for putting our jobs at risk.

"The focus came off the management of the Royal Mail.

"But when they heard how the bosses tried to turn our goodwill gesture into making us sound like scabs, it was clear to all of us again who was to blame.

"It was great walking around the media offices together making OUR voices heard for a change."