

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

Inside:

The cost in lives of the building boom

—CENTRE PAGES

## Now it's time to...

# STRIKE BACK!

**WORKERS across Ireland are starting to strike back against rotten conditions and low wages.**

7,000 workers in Dunnes Stores have just returned to work after magnificent picket lines closed down the retail giant in just two days.

In Northern Ireland, postal workers join a national strike that is going on throughout Britain. Management are trying to enforce 'teamworking' where workers have to cover for absentees.

### Scabbing

A Royal Mail attempt to organise a scabbing operation in August has been a miserable failure.

The main danger that workers now face is the pressure that the British Labour Party is exerting on their leaders to push a 'compromise'.

As one worker put it, "We started off demanding two main things -- a shorter working week and guaranteed jobs. We haven't achieved any of these yet. That is why we are still on strike"

In Dublin, workers at a fancy hotel, the Royal Dublin, in O Connell street are on strike to end a regime of low wages.

It is all a sign that a new spirit is returning to the working class movement. Many commentators had claimed that militancy was a thing of the past and that unions could never organise low paid flexible workers. But they have been proved wrong.

In the Republic of Ireland, union membership has grown by 10,000 last year as a result of struggles.

As long as there is exploitation, union can recruit and organise a fight. The real question is what sort of politics that take these struggles

forward.

The Labour Parties in Britain and Ireland are firmly distancing themselves from working class struggles. They want to run an economy where stockbrokers and fat cats make a profit. They hope that these entrepreneurs will 'provide jobs'.

### Squeeze

But the reality is that bosses use every sign of weakness to squeeze more and more productivity from workers who remain after sackings. Instead of creating jobs—most of them are job destroyers.

This is why we need a strong socialist movement to match the fight back that is growing among the rank and file of unions. We need a party that fight for our class with the same determination that Major and Bruton fights for theirs.

BLOWING THE WHISTLE FOR DECENT PAY & CONDITIONS

TU - Dunne RESTAURANTS and BRANCH

STU

£4.50

an hour

MINIMUM WAGE

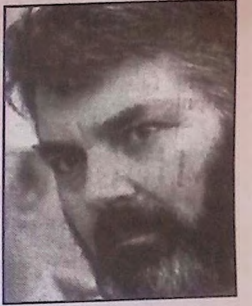
£4.50 an hour minimum wage. That is what we need to end the sweatshop conditions that have grown in recent years.

The British Trade Union Congress have pledged themselves to fight for £4.26 an hour. With the higher cost of living and currency differences that works out around £4.50 in Ireland.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions should be pressing for the same demand. We need to pressurise them now to act.

Order copies of petitions and resolutions on the minimum wage for union branches from *Socialist Worker*

# De Rossa's smear on the jobless



PROINSIAS de Rossa, the former left winger who is Minister for Social Welfare, has given the green light for a major media campaign against the unemployed.

De Rossa leaked selective parts of a report from the Central Statistics Office to the press to claim there was massive fraud going on.

This was then followed up by a claim from the *Irish Times* that 'up to a third of the budget for unemployed payments could be being fraudulently claimed'.

Yet the story is complete fiction. In June, de Rossa claimed that £11 million was being lost through fraud but suddenly it has jumped to £100 million.

The figures for fraud are based a Labour Force survey which showed that a large number of the unemployed were not at the address they originally gave the dole office.

## Moving

But moving address is not a criminal offence or a sign that you are committing fraud.

The unemployed are not asked for their address regularly when they sign on.

De Rossa's figures are not based on actual people who were discovered by the Department of Social Welfare to have committed fraud.

So far as we know they come from a random anonymous survey which does not have to be based on hard evidence.

When *Socialist Worker* rang up de Rossa's office to get a copy of the report on which these outrageous smears were based, they could only reply that it was 'not available'.

## BENEFITS THAT ARE NOT CLAIMED

THE REALITY is that many of the unemployed do not get their full benefit either because they are not aware of them or because of the innumerable obstacles put in their way.

One part time teacher, for example, told *Socialist Worker*, "I started to sign on on July 26th but I still have not got paid because my employers did not send in the proper details of my PRSI payments. It makes me sick to see de Rossa attack the unemployed rather than clear up messes like this'.

Thousands of low paid families are entitled to the Family Income Supplement yet do not know about it or have difficulty filling out the very bureaucratic forms.

Thousands of the unemployed do not get rent allowance because their landlords refuse to sign a rent book. In some cases the Department for Social Welfare also tries to make them stay at home—even if they are older than 21.

Yet instead of de Rossa using his office to get out proper information on these benefits, he has appointed more dole snoopers to harass the unemployed. But all of this will get him more cheers from his Fine Gael friends.

## THE REAL SCROUNGERS

ON THE same day that de Rossa was using a secret report to attack the unemployed, details emerged of who the real scroungers in Irish society are.

The Revenue Commissioners have just reported that £9 million was recovered from Irish businessmen who tried to get out of paying taxes.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. The Revenue Commissioners found 24,000 cases of underpaid tax, mainly from

business.

Among the tax scroungers are:

John Murphy of the Irish Quality Association who owed £159,000 in tax.

Apex Fire Protection Ltd who owe £270,000.

John White, a former TD, whose hotel companies owe £350,000 in unpaid tax.

*Socialist Worker* can now reveal that not one unemployed person has ever been paid these figures.

## Profit to blame as detergent giant pollutes Nenagh water



Queuing for clean water in Nenagh

PROCTOR and Gamble, the giant US detergent manufacturer, has finally been caught for polluting the water supply of Nenagh.

Ever since August the townspeople have had to draw water by hand from huge

tankers that have been brought into the town.

Proctor and Gamble has worldwide sales of over £35 billion but still takes short cuts to cut costs.

The plant discharged effluent into a drain without any regard for the consequences.

At first Proctor and Gamble tried to deny it was responsible but a report from the Environmental Protection Agency finally pinned the blame on the company.

The pollution was first reported on August 3rd but the urban council did not issue a warning until August 16th.

All the time Proctor and Gamble tried to cover things up.

The scandal is that Proctor and Gamble has not even got a licence to operate from the EPA—but is still allowed to continue production while the application is being processed.

This is the second time the plant has polluted the town's well.

So far the EPA has refused to disclose how many other major companies are allowed to operate even though they have no licence.

## Gay bashing in Derry

By a *Socialist Worker* reader WE WERE walking home from the pub one night when we passed by a group of people from our school.

They followed us snarling "faggot", "queer" and "get the f\*\*k out of our city". There were three of us and ten of them.

I felt blows to my head and side, and another of our number was hit twice in the face.

This was not the first such attack. But the school authorities have always respected the thugs' lies and nothing was done.

Similarly when Stephen Dillon was beaten and ended up on a life support machine, St Columb's College distanced itself from the event.

In fact the school has made things worse by teaching that gay are abnormal.

If someone were to report gay bashing to the priests who run the school, they would probably be told to pray for forgiveness as it was their own fault.

## inside the system

# Prisoners made to fight

PRISONERS AT a maximum security jail were made to fight like gladiators while guards cheered and laid bets on them, says a document obtained by the *Los Angeles Times*.

If the inmates did not stop fighting when they were told to, they were shot, it is alleged.

Since the prison at Corcoran in California was opened in 1988, seven prisoners have been shot dead by guards and more than 50 have been injured.

Dimas DeLeon, an inmate, says in an affidavit that he was involved in 11 staged fights in the months he was in the security unit.

"I was made aware by the officers that there was money riding on me to win," he said. "I was even thanked by officers for making them richer."

The fights were so brutal that one is alleged to have ended with a combatant's death.

Officers also had a ritual called "Greet the Bus" in which shackled inmates arriving from other prisons were pummeled, beaten and forced

to run the gauntlet.

Sadistic guards, called the Sharks, donned black leather gloves and placed tape over their name tags while they waited for the bus to arrive.

Inmates were pushed off the bus one by one and hit with fists, batons and combat boots. Some of the injuries, including fractures, were not treated for months.

Other inmates were forced to stand without shoes on hot asphalt, their severe burns being blamed on games of "barefoot handball".



HUMAN resource managers are 1990s gobbledegook for old fashioned personnel managers.

Apparently these charming individuals, whose job is to sack, threaten and bully workers, are having a hard time these days.

The US Society for Human Resource Management has issued a report claiming half of all its members reported one or more "violent incidents"

## Toffs against Terrorism

AS BOTH Catholic and Protestant workers in Northern Ireland suffer low wages, it is good to know that politicians in Britain and Ireland are dining as much as ever.

The British and Irish Association held their annual dinner weekend of gin and tonics and smoked salmon chat in Oxford.

The Association comprises the great and good in Anglo-Irish Affairs and has been meeting since 1972. It is known as 'Toffs against Terrorism'.

*Socialist Worker* is wondering why we didn't get an invite to spend a weekend listening to Michael Ancram singing and Proinsias de Rossa telling jokes about the time he was interned in the Curragh.

directed against them in their workplace last year.

"They are the tip of the iceberg", moans spokesperson Tia Schneider Deneberg.

The factors behind the more aggressive attitude of workers to personnel managers?

"New forms of teamworking, as well as mandatory overtime, more shift working and fatiguing production targets."

Sounds familiar.

# JUNKET OF ALL JUNKETS

THE JUNKET of all junkets takes place in Rome on October 6th.

The occasion is the beatification of Brother Edmund Rice, the founder of the Christian Brothers who believed that Irish manhood was made by the use of the strap.

Public money is being spent for politicians to go and celebrate this devious and brutal man.

## Labour

The delegation is being led by none

other than the Labour Minister for Education, Niamh Breathnach.

And some of you thought that the ties between church and state were loosening in modern Ireland.....

## SPRING CLEANING

SPARE a thought for our brilliant TDs and senators who had to return to work after their summer holidays on ... September 24th.

## Minimum

While workers receive the bare minimum of holidays, the politicians are living it up.

Even better. The Dail is getting new carpets, new furnishings and better facilities. All this while they preach to us about more sacrifice.

## FIANNA FAIL SPEECHWRITERS

Fianna Fail are so desperate for power they have a total of 25 people to write speeches for their party's frontbench spokesperson.

The days when they had a few thoughts to run together to write their own speeches are fast disappearing.

The cost of all this is a mere £500,000. Maybe Larry is back paying the bills in the hope of a few more grants.

# what we think BOSNIA AFTER THE ELECTIONS... So this is peace?

THE MUNICIPAL elections which were held in Bosnia on September 14 showed the reality behind the peace deal imposed by America.

A year ago, the war in Bosnia ended when the Croatian army, which was fully equipped and egged on by Clinton, tore into the Krajina area to drive out 150,000 Serb refugees.

There were few protests against this ethnic cleansing from Western liberals who believed the media campaign which demonised the Serbs.

Today Bosnia has been carved up into three one party states which are mirror images of one another.

All are run on ethnic lines where anyone from "the other side" is seen as the enemy.

In west Mostar, which is run by the Croatian authorities, the police 'are deeply involved in intimidation and violence against those few Muslims and Serbs who venture into the west of the city', according to the *Financial Times*.

Editors of a satirical magazine have even been threatened with three years in jail for "destroying the statesman-like quality and personal integrity" of the Croatian leader Franjo Tudjman.

In the Serb part, the military leader Ratko Mladic, who was responsible for terrible murders, continues to hold his position.

In one town in Teslic an opposition candidate was arrested and held until he agreed to withdraw from the elections.

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**In the Muslim controlled area there have been 20 grenade attacks on homes of opponents of the Muslim party, the SDA.**

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## Torturers

Dozens of torturers, killers and jailers live the good life while working class Serbs, Croats and Muslims live in misery.

Dario Kordic, for example, who is wanted by the UN for the murder of 120 Muslims, lives in a luxury flat owned by the Croatian military while Nasir Oric, a Muslim torturer of Serb women, drives around in his Mercedes.

One of the great lies of the war was that each ethnically based government

truly represented 'its' people. In fact they were all right wing thugs who used hatred to build a power base.

The US government waited until near the end of the war to impose the Dayton agreement.

It consolidated the hold of these thugs and drew both the Muslims and Croats closer to the US "sphere of influence".

The tragedy is that many on the left failed to see all this because they believed that one nationalist group, the Bosnians, were better and even stood for a "multi-ethnic" society.

The reality of what is happening today should convince every socialist never to look to US imperialism as a saviour for the problems that capitalism creates.



■ Mostar is still divided despite all the talk of peace

## The politics of tax cuts

RECENTLY the SIPTU conference voted to open talks on a new programme for social partnership.

The only concrete demand the union leaders were making was for more tax cuts.

Yet this has already been signalled by the Coalition for the next budget.

They see it as part of their electoral strategy for returning to power.

There is a problem with tax in Ireland because four out of every ten PAYE workers pay the top income tax rate of 48%.

But they only pay such high tax rates because big business and the large farmers get away with paying so little.

The Irish rich have developed a culture which has taken tax evasion to a form of high art.

## Culture

The International Financial Services Centre, for example, is a monument to tax evasion.

Banks and building societies move in to take advantage of the low 10% tax rate.

More importantly, the whole multinational sector has been built up on the promise of low taxes.

In 1992, for example, taxes on companies amounted to a mere 8% of the total. Tax on capital was minute, at less than 1%, which was one of the lowest rates in Europe.

Over fifteen years ago, hundreds of thousands of trade unionists took to the streets under the slogan 'Tax the Greedy not the Needy'.

But the union leaders defused the protests when they got too close to the bone.

Now a new demand for tax reform is growing but this time it is coming from the right.

They want to target the unemployed as the reason why PAYE workers pay so much tax. This way they can divert anger away from the privileged elite who have gained so much from the boom.

The scandal is that this new campaign is being fronted by Proinsias de Rossa who has given the green light for a major campaign against the unemployed.

As this party moves closer to Fine Gael, real socialists need to keep the focus on the Irish rich and their multinational friends.

## BAIL LAWS:

# Another move to take away our rights

FRESH FROM a summer which has seen an intense law and order campaign, the Coalition are taking another step to remove one of our rights.

In November they will hold a referendum which will give the police more influence to stop someone getting bail if they believe they will commit a new offence.

Nora Owen says that the measure will initially be used in cases involving murder, rape and drug dealing.

This makes little sense as the lowest rates for re-offences by people on bail are in these categories.

Owen is simply trying to take the most unpopular forms of crime to win powers for the police—and then to extend them to other areas when the referendum has been passed.

Ireland already locks up people who are not found guilty. About 20% of cases in the Circuit Court are denied bail on the grounds, for example, that the accused might interfere with jurors.

The Annual Report for the

Prisons shows that nearly half of new prisoners were remand prisoners.

When their cases were processed it was found that 62% did not get a jail sentence. In other words the police were able to lock them up before they were proved guilty.

## Intimidate

According to the Irish Council for Civil Liberties, the effect of Owen's new provisions will be to 'punish people not for what they may have done but for something that the gardai and ultimately the Court believe they will do in the future'.

It will mean that the gardai get the power of preventative detention.

This will put them on a par with the RUC who use this power to intimidate anyone who oppose their rule.

people will be denied bail if the gardai believe that they are likely to re-offend.

But the gardai will cast their net very wide and imply that anyone they particularly dislike could commit another offence. Much of this will either be lies or complete misjudgments.

In Britain, it was shown that 75% of those who got bail against police objections com-

peted their remand period without any recorded offence.

None of these arguments have been aired in the press. Both the *Independent* group of newspapers and the *Irish Times* have run an hysterical law and order campaign.

Not only have they concluded that crime stories pay, but they also believe there is a lot of anger in Irish society and they want to divert it away from their friends in big business.

## Link

A close link has now been formed between the press and

the gardai publicity machine. It is significant, for example, that the present editor of the *Irish Times*, Conor Brady was a former editor of *Garda Review*.

Most of the crime correspondents also retail rumours and titbits of gossip that the police feed them.

In this situation it will fall to real socialists to actively oppose this disgraceful measure. Just as de Rossa and Spring have gone along with Fine Gael in its general economic attacks on workers, they have now retreated on basic civil rights.

## WHAT REMOVING BAIL WILL MEAN

IF PEOPLE can be held for several months or a year without a trial this will also have very practical implications.

■ The gardai will use the threat of detention to pressurise people to incriminate themselves.

## Confessed

This is what happened in the Kerry babies case where Joanne Hayes confessed to killing a child—even though later it turned out it could not possibly have been hers.

■ Preventative detention leads to discrimination against the person who is on trial. A US study, for example, showed that

people who were held in prison were more likely to be found guilty than those that were not.

This happens because jurors are encouraged to believe that there must be something already wrong for them to be denied bail.

■ Prison suicides will increase. Research in England shows that remand prisoners are four times more likely to kill themselves than those who are convicted.

The stress that arises from uncertainty as well as the anger that you are locked up even though you are innocent are just some of the reasons for this.

# Economic boycotts & sectarianism

IN THE aftermath of the sectarian Orange march in Drumcree, many Catholics have taken to boycotting the businesses owned by leading members of the Orange Order.

So, for example, parents from the Mount Lourdes convent grammar school in Enniskillen have caused the school to change the arrangements for obtaining uniforms.

In the past they all would have bought them from Roy Kells, deputy Grand Master of the local Orange Lodge.

Now alternative suppliers have been arranged. Anonymous letters in nationalist papers have been urging such a boycott.

Unofficially Sinn Fein councillors in Fermanagh were also expressing clear support for the boycott. Now Gerry Adams has said that these campaigns are a legitimate part of the struggle.

**Socialists have no sympathy at all for the business interests of the leaders of the Orange Order. Nevertheless, we would not advocate a campaign of such boycotts.**

In some circumstances boycotts, although a fairly passive form of protest, can be an effective part of a political campaign. For example the boycott of goods from South Africa during Apartheid was certainly worth backing. But in Northern Ireland the same tactics will backfire.

There is a constant rivalry between Protestant and Catholic small business, with many shops, pubs and companies relying on custom from their 'own' community. It does not take much to bring this rivalry to the surface.

The main problem with trying to organise a boycott, even of specific Orange Order leaders, is that it very quickly escalates to all Protestant business and counter-boycotts developing in turn.

**Already anonymous loyalist posters have appeared in Portadown urging Protestants to support a "boycott of Roman Catholic business".**

Both economically and politically such campaigns reinforce the message that the division in Northern Ireland is one of community rather than class.

This was the lesson of the biggest boycott campaign organised by nationalists, that of 1920-1921.

During the fight for independence, Arthur Griffith and Sinn Fein had long advocated a boycott of Northern Unionist business. Griffith hated trade unionism and denounced the 1913 strike.

He had no basis on which he could appeal to Protestant workers. This is one of the reasons why he adopted the tactic of the boycott.

Griffith mistakenly believed that "if they held up the banks it would bring the Unionist gentlemen to their sense very quickly."

## Expulsions

Griffith got popular support for his idea following the marching seasons of 1920 and 1921. These had been accompanied by vicious sectarian attacks against Catholics and widespread shipyard expulsions.

The Labour Party, which had tried to organise an anti-conscription campaign in 1918 in direct alliance with the bishops, also backed the call for a boycott.

Although £5m worth of trade was lost by the boycott it turned out to be totally counter-productive.

Economically it led to Unionist-owned business seeking closer links with Britain and, worse politically, it reinforced the idea that there were two mutually hostile communities in Ireland.

A leading member of Sinn Fein at the time, P. S. O'Hegarty, wrote that it "raised up in the South, what had never been there, a hatred of the North...it made Protestant Home Rulers almost ashamed of their principles and it turned apathetic Protestant unionists into bitter partisans."

Any systematic boycott campaign would have a similar bitter outcome today. For those people angry at the Orange Order and the RUC who want some sort of action, a different tactic is needed.

**There is a tactic that differentiates between the Orange State and ordinary Protestant workers, that unites workers rather than dividing them, and that is in a different league when it comes to organising effective action—the tactic of class struggle.**

Instead of seeking to have Protestant shops replaced by Catholic shops that can pay as little as £1.50 an hour, socialists have to show how the Orange Order is opposed to the interests of Catholic and Protestant workers.

—CONOR KOSTICK

## WILLIAM McCREA JOINS HANDS WITH KING RAT BILLY WRIGHT

# The singing sectarian

THE APPEARANCE of a Democratic Unionist MP, the Reverend William Mc Crea, on the same platform as Billy Wright in Portadown has finally revealed the real links that exist between the Paisleyites and the UVF.

According to former associates who have now split from Wright, McCrea has been an adviser to King Rat—Wright's notorious nickname—for some time.

Both share an interest in fundamentalist religion which sees Catholics as evil and supports right wing politics.

Wright, for example, has declared himself an admirer of Margaret Thatcher.

His former comrades in the UVF are also claiming that Wright may even have connections with British intelligence.

Some Free Presbyterian women swoon over him like teenage girls contemplating Boyzone. But his political message is of hatred and violence.

In 1981, McCrea was one of the 'County Commanders' of Paisley's own paramilitary "Third Force".

## Violence

The fact that Paisley and his DUP have tried to lead one paramilitary group or another since 1969 should be remembered by all when they hear DUP politicians trying to bring an end to the loyalist ceasefire today.



## Arrested

They point to the fact that the whole of a UVF splinter group was arrested after they tried to stage a press conference.

Wright who was also supposed to be present, had mysteriously disappeared.

When he was due to appear at a Belfast court for threatening a woman with murder, the case was adjourned after the principal RUC officer was found to have gone away on holidays.

Although the Democratic Unionist Party says that it will never sit in the same room as gunmen, Willie McCrea has no problem being seen in Wright's company.

Even other Paisleyites regard him as a hardliner.

He officiated at the funeral of one of the UVF men killed blowing up the Miami showband in 1975 when other DUP politicians were told to stay away.

McCrea is a successful gospel singer whose records have sold hundreds of thousands of copies here and in America.

## WHERE DOES THE DUP DRAW ITS SUPPORT?

THE DEMOCRATIC Unionist Party gains its support from the most right wing section of the Protestant lower middle class.

80% of the elected representatives of the party are also involved with Paisley's Free Presbyterian Church.

Evangelical religion provides the excuse to express sectarian hatred and oppose any liberal idea.

## Conditional

According to Paisley, "Just as the Alliance Party is the political wing of ecumenism, the DUP is the political wing of evangelical Protestantism".

The official slogan of the party is "For God and Ulster".

They make it clear that the link with Britain is conditional on the monarch being Protestant and the British state enforcing a Protestant

identity.

The DUP does not differ in the least from the right wing fundamentalists of the US. They still oppose rock music as "the devil's music".

At their 1978 conference they condemned the "pornographic nature of the secondary school examination syllabus."

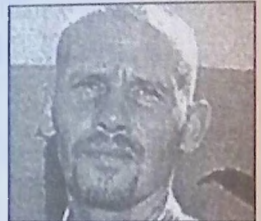
They were referring to John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men!*

The Unionist middle class have won a political leadership over the mass of workers by whipping up hatred.

They feared that a new questioning had begun with the ceasefires and this is why they set out to whip up sectarianism over the summer.

As the pressure grows on these bigots, they are more willing to openly align with thugs like Billy Wright.

## Billy Wright's friends



IN RECENT weeks Wright has been able to walk around brazenly wearing a T-shirt bearing the message "Mid-Ulster UVF simply the best" and has not faced arrest.

The Mid-Ulster UVF has been responsible for the deaths of at least 42 people since 1989, 41 of them Catholics.

■ One of the worst atrocities was the murder of 72 year old pensioner Rose Anne Mallon just outside of Dunganon in May 1994.

Wright was one of three men arrested nearby shortly afterwards. He was never charged.

■ The Mid-Ulster UVF also claimed responsibility for the murder of three workers at the Hyster factory near Lurgan in Co. Armagh.

Its statement regretted that one of the men killed was a Protestant.

■ There was no such statement of regret when the Mid-Ulster UVF claimed the murder of the pregnant Kathleen O'Hagan who was gunned down in front of her five children at her home near Omagh, just three weeks before the IRA ceasefire in 1994.

## The DUP's links with the paramilitaries

IAN PAISLEY has always pretended to be a God-fearing respectable middle class politician who condemns the 'roughs' among the Protestant paramilitaries.

In reality, the whole history of the Democratic Unionist Party reveals a close connection with loyalist death squads.

■ **THE ULSTER PROTESTANT VOLUNTEERS** The UPV carried out a series of bombings to destabilise the moderate Unionist government of Terence O'Neill in 1969.

Its key lieutenants included Reverend William McCrea.

■ **TARA** This was a shadowy paramilitary group led by the convicted paedophile, William McGrath. This claimed that Ulster Protestants were

the lost tribe of Israel.

Dual membership of Tara and the DUP was allowed until 1976.

## Abusing

At the time McGrath was sexually abusing inmates in the Kincora Boys Home.

■ **ULSTER RESISTANCE** This was formed by the DUP in 1986 to wreck the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

In August 1986, Peter Robinson, the DUP MP, led a large force of loyalists to take over the Garda station in the Co. Monaghan village of Clontibret but was arrested.

Before the court case, he thundered that he would go to prison for life rather than give an inch to the Dublin government.

When it came to it, however, he paid a £15,000 fine and £25,000 in compensation rather than spend a few weeks in jail.

This got him the nickname "Peter Punt" among those who had served time after listening to Paisley's rantings.

But it showed that the DUP's role has always been to incite others to take paramilitary action—while claiming to be upright, middle class politicians themselves.

## international news

### TONY BLAIR:

# The Labour leader who sells out before he gets to office

LAST YEAR many believed that Tony Blair was a decent modern leader of the British Labour Party who was practical about bringing real change.

Today thousands of trade unionists are turning away from him in disgust as he moves ever closer to a business agenda.

Over the last few weeks, the Labour Party has set out to distance itself from the goals of working people.

When the Tories were trying to hammer the post office workers, Blair jumped into to call for a ballot. But the man who the Tory press are denouncing as the hardliner who responsible for keeping the postal strike going is in fact a former Blairite.

A year ago John Keggie, the leader of the Scottish postal workers was supporting Blair in his call to remove Clause 4 -- the article which commits the Labour party to public ownership. Now thousands like Keggie finds themselves on the wrong side simply because they want to defend their unions.

Blair's intervention in the postal dispute was no accident. His shadow employment secretary, David Blunkett, has called for ballots every time the employer makes a new offer in a strike. He has not ruled out legislation to enforce this.

This could mean that every time a few pence are offered, a strike has to be disrupted in order to put joke offers to a ballot.

The TUC conference this year was the occasion when the Blair put the boot even further into the unions.

One of the yuppie spin doctors he associates with, Stephen Byers, claimed that Labour would break their links with the unions in the future.

Then, a former supporter of *Marxism Today*, the magazine of the defunct British Communist Party, Kim Howells called on the word 'socialism' to be 'humanely phased out'.

Blair has now concluded that even the word 'socialism' puts off the upper middle class voters he wants to win.

In reality, Blair is well to the right of many Labour Party supporters. An ICM poll in the *Guardian* newspaper showed that 43% of Labour voters agreed that 'Trade unions should have more say in running the economy'. 43% also agreed that 'More socialist planning would be the best way to solve Britain's economic problems'.

All of this indicated that when Blair comes to office he will face major problems. Millions of workers will be looking for a pay back after 17 years of Tory rule. They

### CYPRUS:



Socialists and trade unionists in the Greek south of Cyprus demonstrating against nationalism on May Day this year.

will want changes in their education and health services.

Blair is trying to dampen expectations by getting his sell-outs in now.

For all his dislike of the union leaders, he will still need the help of Bill Morris of the TGWU, Edmonds of the GMBWU and Bickerstaffe of UNISON to keep workers in line. This is why the calls to break links with the unions are a probably fantasy.

The trendy set who dine with Blair regularly in the posh restaurants of Islington may despise the union leaders -- but if they are to run British capitalism they will still have to rely on their sell-outs.

Fortunately major opposition is developing to the left of Blair. The British TUC passed a resolution demanding a £4.26 minimum wage and many are determined to fight for it. 3,000 demonstrators turned up on a working day outside the TUC conference to lobby for the minimum wage.

As Jimmy Nolan of the sacked Liverpool dockers put it, "We must make it clear to Tony Blair and our union leaders that all the Tories anti-union laws must be thrown in the dustbin."

If the Labour government does not guarantee industrial democracy, then we must get it ourselves."

### ZIMBABWE:

# A STRIKING VICTORY

WORKERS IN the southern African state of Zimbabwe have won a stunning victory against great odds.

A strike by up to 180,000 civil servants has forced massive concessions from the government of Robert Mugabe.

The strike received virtually no publicity in the West.

Newspapers and television are apparently not interested in successful struggles which give hope in Africa.

The government told workers last month that they would have to accept wage increases of between 6 percent and 9 percent at a time when inflation is 25 percent.

Beginning with a small group of nurses, the strike soon spread to include around 90 percent of the civil service.

Thousands of demonstrators gathered at African Unity Square in the capital Harare to denounce the government and organise further action.

Armed police were sent to intimidate the strikers but many stayed on the streets for days in a public show of defiance.

The government then sacked junior doctors, nurses, mortuary attendants, firefighters and court staff for refusing to return to work. But workers continued to strike solidly, despite being told to return to work at one point by union leaders.

When the union leaders betrayed, activists organised to keep the strike going and to build

demonstrations which pushed the strike forward.

Pressure from below forced the main union federation to threaten a general strike from this Monday unless the government backed off.

As it became clear that huge numbers of workers would have backed the call, government backbenchers came out in support of the civil servants and denounced their own leaders.

Even a total media blackout, imposed by the government, could not prevent news of the strike spreading throughout the country and many other workers showing support.

## Spreading

After nine days of all-out action, the government told the strikers it had "forgotten to implement" a previously agreed extra 20 percent wage rise and would now make sure the money was paid.

But this was not enough to secure an immediate return to work.

The strike continued into the middle of last week as workers demanded reinstatement of all those sacked during the dispute.

Eventually, after two weeks of a strike that had shut down most state services, Mugabe held a crisis cabinet meeting and gave in.

The public services minister was sent outside to tell reporters that the government would make sure all the strikers could return to their jobs.

## Against hatred

SIMULTANEOUS festivals against nationalism took place in the Turkish north and Greek south of the island in September.

Over 2,000 joined the northern protest called by 48 trade unions and political organisations against Turkish nationalism.

*Workers' Democracy*, Socialist Worker's sister paper, initiated a similar protest against Greek chauvinism in the south which was backed by the AKEL communist party youth wing and the PEO union federation.

Meanwhile the Greek Cypriot government ignored warnings that far right nationalists were planning to attack Turks in the south.

A Turkish border guard was killed in September.

**RUSSIA:**

**The war comes home**

**RARELY CAN the sham of bourgeois democracy have been exposed so immediately as during the aftermath of Boris Yeltsin's election victory.**

Within a matter of weeks the central election issues—peace, democracy, wages, the economy—have all exploded with renewed intensity.

The army reopened its assault on Chechnya barely a week after the election, but with the enemy refreshed and Russian troops deeply demoralised by Yeltsin's broken promises of peace.

Within three weeks the Chechen resistance had seized the capital, Grozny, and the second city, Argun.

Russian attempts to retake Grozny have met with failure.

At the time of writing the assault has been called off and the Russian government has agreed to withdraw the troops from Chechnya by the end of August.

There is deep discontent in Russia with the government in general and the war in particular, which is threatening to explode in popular discontent.

**Promise**

Millions of workers have not been paid since Yeltsin's promise in March to compensate wage arrears.

This led at the end of July to a rash of bitter strikes spreading from the maritime region throughout the coalfields and to strike threats by power, oil and aviation workers and a planned national miners' strike on 26 August.

Although this was called off by union leaders at the last minute, many pits are still on strike.

With expectations raised by Yeltsin's extravagant election pledges, the situation is very volatile.

An indication of this can be found in a remarkable newspaper report of a meeting outside the town hall of Chernogorsk in the Kuzbass coalfield:

"The miners were joined by townspeople, and soon the building was surrounded by an angry crowd, now making political demands: no to the war in Chechnya, no to profiteering at the town market, no to the mafia, yes to better pensions.

"The mayor tried to calm the crowd, but almost paid for it with his life.

"A woman's voice cried, 'Hang him!', and the crowd surged forward with intent.

"He was saved only by the speedy arrival of the police.

"Luckily numerous calls to take up arms and go and shoot the businessmen and loot

the villas of the rich were not taken up. The detonator of these events, the miners, are still desperate" (*Segodnya*, 16 August 1996).

This simmering discontent has given an added urgency to the government's attempts to avoid a new outbreak of crisis in the economy, further symptoms of which are a budget deficit which is double the IMF target, and 400 trillion roubles of inter-company debt.

**Thuggish**

Given the immediacy of this new crisis, infighting within the leadership has also intensified. It is led by the thuggish head of the Security Council, General Lebed, who has demanded the resignation of interior minister Kulikov over the handling of the Chechen crisis.

Lebed tried to turn the rout of Russian troops in Grozny into a personal triumph for himself as "peacemaker", negotiating a last minute agreement for the Chechen resistance to maintain effective control over the republic, while accepting status as part of Russia.

It appears that a section of government is prepared to back Lebed and accept that the immediate social, political and economic price of staying in Chechnya has become too high.

The situation, however, remains on a knife edge. The 11 hour peace negotiations on 22 August, for example, were broken off 15 times as fighting continually flared up.

Lebed's position is highly tenuous—he is an ambitious but isolated individual with little support within the state machine.

**Yet another coup attempt may be on the cards.**

Consequently the ceasefire may be nothing but another temporary lull in the fighting as Russian troops regroup.

If the agreement holds, however, we will be witnessing a crushing defeat for Russian imperialism, the ramifications of which will be immense.

One popular Moscow newspaper has already drawn parallels with Russia's defeat by Japan in 1904, noting that it heralded the 1905 revolution.

1905, however, came after 15 years of rising mass struggles, whereas today the Russian working class is still politically weak and demoralised.

Nevertheless, the situation is ripe with possibilities for workers to go on the offensive.

—DAVE CROUCH

**THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY**

**The cost in the building industry**

**A man's life is worth less than £1,000 as bosses flout the law**

**OVER THE last year or so the Irish economy has been growing.**

**And with it the construction industry has experienced a massive boom.**

Building sites have sprung up all over Dublin and in other parts of Ireland.

Huge profits come the way of the property developers and building companies.

But what of the conditions of the workers in the industry?

As the building bosses scramble for profits the health of building workers is trampled underfoot.

Former shop steward Johnny Cluno told *Socialist Worker*, "In my experience contractors ignore the safety regulations—it costs time and money and they are only interested in profits".

In 1995 there were 15 deaths on building sites in Ireland. So far this year there have been 10.

These figures reflect an alarming upward trend—they are 50 percent higher than in 1993 and 1994.

Last year, injuries came to 1,600—about one in fifty of the 80,000 working in the industry.

Some of these were so serious that men were left crippled and not able to work again.

These injuries and deaths were almost always avoidable if proper safety facilities were put in place on sites.

Yet so frequent are injuries on building sites that only one in seven is reported.

The Health and Safety Authority identifies the following danger areas: poor or no scaffolding; hazards in roofwork and steel erection and edges and openings with no guard rails or other protection.

For example, scaffolding must be properly secured, ladders held in place and edges

over two metres provided with guards to prevent falls.

Johnny Cluno points out: "Scaffolding should have toeboards to prevent tools or bricks being accidentally

kicked over and falling on someone.

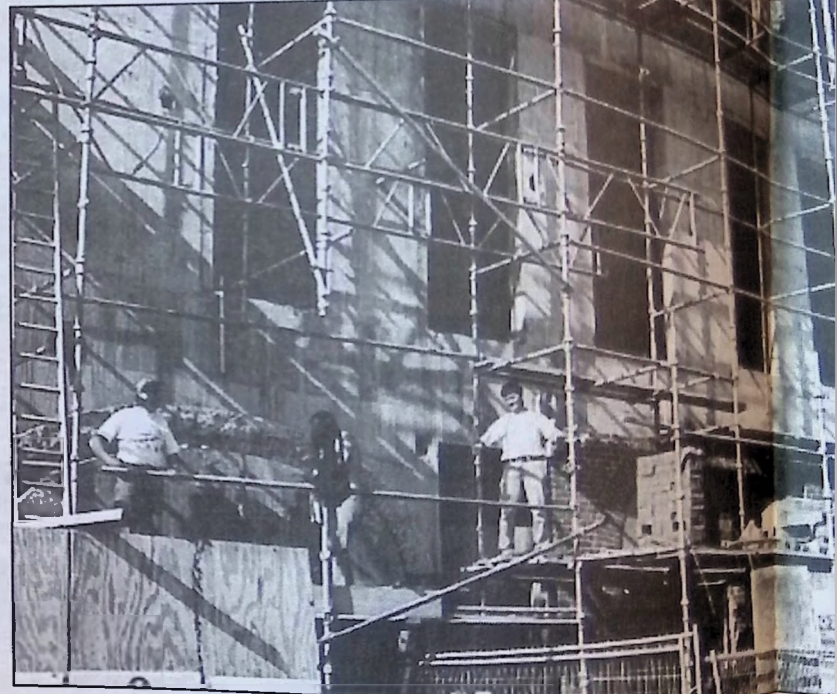
"There should be handrails on scaffolding and all trenches should be shored up to prevent the walls caving in on a man working in the trench.

"Contractors don't want to take the time to do these things and so there are serious accidents".

Failure by employers to observe simple safety procedures led in 1994 to four deaths from falling from a height, two men dead after being crushed by machinery and others killed by electrocution, collapsing wall, a forklift falling in a hole, and being crushed by a falling skip.

The Health and Safety Authority has the job of enforcing safety legislation.

Even with a rate of securing 70 per cent convictions, it managed to get less than a dozen successful prosecutions last



chicken feed in comparison to the profits available.

Here are some of the handful of prosecutions in 1994:

■ On one site in Wexford a worker was electrocuted when a truck short circuited overhead lines.

Failure to conform to the regulations caused the death and the firm was fined just £500.

■ In the same year a boring contractor was fined £340 for refusing to cease operating under lethal high voltage lines.

■ When a crane failed its load of 1,340 kg fell on a site worker. His right arm and shoulder were amputated.

For failing to keep the crane in a proper condition the Co Donegal firm was fined just £1,000.

With penalties as lenient as these is it any wonder construction firms cut corners?

*"The foremen always seemed to know in advance when the inspectors were coming!"*

*"Even if there is a prosecution, it could take two or three years, and a fine of maybe £500—by which time everybody will have forgotten the name of the poor man ... except his wife!"*

And local authorities are gambling with the safety of their workers too.

In 1993, a dry stone wall collapsed on a Waterford Corporation workman digging a trench.

Because the safety regulations were flouted the man was killed.

The Corporation was fined £900.

While the press and politicians whip up a law and order frenzy, few resources are put into making employers abide by the law and provide safe working conditions.

"You've never seen the gardai on a building site arresting the contractors for dangerous practices—that's one area of law and order that the cops and politicians don't care to enforce," says Johnny Cluno.

"With the big firms, the foremen always seemed to know in advance when the inspectors were coming—they would be handing out hard hats and putting things right the day before."

The Health and Safety Authority had just 55 inspectors in 1974 to cover all industries and all of the South's workplaces—and ten of these are specialists in the chemical industry.

The HSA has warned employers that later this month it will divert most of its inspectors into the construction sector for two weeks.

It has given the bosses federation formal notice of this. This amounts to telling the construction bosses to keep an eye out for a fortnight and then return to their old ways.

It is no wonder that efforts to clean up the sites come to nothing.

Earlier this year a worker was killed when scaffolding collapsed on a site operated by the notorious construction firm in Dublin's Parnell Street.

A short while later union officials visited the site and saw

# INDUSTRY...

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

# In lives of ing boom

## less than at the rules

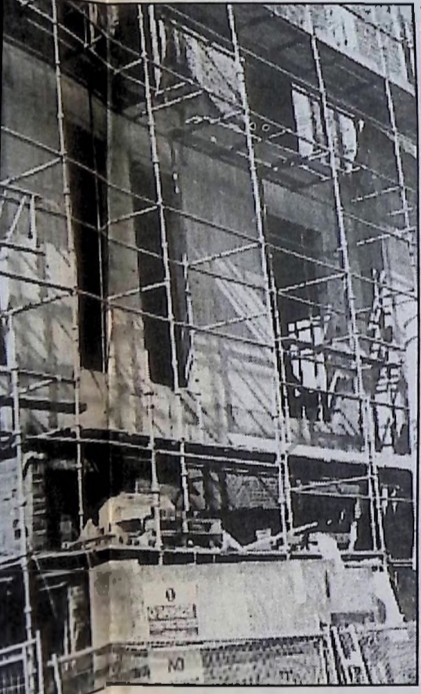


Photo: NATHAN PRATSCHKE

they do not meet safety requirements.

Less immediate is the toll to health that working in the building industry takes.

Hazards like asbestosis are well known and still arise from demolition work.

Less obvious is the general deterioration caused by long years working in all weathers with inadequate facilities.

Mick Brennan believes canteen facilities are getting worse, not better.

"Twenty years ago there would have been a proper canteen on a site with meals for the workers.

"Today there is not one proper canteen on any site in Dublin.

"Often the canteen is also the changing room. Men are eating their poxy sandwiches among dirty clothes and boots.

"Toilets are a disgrace. It is no wonder that after a few years of this men are suffering chronic bad health."

All the safety legislation and regulations mean very little when they are not enforced. And key to enforcing safety at work is trade union organisation.

The building bosses have had things their own way for too long.

As one trade union activist told *Socialist Worker*: "On many sites today a shop steward is a thing of the past.

"Or fear of not getting another start holds people back from speaking out."

Eric Fleming of the construction branch of SIPTU points out that recent legislation provides for the election of a safety officer at work by the workers. "But employers are not keen to see it implemented."

While construction is under the control of the profiteers, human safety will always

take second place.

But a strong union presence on every site would make a start in defending the health and lives of building workers.

## Portrait of a cowboy

ZOE Developments is Ireland's largest city centre apartment builder.

Developing semi-derelict sites in tax incentive areas has made them a fortune. As one of their managers put it: "Land was cheap—people didn't realise its value".

### Completed

With the latest computerised design techniques, Zoe boasts it completed 1,500 apartments in three years.

But there is a dark side to this success story. Their sites have seen the deaths of two building workers and scores of injuries.

At the end of 1994 work was halted on a prestige development in Dublin's Batchelors Walk when Dublin Corporation charged they had broken fire regulations.

Another Zoe development of a block of £40,000-£50,000 apartments in a tax incentive area in Dublin's Parnell Street was being rushed to have units available for the beginning of the tax year.

With corners cut scaffolding collapsed, killing one of the building workers.

This was not allowed to interfere with the profits the apartments made for Zoe or the opulence enjoyed by directors Liam and Roisin Carroll in their exclusive Mount Merrion home.

### Profits

Zoe Developments declared profits of £1.3 million in 1993.

But their auditors, Casey McGrath Associates, felt forced to "qualify" their accounts for that year.

In layman's language "qualified accounts" means something fishy is going on.

Casey McGrath "could not determine whether proper books of accounts had been kept or confirm profit figures".

It's about time strong, fighting trade union organisation was built to shut down cowboys like these.

# What do socialists say?

## Is it really all about economics?

ONE OF Marxism's greatest assets is that it bases its political practice and its analysis on a scientific theory of historical development.

Prior to Marx it was generally assumed that history consisted primarily of the deeds of "great men" and the driving force of this history were the ideas of other "great men".

Karl Marx turned this upside down. He showed that the basis of all human development was the production of the necessities of life—food, clothing, shelter and the like.

The two fundamental factors shaping history were therefore: the level of development of the forces of production, that is the ability of human beings to produce goods.

the social relations between human beings, formed in the process of production, above all class relations between those who owned and controlled the means of production and those who did the work.

Ideas, far from being the prime movers of history, were reflections of and responses to material and social conditions. Moreover, the agents of social change were not individual leaders, religions or nations but social classes arising from the economic structure of society.

Not surprisingly the nineteenth century bourgeoisie and its intellectual supporters felt profoundly threatened by this perspective. Not only because of its political implications—working class revolution—but also because intellectually it challenged their view of themselves as the makers of history.

Over the last 20 years or so they have been given a radical gloss by saying that because Marxism reduces everything to economics it fails to deal with the issues of race and gender.

As first sight these criticisms have a lot going for them. After all, "everyone knows" that there have been many religious and national wars, that racism, sexism and homophobia have played a terrible role in history.

Nevertheless, as objections to Marxism they miss the mark. In the first place they convict Marx of being crude and oversimplified by presenting a crude and oversimplified version of Marxism.

Marxism does not at all deny the important role of ideas. Why else would Marxists devote so much energy to political debate and propaganda and to

building political movements?

Moreover, Marxists have been and continue to be in the forefront of the fight against racism, sexism and all other forms of bigotry.

All that Marx insisted on was that ideas and political power both have their root in the economic structure of society and its class relations.

Therefore any proper historical explanation of the role of these phenomena must take this as its starting point.

In the second place Marx was absolutely right to insist on the economic foundations of society and ideas. Human beings are, in the first place, animals with given biological needs.

Any social order which is unable to address this problem in some form will not survive a month.

How it solves this problem, that is, how it organises production, inevitably shapes and conditions every aspect of that social order.

### Explaining

Treating ideas as independent and autonomous makes any real explanation impossible.

To say for example that the oppression of women is caused by sexist ideology without explaining the roots of that ideology is to explain nothing. It is also a recipe for political despair.

If sexist ideology can be countered only by antisexist ideology then how can we overcome the fact that all the main means of spreading ideas in society are in the hands of the sexist?

One alternative is to say that these ideas are part of human nature or in the genes; that men are naturally sexist or that whites are naturally racist.

But, apart from being scientific and historical nonsense, it is even more a counsel of despair.

The ruling class will, of course, never accept Marx's materialist analysis because it announces their downfall.

But for working class people who need to change the world, not just interpret it, and for those who really want to end oppression, Marxism provides the only serious guide to action.

### Criticisms

These criticisms have formed the core of the academic response to Marxism ever since.

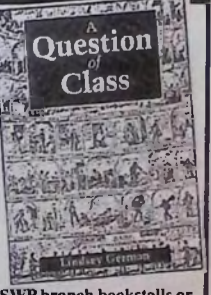
— JOHN MOLYNEUX

# A Question of Class

WE ARE told that class divisions are a thing of the past—that we are moving towards a "classless society".

This book demolishes the myths and shows that inequality and class divisions are as fundamental today as they have ever been.

Lindsey German is the editor of the monthly *Socialist Review* published by the Socialist Workers Party in Britain. She is also author of *Sex, Class and Socialism*, now in its second edition.



£3.50

Available from SWP branch bookstalls or from SW Books, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Tel (01) 872 2682 Add 60p for post.

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MARNIE HOLBOROW reviews a new book on the United Irishmen

# The tree of liberty

**T**HE UNITED Irishmen have either been damned or romanticised by Irish politicians.

According to Daniel O'Connell, they were just "designing wretches who fomented the rebellion". For modern day republicans they were "the men of no property".

In fact the backbone of the United Irishmen came from two sources. First there were the leading industrialists of Belfast and Dublin who had grown tired of British restrictions on their liberty and their commerce.

The leadership of the United Irishmen shows the influence of this class. Neilson was a prominent wool draper, Sinclair the owner of a linen mill, John Cambell an apothecary, Tennent a merchant.

In the Dublin Society, there were over 100 merchants, amongst which were the woollen merchant Oliver Bond and the wealthy iron founder Henry Jackson.

This ruling class in-waiting wanted to break the old system of privilege that rested on the landowning class and bring in a society where industry and trade could flourish.

The second main group were those who opposed the system of land ownership and tenancy which had been dictated by British colonialism.

Settlers had dispossessed native owners in the previous century. Landlords were often absent and so middlemen came to have a key position in the economy.

The majority of these middlemen were originally picked from the favoured ranks of Protestant immigrants.

However, some middlemen were Catholics, often from the ranks of those dispossessed in the previous century. Helped by the repeal of the penal laws from 1778 onwards, they increased their holdings and began to consolidate their social position.

By the end of the century they were becoming the backbone of rural life and sought a political voice to match their new-found economic influence.

Some of this "underground gentry" openly joined the ruling orders, or as Tone put it, "sold their less advantaged brethren to be called "my lord" at the castle".

The majority, however, saw themselves as wrongfully dispossessed, the true proprietors of the land they were forced to rent. They lived in the "big house" but did not own the land.

In Ulster, this Catholic big farmer class had not developed in the same way.

Catholics had been squeezed by Protestant head tenants, and were lower down the social ladder.

They were the alehouse keepers, the grocers and school teachers as well as smaller tenant farmers in Southern Ulster.

In the 1780s many of them joined the Defenders, the secret society that sought, amid the stark class divide of the linen industry, to make the "cobler and the Caesar level".

The Defenders merged with United Irishmen in the mid 1790s, and began to embrace French revolutionary ideas.

The ruling classes were terrified by these developments. The claims of some United Irishmen to restore lands to those Catholic families dispossessed by the Act of Settlement left them aghast.



■ The arrest of Lord Edward Fitzgerald and (inset) Wolf Tone

One English landlord said he felt under siege like "a traveller in Africa, in a forest among Hottentots and wild beasts".

**I**N FACT, the United Irishmen were more ambiguous over the question of land distribution and tried to look both ways.

For example, to reassure wealthy farmers, they stressed that any land confiscation would be targeted only at church lands and at those who actively fought against the revolution.

On the other hand, Tone in *Poor Man's Catechism* was more radical and

said all landed gentry—Protestant or Catholic—were as reactionary as each other. "The origin of nobles in every country is the same, but time and revolutions have concealed their hateful origin".

Tone's approach showed that he understood

more than other leaders the need to build a mass movement that embraced the poor if they were to beat Britain.

When the United Irishmen were pushed underground, they set up meetings under the guise of book clubs, literary societies and clubs, like the secret Jacobin clubs before the French revolution.

These meetings were often held in barns and schoolhouses in rural areas. William Putnam McCabe, the United Irishman organiser, distributed Tom Paine's *Age of Reason* among millworkers in Belfast. Godwin's *Political Justice* was reported to be distributed across the countryside.

John Burk, a United Irishman who was expelled from Trinity College for being an atheist, wrote a broadsheet entitled *The Cry of the Poor for Bread*

which was pasted up on street corners and distributed in Dublin. It described how society was divided into two sections—"the parasitic" and "the useful".

Secret clubs multiplied and some drew in young artisans. The *Strugglers*, the *Real United Trades*, the *Union*, the *Cold Bone*, *Shoe*, *Druid*, *The States* were just some of the many in Dublin. One hostile observer described how *Northern Star*, the movement's paper, was used:

"The *Northern Star* is the principal and most powerful of all the instruments used for agitating and deluding the minds of the people. The lowest of the people get it. It is read to them in clusters. A whole neighbourhood subscribes to it".

**T**HE STRIKING achievement of the United Irishmen was to cut across sectarian lines. They could only do this because they were identified with revolution.

The French revolution had shown that the Catholic church was part and parcel of tyrannical privilege. The United Irishmen declared in 1795 that "the superstitious power of the Catholic clergy is at an end".

But the French revolution also became the model for a secular republic. The fight for reform to include the vast majority of Catholics would simultaneously mean dismantling a state founded upon the sectarian lines of an established Protestant church.

Tone, in his *Argument on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland* was categorical about the need for a non-sectarian movement. "No reform can ever be obtained which shall not comprehensively embrace Irishmen of all denominations".

Had their social support been confined to the industrialists, the United Irishmen would have got nowhere. Their political goals struck a chord with those lower down in society—the artisans, the cottiers, the tradesmen—and this gave the movement strength.

**J**UST AS the Jacobins in France relied on the mass mobilisation of the people—the *sans culottes*—so the United Irishmen rallied the "men of no property" behind the movement.

This huge movement against the British state caused the British ruling classes to act. They used the opportunity of the war with France to destroy the United Irishmen.

A massive campaign of military recruitment was launched. Signing up Irish Catholics as cannon fodder held the added advantage for the British of neutralising the revolutionary movement.

No less than 25,000 men were recruited in 1793-4 and over the Napoleonic wars a massive 150,000 Irish recruits joined the British armies.

More importantly, the British ruling class wooed the Catholic hierarchy within its fold by giving them their own Catholic college at Maynooth in 1795.

The Catholic Bishops were easy prey. Patrick Plunkett, Bishop of Meath, said after dining at Dublin Castle that "the politeness, attention and affability of the Lord Lieutenant was such as to leave us nothing to wish for".

However the real fanning of sectarianism came with the setting up of the Orange Order.

As the United Irishmen were making headway across the North the local conservative gentry and Anglican establishment were encouraged to spread the Orange Order to Mid Ulster.

In the words of one Anglican clergyman, it was the "means to check the progress of sedition".

The origins of the Orange Order give lie to the idea that it is the authentic ex-

pression of Protestant identity. It was the Anglican establishment, not Presbyterians, that first encouraged the Orange Order.

The violent terror that it unleashed was part of a strategy to divide the people in order to keep the country safe for the establishment. In 1796, for example, six hundred Catholic families were banished from their homes in Armagh.

Kevin Whelan's new book *The Tree of Liberty* shows that the rise of sectarianism in the 1790s cannot be laid at United Irishmen's door, but at that of the sectarian state itself.

He also shows that after this period of terror the "underground gentry" that had so recently been the standard bearer of freedom itself turned sharply away from the ideals of the United Irishmen.

After this point, the Catholic gentry who became a privileged layer within Irish society, did not want to rock the boat and aimed instead for the limited goal of reform within the Union.

Daniel O'Connell, who was the mouthpiece for this class, adopted a conservative stand of Catholic nationalism to meet his ends. He turned violently against everything that the United Irishmen stood for—including lying about his early involvement with them and making out that it was only run by Ulster Presbyterians.

Whelan describes O'Connell as the grave digger of the United Irishmen. In the sense that he stamped out the political tradition of secular, non-sectarian internationalism and replaced it with narrow Catholic conservatism, he is right.

Although this book is sometimes weak on a class analysis, overall it adds new insights into this revolutionary period.

■ *Tree of Liberty: Radicalism, Catholicism and the construction of Irish identity 1760-1830* by Kevin Whelan, Field Day Essays Cork University Press 1996

"The origin of nobles in every country is the same, but time and revolutions have concealed their hateful origin"—Wolf Tone

"The politeness, attention and affability of the Lord Lieutenant was such as to leave us nothing to wish for"—Patrick Plunkett, Bishop of Meath



book

# Up against bigots and cowards

CATHERINE CURRAN reviews a new book by Edna O'Brien

EDNA O'Brien's new novel provokes most of all a sense of outrage.

It weaves the events surrounding the X case in 1992 into the story of Mary, a young girl in the West of Ireland who flees from an incestuous relationship with her father only to discover that she is pregnant.

Her subsequent desperate bid to get an abortion in England is uncovered by local busybodies, who instantly raise the alarm and prod the gardai into action.

As a result, Mary and her accomplice, a single woman called Betty, are ordered back home to be called to account by the powers that be.

O'Brien's talent is satire, and she shows no mercy for that coterie of the pious and the hypocritical who band together under the umbrella of the pro-life movement.

She leaves little room for ambiguity in sketching the callous zealotry of the "pro-life" youth wing, or in targetting the complacent clutch of Catholic women drawn into the anti-abortion circle more for the Parish priest's approval than out of any concern for the unborn.

## Contempt

Where O'Brien depicts the bigots with malicious glee, she shows no less contempt for the cowardice of the so-called liberals who will not speak out in defence of the teenage mother, for fear of the wrath of the bishops.

On the other side of the coin we see the poverty, both material and emotional, in which Mary and her father are condemned to live.

Far from being cast as the villain of the piece, the father is portrayed as a tragic figure, a failure who constantly dreams of escape, trying to feel like a real man by standing with the farmers at the auction on fair-day although he has no cattle to sell.

Although Mary is driven to run away to save herself, we can perfectly understand why, when in the custody of her narrow-minded cousin Veronica, she has longings to return to him.

This contrasts with the hypocrisy of those who wish to forcefully return her hope in order that the sanctity of the family should not be thrown into question, despite a lurking suspicion that all is not as it should be.

This determination that the lid should not be lifted on the sordid secrets of rural life is what prevents those who know from speaking out.

But the novel is certainly not steeped in pessimism, and the final outcome shows hope for the future even in the midst of tragedy. Definitely worth reading, but wait for the paperback.

■ *Down By The River* by Edna O'Brien. Published by Wiedenfeld & Nicholson £15.99

film

SOME MOTHER'S SON...

# The film the Tories hate

Reviewed by DAVE McDONAGH

THE TORY establishment in Britain is furious over the new film *Some Mother's Son*.

They complain that it portrays them as the "bad guys" and the IRA hunger strikers of 1981 as heroes.

The film is co-written (with Jim Sheridan) and directed by Terry George, himself a former Republican prisoner. George defends the film against Tory criticisms saying that "there's no such thing as an unbiased film".

## Extreme

Among those attacking *Some Mother's Son* is Alex Walker of the *London Evening Standard*.

The *Standard* was the paper which in October 1982 carried the notoriously racist *Jak* cartoon portraying "the Irish" as a bunch of psychopaths.

This was the extreme end of a propaganda war



■ Bobby Sands played by John Lynch

aimed at demonising the IRA and presenting them as criminals rather than as freedom fighters.

The film shows how this policy of "criminalisation" provoked the H-Block hunger strikes and backfired on the Tories.

The first recognisable face on screen is that of Margaret Thatcher speaking to reporters after becoming Prime Minister of Britain in 1979.

Thatcher says of the Tories "where there is discord, we will bring harmony".

Their idea of harmony in the North was to step up repression.

## Bridges

We soon see British officials announcing the policies of "isolation, criminalisation and demoralisation" to deal with the Catholic minority.

"Isolation" involves the British Army blowing up bridges and blocking border roads. Frank, played by David O'Hara, and Gerard (Aiden Gillen) respond to one such action by blowing up an army landrover.

The two are arrested following a shootout and locked up in the notorious Maze prison.

## Focuses

The film then focuses mainly on the mothers of the two men, Annie (Fionnuala Flanagan) and Kathleen (Helen Mirren).

Annie is a republican who has already had one son shot by the army.

She fully supports her other son Frank, who is singled out by the RUC as the local IRA "ring-leader".

But Kathleen is different.

She regards herself as middle class and hates the IRA. She is horrified to learn that her son Gerard is secretly involved.

But she is galvanised into action when he announces he is joining his cellmate Bobby Sands on hunger strike.

The refusal of food was the culmination of a struggle for political status.

Republican prisoners

had previously been allowed to wear their own uniforms, organise their own education and associate freely in prison.

But in 1975 the Labour government withdrew political status and forced the prisoners to wear prison uniforms and live in separate cells without special status.

The film shows the Tories' "criminalisation" policy crumbling as Bobby Sands is elected to Westminster with 30,000 votes—more votes than Thatcher, as Helen Mirren's character points out to British officials.

## Exercise

But then the film retreats into the personal issue of whether or not Kathleen should exercise her right to take Gerard off the hunger strike if he lapses into a coma.

Kathleen has reluctantly immersed herself in the prisoners' campaign because of her son and never fully identifies with the working class ghettos at the heart of the struggle.

But this is the movies and *Some Mother's Son* is as good a film as we'll get on the North.

And anything that gets the Tories so annoyed has to be worth seeing!

book

# The reality of the class divide in Ireland

IRISH SOCIETY: *Sociological Perspectives* is a standard student textbook but it provides useful material on how Irish society has changed over recent decades.

It is based on a series of essays from Irish sociologists.

O'Hearn outlines the free market orthodoxy which has underpinned the state's strategy of development since the late 1950s.

This strategy was adopted with particular enthusiasm by Fianna Fail, leading to drastic public spending cuts in the late 1980s and a spate of cut-backs in public companies like Irish Steel, Team Aer Lingus and the ESB.

During the 1980s, industrial employment actually fell as output increased, reflecting the pressures on workers to increase productivity.

## Exodus

Ireland's late industrialisation provoked an exodus from the land and a shift in the composition of employment.

Between 1961 and 1981, the proportion of men working in agriculture fell from half of those at work to just one-fifth, and to just over 12 per cent by 1990.

Reviewed by JONATHAN PRATSCHKE

The percentage of women in the labour force increased from just over one-quarter in 1971 to almost one-third twenty years later.

The percentage of women between the ages of 20 and 24 who are economically active was much higher in 1991, at 46 per cent, and almost half of all women in the labour force are married.

Fahey and Mahon describe the social and political changes which have accompanied these shifts, showing how the model of the family set out in the Irish constitution has lost relevance.

In 1961, less than 2 per cent of births occurred outside marriage, but by 1991,



■ There are now more women in the labour force

this had reached 16.6 per cent.

The number of people involved in marital breakdown has also increased, and between 1986 and 1991, there was a rise of one-fifth in the number of people who were separated.

The massive outcry over the "X" case in 1992 showed that many Irish people are no longer willing to accept what the Church and right-wing politicians tell them, paving the way for the legalisation of homosexuality and last

year's vote in favour of the right to divorce.

Despite these changes, no reduction in class inequalities has occurred.

## Enjoyed

Whelan points out that the chances of a child from the industrial working class rising to the "service class" (i.e. professionals, administrators and managers) are substantially lower than in other European countries.

He also shows that the ad-

vantages enjoyed by the Irish rich are significantly greater.

This is evident in the area of education, and the most recent data show that only 3 per cent of the children of "higher professionals" leave school before the Leaving Certificate, compared to a massive 47 per cent of those from unskilled manual backgrounds.

The control of the Catholic Church over education has contributed to these inequalities.

Over and over again, the

essays in this book show the reality of the class divide and the extent to which class determines access to education, resources and power.

However, when it comes to changing this situation, the authors are largely silent.

Where the need for change is acknowledged, there is great confusion about the way forward, with vague references to the 'new social movements'.

## Absent

The working class is absent as a real agent with its own interests.

The ways in which Irish society has been shaped by workers' struggles in the past are ignored, and we are given ad hoc explanations of such social change.

Above all, this book illustrates the political vacuum in many academic departments and the need for socialists to provide a clear solution to the exploitation and oppression which Irish workers continue to face.

■ *Irish Society: Sociological Perspectives*, edited by Patrick Clancy, Sheelagh Drudy, Kathleen Lynch and Liam O'Dowd (1995).



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.

# As ICTU tries to sell a new programme... WHY SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP DOES NOT WORK

**THE UNION leaders and the employers are trying to sell another social partnership deal.**

This will be the successor to the Programme for Competitiveness and Work (PCW).

The PCW was the third-three year programme to limit wage increases in return for a vague commitment to social reforms.

The first programme, the PNR, was signed after Fianna Fail returned to power in 1987. The ICTU argued that Haughey's government would be more amenable to workers than Fine Gael had been.

In reality, the deal meant that there were 20,000 job cuts in the public sector and wages were limited to a very low figure.

One political correspondent, Stephen Collins, later pointed out that Haughey had achieved the almost impossible task of combining a programme of cuts with keeping the union leaders on side.

**Minority**

At the time the union leaders claimed it was necessary to sign an agreement with a minority Fianna Fail government to stop the danger from the 'New Right'.

Now the arguments have

changed because many of the 'New Right policies' are being implemented by Labour and Democratic Left ministers in a coalition which is presiding over privatisation and attacks on the public service in companies like Telecom, ESB and Dublin Bus.

Social partnership is supposed to signal the end of 'old-fashioned', 'confrontational' trade unionism.

But workers in Dunnes Stores and elsewhere have discovered that you still have to fight against employers who want to squeeze as much as possible out of workers.

## FEW GAINS FROM THE PCW

**The PCW brought few gains for most workers. In the three years of the programme the average worker's living standard rose by less than 1 per cent a year.**

Unemployment is higher, while poverty and drug addiction are rampant in working class areas.

Workers have lost out despite the boom in the Irish economy. The two main banks, for example, are now making £1 million a day profits, while multinationals repatriated £4,600 million in profits in 1995 alone.

**PAY**

The PCW limited wage increases to as little as 2 per cent. Meanwhile pay restraint has not hit company directors whose incomes have risen massively.

To benefit from the boom, workers need the freedom to fight for claims that allow us

to catch up.

Every worker should be free to pursue a claim for a 15 per cent wage increase. If we want to do this, we cannot afford to be tied into another three year deal.

**TAX**

The PCW has delivered very little in the area of tax reform. Last year PAYE workers paid 86 per cent of all income tax while corporation tax paid by big business accounted for only 11 per cent of total tax revenue.

Workers also face double taxation in the form of service charges.

The rich were allowed to get away with a tax amnesty during the years of social partner-



■ Tax demonstrations during the 1980s

ship. And to add insult to injury workers are now expected to foot the bill for Larry Goodman's beef fraud.

**JOBS**

The national agreements were supposed to bring job creation in return for modest pay increases.

But there is now more unemployment than nine years ago when the first programme was agreed.

The bosses are using the freedom they have been given by the no-strike clause of the PCW to squeeze more productivity out of us. Instead of creating extra jobs they are looking for more ways to cut back employment and boost profits.

**A PROGRAMME FOR PROTECTION?**

The union leaders tell us we need a programme to protect

the lower paid and weaker groups of workers.

They claim that free collective bargaining only benefits the stronger workforces who can fight for their own increases.

But low pay is rampant despite the programmes.

Shop assistants in Londis and Centra earn as little as £2.41 an hour.

Some hotel workers earn as little as £1.25 an hour for washing dishes.

The low rates for many shop workers are officially set by the Joint Labour Committee for the retail trade.

Instead of calling for more wage restraint the union leaders should be demanding a minimum wage of £4.50 an hour to break workers out of the poverty trap.

The unions should be or-

ganising in every shop and restaurant and then they should take action to win decent pay for the workers there.

It is the ICTU leaders who have often left groups of workers weak and isolated by demanding observance of the two tier picket.

By returning to a tradition of solidarity no group of workers would be left to fight alone.

### The fight for union rights

AT THE SIPTU conference which endorsed talks for a new programme, the union's leaders said union recognition was a demand they would pursue at the talks.

It would be brilliant if the unions organised to win recognition in every workplace.

The danger of social partnership is that unions will seek recognition in return for sweetheart deals.

SIPTU has led the way in this regard.

At Fruit of the Loom in Donegal and Derry, for example, workers are automatically made members of the union which encourages passivity instead of leading a fight. Now SIPTU stands by every summer while the workers are put on a three day week.

There is no point in union recognition unless the union is prepared to fight for better conditions. Unions will flourish if they return to a tradition of rank and file struggle instead of social partnership.

### Is there another way?

**IF WE reject a new programme what is the alternative?**

■ Groups of workers should be free to put in national or local claims, but they should support each other in the fight.

■ Negotiations should be controlled democratically at local level. The officials should be instructed to carry out the wishes of the rank and file.

■ There should be no ban on strike action. The alternative to the PCW is a trade union movement that organises its members to fight.

## SWP branch meetings

### MARXISM

**Weekend of meetings and discussion**  
ATGWU Hall, Middle Abbey St, Dublin  
1st, 2nd, 3rd November

**SPEAKERS INCLUDE:**

**Irish Times columnist Vincent Browne; Scientist Steven Rose, author of *The Making of Memory*; Historian Prof Brian Manning; Eamonn McCann; Lindsey German, author of *A Question of Class*; Kieran Allen, author of *The Politics of James Connolly* and editor of *Socialist Worker*; Pat Stack of the SWP in Britain**

Creche available (book before Oct 15)  
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Tickets £6 (£2.50 unwaged)  
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**BELFAST**

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Central Hall Rosemary St.

**CORK**

Meets every Tues at 8pm  
in Dennehy's Pub,  
Cornmarket St.

**DERRY**

Meets every Tues in  
Badgers Bar at 8pm

**DUN LAOGHAIRE**

Meets every Tues at 8pm  
in Smyths Pub.

**ENNISKILLEN**

Meets every fortnight  
Contact national address  
for details

**GALWAY**

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

**MAYNOOTH**

Contact 8722682 for  
details

**WATERFORD**

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

**DUBLIN NORTH-WEST**  
Meets every Tues at

8:30pm in The Old  
Brogue, Dorset St.

**DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK**

Meets every Thurs at  
8.30pm in the Artane/  
Beaumont Family  
Recreation Centre,  
Kilmore Rd.

**DUBLIN DRIMNAGH**

Meets every Tuesday at  
8.30pm in the Lowes Pub,  
Dolphins Barn

**DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL**

Meets every Wed at  
8:30pm in Conways,  
Parnell St.

**DUBLIN RATHMINES**

Meets every Wed at 8pm  
in O'Connell's Pub,  
Richmond St.

**DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL**

Meets every Thur at 8pm  
in the Trinity Inn, Pearse  
St.

**DUBLIN TALLAGHT/CLONDALKIN**

Meets Tues Tallaght  
Welfare Society, Tallaght  
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## Royal Dublin Hotel strikers fight on

**WORKERS AT the Royal Dublin Hotel have been out on strike since August 31st and are determined to fight to win.**

They are striking against the appalling low rates of pay for all grades of workers. House porters get only £2.50 per hour and kitchen porters only £3.59 per hour.

As one of the shop stewards put it, "I have worked here for eight years on lousy money. The last time we got an increase was 1991. But the owners of this hotel could more than afford to pay us increases."

Holland and Gilmore, the hotel owners, also own the Country Club in Portmarnock and the Mespil Flats complex where they threatened to evict pensioners just a few years ago.

### Support

Morale on the picket line is high. Support for the strikers has been coming in from all around the country.

Hundreds of pounds were collected at the recent SIPTU conference in Liberty Hall.

Other hotels, the Conrad, the Montrose, the Shelbourne have had regular collections for their striking colleagues.

Collections have also come in from Nissan and from the SIPTU Waterford and Donegal branches.

With support and solidarity like this the pickets are even more determined.

On Sunday 15th September all the strikers came out in force for the day of the All Ireland final.

They were supported by union officials, other SIPTU members.

One of the pickets told *Socialist Worker* "It was a great day. I really enjoyed the picket. We looked so strong that the hotel was down to about one quarter



■Morale on the picket line is high

of business for a big match day."

Management at the hotel called the gardai three times during the day as the pickets grew in strength and used whistles to attract attention from the public.

Two managers, Christian Bauer and Joe Kearney, tried to break up the picket line by pushing around the striking workers.

But the majority of customers turned away. Most of them were

from outside Dublin and were unaware of the strike until they got to the picket line.

### Hurts

But one third of the workforce are passing the pickets.

As one shop steward told *Socialist Worker*, "This hurts more than anything else. And when this strike is over the scabs will have

no union card and the owners will treat them just as badly as ever. They won't show them any respect."

Spanish students who have been recruited during the strike are working long hard hours for little money. They are being used to break the morale of the pickets but without success.

### Deliveries

Pickets need to be stepped up on a daily basis at the service entrance where the scabs and deliveries go through.

Leaflets need to go out arguing with newly recruited workers not to scab. Already Guinness, An Post and bin collectors have all refused to deal with the hotel. This pressure can be pushed up.

This week one French student turned away from an interview in the hotel for a porter's job after the pickets argued long and hard with him.

More workers Dublin can be convinced not to scab.

■The Socialist Workers Party in Dublin has organised a fund-raising gig for the strike.

It takes place in the Baggot Inn on Sunday 22nd September and includes Glen Hansard, Mark Dignam, Bunny Hooper and the Frame-ups.

Show your solidarity and get to the gig.

All proceeds go directly to the strikers.

**NO MORE PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BOSSES!**  
**FIGHT FOR £4.50 PER HOUR MINIMUM WAGE**  
**Lobby ICTU Conference, Liberty Hall, Sept 26th, 12.30 to 2.00pm**  
**Called by the Socialist Workers Party**

## Wellman strikers face down bosses' threats



**WORKERS at Wellman International are determined to resist management threats to "consider their future in Ireland" after being on strike for nine weeks.**

The bosses say that they are only prepared to negotiate on a Labour Court recommendation which the workers voted against in June.

"It is obvious that the Labour Court is a pro-employer institution, with 80% of cases going in their favour" said one worker.

Wellman have brought in a hatchet man from the British chemical company, ICI, Richard Budden "who thinks that

he can do a Thatcherite job on the workers' as one worker put it.

But the scale of the resistance has come as a shock to this macho manager.

The strike began after the company tried to bring in major changes after a new programme of investment.

They wanted to transfer workers who had been on day shift to a four cycle shift.

Some of these workers had spent 14 years on a day shift.

They also wanted to cut back numbers in a very hot section of the plant which meant longer hours under unbearable conditions for the remaining staff.

### Campaign

On top of all that they wanted a 'job enrichment programme' whereby the jobs of electricians and other would be taken over by general workers for small bits of extra cash.

The press have run a major witch-hunt campaign against the Wellman workers.

One newspaper claimed that they were earning £27,000 a week.

"That is a real joke. They are talking about people who might have done 84 hours over three shifts—but that is a small minority.

"It is typical propaganda" says one trade unionist."

The strikers have also had to put up with the antics of a Fine Gael Senator, John Farrelly, who is out to make a name for himself.

He has called on workers to pressurise their committee to drop certain demands.

"Why should we" said one worker.

"This company has not budged an inch since the strike began.

"If they think they are going to blackmail us into returning to work, they should think again."

At regular weekly meetings the workers have almost unanimously endorsed the stance of their negotiating committee.

It is a fine example of people sticking together to win decent conditions.

## Dunnes' Stores WE COULD HAVE WON MORE

**WORKERS at Dunnes Stores have made management back down from their macho style.**

For the first time, they have forced Dunnes to sign an agreement on company notepaper committing themselves to some changes.

They will have to back date a 3% award to last September and create 400 extra jobs.

The Dunnes workers showed that strike action gets results.

They are building up a strong union from mainly part-time staff who have been pushed around by Dunnes bosses for years.

They are an example to the rest of the trade union movement on how to fight.

However, many workers who voted for the Dunnes' Stores deal did so reluctantly and over 2,000 workers voted to reject it alto-



gether. They do not trust Margaret Hefferman and the management to stick to anything.

### Worried

"After the strike last time, they set about harassing us. I am really worried that the agreement says that we should not 'flood' the new

procedural system in the first few weeks", said Deirdre, a worker in the Clondalkin store.

"Even when we make complaints it can take up to three months to process them."

The other issue that worries most workers is the fact that the 400 new jobs being created come with the condition that staff will have to

work Sundays for time and a half.

"You can already see the other stores lining up to follow Dunnes on this one.

"We should have stuck it out to remove this condition," said one worker at the Coolock shopping centre."

Dunnes has also been able to get away with putting workers on paypath without giving out any extra bonus.

Many workers are also concerned about the new

grievance procedure.

"It says that you have to see a manager first. Can you imagine a 16 year old asking to see a Dunnes manager in their office rather than going with their shop steward?" said Maria.

### Dividing

However a worker from Letterkenny put his finger on the real problem at Dunnes: "They keep dividing us up

into different categories. There are part timers, flexis, full timers—everyone with different conditions".

The secret of Dunnes has been to have the most flexible workforce in the retail trade.

They call workers just when they need them and always try to get out of payments for unsocial hours.

Real union organisation on the shop floor is needed to sort this out.

## THE WAY FORWARD

**THE KEY to the future in Dunnes is a good strong shop steward organisation.**

**This has improved over the course of the last few strikes but more needs to be done.**

**If workers have to rely only on a full time official, they will have little protection from Dunnes' managers.**

**Every store should have a proper committee that builds up its cred-**

**ibility by fighting Dunnes on the small issues.**

**Every time a manager tries to harass a member of staff, the shop steward should be called.**

**The union must become a real defence for the individual worker.**

**Workers should also demand that shop stewards get time off to do their union duties and have facilities for union meetings.**

# Socialist Worker

## THE TORTURERS THAT CLINTON SUPPORTS...

*"When you abuse your own people ... you must pay a price"*

That is what Bill Clinton said when he ordered the bombing of Iraq.

Saddam Hussein is a brutal tyrant and should be overthrown by the Iraqi people.

But Clinton is only attacking him because he did not toe the US line.

There are far more torturers in the Middle East which he supports.

■**SAUDI ARABIA:** This is the world's largest oil reservoir and gets full support from the US.

Yet no defence lawyers are allowed to attend secret trials run by the regimes. Public beheadings regularly take place outside the mosques.

■**BAHRAIN:** This is the home base of the US Gulf Fleet from where they direct Cruise missiles against Iraq.

Political activists who demand a return to parliamentary democracy are regularly tortured.

The security service is run by a mercenary, Ian Henderson, who sometimes personally tortures his victims.

■**ISRAEL:** The US watch dog in the Middle East.

Massacred 105 refugees in a UN safe haven this year but the US did not condemn its actions and encouraged Israel to keep up the bombardment of Southern Lebanon.

**As US gets ready to attack Iraq, Clinton is...**

# The bomber in the White House

**THE US military machine is gearing itself up for another attack on Iraq. 5,000 US troops have arrived in Kuwait and US aircraft carriers have moved off into the Gulf.**

Like an old style colonial power, the US has unilaterally declared that no aircraft can fly south of the 38th parallel in Iraq.

Not even the feeble United Nations, which backed the US during the Gulf War, gave them permission to do this.

The US originally said that it had to intervene in order to protect the Kurds who were in danger of slaughter from Saddam Hussein.

### Strategic

But all their bombings have taken place in Southern Iraq where the Kurds do not live.

Now the US defence Secretary, William Perry, claims that the US has no strategic interest in the Kurds.

They have admitted that their main interest lies in propping up the regimes of the neighbouring countries.

They know that there are massive opposition movements in countries like Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

These are seen as friends of the West because they

guarantee profits for the oil companies.

Clinton never complains if these countries—or Israel—trample on human rights.

The battered army of Iraq has little chance of invading these countries which have invested heavily in US weaponry over the past few years.

But the real reason for Clinton's operation is to display US power in the area to frighten anyone who thinks they can stand up to colonialism.

This way he also believes he can look like a strong man in the US elections.

### Overthrow

The US government is not trying to overthrow Saddam Hussein out of any concern for democracy.

After all they originally built him up by supplying him with many of his weapons.

Their bombing campaign today has also helped to win support for Saddam Hussein throughout the Arab world.



■**Don't believe the lies about "smart bombs". Tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians were butchered during the Gulf War**

According to Shyam Bhatia of the *Observer*, 'support for Saddam has grown stronger on the streets of

Amman and every other Arab capital'.

The US only wants some other tyrant to come forward who will take Saddam's place—but this time keep the oil flowing to the Western companies.

They will keep victimising Iraq until they get their way on this.

### Reduced

Since the Gulf War, Iraq has been reduced to an impoverished nation.

It is estimated that over half a million children have died through malnutrition and lack of medicine as a result of sanctions imposed on the country.

The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation says that the country is in a 'pre-famine situation'.

In reality there is no justification for these actions. Clinton has blood on his hands and so does every government which backs him.

## HOW THE WEST MADE WAR FOR OIL

■**1963:** Ba'ath party seizes power in Iraq with US backing, slaughtering the Left.

■**1980:** Saddam Hussein invades Iran. The US, Britain, France and Germany pour billions of pounds worth of arms and credit in to back Iraq.

■**1988:** Saddam Hussein launches massive attack on Kurds. Chemical weapons kill 6,000 in town of Halabjah alone. The West remains silent.

■**AUGUST 1990:** Saddam Hussein invades Kuwait. The tyrant who has been nurtured by the West is now "the new Hitler".

■**JANUARY 1991:** US and British led coalition attacks Iraq, dropping bombs equal to the force of the Hiroshima atom bomb every day.

■**MARCH 1991:** US president George Bush declares victory and ends the Gulf War after slaughtering one hundred thousand Iraqi civilians fleeing on the Basra Road.

The US imposes sanctions that continue to kill tens of thousands of impoverished Iraqi people.

■**JANUARY 1993:** Clinton celebrates his presidency by launching 40 Cruise missiles into Iraq.

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