

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

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## 'Zero tolerance' for bribery

**JAIL THE  
CORRUPT  
POLITICIANS!**



## Scare story on immigrants

THE latest scare story is that Ireland is taking in too many immigrants.

The Gardai are stepping up surveillance at Irish ports and airports.

Justice Minister Nora Owen and Labour's Joan Burton claim there is a danger of 'economic migrants' posing as refugees and 'abusing Ireland's image as a haven for human rights.

### Reality

In reality the number of refugees is still tiny. Less than 700 arrived in the first three months of this year.

The Sunday Tribune claimed that it would cost £20 million a year to provide benefit to the refugees. But those coming in are not allowed to work until their papers are

cleared and have to live on about £100 a week.

The hysteria is entirely directed at non-whites or non-English speakers, mainly from Africa and Eastern Europe. Many white Americans and Australians are welcomed to this country and are not regarded as a drain on resources.

Some commentators claim that the increase in immigrants will give rise to more racism. This notion blames the victims and implies that racism is caused by working class ignorance.

But politicians and the media are laying the ground for racists by whipping up the hysteria.

# Harney's lies on Water charges

MARY HARNEY's support for water charges has confirmed her position as Ireland's Margaret Thatcher.

Harney claims we need water charges because the EU will not allow Ireland to abolish them. But Ireland has opted out of EU regulations when it suited the rich.

EU law says we must have a 48-hour limit on the working week.

But where were Mary Harney's protests when the Irish government allowed the employers various loopholes in the new Working Time Bill?



Protests defeated the water charges now Mary Harney (inset) wants to bring them back.



### Demand

When are the PDs going to demand that Ireland implement in full the Social Chapter on workers' rights?

Harney's main argument in support of water charges is that 'someone has to pay for it'. She has been backed by the Green Party and by media feature writers, who all claim that Irish people waste too much water. We would appreciate this resource more if we had to pay for it, goes

the argument.

But campaigners against water charges never claimed water came for free. They argued that the charge was a double tax on working class people who already paid high rates of PAYE.

The way to fund the water system, and all the other services we need, is to shift the tax burden onto the rich.

They have taken the wealth created by workers and are under no obligation to reinvest that wealth.

Some commentators have backed the call for water meters to be installed, to force the 'wasters' to pay. New houses in Wicklow already include meters.

But metering would hit the poorest households.

A family on an income below £20,000 a year would need far more water than a single apartment dweller on £60,000, and would have to pay more.

Washing your children and maintaining hygiene is not wasteful.

The real water wasters are people who live in mansions with their own private swimming pools and lawn sprinklers.

By backing the double tax on water the PDs have given the lie to their image as the 'party of low taxes'.

But Labour and Democratic are no better.

They only abolished water charges because of protests but are still dragging non-payers through the courts.

## Greens back double tax

THE GREEN PARTY have attracted the support of many who hate the way big business has wrecked the environment. But the party's support for water charges shows the limits of their radicalism.

Green politicians have even called for water meters to be installed in all new homes.

In a recent Irish Times letter, Green Party councillor Mary Mullarney accused the government of cowardice in abolishing water charges.

She bemoaned the court delays in non-payment cases; presumably she would have favoured quicker disconnections?

### Working

Mullarney is a member of South Dublin County Council, which includes the large working class estates of Tallaght.

Yet her letter betrays a condescending attitude to working class people: she describes opposition to the water charges as 'a noisy campaign'.

**BILL BRATTON**, the former New York police chief who invented Fianna Fail's policy of zero tolerance, recently enlightened Irish Times readers on the main cause of society's ills.

It's not greedy multinationals or arms dealers or corrupt politicians.

No: Bratton has put his finger on a much bigger menace to civilisation than any of the above.

### Article

In his article the former top cop revealed that Public Enemy No 1 is...the 'squeegee pest'.

Forget chemical company's polluting the rivers and seas:

the 'squeegee pest', according to Bratton, would welcome visitors to the Big Apple by washing their windscreens with dirty water!

But, thankfully for New Yorkers, this reign of terror was brought to an end when the police began to crack down on petty offenders.

After all, as the theory goes, if small acts of lawlessness go unchecked people will think they can get away with more serious crime.

You start off stealing sweets from the local supermarket and you end up taking million pound bribes from the supermarket owner.

Bratton identifies other groups who have been cleared

off the streets in the new 'safer' New York: unlicensed street pedlars, beggars and the homeless.

In other words, zero tolerance is all about scapegoating the poorest in society.

## FF ignore the evidence

ZERO TOLERANCE has led to an increase in complaints against the New York cops some of whom shoot first and ask questions later.

Bill Bratton has claimed credit for a drop in crime since his 'get tough' regime was introduced. But there is strong evidence that crime was falling before zero tolerance: one reason given is a drop in the number of young males in the population.

And if zero tolerance is so great, why do we only hear about its 'success in New York'? What about other US cities? In fact crime has fallen in other cit-

ies which have not adopted the same policy.

Fianna Fail conveniently ignore such evidence. Their new pet theory has even been criticised by senior Gardai.

But RTE have run a propaganda campaign in favour of zero tolerance. And even though the other parties have distanced themselves from the idea, they are all trying to prove how tough they are on crime. Except, that is, the crimes of the rich.

## Free Roisin McAliskey

THE FOCUS of activity in the campaign to free Roisin McAliskey has moved to Germany.

The 25 year old daughter of former MP Bernadette Devlin McAliskey has been in prison now for nearly six months, but still has had no charges laid against her by the German authorities.

In a bizarre move, the German Special Branch, the BKA has put Roisin on their 'Fugitive Wanted' list on the Internet, describing her as 'armed and dangerous'. It is believed to be



the first such notice ever placed by the BKA on the Internet.

The German move did not come as a surprise to the McAliskey family who, in recent weeks have started legal action in Germany to have the extradition warrant against Roisin quashed. As a result of this, they have finally seen the documents provided by the German police in support of extradition.

### Evidence

The 'evidence' produced was according to Bernadette McAliskey at a recent public meeting in Derry. "flimsy contradictory or absent".

The German authorities have implied that if only Roisin would agree to hop on a plane and come over, the whole thing could be sorted out. The reality is that political prisoners in Germany can linger in prison for two or three years before even being charged. It can take five years to be proved innocent.

Meanwhile, it looks as if Roisin will be forced to give birth to her child in Holloway prison.

## Freephone Albert

If you can't afford a mobile phone, don't worry: ex-Taoiseach Albert Reynolds is making plenty of calls at your expense.

Albert clocked up £4,000 worth of mobile calls last year. This was one tenth of the Department of the Taoiseach's total bill for such

calls.

No doubt the free calls will come in handy if Albert takes to the road to contest the election for President. I wonder will bigots like Des Hanafin — who challenged the result of the divorce referendum — complain about this flagrant abuse of democracy?

what we think

# Send out the arrest warrants

THE SCANDAL over the Dunnes payments shows that the main parties are bought and paid for by big business.

What has now been revealed is still only the tip of an iceberg. The scandal only broke by an accident.

The Dunnes family fell out with each other and began to spill the beans.

The rest of the web of corruption that connects the Golden Circle of poli-

tics to big business is still hidden.

None of the main parties will reveal who is giving them donations for their next election campaign.

They complain when workers try to influence politics by strikes and demonstrations.

But they want to the power that money wields a secret.

What can be done about all this? We should look to what happened in Italy when the *tangentopoli* (bribes) scandal broke.

Thousands as of people got onto the streets, led by their unions.

## Silver

They threw piece of silver at prominent politicians and demanded they be thrown in jail.

Of course, this in itself did not break the link between big business and politics. But for a period it terrified the establishment as they felt matters, temporarily, slip from their control.

We should look for the same thing in Ireland. Lowry and Haughey have been at liberty for too long.

They should be immediately arrested on a charge of corruption and put behind bars.

The 'law and order' fanatics who dominate Fianna Fail and Fine Gael speak at length about 'zero tolerance' and have campaigned to take away our right to bail.

They should now be told that we want zero tolerance of corruption.

But to enforce any of this, there is no point simply waiting until the end of this Tribunal. The last Tribunal on the beef in-



Ben Dunne warmly shakes Charlie Haughey's hand

dustrial was a farce, with Goodman now even having the cheek to claim £7.6 million in legal expenses.

This Mayday there will be trade union demonstrations all over Ireland. They should be turned into huge demonstration to attack corruption.

The call should be: Jail and Corrupt politicians: Smash the system which breeds them

## What the Dunnes got back from the politicians

THERE IS one big favour which Dunnes Stores has got from all the politicians they have been paying off for years: the company pays minimal taxes.

Dunnes Stores is organised into a trust so as "to minimise its tax through legitimate means".

Being a trust means that they are not liable for capital acquisitions tax. This allows them to keep the wealth in the family over generations.

If they were taxed like other companies, it is estimated that Dunnes would have to pay £125 million in back taxes.

When the scandal broke last year, Dunnes were even lobbying for another measure that would cut their tax bill by £80 million.

The truth is that Ben Dunne knew it was cheaper to pay bribes to politicians than to pay his taxes.

## Pull the other one, Ben!

IF YOU were to believe that Ben Dunne told the McCracken Tribunal, then Saint Bernard himself had re-appeared.

He pretended he was big friendly man who met politicians for cups of tea and pints and then wrote cheques to help them out.

There was to be no favours, no special deals, not a hint of corruption—just the milk of human kindness.

"All the Dunnes, in fairness, have that kind streak to them" he even told the Tribunal.

Tell it to the workers in his supermarket Maria, a worker in one of the Stores told Socialist Worker.

"Who do they think they are kidding.

Up to this week we even had to buy our own blouses, paying out £15 for two with the Dunnes logo on it.

"Most of the staff are part time and we are treated like dirt. There is no holiday pay or pensions.

They don't give us any service pay—even though I am there for over fifteen years. Of course, the Dunnes were getting something in return."

## TAX: THAT IS ONLY FOR THE PAYE SUCKERS

ACCORDING to his own evidence, Dunnes made most of his payments through accounts in the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

The banks on these islands are tax havens that are regularly used by the Irish rich to get out of paying tax.

Haughey got £1.3 million. Most of it went through the Ansbacher Bank in the Isle of Man. He also

picked up three bank drafts written in fictitious names.

### Extension

That also helped to ensure he would pay no tax.

Lowry received £500,000 in various payments on top of his house extension.

The money first went through the Cayman Islands and was then filtered back to his account in a

building society in Cork.

The rich believe that taxes are only for the PAYE suckers.

This was shown when the government cut the rate of PAYE tax by a miserable 1% this year.

They insisted that workers take lower pay increases then they got during the recession of 1991.

But now they tell us that nothing can be done about crooks like Lowry and Haughey who salt away their money in tax havens.

## Haughey: The godfather of Irish politics

CHARLES J Haughey is the symbol of everything that Fianna Fail stands for. Bribery, corruption and graft!

In the 1960s, Haughey used to run the Fianna Fail fund raising outfit TACA which raised money from big business.

Even then a former colleague, Kevin Boland, described how as Minister for Local Government he was always sent around the tables of building contractors who donated to the party at the TACA banquets.

Haughey and Neil Blaney were implicated in the Arms crisis in 1971. Fianna Fail set

out to split the left wing moving IRA by promising money to those who dropped social agitation in the South.

Throughout all his wheeling and dealing, Haughey amassed a huge fortune that let him live the life of a Lord.

### Kinseally

His house in Kinseally has more than 300 acres and contains one of the finest rose gardens in Europe. It has the only fresh water lake in North Dublin, a 'traditional Irish Bar' designed by the famous architect Sam Stephenson, several stables and even its own dairy.

Haughey has never given

the slightest explanation of how he amassed this money. Instead he has presented himself as a rogue who is a friend

of working class people.

This image has been helped by the way he cultivated a friendly relationship

with the union leaders of the present day SIPTU.

After the Arms Crisis, Haughey appeared as guest of

Ben Dunne.

They never said anything about this until the scandal broke.

80% of the present Front Bench of Fianna Fail were in Haughey's cabinet.

Bertie Ahern was known as Haughey's protégé for years.

Haughey described Ahern as 'the most devils' politician he knew. Just the qualities needed to lead Fianna Fail.

## NO CLEAN BROOM...

The present day leaders of the Dail parties pretend that the era of corruption is over.

They want to claim that a line has been drawn in the sand between Haughey and Lowry and their parties.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Two prominent members of Fine Gael, John Bruton and Alan Dukes

honour at Liberty Hall, the headquarters of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union.

In 1986, Haughey and Attley, the present leader of SIPTU conducted secret negotiations to set up the social partnership deals that have culminated in Partnership 2,000.

Like many Fianna Failers, Haughey has operated as an old gangland party boss who dispensed favours and hoodwinked the working class.

When we set about cleaning up the muck he has left behind, we should also remember those who helped him cultivate the image of a 'friend of workers'.

£10,000

## Appeal

THANKS TO OUR readers who contributed £1,250 to the SW appeal this fortnight. This brings the total to £6415

Our target is £10,000 to cover the cost of a new printer and of standing four candidates in the general election.

We rely on the contributions of our supporters no matter how small. Help spread the ideas of socialism by giving to the appeal this fortnight. Please send cheques or postal orders made out to Socialist Worker Appeal, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

£10,000

£9,000

£8,000

£7,000

£6,000

£5,000

£4,000

£3,000

£2,000

£1,000

Socialist Worker

# Big vote for left winger shakes SIPTU union

"JUBILATION! I'm absolutely delighted with the vote" This was the response of Carolann Duggan, a Waterford factory worker, on hearing that she won 42% of the vote in the election for President of SIPTU, Ireland's largest union.

Although the election was won by Jimmy Somers, the union machine candidate, who took 51,651 votes to Carolann's 37,940, the overall result was a major victory for workers' democracy.

"People are genuinely disenchanted. The big vote proves my point about union leaders being out of touch with their members," said Carolann Duggan.

Carolann stood as a rank-and-file candidate, opposed to the privileges of the full-time union bureaucracy, and denounced the sell-out Partnership 2000 deal.

She openly proclaimed her membership of the Socialist Workers Party and always pointed out that she was an active socialist in the same tradition of James Connolly.

"There used to be a lot of old left wingers around who always advised people to hide their politics."

## Spearhead

"It was almost as if you could not mention politics in front of the children. Carolann's vote destroyed that piece of old wisdom" said Thany Moran, a former Somerit worker who helped to spearhead her campaign in the Dublin area.

The right wing Labour Party candidate, Jimmy

Somers, had the entire union apparatus at his disposal and the endorsement of most union officials.

Somers used his position as the current union Vice President to tour the country addressing branch meetings. Carolann Duggan was denied entry to the same

meetings.

Yet Somers main selling point was his 'expertise' in negotiating Partnership 2000. He tried to convince workers that it would bring genuine benefits and that he could be relied on to see it implemented in full.

The massive vote for Carolann Duggan showed the level of disenchantment with the message.

## Working

Carolann spent most of

the six weeks leading up to the election working on the assembly line at the Bausch and Lomb factory where she makes contact lenses.

She had to take time off to address meetings and make it up later by working extra at weekends.

In Carolann's words, "I had only rank and file workers to support me". She reacted angrily to Jimmy Somers' dismissive remark that there was probably "a woman factor," in the vote.

Even the official women's

committee of SIPTU led by a Noirin Greene did not recommend a vote for Carolann.

After the election, Carolann Duggan announced that she would be standing for the position of Vice President of the union.

## Vacant

This position is becoming vacant in the next few months. The campaign for this position will help to re-ignite the flame of discontent that was shown so visibly during the first election.



SWP member Carolann Duggan received 42% of the vote

# Rank and file support

FOR MANY rank-and-file workers, Carolann's campaign provided a focus for their anger against the shoddy P2000 deal stitched up by their union leaders.

Charlie Kavanagh, vice president of Bray branch of SIPTU said Carolann's campaign deserved support because she "represented the views of the workers. Basically I think she's right" he said. "She has a lot of courage and a lot of honesty".

He criticised the arrogance of those at the top of the union, who had been nothing short of dictatorial during the campaign.

He added that "This

vote will make the leadership sit up and take notice of the shop floor.

"Workers can't be ignored any longer.

"We want a share of the economic boom—this Celtic Tiger isn't roaring for the workers".

## Focus

For John Quinn, a worker in Bord Gais, Carolann's campaign provided a focus for the anger against Partnership 2000.

"We were going to spoil our votes, until Norman Croke stood down and we saw Carolann running on an anti-Partnership 2,000 ticket.

"The SIPTU members in Bord Gais are very anti-Partnership 2,000

"They voted five to

one in Carolann's favour.

"People relate to what Carolann is saying. We've seen an erosion of the quality of our jobs and the time really has come to fight back—

whether it's nurses or ambulance drivers or whatever, we should all support each other.

"There is a basic conflict of interest between worker and employer."

"People shouldn't be afraid to fight back.

"We resent decisions coming from the top down.

"The union is acting almost like an employer. Workers are not being consulted and we find it extremely undemocratic.

"As for the politicians, what would Dick Spring and Ruairi Quinn know about the conditions fac-

ing working people?

"If Carolann decides to take the fight further, she has our support".

For Paddy Wilson of Dublin County council Carolann's vote was also a welcome one.

## Response

He reported that Carolann got an enormous response in his depot.

"She is the first person in the rank and file to stand up to the union leaders.

"The workers, agreed with her position that the union was out of touch.

"It's time for the rank and file to stand up and fight every cause. For the cause of the rank and file is not yet lost!"

# How do we change SIPTU?

THE VOTE for Carolann Duggan is a powerful sign that many want to change the direction that SIPTU is going. But more will be needed than simply voting for a left winger.

Socialist Worker believes that key to change lies in the building of a rank and file movement.

Such a movement needs to be firmly rooted in the workplace. It cannot seek simply to hold union positions without winning the active support of workers for a strong fight against the bosses.

Union bureaucrats often hinder and sabotage fights from below. But they themselves are not the main enemy. What is needed is a powerful shop floor organisation that is able to take on the employers in their own workplaces.

The motto of rank and file movement is to "support the officials when they rightly represent the members and to act independently of them when they do not".

Such a movement needs two conditions to come into existence. There has to be a major revival of workers confidence in their own ability to fight. The boom in the Irish economy at the moment makes this more possible.

Many workers see their companies making huge profits.

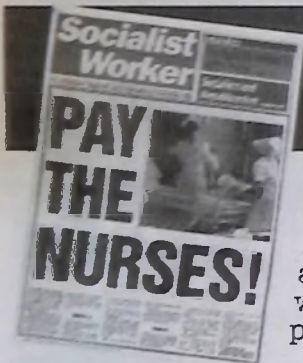
They know that new workers are being taken on and that action by them can hit the employers where it hurts. But the new confidence has yet to be tested in a variety of struggles where workers start to win.

## Socialist Politics

The second condition for a rank and file movement is a strong socialist presence in the union. Socialist politics are vital for helping workers to stand up against the propaganda about "competitiveness" and "flexibility".

A socialist organisation also provides a school for tactics for militants who want to win after years of defeat.

That is why the challenge ahead is to build firmly on the huge vote won by Carolann Duggan.



# A message from Carolann Duggan

"I have been reading and selling Socialist Worker for years. Across the country, many more union members are now taking it every fortnight. It was a network that gave me great support in my campaign.

It helps to keep us in touch, tells us the real stories which the rest of the

media ignores. It gives you arguments to combat the propaganda of the bosses and government.

If you want to see fighting unions which stand up for workers, then start by taking Socialist Worker around your job and union branch".

**Order your copies now!**

## Socialist Worker rallies

**Jail the corrupt politicians!**

**CAROLANN DUGGAN, (SIPTU Vice Presidential candidate) speaks on...**

# The socialist alternative

Plus local speakers

**DUBLIN:** Wednesday 30th April, 8.00pm ATGWU Hall, Middle Abbey St

**CORK:** See local posters for details

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# Bigots prepare for Drumcree 3

**HARD LINE** loyalists are already organising to turn the North into a sectarian wasteland this summer.

Joel Patton, the leader of the Spirit of Drumcree group, has organised an Orange rally in Ballymena on April 25th to oppose efforts of the Mediation Network to find a solution to the parades issue.

Patton has promised that there will be a final showdown within the Orange Order in the run up to Drumcree and believes that the current Orange leader Robert Saunters 'can't last the summer out'.

A new axis is being formed within loyalism that links the Harryville protesters, Paisley and the Spirit of Drumcree group.

On their wider fringe is the newly formed Loyalist Volunteer Force which has been established by associates of King Rat, Billy Wright.

## 'Outbreed'

The aim of this axis is cover over the cracks within Unionism by heightening sectarianism to an unprecedented pitch. Paisley is verily to the fore in these efforts.

At a recent rally, he denounced a plot by Catholics to 'outbreed' Protestants.

The PUP leader David Ervine has revealed that a 'dirty tricks' operation is being sponsored by loyalists to burn Protestant churches and businesses and make it look like the work of republicans.



■ Joel Patton, the leader of the Spirit of Drumcree group

cans.

These plans to raise sectarian hatred need to be tackled firmly now.

The trade union movement should be mobilising joint demonstrations of Catholic and Protestant workers.

## Opposing

They should send busloads of trade unionists to

help lift the siege of Harryville.

Yet to date leaders of the UNISON union have spent more time attacking the United against Bigotry group who organised a joint Catholic and Protestant protest at Harryville—than they have in opposing Paisley, Patton and their plans for a Drumcree Mark 3.

## Unionist councillor blames Catholic victims of arson

**DAVID BROWN**, a Unionist councillor has used a loyalist attack on Catholic families in North Belfast to stoke up more bigotry and hatred.

He claimed that the eight Catholic families who were forced out of a block of flats on Limestone Road had only themselves to blame.

He said, "Nobody really wants to live in these areas. If you're prepared to stick it out until something happens, you can get on the priority list right away and leapfrog up the housing ladder. People are using the situation for their own ends"

The attack took place on April 12th when masked loyalists armed with knives, sledgehammers and clubs attacked the Catholic families in their homes.

They smashed doors, walls, broke furniture and

stole televisions and videos as people fled their homes.

One couple was attacked by a mob led by a man in his fifties and a woman in her thirties who said "I'm going to slit your throats, you Fenian bastards".

The couple got out of the house and attempted to get help from the RUC who were parked nearby. But the RUC remained inside their landrover and did not come to their aid.

One man who suffers from a heart condition had to be taken away in an ambulance. The loyalist mob shouted "Die, Fenian Bastard".

To suggest as Councillor Brown did that these families are to blame for putting themselves at risk is simply making excuses for the attack. But then that has always been the role of the Unionist Party.

## University of Ulster bows to bishops

**THE** University of Ulster has dissociated itself from remarks about integrated education made by its Chancellor, Rabbi Julia Neuberger.

What Neuberger said was not that shocking, really a description of fact: that educating children separately according to their religion is sectarian.

She made the remark at the opening of Loughside Inte-

grated School in East Belfast. She said that the young people who engaged in sectarian riots 'would be less likely to do so if they had been educated side by side'.

## Protests

She was quick to add that 'integrated education cannot end sectarianism, that is a problem for the wider society'. The Catholic Church was

outraged and Catholic bishops contacted the University to lodge protests at its Chancellor's comments.

The NUU immediately bowed to pressure from the Bishops.

This by the way is the same university that refused to disassociate itself from the fascist professor of Psychology, Richard Lynn, who claimed that black people are less intelligent than whites.

## Fascist seeks to stoke up sectarianism in Coleraine

**IAN ANDERSON** is a Nazi who is standing in the General Election in the Coleraine area. A drop out from Oxford University, he has spent 25 years around fascist politics in Britain.

In the past, he was active with the National Front in London but concerted action by the Anti-Nazi League has demoralised and splintered this organisation.

Anderson was chairman of the NF until 1994 when he re-named the group the National Democrats. Anderson's strategy has been to attach himself to loyalist organisations to stir up hatred against Catholics.

## Tensions

He has written for the UDA magazine, *Ulster*, and has described Bloody Sunday as the day "13 people were rightfully shot dead by British paratroopers".

As groupings like the Loyalist Volunteer Force seek to raise tensions through a campaign of church burnings, open Nazis are now beginning to make their appearance on the fringes of loyalism. Socialists need to be ready to take on these thugs.

## 280 walk out at Montupet

**AROUND 280** workers at Montupet car components factory in Dunmurray, outside Belfast, walked out on a strike on 13 April.

The workers, members of the AEEU engineering union, had previously balloted for strike action over a pay increase after they rejected an offer of 2.5 per cent.

The workers are demanding a 4.5 per cent rise.

The workers walked out when two of their colleagues were suspended for observing a work to rule.

"We'd just had enough," one worker on the picket line told *Socialist Worker*. "It's like they're reintroducing slavery in there."

"They wouldn't even let the boys speak to their shop steward on the Monday morning."

"That was the final straw and we walked out."

The strike is unofficial and the workers are receiving no strike pay.

AEEU union officials says that they can't give them any support because it would be breaking the Tories anti-trade union laws.

The plant convenor wasn't

even allowed into the union office to use the phone to get support for the strike from other plants.

"The union told us to go back in for three weeks and re-ballot for a strike."

"But we can't go back in now," a striker said. "If we did, we'd be hammered, they'd pick out the union activists and make our lives hell."

"We can't go back until we win our demands and that means recognising the union inside the plant, as well as the pay rise."

Montupet is a French multinational, with a notorious anti-union record, which has been given over £40 million in Industrial Development Board grants.

## Promotes

The IDB promotes Northern Ireland as a low wage economy and boasts in its brochures that union rights are not compulsory.

"The management treat us like dirt and then expect us to act like grateful peasants." Another striker said. "The manager actually said to us 'You should be thankful that I'm putting food on your children's table!'"

Workers at the plant have a

strong tradition of trade unionism, having taken action four times in the last seven years.

Management have responded by victimising union activists, preventing workers having union meetings, and introducing a merit pay system to try to divide them.

## Benefit

After last year's pay rise, the plant was put on a four day week, wiping out any benefit to the workers.

Recently, shifts have been reduced from three to two but the remaining workers are expected to produce the same amount.

"This company has made a profit every year since it was set up, £4.5 million last year," said one worker.

"We do a good job, we don't skive. But as soon as we ask for something in return, there's nothing."

The strike is a magnificent example of Protestant and Catholic workers standing together.

The workers were angered at management attempts to exploit sectarian divisions during the pay negotiations.

The plant convenor, who is

from a Protestant background was told he was acting like those people from West Belfast.

"They're never satisfied, no matter how much you give them. "We expected different from you."

"All of us took offence at that sort of thing being used and it just made us more determined to stay out," a union activist said.

The strike is solid among the 280 production workers.

Only 3 or 4 scabs are going in. Royal Mail drivers have respected the picket lines and building workers who were carrying out work for the company have refused to cross.

On Friday, around 70 workers turned back a gas delivery which was being escorted by the RUC.

These deliveries are needed to keep the furnaces lit.

It is crucial that the strike gets support from other workplaces. It is a disgrace that AEEU leaders have refused to back the strike.

They could ensure that collections are done in other workplaces and prevent production being moved.

Trade unionists throughout Belfast now need to get behind this strike to make sure it wins.

# The tragedy of East Timor

THE EAST Timorese Nobel peace prize winner, Jose Ramos Horta is visiting Ireland and speaking at meetings. Here *Roisin Cronin* writes about the background to the 25 years of oppression of East Timor.

Indonesia invaded East Timor in 1975, bringing two decades of mass murder which resulted in the deaths of more than 200,000 people.

After massacring a third of the population, the Indonesian regime have forcibly sterilised Timorese women. The aim has been to wipe out the local population.

East Timor lies 300 miles to the North of Australia. For four hundred years it was a Portuguese colony until it was decolonised in 1974.

East Timor's growing movement for independence represented a serious threat to Indonesia's dominance of the region. Indonesia is an important strategic country, containing the world's fifth largest population and is an important source of oil. For the Western powers, Indonesia is crucial to the maintenance of stability in the region.

The US and Britain directly encouraged and supported the invasion of East Timor. 90% of Indonesia's weaponry, for example, comes from the US.

All along the Western powers have ignored the genocide in East Timor. Despite more than 10 UN resolutions, calling for Indonesia to withdraw there has been no economic sanctions or even arms embargo.

The CIA knew exactly when the invasion was about to happen in 1975. The CIA desk sergeant at Jakarta, later reported how he had 'intelligence from firm sources'.

## Invasion

On the day the invasion was supposed to take place, the US President Ford was due in Jakarta. The Americans only demanded that the invasion be postponed until the President left the country.

When Ford eventually touched down in Hawaii and was asked about his reaction to the invasion, he only smiled and said "We will talk about that later".

By the late 1970s, the East Timor resistance movement, Fretilin, had managed to bring the invading Indonesia army to a standstill.

But US supplied Skyhawk and Brouco planes which were crucial in turning the tide in favour of the Indonesia army. In 1980, British Aerospace began to send Indonesia Hawk fighter jets.

These planes, according to journalist John Pilger are "ideal for low level terror attacks against the civilian population now sheltering in the Matallean mountains".

He has described how they shoot "high velocity cannons and deliver ordinance at low levels against unprotected

**All along the Western powers have ignored the genocide in East Timor. Despite more than 10 UN resolutions, calling for Indonesia to withdraw there has been no economic sanctions or even arms embargo.**

human beings".

To date, British Aerospace have provided a total of 24 fighter jets to the Indonesian regime. According to one senior British government official, everyone at the foreign office "knew exactly what the Hawks were really for".

Over 20 years since Indonesia invaded East Timor, the killing continues. The plight of East Timor situation only received international publicity after a massacre in 1991.

During a peaceful demonstration in the Santa Cruz cemetery in the capital of Dili, Indonesian troops opened fire without warning. After killing 270 unarmed civilians, General Try Sutrisno, the commander of the armed forces said, "These ill-bred people have to be shot... and we will shoot them".

A further 200 people were killed in follow up operations. But the atrocity was filmed by a western journalist so exposing the brutality of Indonesia and its backers.

The presence of Indonesia is now being courageously fought by hundreds of thousands.

Although the pro-independence movement, Fretilin, has been forced underground and anyone suspected of links to it have been tortured, many are still resisting the Indonesian army.

East Timorese have taken their protests to Indonesia itself by occupying the US embassy and demanding action. Their action has been an inspiration to many who oppose the military regime.

In recent years a huge pro-democracy movement has grown up in Indonesia. They are seeking to overthrow the generals who came to power in 1965 after they destroyed the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI). Their coup led to the deaths of one million Indonesians, many of them socialists and trade unionists.

A united front between the East Timorese movement and the pro-democracy movement in Indonesia itself could finally topple this bloody regime.

# Class is bad for health

Special report by  
**JULIET BRESSAN**

**CLASS BACKGROUND** is the major influence on your health and chances of living a long life. Numerous studies now confirm the association between class and health. In America, a study over eighteen years in Almeida showed that poorer people were twice as likely to die as the wealthy. Even account was taken of unhealthy habits such as smoking, the poor were one and a half times more likely to die.

In 1977 the famous Black Report in Britain showed that while general mortality was declining, there were wide differences in social class especially on infant mortality.

In Ireland, in 1981 the ESRI published figures which showed that working class men have double the death rate of professional classes.

## Inequalities in the health services

**IN 1948, Noel Browne's proposal for free health care for Mothers and Children was defeated by a powerful lobby of the bishops and the consultants. Ever since Ireland has had a most blatant class system of health care.**

Only one third of the population are entitled to a medical card that gives free health care. But you have to be virtually below the poverty line to qualify, and have the patience of a saint to deal with the red tape involved in getting the card.

Homeless people in general do not have a medical card due to their mobility which means that they have to pay for basic primary care such as dental treatment and footcare.

### Private

One third of the population have VHI - a private insurance system which is government subsidised in the form of tax breaks.

Many working-class people are pressurised into taking out VHI for fear of not being able to get proper health care through the public system.

This is a very realistic fear, and one which allows the government to justify the subsidisation of private medicine on the grounds that it "frees up" the public waiting lists, and that is what people want anyway.

But the VHI is based on a philosophy that the more you pay, the better health care you are guaranteed. The top plan gives access to private clinics

while the bottom one only gives you a semi-private bed in a public hospital. This means that the rich benefit most from the subsidies.

The VHI guarantees that huge profits will be made by the private hospitals, and it justifies the running down of the public health services. In 1995, VHI paid 200 consultants over £200,000 each for private practice. This was on top of a salary of £60,000, and huge fees that many consultants charge for court appearances and legal reports.

The health services relies heavily on over-prescribing drugs which ensure massive profits for multinationals. Many top doctors have shares in multinational drug companies, and get paid handsomely by drug companies to put patients of trials of experimental drugs.

### Conditions

Health is approached in medical terms and separated completely from social conditions. Decent healthcare is available only for the rich. The wealthy have the Blackrock clinic, and liver transplants in America.

The rest of us have waiting lists, cutbacks and appallingly uncomfortable conditions in hospitals and health centres.

Studies done by the Eastern Health Board have shown that the death rate of different areas of Dublin are directly related to the average income of that area.

The life expectancy for travellers today is equal to that in the 1950s for settled people, and travellers also have exceptionally high infant mortality.

### People

The right wing will tell you that working class people are to blame for their own bad health, due to unhealthy lifestyle habits such as smoking.

Yet at the beginning of the 20th century when smoking became fashionable, only the upper classes smoked. Yet the health inequalities were the same then as now.

The Black Report has shown that the incidence of infectious diseases, cancer, congenital abnormalities, chest and lung disease, accidents, poisoning and violence are all related to social class.

### Town

Ballymun has a population of 17,000, the equivalent of a small rural town, yet the entire population is crammed into an area the size of a large field. It has a disproportionate number of young people.

More than half the teenagers in the area leave school before age 15, and only 1% will get any sort of college education before the age of 20. 45% of Ballymun residents are unemployed.

### Rates

Areas like Ballymun have also got one of the highest death rates in Dublin. They also have one of the highest rates of premature and low birthweight babies and disproportionately high rates of suicide, cancer, depression, alcoholism, and drug related illness, as well as lethal childhood infectious diseases such as meningitis.

Diseases such as TB, meningitis, gastro-enteritis are directly linked to poverty, overcrowding and malnutrition. They are run of the mill diseases amongst travellers, refugees and homeless people.

Some policies will make this situation even worse. The Progressive Democrats and the Greens want us to pay for water which is a basic necessity for health.



But this could lead to a rapid increase in incidence of water-borne diseases such as cholera and typhoid among the poor.

All governments now blame the ills of their nation over-funding of an inefficient health service.

Yet this obsession with 'benefit' analysis has led to health bureaucracy.

In Britain a massive law

## What social

A SOCIALIST SOCIETY would be produced at the hour. The incentive for expensive drugs would be no practice and this would up huge resources for treatment of ordinary people. Resources would be properly allocated to education and housing.

### Sufficient

People would be guaranteed sufficient income to ensure they got decent food. They would be able to make their own choices such as taking

# And for your



## What do socialists say?

### Corruption, class and democracy

**THE Dunnes payments to politicians is of course a scandal. Faced with a stream of revelations about bribes to politicians, the government has had to appoint the McCracken Tribunal.**

Seldom, if ever, has the establishment been so blatantly exposed its own rottenness. All this is blindingly obvious and will doubtless prove to be another nail in their coffins.

However, the affair is more than a scandal. It not only reveals the greed and corruption TDs as individuals. It provides an insight into the real nature of parliamentary democracy.

**It is a striking confirmation of the criticisms revolutionary socialists have always made of the parliamentary system.**

According to the standard theory of parliamentary democracy, what happens is this.

The people democratically elect their representatives to parliament. The representatives produce from their ranks a government which rules on behalf of the people - "in the national interest", as they say.

The government is accountable to members of parliament who are in turn accountable to the public at election times.

Socialists have always rejected this view as a myth designed to pull the wool over the eyes of working people.

While recognising that parliamentary democracy is preferable to dictatorship or fascism, we have insisted that it is essentially a charade and in no way genuinely democratic.

Real power lies outside parliament with those who control the wealth of society - the bankers, financiers, industrialists. In other words, with the capitalist class.

The capitalist class's power over the entire economic life of society enables it to dominate

government policy. They even claim that this is holding the country to ransom!

So what is the alternative?

The McCracken Tribunal will probably do its best to cover up for the scandals.

This is why it is important to keep the pressure on for the jailing of politicians who have been found to take bribes.

But even this will not get to the root of the problem.

This lies in the concentration of real power in the hands of big business and the lack of power of working people.

To change this two things are necessary.

The first is the creation of a new form of state power in which elected representatives are really responsible and accountable to those who elect them.

**This means a system of workers' councils in which delegates are elected from the workplace and other working class collectives.**

Since workplaces are collective, the electors could meet, debate and decide on policies.

If elected representatives deviated from their mandate they would be recalled and replaced.

At the same time all state officials would be elected and paid workers' wages, thus preventing the emergence of privileged and vested interests.

Second the new workers' state would have to take the control of wealth and production out of the hands of the capitalist class and place it in the hands of the actual producers.

This means social ownership under workers' control.

This alternative is radical.

It would need a revolution to bring it about.

But it is the only way of really ending the corruption of democracy that is built into capitalism.

#### **The Dunnes scandal shows the systematic subordination of parliament to the interests of the capitalist class.**

and manipulate parliament.

It ensures that in practice parliament serves the bosses' interests, not the interests of workers.

In contrast the electorate, supposedly the ultimate masters of the system, have almost no real power.

In the first place they don't control the wealth or production. In the second place they are not a collective - they don't meet, they don't debate, they don't form a collective will.

#### **Atomised**

They are simply atomised individuals in a geographical area.

Atomised individuals are always less powerful than organised bodies.

Consequently the electorate are unable, in any meaningful sense, to hold parliament or its members accountable.

The Dunnes shows this whole process at work. It reveals the systematic subordination of parliament to the interests of the capitalist class.

When Fianna Fail and Fine Gael claim that 'democracy has a price' they are talking about links with big business.

The TDs who refuse to reveal how much money they get from big business denounce workers efforts to influence politics by strikes and demonstrations against

managerial beaurcracy has been created in to work out whether or not doing hip replacements is a better way of spending public money than doing liver transplants.

#### **Oppose**

Socialists should oppose cost benefit analysis in the health service because it is based on the atti-

tude that healthcare should be cut back so that more public revenue can be devoted to tax breaks for the rich.

An example of this minimalist approach to healthcare is the fact that the entire government budget for combat smoking behaviour is a tiny fraction of the amount of money spent on the advertising of cigarettes in the press and at sporting events.

Capitalism has defined our lives and our health in terms of the needs of accumulation - the health needs of the mass of working people will not be pursued if they conflict with profit.

Therefore, the demand for proper health is in itself a revolutionary demand and one which must be taken seriously in the broader struggle for socialism.

## What would a socialist society do?

**A SOCIALIST SOCIETY would get rid of** from the health of people. Drugs could be produced at the cost of raw material and incentives to prescribe outrageously priced drugs would be abolished.

There would be no private hospitals. This would free resources for the ordinary people. Resources would be properly allocated to education

#### **Sufficient**

People would be guaranteed income to ensure decent food and make health care taking exer-

dise and having a relaxing holiday.

Health service planning under socialism would ensure that basic health needs are met. There would be clean water for free, not metered contaminated supplies.

There would be free access to primary health care so that people who are ill are not left on waiting lists, overcrowded GP waiting rooms and two minute consultations.

Money currently being handed over in tax breaks for the rich and private salaries for consultants would be spent on properly staffing all hospitals.

Many doctors and nurses have already had to emigrate due to understaffing of health services here.

#### **Hierarchy**

Getting rid of the hierarchy among hospital staff would ensure that the manpower in the hospitals is geared towards patients needs.

Decent housing would control the spread of infectious

diseases.

Proper play areas for children would very much reduce the likelihood of accidents on the streets, where hundreds of working class children are injured and killed every year.

The market system only plans one thing - profits for overpaid consultants and multinational drug companies and cutbacks on the health needs of the majority of people.

We need to fight for a system that is based on the needs of the majority of working people, not the profits of a few.

Alex Callinicos reports on his visit to South Korea:

# Workers taking on the Tiger

IT IS easy for the visitor to South Korea, confronted with a country that has leapt in a generation from a war devastated rural society to the eleventh largest industrial economy in the world, to lapse into clichés.

Seoul, a vast conurbation of 15 million people, a quarter of the country's entire population, is a bustling modern city. Its freeways are full of frantically driven new cars.

Huge unfinished skyscrapers, some forming new satellite towns for commuting city workers, bear witness to South Korea's headlong expansion. Last year the economy grew by 7.1 percent.

Yet this is a society in crisis. In January's strikes a regime mired in corruption and scandal confronted the working class created by South Korea's rapid industrialisation.

## Roots of crisis

**THE CRISIS can be traced back to the nature of this industrialisation.**

After the military seized power in 1961 soldiers and bureaucrats imposed tight state controls on the economy.

Close relationships developed between the state bureaucracy and the chaebol, a handful of huge family firms. They received state subsidies and loans while their workers were subject to ruthless repression. The economic dominance of the biggest chaebol Samsung.

Lucky Goldstar, Hyundai has lasted to the present day. Their products and logos can be seen everywhere in South Korea.

This state capitalist strategy allowed South Korea to concentrate its investments in certain export sectors—shipbuilding, steel and semiconductors and break into key world markets.

But as the economy expanded so did the industrial working class. By the mid 1980s it had become a skilled and educated workforce, no longer willing to tolerate repression and low wages.

In June 1987 students demonstrated against the military regime. Workers joined in, launching a wave of mass strikes that demanded both higher wages and political reforms, and organising independent unions.

The strikes of July - August 1987 marked a turning point. The working class had now stepped on to the stage of history.

## A failing Tiger

**THE 1987 strikes helped force the election of a civilian president, Kim Young Sun, in December 1992.**

He has presided over an economy in growing trouble. In



The Korean Socialist Worker (top) found an audience in the January strikes

part, this reflects the global instability of capitalism. Semiconductors make up nearly 20 percent of South Korean exports.

In the mid 1990s these computer chips were scarce, their prices rose, so investment and production soared. The result was a glut of semiconductors last year. The price of chips on world markets fell sharply.

South Korean firms have also been hit by the spread of industrialisation through East and South Asia. They now face cheaper rivals in many export markets.

Last year South Korea ran up a balance of trade deficit of \$24 billion, the second largest in the world. The country's foreign debt also soared to \$100 billion and the rate of economic growth fell sharply.

## Business as usual

**KIM YOUNG Sunm made little change to the corrupt relationship between the state bureaucracy and the chaebol that had existed under the military.**

Businessmen are expected to pay ministers and bureaucrats massive bribes in exchange for government support.

Kim also continued to rely on repression. From the start socialist groups were targeted.

Now Kim has resorted to increasingly indiscriminate repression.

In one police swoop last year some 4,000 students were arrested and hundreds sentenced to prison.

## January strikes

**ON BOXING Day last year Kim rammed through two laws through a secret session of parliament attended only by members of his New Korea Party.**

One law increased the powers of the secret police. The other imposed new restrictions on trade unions and made it easier to sack workers.

Kim had set himself on a collision course with the organised working class, and one which was increasingly confident and angry.

Last year had already seen a growth in workers' militancy. Car workers, one of the best organised groups, won a series of concessions.

These workers belonged to the semi-legal Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) which had a reputation for militancy.

Anger also spread to members of the more moderate Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU), which originated in the state controlled unions set up by the military regime.

The new laws provoked an immediate wave of mass strikes called by the KCTU and supported more hesitantly by the FKTU. At their peak in mid-January they involved 370,000 workers.

The strikers showed tremendous self confidence on demonstrations and rallies.

Yet the strikes were tightly controlled from above by the KCTU leadership. To avoid the rank and file taking the initiative, union officials kept the action selective.

So while some car workers were out for 26 days, Korea Telecom workers struck for only four hours.

In mid January, just as the regime was wilting under the pressure. The KCTU switched from all out action to weekly one day strikes.

Finally, it used the collapse of the Hanbo chaebol as a pretext for calling them off altogether.

The behaviour of the KCTU leaders shows that in South Korea, as in Ireland, trade union officials, seek to act as go-betweens between workers and bosses.

Nevertheless, the strikes threw the Kim Young Sam regime into what is probably its terminal crisis. The labour law was withdrawn and then amended.

The bankruptcy of two chaebols, Haibo and Sai-yini group, highlighted the issue of official corruption.

In a letter to 80,000 business executives Kim warned, "If the present situation remains unimproved shortly, the tower we have built up with blood and sweat in the past may crumble."

## Socialist alternative

THE CRISIS of the regime offers a tremendous opportunity for the South Korean left. Unfortunately its traditions are strongly Stalinist.

Thus the largest current on the left in the 1980s strongly identified with state capitalist regime of Kim Il Sun in North Korea.

The collapse of the Soviet Union 1991 sent the North Korean regime into crisis. Widespread food shortages have made it dependent on foreign gifts of grain and rice.

For a regime that prized its self reliance this collapse is a terrible humiliation.

North Korea's failure has meant many South Korean left wingers active in the 1980s became politically disillusioned. One political current, however, flourished. The International

Socialists of South Korea (ISSK), which shares the same political ideas as the Socialist Workers Party, was formed in 1990.

Many of its key activists joined after the failed conservative coup in Moscow of August 1991.

This convinced them that societies like North Korea have nothing to with socialism.

The ISSK has suffered severely as a result of police repression. Six of members are now serving prison terms usually merely for possessing a socialist publication. Nevertheless the group has been able to survive and respond to the rising workers' struggles.

During what one comrade called the "dream state" of the mass strikes six special issues of the ISSK's normally fortnightly paper, were produced and a total of 18,000 copies sold. One issue sold out the day it was produced and had to be reprinted.

After the strikes were over the ISSK organised a "Forum for Workers Solidarity" at the beginning of February

Over 230 people, representing many unions and industries, participated to discuss what advanced workers should be doing.

Some 900 people, mostly student and worker activists attended a lecture I gave on Marxist theory and the South Korean workers movement at Korea university in Seoul. The size of the meeting reflects the appetite for socialist ideas and the widespread publication of books by SWP authors in South Korea.

State repression and the tight grip the trade union leaders kept on the January strikes show that socialists in South Korea have still a long way to go.

But they have made a start.





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 workers 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.

# Election roundup..... Election round up..... Election round

## Dublin South East:

# A Challenge to Ruairi Quinn

PEADAR O GRADY, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Dublin South East, kicked off his election campaign to an enthusiastic meeting of nearly 50 people last week.

Peadar has a long record of union activity in the health service.

As shop steward for junior doctors at Galway's Regional hospital, he helped to implement a 65 hour week and pushed management into creating an extra 20 jobs.

He joined the Labour Party in 1989 in Galway where he campaigned for Michael D Higgins.

"I was a delegate at the Labour Party conference after the 1992 election and initially I voted for them to go into Coalition. I thought to myself: what would they do if they were not in government? The Labour party was not geared to struggle — only to elections.

"But afterwards when I saw terrible they were, I started looking elsewhere and joined the Socialist Workers Party."

### Active

Peadar O Grady played an active role in resisting water charges in the Ballinacorney area and spoke at many of the meetings there.

"It showed me that when people stick together we can beat this government. No one should think that Howlin got rid of the water charges—he was forced into it by mass pressure."

Today as Peadar O Grady works as a doctor, he is appalled by the run down of the health service.

### Health

"We are just chronically under-staffed. Every year, the government gives out £1 billion in grants and tax breaks to the rich. That is half the health budget and you can imagine what we could do with the money"



Peadar O Grady

"In Dublin South East they are closing down local hospitals at the Adelaide and the Meath and moving them to Tallaght. I am not against the moving of some units—but we need proper health services in the inner city as well.

"The system of private medicine makes the cutbacks even worse.

"I am against consultants having a private practice alongside their state jobs. I do not think they should be earning astronomical salaries.

"I heard one consultant recently say that 'if you pay peanuts, you get monkeys'."

"He must think that the rest of the hospital staff are monkeys, because they are paid peanuts."

## Canvass for the SWP

# Bríd Smith runs in Dublin South Central

BRID SMITH, who is the Socialist Workers Party candidate in Dublin South Central, is well known around union circles. She has worked for the shopworkers union MANDATE for ten years and was active in helping to organise the picket lines during the Dunnes stores strike.

"When you look at the treatment of shop workers you can see how really sick this system is. Big chains like Quinnsworth and Dunnes are making a fortune. Margaret Heffernan's jewellery is probably worth more than most shopworkers earn in a few years.



Brid Smith bus conductors in Dublin. Our job was made worse by a vicious sexist article in the Sunday World. I am glad to say that male and female workers stood together against that paper by organising a picket of 300 outside their office. They were soon apologising after that."

In the Crumlin area where she has been active with SWP, Brid has come across the drugs

issue quite a lot. "There are some very good groups working on the drugs issue in Drimnagh and Crumlin. But they are getting little back-up from the state.

"There are now so many addicts looking to get on programmes in Crumlin that a charge of £40 is now needed to get onto treatment. The local community were even thinking of sponsoring the addicts for the price—but the money should be coming from the state. They given enough hand-outs to the rich—it is the least they could do.

"I am against vigilantism. Instead of marching on the houses of addicts, we should be going to the Dail. They have neglected working class areas and then given out their hypocritical speeches about zero tolerance. We should demand that they fund proper treatment centres."

### Union

A bagpacker in the supermarkets will get as little as £1.60 an hour. In non-union jobs like Centra or Londis, the average pay level is around £2.50 an hour."

Before working in MANDATE, Brid Smith was the Dublin branch secretary of the National Busworkers Union.

"I was employed as one of the first female

The SWP campaign in a number of constituencies is now well underway.

An election is expected on May 23rd unless it is delayed because of the McCrackin Tribunal. The mood in many areas is one of real anger against the politicians.

"I am just waiting for Sean Haughey to come to my door" said one resident in Kilmore in Dublin. "The Haughey's cannot act like the Lords of Kinseally any longer."

Deirdre Cronin, the director of

election in Dublin South East explained how the SWP are canvassing. Whichever government is elected, there are going to be new attacks on the working class. The strike of paramedics in the hospitals is just one sign of what is to come. This means that we have to build a network up from below of working class militants who are willing to fight after the election. That is why we say: we want votes — but we want more. We ask people do they want to take Socialist Worker and can they get involved in activity."

Supporters of the SWP are invited to join the canvassing teams.

There is usually one team going each night in most of the constituencies where we are standing.

Dublin South East: Peadar O Grady: Tel:(01)4734565  
Dublin South Central: Brid Smith: Telephone:4550855  
Dublin North Central: Ritchie Browne: Tel:(01) 8722682  
Waterford: Jimmy Kelly: Tel: (051) 858068

## News from the SWP:

THE ELECTIONS through Ireland are creating a political atmosphere from which SWP is growing.

In the North, the SWP has pointed out that the election is nothing other than a sectarian head-count whereby workers are expected to vote for 'their side' no matter how right wing the politics of their nationalist or Unionist representatives are.

Leaflets have been produced calling for a different type of politics based on class.

During the election, an important unofficial strike broke out in the mixed workforce of Mantupet in Belfast. The SWP have responded quickly by raising collections on the street sales and from surrounding workplaces. As a result of stressing the importance of class politics several people have

joined the party in Belfast in the last few weeks.

In the South, the Carolann Duggan vote in SIPTU has had a huge impact.

### Impact

Carolann ran as an open SWP member and despite the charge from one failed candidate, Norman Croke, that she was 'infiltrating' the union that she belonged to for twelve years, she got 42% of the vote.

After the vote, many more shop stewards have started to take copies of Socialist Worker to sell in their factories. A number have also decided to join the SWP.

In the four areas

where SWP is standing for election, strong canvassing teams have now been built. At a meeting in the Dublin South East constituency, three people joined the party from the canvassing meeting and regular activity has been organised.

With the growth of SWP, new members meetings are now being organised on a fortnightly basis.

Nearly 20 new members attended the first meeting where questions were asked on the party's policy. The next new members meeting takes place in Dublin on May 3rd.

Full details for those who have joined or are interested in are available on 8722682.

## SWP branch meetings

- BELFAST**  
Meets every Wed at 8pm  
Upstairs Whytes Tavern
- CORK**  
Meets every Weds 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.
- DUNDALK**  
Meets every Weds at 1pm in  
Dundalk RTC
- ENNISKILLEN**  
Meets every fortnight Contact  
national address for details
- GALWAY**  
Meets every Thursday at 7.30pm  
in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square
- LIMERICK**  
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in  
Costello's Tavern, Dominick St
- MAYNOOTH**  
Contact 8722682 for details
- WATERFORD**  
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in  
ATGWU Hall, Keyser St.
- DUBLIN NORTH-WEST**  
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm  
in The Old Brogue, Dorset St.
- DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK**  
Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm  
Contact 8722682 for details
- DUBLIN DRIMNAGH**  
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm  
in the Black Forge (formerly the  
Bentley), Drimnagh Rd
- DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL**  
Meets every Wed at 8.30pm in  
Conways, Farnell 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 Monday at 8pm in the  
Steering Wheel, Clondalkin

There are Socialist Worker members in:  
COLERAINE; LURGAN; CAVAN; DONEGAL; NAAS; KILKENNY;  
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# news & reports— politics; the unions

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## Irish Life

# The best way to win is to escalate

THE LOCK-OUT at Irish Life is now entering its thirteenth week. Over 300 MSF members and now 60 SIPTU members, who recently joined the action are picketing the companies offices throughout the country.

The company have locked out the sales staff after trying to force through changes in work practices that would completely undermine the job security of workers.

The company are demanding that workers deliver a minimum number of "fact finds" (information on customers financial status) each week.

### Required

Staff who failed to come up with the required number of "fact finds" could then face disciplinary action including the loss of their jobs.

The company offered a deersory £600,000 between all 300 staff in return for acceptance of the package.

This attack on workers comes at a time when the company are declaring massive profits of £153 million.

And while the staffs' conditions are under attack, it was recently revealed that five of the companies directors have been given massive pay hikes adding up to over £1 million a year between



them.

As one picket in Dublin put it:

### Package

"They were offering £600,000 between 300 of us to accept this package with a clause to repay £2,000 if you leave the company within 6 months. But then they can give themselves a 21% pay rise.

"Between 5 of them they are getting more than all 300

of us. It's a disgrace."

In the last week the company have stopped payment of commissions already earned by the sales staff, most of whom who are trying to exist on a mere £30 a week strike pay.

Irish Life are now also threatening to sack those involved in the dispute and employ scabs to take their jobs if they don't end their action.

### Threat

Responding to the companies threat, the union leadership have threatened an all-out strike.

This is quite right but the union should not wait.

The best way to win is to escalate immediately. MSF

and SIPTU should issue a clear instruction to all their members still working inside to come out.

Those who refuse to do so are not worth having in the union anyway and should be expelled.

As we go to press, the workers are planning a second mass picket and march.

These should be organised regularly to provide a focus for solidarity.

Delegations should be sent from the picket lines to MSF and SIPTU workplaces looking for support for these actions and collections.

Other MSF workers have begun to make donations to the strike fund.

The unions should push for more of this kind of action.

## Irish Lifes shady birth

THE PRIVATISATION of Irish Life in 1991 was surrounded with shady dealing.

The company sold off a block of flats in Mespil Road, Donnybrook but did not put them out to public tender. Among those ending up buying flats in the complex were two of Reynolds' daughters and TV presenter Marian Finucane.

### Management

Around the same time, management including David Kingston, still company chief executive today, lost £98 million of policy holders money investing in Guinness Peat Aviation. Brendan Hayes, the Director in charge of investments "mysteriously" disappeared shortly after.

This crooked management have the cheek to tell those who actually do the work in the company that they need to be more efficient!

## IMPACT:

# Striking for pay and the health service

OVER 3,500 HEALTH workers in IMPACT have taken Strike action over Pay.

The government and management has refused to give the paramedics — who include, Physiotherapists, Social Workers, and therapists from eye and speech to mental health—a pay increase in line with that given to the nurses.

The picket lines are both solid and in good spirit. On the first day of a large number of people joined the union.

### Debates

And debates are taking place over the extent of emergency cover, since some child care workers do nothing but what is called emergency cover.

A social worker told Socialist Worker. "Management have always told us that we had to keep parity with the nurses, this was when we were paid more than them.

"Now the nurses got a decent pay rise, they have said there is no parity."

She went on "The government didn't even have the decency to tell us this, they simply announced it on the media."

### Service

Workers in the paramedic services have had an increased work burden placed on them in the last few years.

There has been a gradual undermining of conditions, with increased "flexibility" to overcome the under funding of services. As Margaret a speech therapist put it:

"We operate a whole

*"The people I look after are literally voiceless, but that doesn't mean that they don't deserve decent health care."*

*range of new equipment, which has meant learning new skills and bringing extra workload on therapists."*

The strikers are concerned that the health service is consistently unfunded. As one worker said:

*"A two tier system is operation, for those with money health care is available for those without it more and more it is not. Waiting lists for a speech therapists are up to two years."*

### Attempting

The government are attempting to stop a wide range of workers from putting in wage demands, beyond the pittance offered under Partnership 2,000.

Margaret thinks that "The government has decided to take us on because they think we are soft target. The people look after are literally voiceless, but that doesn't mean that they don't deserve decent health care."

The Paramedics are central to the running of the health service, the strike action shows the best way to fight not for just decent pay but for a decent Health Service.

## Telecom:

# Vote to reject shares

TELECOM workers will soon be balloted on a new Employee Share Option Plan (ESOP).

The union leaders in Telecom claim the ESOP will give staff influence at board level.

In reality the shares will be used to get workers to accept a major erosion of conditions.

### Offered

The unions have offered the company a pension contribution in return for shares. But the company want more, including:

■ Non-payment of partnership 2000 increases;

■ Longer flexible working hours.

■ Grade and geographic mobility.

Telecom management want workers to bear the brunt of cuts in the face of new competition.

Meanwhile top managers are set for a huge hike in salaries and perks as the company moves towards privatisation.

Workers should reject the ESOP and demand their unions fight to defend conditions.

## Aer Lingus profits soar by 130%

AER LINGUS has declared a profit margin of £49 million for 1996.

This is a 130% rise over the previous year.

Yet the chief executive Gary McCann claims that while the results are very good more cuts on payroll

and overhead costs are needed.

Workers at Aer Lingus take a different view. "We have had this sacrifice message for years. If they are declaring such big profits, it is time we got some results."

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

**Inside:**

**Class is bad for health**

-Pages 6 & 7

South Korea:  
Workers take on the Tiger

-Page 8

# Good riddance to the Tories

## Teachers unite and fight

# BUT DON'T TRUST BLAIR!

**THE TORIES** have left a legacy of destruction after their eighteen years in power.

Today, according to the Child Poverty Action Group, one in three children are living in poverty.

That compares to one in ten in 1979.

The income of the poorest tenth of people has also fallen by 13 per cent under the Tories. These have been the

### Refusing

But nobody should trust Tony Blair's New Labour Party to bring

real change.

Labour is refusing to reverse the cuts in the health service and education.

The hospital units in the Royal Maternity and City Hospital in Belfast will still be closed under a new Labour government.

And hundreds of

teaching jobs throughout the North will still be slashed—unless we organise ourselves to resist.

Nor should anybody believe that Blair will bring peace to Northern Ireland as people like Gerry Adams fervently hope.

Blair has always claimed that his policies on the North are almost exactly similar to the Tories.

When Labour was last in power, their overlord for Northern Ireland, Roy Mason, was known as Stonemason because of his avid support for repression.

The tragedy is that the General Election in Northern Ireland gave no scope to raise these issues.

### Head Count

It was based entirely on a sectarian head count whereby we were told to get back to 'our own camps'.

Protestants were asked to vote for Unionists no matter how right they were while Catholics were supposed to get behind na-



Bangor was attended by a 1,000 people.

The Tories are using "Drumcree and the deterioration of the security situation" as the excuse for the cuts. This is just a smoke screen.

The intensity of the cuts matches those in Scotland where there is no "security situation!"

### Division

When the IRA were more active and the number of security forces higher, there were not as many cuts as today.

The Tories are using the widening division amongst Catholics and Protestants over Drumcree to push through the cuts.

The leaders of the teachers unions should call a united fight across the different unions.

They should not be letting sectarian politicians on to their platforms. We should look to our fellow workers rather than Tory allies to win this fight.

**TEACHERS ARE starting to fight the massive cuts facing schools in the North.**

Last Wednesday INTO members staged a half day strike against compulsory redundancies in schools.

The larger teachers union—NASUWT—have called a rally in Belfast in protest at possibly 500 job losses. In addition the NASUWT has called "selective strikes" in schools where class sizes are set to increase because of redundancies.

The first of these took place at Corpus Christi College in West Belfast where seven redundancies are being made.

There is massive anger amongst teachers and parents over the cuts in education. One rally in

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**'Save our schools' rally**

**11:30am Saturday 26th April  
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