

Socialist Worker

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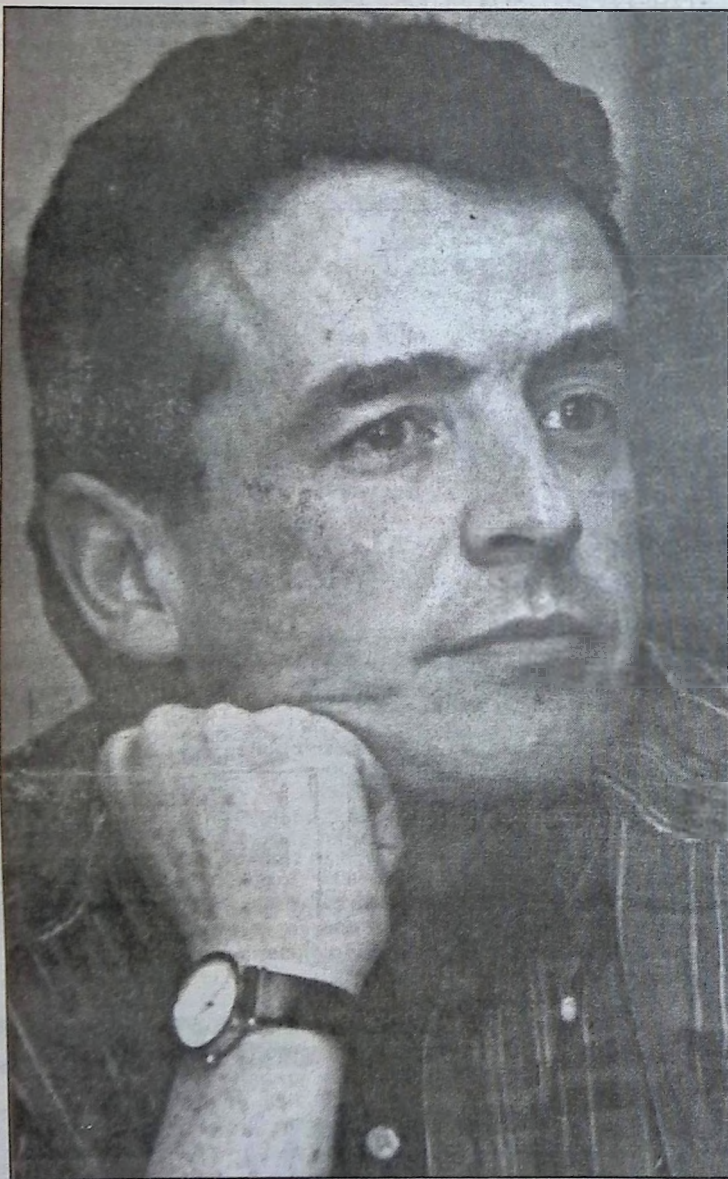
Inside:

The Arms Race that never stopped
—CENTRE PAGES

Kosovo: Seeds of a new Balkan war?
—PAGE 4

Solidarity price £1

Anti-union Ryanair boss Michael O'Leary pockets £140m share deal...



THE UGLY FACE OF IRISH CAPITALISM

THE CELTIC Tiger is throwing up some of the greediest businessmen this country has seen.

One of them is Michael O'Leary—the boss of Ryanair.

Last year, O'Leary pocketed £17 million as a share bonus.

His overall shares in the company came to a staggering £140 million.

O'Leary hires a PR company to manipulate the media.

But he wants to deny workers the right to be represented by a union.

The press claims that O'Leary is the exception among Irish bosses and the rest are supposed to be decent social partners.

But that's nonsense. The bosses' organisation, IBEC, defends O'Leary's right not to recognise unions. And there are plenty more employers who are like O'Leary.

Take for example, Margaret Heffernan.

Her annual salary is £1.5 million but she insists that new workers in Dunnes Stores do not get double time for Sunday work.

The reality is that the employers are using social partnership deals to hold down wages in a booming economy.

They may distance themselves from the tactics of O'Leary because they reckon they can get more by working with the union leaders.

But if O'Leary gets away with keeping unions out of Ryanair other bosses will try to follow him.

They have already shown that all they care about is their own greed.

Róisín McAliskey victory

THE PRESS have hailed the decision of the British Home Secretary, Jack Straw to free Róisín McAliskey.

But there should be no gratitude because Róisín should never have been arrested or imprisoned in the first place.

She was framed, persecuted and used by the RUC to appease Unionist politicians.

She was held for a week in the notorious Castlereagh holding centre where she was interrogated without a solicitor.

Attempt

She was not even questioned about the Osnabruck bombing in Germany. Instead police taunted her about the loyalist murder attempt on her parents in 1981.

Róisín spent nearly seven months locked up without charge in British jails.

At Holloway jail she was strip searched 75 times in four

months despite being pregnant.

She was held for six weeks at the Belmarsh men's prison in a cell which had shit smeared on the walls.

There is no evidence linking her to the bombing of the Osnabruck British army base in Germany.

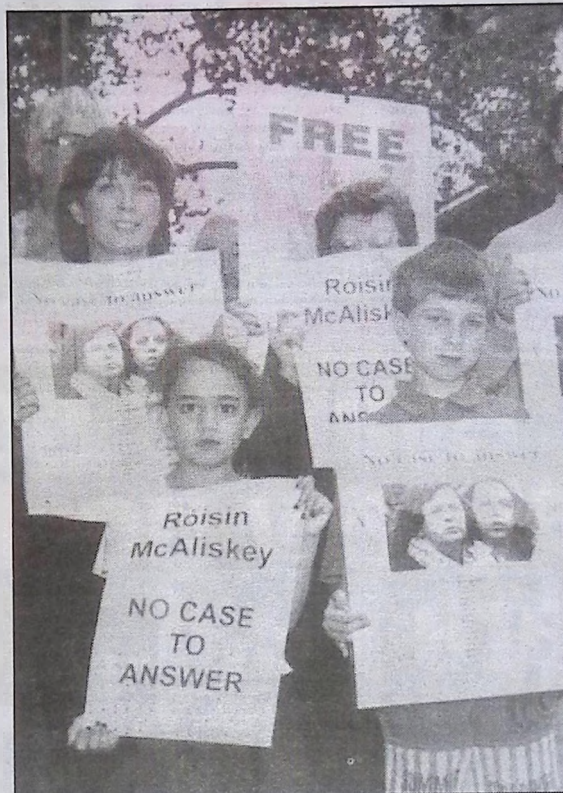
She has an alibi to prove that she was not in Germany.

All four Germany witnesses say Róisín is not the woman they saw at the time of the bombing.

Róisín's only real crime was to be the daughter of Bernadette McAliskey who played a prominent role in the Civil Rights movement and remained a trenchant critic of the RUC since.

Róisín McAliskey has only been freed because there was a public outcry in both Britain and Ireland.

The furious reaction of the Unionist politicians and their Tory friends in Britain shows they have no interest in bringing justice to Northern Ireland.



■ Róisín's only real crime was to be the daughter of Bernadette McAliskey

O'Donoghue's hypocrisy on refugees

JUSTICE Minister John O'Donoghue has embarked on a policy of deporting refugees.

And according to Amnesty International, he has refused to give an assurance that he will not be opening detention camps in the future.

But when O'Donoghue was in opposition he sang a different tune.

He attacked the Refugee Act which was introduced by the Rainbow Coalition because it was not liberal enough.

O'Donoghue said that "the status of the refugee should strike a chord with every man, woman and child who has a grasp of Irish history".

He attacked the provision that refugees should not be eligible for work.

He demanded free legal aid so that refugees could process their claims for asylum status.

But as soon as O'Donoghue came to government he did a complete about turn.

Within weeks of taking office, he was boasting about the numbers of people who had been turned back at Irish borders.

He presided over a policy whereby immigration officers were encouraged to pick out black faces to see if they could be stopped coming into Ireland.

Funding

He cut all legal funding to the Refugee Council. And now he is engaging in a whole scale policy of deportation.

Yet the reality is that there are only a few thousand refugees in Ireland.

This contrasts with a figure of between 50,000 and 100,000 Irish illegals in America in the 1980s.

O'Donoghue blames refugees for "costing too much".

But he should remember that his own proposal in opposition for them to be allowed work would solve this issue overnight.

The reality is that Fianna Fail want to use refugees as scapegoats. Their zero tolerance policy has turned out to be a farce so now they want to focus on refugees as a "problem".

They want to hide the fact that their policy of cutting taxes on the rich means that there are less local authority houses to go around.

By blaming refugees for taking accommodation and resources, they try to hide the real scroungers: the big business backers of Fianna Fail who use offshore accounts to hide their corruption.

Courts block free speech

THE IRISH wealthy are using the courts to stop free speech when it upsets their privilege.

Despite all their talk about an open society, they use the weapon of the law to hide their activities.

Three recent cases show how the wealthy use the law

National Irish Bank: RTE uncovered a major operation to organise tax evasion through off-shore accounts. Yet the NIB was able to go to the High Court and prevent the full story coming out for seven weeks.

Cramptons: This company used sub-contractors who hired

workers from the black economy.

But when the BATU union organised against them, Cramptons went to the High Court and got an injunction to stop "malicious stories" against them.

The *Sunday Business Post* was prevented from printing photographs of a picket line because placards contained the words: "Building Workers Against the Black Economy".

Fortunately building workers defied the picket and forced Cramptons to pay up for the union's legal costs. (See Page 11)

Gate Gourmet: During the

shutdown of Dublin airport this company got an injunction to stop union activists talking to fellow workers about the need

THE JUDGES rule their courtrooms like petty dictators. Judge Terence Finn recently had the journalist John Kilraine arrested because his mobile phone rang in a Dublin District Court.

The journalist was held for two hours in a Garda

station and had to apologise to the judge.

Over the last few weeks, the press have claimed that racists like Aine Ni Chonaill have been

denied "free speech". But the real force that blocks free speech are the wealthy who want to muzzle criticism of their privilege.

for solidarity action.

Judges seem to be able

Pretext
In another case a judge ordered workmen to stop drilling within earshot of the Four Courts or they would be arrested.

to hold ordinary people in contempt of court on the slightest pretext.

Yet does anyone imagine that Charlie Haughey would be treated in this way?

The real contempt is that of the judiciary towards the working class.

Their contempt for us

Dangerous horses

THE GARDAI are in the process of setting up a mounted division. While this may seem an extreme response to the petrol prices and traffic chaos in Dublin, the reality of mounted police is more ominous.

The most likely source for the new horses is the Yorkshire police.

Trained

They have four ageing nags up for sale for anyone who wants them.

The chief constable describes the horses as "well trained in crowd control, policing demonstrations and deal-

ing with civil disturbance".

Yorkshire police's idea of crowd control was the Hillsborough disaster when they used horses to push people into the over full ground, leading to the tragedy.

In the 1984-85 miners' strike, they used horses in a series of cavalry charges at Orgreave against striking miners.

The guards may try and claim that they want horses for tourists at the St Patricks Day parade, yet it is precisely "civil disturbances" like the protests at Dublin Airport where the Garda seventh cavalry will be used.

£11.1 million handout for unsafe firm

THE NORTHERN Ireland Industrial Development Board has just paid £11.1 million to the Sean Quinn Group to build a new glass factory in Derylin which is supposed to supply 30 percent of the Irish market.

The company has quarries

in Fermanagh and Galway, a huge country club in Cavan and a dozen pubs in Dublin.

But it also has a terrible health and safety record.

Between 1994 and 1995, four workers at the Quinn's group died.

Yet the business has only been to the courts once for overloading cement and

gravel lorries and was fined a mere £500. In one case the blame for over-loading was pinned on John Carey, who died in a fatal accident.

His widow will get no compensation.

The Northern Ireland Office clearly believes in feeding more lard to the fatted beast.

what we think

A settlement built on sectarianism

THE BRITISH and Irish governments are making a final push to get a settlement to the Northern conflict agreed in the next few weeks.

They want to hold a referendum North and South of the border in May.

If there was a settlement which brought a permanent peace, then working class people everywhere would be delighted.

But all the signs are that this will not be the case. During the multi-party talks David Trimble has not shown the slightest interest in compromise.

He is still even demanding the expulsion of Sinn Fein.

The settlement looks like it will be built on a trade off whereby the Unionists get back an Assembly and nationalists are given North-South bodies with some powers.

Reject

While Sinn Fein may reject this deal, they are re-positioning themselves to work it by talking about an "equality agenda" which involves advances for Catholics within the Northern state. Yet any deal that comes out of these talks will

not dismantle sectarianism.

It will be built around red herrings like the removal of Articles Two and Three of the Irish constitution.

The Southern state never tried to enforce its claim on the North but the Unionists want to pretend it was one of the main causes of the conflict.

The RUC which is hated in Catholic areas is unlikely to be disbanded.

And if there is an assembly formed in Northern Ireland Unionist politicians will behave as they did in the old Stormont days—they will try to impose sectarian rule.

The British and Irish government proposals are built on the idea that there are two competing communities.

Instead of eradicating sectarianism, they only want to modernise and adapt it to new purposes.

They will be hoping that the sectarian divisions that have divided workers in the past will be maintained so that low wages can still be guaranteed to multi-nationals.

Socialists oppose a return to armed conflict in the North. It could only lead to an intensification of sectarian bitterness and suffering.

But we should not be blackmailed into accepting a bosses' solution that can only lay the basis for continuing sectarianism.

Demand abortion rights now



A pro-choice rally on International Women's Day in Dublin

Questions about Hugh Coveney

"A TRAGIC accident that killed an essential gentleman". This is how the press have presented High Coveney.

But in any other country, questions would be raised about the circumstances surrounding Coveney's death.

Hugh Coveney is a businessman who has grown wealthy by property speculation. For nearly thirty years he was involved with the Cork "merchant princes" who had extensive business contacts with the Guinness Mahon Bank which was run by Des Traynor.

Traynor was the key figure who ran the Ansbacher account which was used to fund Charles J Haughey

The week before his death Coveney was interviewed by the Moriarity Tribunal because of his links with Des Traynor and the Guinness and Mahon Bank.

Coveney's record shows that he was not above using public office to further his business interests. He made a phone call to the chair of Bord Gais to promote the idea that his family firm should be given a consultancy contract.

During the corruption scandals in Italy and Japan, there were often deaths of key business men and politicians.

Available

This is why there should be no cover up on the circumstances surrounding Coveney's death. The Moriarity Tribunal should make available the transcripts of interviews with him.

More importantly, the names of the secret clique involved in the Ansbacher account need to be revealed and their full contacts with political leaders exposed.

NEARLY ONE in four pregnancies outside marriage end in abortion.

According to a recent study conducted by Eveyln Mahon the overwhelming reason is that many young Irish women

and mendo not have adequate information or access to contraception.

Fianna Fail Health Minister Brian Cowan has censored the conclusion of the report because he wants to have yet another commission look into the issue. But what needs to be

done is obvious.

We need a fully funded contraception service that is available at all times. And Irish women who choose to have an abortion should not be forced to travel to Britain at great cost. (For report of Derry Pro choice march see page 11.)

Carolann Duggan says:

'Take Socialist Worker and build the network'



"I have been campaigning for the last few weeks for the post of SIPTU General Secretary. I am more convinced than ever that the idea of social partnership is a joke.

"How can you have partnership when factory workers I have met are earning £9,000 a year while the fat cats are making a fortune.

"Whatever happens in this election we need a network of people who will fight for working class interests.

"Socialist Worker is the key to that network. It reports every fortnight from the workers' side.

"I urge you to take copies into your workplace."

I want to take ___ copies of Socialist Worker to sell.

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news of the world

Kosovo: Seeds of a new Balkan war?

THE ALBANIAN opposition in Kosovo, led by Ibrahim Rugova's Democratic League of Kosovo, has boycotted Milosevic's elections and set up its own shadow state structures since 1989.

Every Western government claims it's operating a just policy in the Balkans based on defending the rights of minorities.

Yet for the last nine years they have been silent over the discrimination and lack of democracy in Kosovo, and have refused to recognise Rugova's government.

The inability of Rugova's respectable opposition to gain a hearing in the West is one reason why many Albanians in Kosovo have turned to the Kosovo Liberation Army.

Onslaught

The governments of Britain, the US, Russia, France, Germany and Italy have condemned the Serbian forces' onslaught in Kosovo. But British and US leaders have also slammed the Kosovan opposition.

Indeed many experts say Britain's Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, and UN envoy Robert Gelbard "gave the green light" to Milosevic to crack down in Kosovo.

Cook said after the Serbian offensive began, "The Belgrade authorities say they are fighting terrorism. We unreservedly condemn terrorism."

"The Kosovans must recognise that their self styled liberation army does not promise them liberation, but will bring them further impoverishment."

The Western powers oppose independence for Kosovo and want to see it remain part of Serbia, although with autonomous status.

They have treated Kosovo so shabbily because they have never been interested in justice in the Balkans.

The US imposed the Dayton peace agreement on the leaders of Serbia, Bosnia, and Croatia as the war in Bosnia reached stalemate in 1995.

That halted the Bosnian war. But it froze and reinforced the ethnic hatreds.

Cleansed

It erected borders based on the military frontlines and ensured people lived predominantly in areas "cleansed" of other ethnic groups.

The world's major powers are only interested in "stability" and winning spheres of economic and political influence in the Balkans.

They cannot be trusted to bring any kind of lasting solution to Kosovo or anywhere else in the region.

It is a terrible mistake for some Albanian Kosovans to react to repression at the hands of the Serbian paramilitaries by calling for NATO intervention against Serbia.

The world's major powers have proved that all they can do in the region is back one or other territorial carve up. In each case nationalist rivalry has been stronger.



TENS OF thousands of Albanians protest at Serbian forces killing protesters

Only one way out from this horror

ONE KEY reason why Western leaders have vacillated over what to do about Kosovo is that they fear the crisis will spread.

Albanian people are spread across the Balkan countries—Albania itself, Montenegro, Kosovo, Greece and Macedonia.

There have been sympathy demonstrations by Albanians in the two most important areas—Albania and Macedonia.

Rebels

In Albania support for the Kosovan rebels has become bound up with the rivalries between the different local warlords.

The "Kosovo question" threatens to rip the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia apart.

One in four of Macedonia's two million population are Albanian. Two thirds are Macedonian.

Full scale war in Kosovo could draw in Albania and Albanians in Macedonia.

A civil war in Macedonia would draw in Bulgaria and Greece. They border it and have claims on its territory.

That in turn could lead to con-

flict between Greece and Turkey.

Both countries are members of NATO but are engaged in a regional power struggle for dominance in the eastern Mediterranean including control of potential oil reserves and the route of pipelines.

Independence for Kosovo calls into question the rotten carve up of the Balkans and the rivalry between ruling classes, each of which wants to expand its share.

But there is also a danger that, as in the Bosnian war, ordinary workers and peasants across the region get drawn behind their respective rulers in a nationalist frenzy.

This can happen even to those like the Kosovan Albanians who start off fighting against clear discrimination and repression.

Anger and bitterness at repression can become directed, not at

Milosevic, but at the Serb minority in Kosovo.

The only way to avoid that is for struggles for democracy and against repression to break out of the nationalist straitjacket.

It means recognising that class divides every group of rulers from the mass of people they supposedly represent.

There is a tradition of workers and peasants in the Balkans unit-

ing across ethnic divisions.

But that requires breaking from all the nationalist leaders.

It means fighting for the rights of every nationality and for economic and political power to lie with ordinary people.

That is something the rulers of every world power will do their utmost to prevent, even if it means ensuring the Balkans are divided by rival blood soaked nationalisms.

Bitter fruits of Dayton Deal

THE COUNTRIES of south east Europe, the Balkans, stand on the brink of what could be the third terrible round of war in a decade.

The immediate cause is the offensive by Serbian paramilitary police last week against separatist rebels in the province of Kosovo.

Revolt

The Kosovo crisis could draw governments across the region, including Greece and Turkey, and the world's major powers, into full blown war.

Kosovo is officially part of the Serbian state, but only 10 percent of its two million population are Serbs.

The other 90 percent are Albanians, huge numbers of whom have been in open revolt demanding independence from Serbia.

The Serbian regime sent "special units" last week to crush the Kosovo Liberation Army, which has grown in influence with its militant demands for independence from Serbia.

The Serbian forces have killed dozens of people and razed whole villages to the ground.

The murderous reaction of Serbian President Milosevic's troops is typical of the way he has tried to rule Kosovo for the last nine years.

Under the 1974 Yugoslav constitution Kosovo was an autonomous province.

Nationalism

In 1989 Milosevic, who had been elected president of Serbia two years earlier, used the Serb minority in Kosovo to whip up Serbian nationalism.

He stripped Kosovo of its autonomy. Milosevic, along with other rulers in Yugoslavia like

Croatia's Franjo Tudjman, turned to nationalism to bolster his position as the Yugoslav state fell apart.

The descent into nationalism and hatred for other ethnic groups led to war in Bosnia.

In Kosovo it meant the Serbian authorities were fomenting distrust between Serbs and Albanians.

Milosevic drove Albanians out of positions in the state bureaucracy and replaced them with Serbs.

He wanted to drive a wedge between ordinary people, both workers and peasants, in one of the poorest parts of Europe.

Zairians protest at Kabila

AROUND 50 people held a lively protest outside the U.S. Embassy in Dublin against US imperialism in Zaire.

The demonstrators, all originally from Zaire, said that President Kabila, the current president of Zaire, was a puppet of the western and American imperialism.

One man said, "We wanted a democracy in Zaire, instead we got Kabila".

The protestors said that there was a lack of even basic human rights in the country.

They felt they had to act because the people of Zaire are unable to do so themselves due to the high level of repression.

Alex Belo, acting as a spokesperson said "We must do something in this country because there is too much repression at home at the moment - It must start here".

The group intends to mount bigger protest in the near future.

LVF: the military wing of the DUP

Special report by
JOHN ANDERSON

DURING THE spate of recent killings by LVF murder gangs, the PUP's David Ervine spoke of the LVF receiving assistance from "respectable" politicians.

There was a furious response from the DUP, which says it has always condemned violence.

But there is mounting evidence to suggest that the DUP has in fact informally linked up with the LVF.

On the same day as the two victims of a horrific LVF attack were buried in Poyntzpass, Ian Paisley junior and Sammy Wilson sang the praises of the late LVF leader Billy Wright at a rally in Portadown.

The rally was organised by the shadowy "Concerned Protestants Group", widely believed in Portadown to be a publicity front for the LVF.

The DUP's track record also shows that they have not been squeamish about violence in the past.

Sectarian

Since Paisley began his political career in the 1960s, he has always attracted elements which were involved in sectarian violence.

As early as 1966, when three UVF men were convicted of the brutal murder of a young Catholic in Belfast, one of the killers told the court, "I am sorry that I ever heard of that man Paisley or decided to follow him."

During the 1980s the DUP was instrumental in setting up several private armies.

In 1981 Paisley launched the Third Force.

This was a conscious echo of the Third Force employed by the apartheid regime in South Africa to carry out killings, bombings and dirty tricks against pro-democracy activists.

Paisley argued that the RUC and British Army were too restrained and a "third force" was needed to "take the war to the IRA".

This is the same justification that has always been used by loyalist death squads.

A British Army officer was more honest when he said, "The Protestant paramilitaries have done the things the security forces couldn't do."

After the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 the DUP launched the Ulster Resistance movement at a rally in the Ulster Hall.

While the group's main public activity was to parade around in paramilitary uniform, it also built up a stockpile of weapons and there was a clear implication that those weapons would be used.

It has recently been reported that the now defunct

Ulster Resistance has been handing over its guns to the LVF. The DUP was also highly influential in the formation of the LVF.



Johnny "Mad Dog" Adair

The picket of the Catholic church at Harryville in Ballymena was originally organised by convicted murderer Billy McCaughey, a prominent member of the DUP in Ballymena.

Other leading DUP figures, like local councillor Davy Tweed, were vocal in supporting the thugs harassing Catholic worshippers outside the church.

Notorious

The LVF was formed when elements from the Harryville picket linked up with Billy Wright's notorious Mid-Ulster brigade of the UVF.

The DUP was quick to make common cause with Wright, as both shared an interest in splitting the UVF.

The DUP was concerned that the political wing of the UVF—the PUP—was threatening its base in places like East Belfast and Larne with its emphasis on working-class issues and support for the peace process.

Wright and his followers based their politics on Protestant fundamentalism and naked sectarian hatred, and believed that the Belfast-based PUP/

UVF leadership had gone soft.

Wright also attacked PUP leaders David Ervine and Billy Hutchinson for their vague talk about socialist politics, saying, "This has always been a right-wing movement...there is no place in this movement for communist or Marxist ideas."

These ideas fitted like a glove with the politics of the DUP.

When the UVF leadership finally expelled Billy Wright, DUP politicians leapt to his defence.

Former MP William McCrea spoke on the platform with Wright at a rally his supporters organised in Portadown.

Other leading DUP figures, including Peter Robinson, attended the rally.

When Wright was killed last December DUP politicians called it a scandal and many attended his funeral.

This "non-violent" party seemed to have no problem showing solidarity with a sectarian mass murderer.

The bitterness that grows from poverty

ONE AMERICAN journalist who reported the Wright funeral said most of the people there were "the poorest of the poor". This is the key to why sectarian bigotry still flourishes in the North.

In South Africa the Nazi AWB grew from the despair of poor whites by telling them that blacks were to blame for their poverty.

The same process is at work in Northern Ireland. A recent study

by the Low Pay Commission showed that Ballymena has the lowest wage rates in the North.

Most of the Harryville pickets come from Ballykeel, an intensely deprived estate with sky high unemployment, rotten housing conditions and virtually no social welfare provision.

It is in these rundown estates in Ballymena, Portadown and across the North that the sectarian poison of Paisleyism and the thuggery of the LVF finds a breeding ground.

Republicans have no answer to Protestant poverty because they

see two rival communities competing with each other.

Instead of challenging the system that drives so many into despair, leaders like Gerry Adams pour their energy into getting multinationals to invest in "their" areas.

What is clearly needed is a socialist alternative which fights for the common interests of workers. That means openly opposing capitalism rather than fighting to see which side gets its crumbs.

Only by doing that can loyalist ideas which scapegoat and murder Catholics be challenged.

Zimbabwe

From freedom fighter to 'rotten ruler'

SOCIALIST WORKER was one of the very few places you could read about Zimbabwe's second general strike in barely two months.

According to the Zimbabwean Confederation of Trade Unions (ZCTU), between 80 and 90 percent of workers supported its two day stayaway in protest against government tax and price increases. Even the employers conceded that more than 70 percent had stayed at home.

The strike is another sign of the profound crisis facing the regime of President Robert Mugabe.

Until 1980 Zimbabwe was the white settler colony Rhodesia. In 1965 Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front declared illegal independence from Britain in order to perpetuate the dominance of a small white minority over an overwhelmingly black population.

The main challenges to the Smith regime came from the guerrillas of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), who waged a bloody seven year war against white minority rule.

It was during the war that Mugabe emerged from a ten year spell in Smith's prisons as the most intransigent political spokesman of the liberation struggle.

Finally in the late 1970s, the guerrilla war forced Smith to negotiate. The Lancaster House agreement of December 1979 provided for the first one person, one vote elections in the country's history.

Swept

The elections swept Mugabe's ZANU-PF party into office. At a ZANU-PF election rally I attended in 1980, the speaker asked, "What does majority rule mean?" The audience of peasants and farm workers replied, "A full belly."

More than anything else the guerrilla struggle was about land. The colonial Land Apportionment Act of 1930 guaranteed 6,000 white farmers the more fertile half of the country's land.

Zimbabwe's peasant majority supported the guerrillas in the hope that they would sweep away this racist setup and redistribute the land.

But Mugabe, like Nelson Mandela after him, set out to achieve "reconciliation" between the races.

This turned out to mean that, while political power is now in black hands and legal racism has been abolished, the economy is still dominated by a handful of white businesses and farmers.

In the years after independence in 1980 some social reforms were introduced, but the structure of economic power and the distribution of wealth were largely unchanged.

At most a handful of black politicians, the so called "chefs", and their business cronies got a share of the wealth and privileges which had previously been an exclusive white preserve. At the end of the 1980s the regime went into serious crisis when some senior ministers were implicated in a major corruption scandal.

"What does majority rule mean?" The audience replied, "A full belly."

An alliance of militant students at the University of Zimbabwe and the ZCTU succeeded in blocking Mugabe's attempt to set up a one party state.

He reacted by abandoning the lip service he had previously paid to socialist rhetoric and embracing a programme of market oriented "restructuring" drawn up by the International Monetary Fund.

Mugabe has tried to ride the resulting unpopularity by adopting the language of "black empowerment", also used by South Africa's president in waiting, Thabo Mbeki.

The problem, he says, is that whites still control the economy. The solution is to replace them with black "entrepreneurs".

Mugabe announced plans to expropriate white farmers without compensation. These were met with widespread cynicism, since everyone assumes the farm will be given to the chiefs and their cronies.

The East Asian crisis has tightened the economic vice round Mugabe's neck. The Zimbabwean dollar and local shares collapsed last November.

In a desperate attempt to regain popularity Mugabe offered generous compensation to ex-combatants who had fought in the liberation war—but tried to finance them with huge tax and price increases at everyone else's expense.

These rises pushed the reluctant leadership of the ZCTU into calling two general strikes. Industry minister Nathai Shamuyarira said the last stay away was a "plot" and warned that "drastic and, punitive action will be taken against workers who stay away."

I remember interviewing Shamuyarira just before the independence elections in 1980, when he was free with revolutionary rhetoric about smashing the state. Now he wants to use this same state against workers exercise their right to strike.

It shows how those who try to reconcile the struggle for real change with appeasing capitalism end up belittling the cause for which they made so many sacrifices.

by ALEX CALLINICOS

THE ARMS NEVER S

AFTER THE end of the Cold War, many expected a "peace dividend". Arms spending was supposed to come down and more resources could go to education, health, and ending poverty.

But recent evidence shows that arms spending is in fact rising. Today the weapons industry is the second biggest industry in the world—beaten only by the oil industry.

Each year spending on arms uses up \$180 per person on the planet. In 1992, military spending totalled \$815 billion—a figure equal to the combined income of half the world's population.

The biggest producer of weapons is the United States. It produces more weapons than the next ten industrialised countries combined.

Peace

After the Cold War ended, US politicians talked about peace for a brief period. But then they used the first Gulf War of 1991 to argue that the US had to adopt a strategy known as Military Reaction Contingency. This argued that the US had to have enough weaponry to be able to fight two regional wars simultaneously.

Since then US budget for arms spending has risen to \$256 billion by last year.

Even allowing for inflation this is now higher than the equivalent figure for 1980 when the Cold War was at its height after the Russian invasion of Afghanistan.

Instead of cutting back on weapons, the US is increasing production of crazily "sophisticated" weapons.

One is a new Apache attack helicopter which costs \$15 million per model.

This contains a computer which is supposed to be able to identify targets all by itself.

Another is a nuclear weapons carrier which cost a \$4 billion per model. When aircraft and accompanying ships are included the cost rises to a staggering \$20 billion.

The cost of this overblown waste is borne by ordinary Ameri-

by DAVE McDONAGH

cans. Despite its huge wealth, the US has the highest infant mortality rate in the industrialised world. Life expectancy in the US is as low as it is in the impoverished Cuba.

The US government justifies its military spending by claiming that it is trying to make the world "safe for democracy".

But the example of Columbia shows why this is nonsense. According to Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, Columbia is the worst violator of human rights in Latin America. Yet they get half of all US military aid and training in that hemisphere.

The reality is that US spending on arms is intimately connected with its growth as a capitalist power.

The rulers of the US are terrified of the increasing economic threat from rivals such as Japan or Germany. To overcome this competition, they use their military resources to turn the conflict in their favour.

They push for a continual expansion of NATO in order to defeat their rival in Russia—and also to keep their own so-called allies in Europe under their thumb.

They use their military prowess to get Third World countries to buy weapons from their companies. Today 75% of weapons sold to these countries comes from US firms.

This is why war and murder remain a reality for millions as long as there is a system driven by a greed for profit.



A US soldier displays the "product" of the arms industry.

Blood on

Kidney machines or rockets

"IT'S THE kidney machines that pay for rockets and guns".

These lyrics from Paul Weller's song Going Underground sum up the human cost of the arms trade.

The poorer countries spend over \$100 billion a year on the military. Their regimes align themselves to Western powers

like the US, Britain and France and build up huge armies to crush their own people. For every £100 spent on schools and hospitals in Pakistan, for example, £240 is spent on the armed forces.

It is estimated that just 12 percent of the poorer countries' military spending could provide primary health care for all, immu-

nize all children, end severe malnutrition and give everyone clean water.

If the money spent on one British Aerospace Hawk jet were cancelled, 1.5 million people could be provided with clean water for the rest of their lives.

But it is not in the interest of Third World elites of their Western backers to do this.

THE PERIOD is covered in 1980, referred to as the 'pea' year, which has been a death for the poor.

This ignores the fact that in some parts of the world, since the 1980s, wars have been taken place in which more than 20 million people have been killed.

Today there are still taking place in the former USSR.

Again, the former USSR is still taking place in the former USSR.

ARMIS RACE TOPPED

WE THINK

BEHIND ALL the talk of "peacekeeping" the wars of recent years have shown the continued existence of a system of naked imperialism.

The US only went to war against Iraq to protect the oil profits of Western multinationals.

Protect

The other world powers are all willing to fight wars to protect their economic interests around the globe.

Jacques Delors, the former EU President, admitted as much when he talked of preparations for the "resource wars" of the twenty-first century.

Many "local" wars and civil wars have also resulted from the imperialist divisions imposed on the world.

The former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Somalia were all ruled or dominated by the great powers for years. The imperialists whipped up ethnic divisions to maintain their rule.

When these countries' economies began to fall apart, the local rulers turned once more to the tactic of "divide and conquer". The result in each case was bloody war, often using weapons produced by the major powers.

As economic crisis returns with a vengeance the order books of the big weapons manufacturers will remain full.

Ireland's role

WHAT DO Boeing, GEC, Ford, Philips, Thorn EMI, Toshiba and Rolls Royce all have in common?

Apart from being household names—producing everything from cars to planes to CD players—these giant companies have all been directly involved in arms production.

Arms manufacturing is not only used to defend the interests of big powers—the industry itself is also integrated into world production.

A huge number of companies involved in computers and com-

munications are also part of the arms industry. Despite Ireland's "neutrality" several Irish companies have links to the arms trade.

In 1996 Afri (Action from Ireland) published a report naming some of these firms:

■ Eanna Timoney is the boss of Navan based Timoney Holdings. He has boasted that his name is on fire engines all over US air bases.

The Timoney Armoured Personnel Carrier was first delivered to Belgium in 1978 and the company has had an input into several types of tank and armoured car.

■ A spokesman for Ardee Sports in Co Louth told Afri that the "company supplies the shooting requirements to different countries for military, police and sporting (!) supplies".

"We represent many famous brand names and have numerous contacts in the arms business throughout the world", he added.

■ Befab Safeland of Shannon are listed in the International Defence Directory and supply "runway products capable of arresting the complete range of military aircraft".

Befab describes these products, used on aircraft carriers, as "equipment that saves lives". Tell that to the victims of aerial bombardment!



arms trade

in their hands

...the war commonly peacetime". ...going bloodshed ...ath and destruct- ...orest countries

World War, 150 ght. Most have rd World where civilians have

armed conflicts n wars in the e former Yugo-

slavia, most of these are in the Third World.

Even when the imperialist powers have not been directly involved in the fighting they have kept the bloodshed going by selling arms to the regimes involved.

It is estimated that one fifth of the Third World's debt is caused by arms imports.

Imports

In 1989 the poorer countries' combined annual cost of arms imports and debt repayments exceeded \$80 billion. This was \$27 billion more than

these countries received in development aid.

The Western powers link development aid to arms contracts.

One of these countries is Indonesia, which used weapons bought from the West to carry out genocide against the people of East Timor.

In 1991 Britain gave Malaysia £234 million to build the Pergau Dam.

Overseas secretary Sir Tim Lancaster said the dam was "uneconomic" and "an abuse of the aid programme".

But the £234 million was linked to a billion pounds arms deal for the British weapons industry.

What do socialists say?

Where does profit come from?

IN CAPITALIST society the large majority of people, the working class, neither own nor control the tools, machinery, equipment or land necessary to produce goods that can be sold on the market. They do not possess the means of production.

What they do possess, however, is the ability to work. Marx called this their labour power.

In order to work, to earn a living, workers have no choice but to sell their labour power to those who have a virtual monopoly of the means of production—the capitalists.

Before capitalist societies came about the majority of working people were either slaves or peasants.

The first were the property of slave owners, and could not therefore sell their labour power. The second at least owned land and tools, and so worked some of the time for themselves.

It is only with capitalism that labour power in general becomes a commodity. The price of this commodity is the wage paid by the capitalist.

But what determines the value of labour power? Clearly this is a vital question for all workers since it is on the value of their labour power that their standard of living depends.

Labour

It is also a vital question for the capitalists since all production costs in the end boil down to labour costs.

Marx's answer was that the value of labour power is determined in the same way as the value of all other commodities—by the amount of labour time involved in producing it.

This is made up by the amount of labour time needed to produce food, clothes, housing, transport, training and everything else required to keep the worker ready and able to work.

Also included in the value of labour power is that labour time needed for its reproduction—to ensure that a new generation of wage labourers is supplied.

In other words, capitalists pay workers just enough to maintain them as workers.

In this respect the buying and selling of labour power is just like the buying and selling of everything else. It is paid for according to its exchange value in an apparently fair deal.

But, as Marx pointed out, there is one respect in which la-

bour power is not like any other commodity. It can create more value than is involved in its production.

So, when a boss buys a worker's labour power for a week at, say, £100, he receives a commodity which when used (put to work) produces £150 or even £700 worth of goods.

The difference between the two amounts is what Marx called "surplus value". This is the source of the boss's profits.

Another way of viewing this process is in terms of the working week.

The worker who is employed for 40 hours will produce the equivalent of what is needed to maintain him or her in 20 or 30 hours. The remaining time will go as unpaid labour to the capitalist.

Of course, it does not appear to be unpaid labour because the capitalist appears to pay for all 40 hours of the working week.

Marx used the labour theory of value to show that behind what looked like the fair exchange of the labour contract was really naked exploitation.

Exploitation was not an exceptional nastiness perpetuated by the odd rogue employer but was inherent in wage labour.

In Marx's hands this abstract and obscure economic theory had become a dagger pointed at the heart of capitalism.

It illuminated not only the system's inequality and injustice but also its central dynamic—the accumulation of capital through the extraction of surplus value from the labour power of the working class.

Above all, the theory located the basis of the antagonism between classes in the inevitable struggle of the capitalist class to increase the rate of exploitation of the working class.

And the no less inevitable struggle of the working class to resist this.

It identified an irreconcilable conflict of interest which, on the one hand, is the source of strikes, go slows, overtime bans and the entire trade union struggle.

But which, on the other hand, can never be ended by trade union struggle alone, since this challenges only the rate of exploitation—not the exploitation itself.

Nor the relations of production which give rise to it.

Marx's labour theory of value and its development, the theory of surplus value, therefore led directly to the revolutionary conclusion that the struggle of the working class against exploitation could succeed only if it culminated in the complete overthrow of the capitalist system.

by JOHN MOLYNEAUX

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150 years since 1848

THE YEAR the *Communist Manifesto* was published was the first truly international year of revolution. During 1848, across Europe, country after country rose up against absolute monarchies

During the previous years economic conditions round Europe had worsened and living conditions for most were appalling.

In France one in four were out of work and people died on the streets from hunger and cold. Among the middle classes there were growing liberal and nationalist protests.

The wave of revolutions opened in France. General dissatisfaction was intensified by King Louis Philippe's increasingly reactionary policies, carried out by his prime minister Francois Guizot.

The middle classes organised what was known as a banquet campaign where they made speeches promoting political opposition to the regime.

When the largest banquet of the campaign—scheduled for Feb. 22, 1848, in Paris—was forbidden by the government, the official opposition gave in. But workers who could never have afforded to go the banquets took to the streets.

They marched to defend the right to criticise the government and in one incident on the Boulevard des Capucines government troops fired on the demonstrators. The next day barricades appeared and some troops openly ridiculed Louis Philippe.

Forty eight hours after the banning of the Feb 22nd banquet, Louis Philippe abdicated and "the beautiful revolution, the revolution of universal sympathy," as Marx described it had begun.

News of the revolution spread fast through the new telegraph system and within a few weeks barely a state in Europe was not touched by it.

In Germany, a popular uprising led to the dismissal of unpopular ministers and the creation of a new parliament to draft a constitution for a united Germany.

The Habsburg monarchy of the Austro-Hungarian empire also felt the flame of revolution. Barricades were thrown up in Vienna, Hungary, Milan and Sicily and people demanded national independence.

In Britain, the Chartist movement, which had campaigned for universal suffrage and workers' rights, re-awakened. Huge demonstrations and riots occurred across the country.

In Ireland, Charles Gavan Duffy and the Young Irelanders prepared for revolution.

The historian Eric Hobsbawm noted that "There was never anything closer to world revolution than this spontaneous and general conflagration."

But he also wrote that "Within six months of its outbreak, its universal defeat was safely predictable. Within 18 months of its outbreak all but one of the regimes it overthrew had been restored."

The reason for the defeats sprung from



THE YEAR OF REVOLUTION

the nature of the revolutions themselves.

The revolutions were often based on workers and poor peasants but they were led by the more republican wing of the industrialists. And here a tension soon became evident.

Up to 1848 the bourgeoisie had been a revolutionary class, but the more the working class appeared as an independent social class the more the bourgeoisie feared any upheaval which might threaten its property.

All over Europe this class was presented with a stark choice: they could push through a revolution for democracy and risk a tide that might sweep them away as well, or they could pull back and unite with their former enemies.

By the end of 1848, it had become clear the bourgeoisie had taken the second option.

After the abdication of Louis Philippe, France was ruled by a provisional government, which proclaimed a republic. For the first time the government con-

tained workers' representatives—the socialist Louis Blanc and a gasworker known only as Albert.

But soon the tensions between the bourgeois revolutionaries and the radicals, led by Louis Blanc, was becoming stark.

Radical demonstrations erupted in March, but these were turned into peaceful channels by Blanc himself. Everywhere the conservatives began to speak about the "spectre of communism". In April the moderates, who were stronger in the provinces than in Paris, won a majority in the elections.

The provisional government was now replaced by an executive commission which included the republican bourgeois leaders Lamartine and Ledru-Rollin.

In the middle of May the workers at-

tempted to overthrow the newly elected national assembly, but the revolt was quickly put down.

The final showdown came over the issue of national workshops for the unemployed.

The radical leader Louis Blanc had outlined his ideal of a new social order based on the principle: "Let each produce according to his aptitudes—let each consume according to his need".

He advocated, as a first stage in the achievement of this goal, a system of national workshops controlled by workers with the support of the state.

Some of Blanc's ideas seemed to be taken on by the republican government at first.

They guaranteed a right to work for all, by creating national workshops for the unemployed which would be paid for with higher taxation.

The middle classes were furious with this move. They tried to destabilise and then to get rid of the national workshops.

Finally after the new executive commission came to power they succeeded.

On June 21 the government issued a decree abolishing the workshops and requiring the unemployed to return to the provinces.

The workers revolted to save their "democratic and social republic". Between June 23-26 barricades again went up on the streets of Paris. The middle classes abdicated power to a man called General Cavaignac. He was given dictatorial powers and used harsh measures to suppress the insurrection.

The workers fought heroically for several days but they were isolated in Paris. Afterwards there were mass summary executions and more than 15,000 workers were deported to Algeria.

Marx described the counter-revolution: "Fraternalism, the brotherhood of opposing classes, one which exploits the other, this fraternalism was proclaimed in February and written in capital letters on the brow of Paris, on every prison and every barracks."

"But its true, genuine, prosaic expression is civil war in its most terrible form, the war between labour and capital."

This fraternity burnt in front of all the windows of Paris in the evening of 25 June. The Paris of the bourgeoisie was illuminated, while the Paris of the proletariat burned, bled and mourned in its death agony."

Rather than risk their property the liberal middle classes were happy to see the revolution crushed. 1848 was the last time the bourgeoisie was revolutionary.

From then on they recoiled in fear from revolt - even if that meant giving up part of their own programme of radical democratic reform.

In Germany, for example, the liberals who had won an assembly vacillated and delayed until the old rulers were able to regain the initiative.

In Ireland, radical nationalists like John Mitchell of the Young Irelanders denounced the "red rabble" of Paris and supported the crushing of workers.

Although they attempted to stage an insurrection in the midst of the famine, Connolly argued that the Young Irelanders

"were as rabidly solicitous about the rights of the landlords as were the chiefs of the English government."

The events of 1848 caused Marx to develop his beliefs.

At the start of the year, Marx believed that a "democratic bloc" of classes could carry through the revolt against the absolute monarchs.

He edited a paper, the New Rhineland Gazette, which was funded by liberal industrialists.

But after the events of 1848 he drew the lesson that workers needed to organise independently of other classes and take power for themselves.

He argued that the revolution needed to be permanent if it was to be successful:

"It is our task to make the revolution permanent until more or less all possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, until the proletariat have conquered state power... not only in one country but in all the dominant countries of the world."

by SIMON BASKETTER

The relics of old tyranny

THE MEDIA have developed a mild fascination with the fate of Tsar Nikolai Alexandrovich II, exalted Emperor and autocrat of all Russia until 1917.

There is a former KGB agent who claims to be the last Tsar's youngest son, and controversy surrounds the remains of the dead dictator's family. The number of his fingers on display from Washington to Siberia currently runs at 14.

Its all part of a pretty desperate attempt to rehabilitate the pre-Revolutionary regime in Russia.

The facts of the case are straightforward. After the Tsar abdicated in February 1917 he and his family were held in the town of Yekateringburg.

Nothing much was heard about them until June 1918 when the town was about to be taken over by the White armies of Admiral Kolchak during the Civil War.

Up until then the worker's government had been indifferent to the former monarch and his family. But it was clear that the Whites would use Nicholas as a figure head to rally the forces of reaction.

Their captor, the Bolshevik Yakov Yurovsky, took the Romanovs to the basement of the house and executed them. Their bodies were taken away and buried in an anonymous grave, so right wing lunatics couldn't use the bodies as relics.

However the Bolsheviks underestimated the inventiveness of their right wing opponents.

Bones

A deeply unpleasant anti-semitic called Nikolai Sokolov was put in charge of the Whites attempts to find the bodies. When the Red Army re-took the town he fled to Belgium with some bones and a jar of congealed fat.

After failing to sell the relics to various royals around he hawked them off to the Russian Orthodox church in exile—this was a splinter from the main Russian Orthodox church which it considered to be too left wing!

These zealots embedded the bones and the fat in the wall of a church and set up a shrine for the Tsar and his relatives who were now declared saints.

After this, various people spent the next few decades wandering around the world, making a living by claiming to be the lost daughter of Nicholas II, Anastasia.

Most famous of these was Anna Anderson, who had two movies and at least three mini-series made about her. In fact Anna Anderson had the far more impressive and proud blood line of domestic servants from Central Europe.

When the Stalinist regime collapsed in 1990, right wing groups tried to fill the political vacuum. Not surprisingly, in 1991 two extreme nationalists claimed to have found the "real" Tsar's bones.

These Yekateringburg bones have now become a political battleground in Russia. The Orthodox church in Russia (as opposed to the one in exile) has declared them genuine, so has the Russian government.

There is still however a dispute over who gets to control these bones. The Mayor of Moscow wants them for tourists, now that Lenin's embalmed body isn't attracting the crowds anymore.

Boris Yeltsin, who uses the Tsarist double headed eagle as his personal crest, wants a shrine in St. Petersburg. The fascist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy simply wants to buy them.

Nothing could clearly express the sickness of Russian society today.

The shift from state capitalism to the free market has brought none of the promised gains. Instead the Russian economy has remained in free fall.

What better way then to detract from the realities of life then by playing with the relics of a dead tyrant.

The closest we have seen to a decent society was in Russia in 1917, when the Romanovs were thrown out and ordinary people took control.

The revolution ended the rule of a dictator who produced the horrors of the first world war and presided over terrible pogroms against Jewish people.

The Tsar's relics - whether real or fake - should be thrown into the dustbin of history along with his motley crew of defenders.

by **SIMON BASKETTER**

film

New lads with flabby midriffs

THE FIRST new lad Irish magazine *Himself* has just arrived in the shops.

If you want to find out about pressing issues such as "the truth about Irish nurse—are they really as sexy as they're made out to be? Then this is just what you've been waiting for.

Himself is full of sexist drivel packaged in the glossy format of the woman's mag.

The problem page is stacked with clichés: the boyfriend who wants to pep up his sex life with "blue movies" or the girlfriend who wants to settle down, and boyfriend doesn't.

Accessory

It's surprising that the letters don't end with the street cred accessory "D4", "shocked girlfriend from D4", or "repressed male from D4", because Dublin 4 is where this magazine is at.

Of course, the magazine's real aim is to sell products to young men who're looking for a quick fix for their insecurities.

It is aimed at the yuppies of the Celtic Tiger, who see themselves as the bright young pups of the future. The male role models it puts forward are exciting people such as the 24 year old who's already a Fianna Fail TD, or the

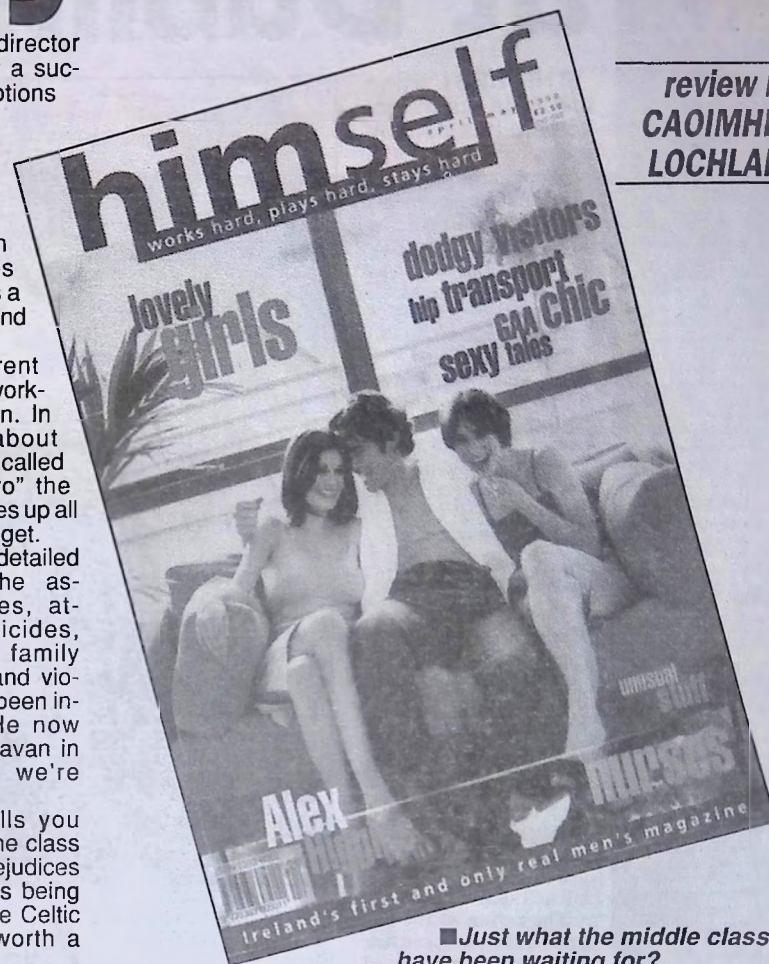
30 year old director and owner of a successful promotions company.

You can almost hear Dermot Morgan do a take on them when you find lines like "the film is a bit flabby around the midriff".

It's a different story for the working class man. In an article about Alex Higgins, called "Hero to Zero" the magazine rakes up all the dirt it can get.

There is a detailed guide of all the assault charges, attempted suicides, drug taking, family breakdowns and violence he has been involved in. He now lives in a caravan in Manchester we're told.

Himself tells you more about the class and sexist prejudices of the yuppies being created by the Celtic Tiger. Well worth a miss.



review by
CAOIMHE NÍ LOCHLAINN

video

The Full Monty

THE FULL MONTY has come out on video. Like *Brassed Off* this is a serious but comic look at the ravages of unemployment in the industrial heartlands of Britain after Thatcher.

Gaz and Dave are two unemployed Sheffield steel workers in dire straits.

Unemployment has demoralised Dave while Gaz is threatened with losing access to his son because he can't make the maintenance payments demanded by the

Tory inspired Child Support Agency.

Following a visit to the town by the male strippers, the Chippendales, Gaz suggests they could stage their own strip show to make some money.

Physique

Lacking the physique of the Chippendales, Gaz decides they will only get an audience by "going the full monty" and revealing all in their show.

What follows is a hilarious series of scenes as Gaz, Dave and other ex-steel workers begin auditioning and rehearsing for the big night.

While the film keeps you laughing throughout, it shows the desperate lengths people have to go to maintain a semblance of dignity in a system that turns working class people into scrap like the steel they once produced.

Gaz and Dave meet one of the other former steel workers while he is

trying to suffocate himself with exhaust fumes. He joins their troupe. He is also gay in a society that vilifies homosexuality. Gaz and Dave befriend him and find their own homophobic attitudes changed as they realise they are in it together in a society that oppresses them all.

The film also takes a subtle look at the way in which the human body and sexuality is commodified and exploited by capitalism.

The sexist attitudes of the men are challenged when they have to turn themselves into sexual objects. Suddenly they see how women's bodies are exploited under capitalism.

Above all the film shows how working class people are forced to resist a system that tries to dehumanise them and how in the process of fighting back they change themselves.

— **RICHARD BOYD BARRET**

films

VIDEOS TO RENT

WE LOOK below at some of the latest videos to rent for some decent viewing alternatives.

GROSSE POINT BLANK is an enjoyable comedy thriller. It takes a funny and biting look at contemporary US society.

A SELF MADE HERO is a great French film about French resistance during the war, exploring issues of guilt and betrayal.

WHEN WE WERE KINGS is a film of the "Rumble in the Jungle" fight between Mohammed Ali and George Foreman — this is highly recommended even if you hate boxing.

GET ON THE BUS is Spike Lee's film of the "Million Man March" in

Washington in 1996. It provides a fascinating insight into race, class and sexism in the US.

MANDELA contains memorable footage of the apartheid regime's fall in South Africa.

JUMP THE GUN provides a fictional account of how hopes for change in South Africa have been dashed. Two new videos give sympathetic accounts of the IRA.

The mainstream **THE DEVIL'S OWN** has Brad Pitt playing an IRA man, is worth a look.

A FURTHER GESTURE explores issues of terrorism by comparing conflict in Northern Ireland with the Guatemalans' fight against right wing death squads.



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.

RYANAIR

Magnificent solidarity at Dublin Airport

"THE BEST thing the trade union movement has done in years."

This is how Carolann Duggan, the candidate for the post of General Secretary of SIPTU described the actions of Aer Lingus workers who closed Dublin airport.

The media has had a very different reaction.

Pat Kenny devoted his RTE programme to accusing firefighters at the airport of "recklessly endangering lives". The Irish Times denounced SIPTU for having "lost control of some of its membership".

Actions

Yet the reality is that the actions of Aer Rianta and Aer Lingus workers prevented Michael O'Leary from smashing SIPTU in Ryanair.

On the Friday before the dispute escalated O'Leary withdrew security passes from Ryanair workers.

After wearing down the strikers for nine weeks he had hoped to go in for the kill and sack them.

The action of the airport workers stopped him in his tracks and forced him to at least discuss the issue of union recognition.

There was no anarchy or intimidation in the workers' action. Firefighters only walked off their jobs after they gave the company four hours notice to divert flights.

The only intimidation came from companies like Gate Gourmet, a catering company which services the planes.

They rushed to the High Court and got an injunction to stop union activists even talking about the need for solidarity. "When I went into work, the manager kept waving this High Court injunction at me and telling me to get off the premises. Workers were really frightened because many are on



contracts' one Gate Gourmet worker told *Socialist Worker*.

Solidarity

Yet this intimidation was more than matched by an intense display of workers solidarity.

Taxi-drivers and bus drivers refused to pass the pickets and set their passengers down outside the pickets despite being encouraged by the Gardaí to cross them.

Caterers, cargo handlers, Team workers, and MAN-DATE members in the duty free shops all walked off the job after shop stewards urged them to.

"We know that Michael O'Leary is a threat to all of us. If he breaks SIPTU in Ryanair and lowers conditions, the other airline companies will try to follow his example. That is why we are here to show our solidarity" one worker said.

No ifs, no buts: union recognition

THE display of worker power terrified the establishment. But the danger now is that the leaders of SIPTU will throw away the chance of outright recognition.

The inquiry into the dispute is being conducted by a former leader of the employers' organisation Dan McAuley and a former union leader Phil Flynn who went over to management when he became chairman of the ICC bank.

The day after the inquiry was set up O'Leary told RTE

there was no question of union recognition being granted.

He knows that if the baggage handlers win a right to union recognition, many more who are now intimidated will follow.

Wage

Ryanair cabin crew earn a basic wage of only £100 a week.

They make up their earnings by a commission on selling duty free.

When duty free is abolished in 1999, they will want some representation.

But while O'Leary was as belligerent as ever, SIPTU leader Des Geraghty promised to be "flexible".

The Irish Times correspondent, Padraig Yeats, has suggested that this could mean accepting a works council of non-union employees who operate with trade union advice.

But Ryanair workers need proper trade union organisation that is based on elected shop stewards on the jobs.

If the inquiry does not deliver this, then the fantastic solidarity action shown at Dublin Airport earlier this month should be repeated.

A firm built on greed

THE SEVEN listed directors of Ryanair include three members of the Ryan dynasty, Michael O'Leary and the former Fianna Fáil politician Ray McSharry.

During his years in politics Ray McSharry held major positions of influence as a former Minister for Finance for three years. He joined the Board of Ryanair in 1993 as consultant during the key years of O'Leary's aggressive management.

Losses

Ryanair was set up in 1985 with a kick-start investment of £20 million from the Ryan dynasty. It was making losses up until 1991 when Michael O'Leary joined management who succeeded in monopolising some of the cross channel market to Britain.

He could not have done this without getting state backing to get hold of the lucrative Stanstead line. Since then Ryanair made big profits where a total of 50 per cent of it or £24 million was paid out to the executive directors.

Today Ryanair is seeking to overtake Aer Lingus by winning support from large US investors. Many of these are vehemently opposed to unions.

On the Dublin stock exchange, the closing price for Ryanair was £500 million and the Ryan family raised £48 million alone from the sale of its shares.

Meanwhile these people shamelessly kept on telling their workers that they could not have pay increases and extra pay on Sundays and Bank Holidays because the company could not afford it.

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BELFAST SOUTH
Meets every Weds at 7:30pm, Renshaws, University Street

CORK
Meets every Weds at 8pm in Denny's Pub, Commarket St.

DERRY
Meets every Tues in Badgers Bar at 8pm

DUN LAOGHAIRE
Meets every Tues at 8pm in Christian Institute.

ENNISKILLEN
Meets every fortnight Contact national address for details

GALWAY
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square

MAYNOOTH
Meets every Thursday at 16.30pm Class Hall D Arts Maynooth college

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

DUBLIN NORTH-WEST
Meets every Tuesday at 8:30pm in The Snug, Dorset St.

DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK
Meets every Tuesday at 8:30pm Artane/Beaumont Recreation Centre opp Artane Castle

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, Parnell St.

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

DUBLIN RATHMINES UPPER
Meets every Mon 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; DUNDALK; ATHLONE; DROGHEDA.
If you would like to get in touch, contact our national office at (01) 872 2682, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Socialist Worker rally

150 YEARS SINCE THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO...

The fight for socialism today

SPEAKERS:
Ryanair striker, Cramptons worker, Diane Hamill, Carolann Duggan (SIPTU), Kieran Allen (Socialist Worker)

Thurs. 26th March 7.30pm
ATGWU Hall, Mid Abbey St, Dublin



news & reports— politics; the unions

send in your reports: telephone (01) 872 2682, fax: (01) 872 3838

Equal pay win in UCD

WOMEN workers in UCD restaurant have won an equal pay claim.

The claim arose out of pay differences between male restaurant porters. UCD library porters and the women workers in the restaurant who do similar work. The women workers were on £3.80 an hour while library porters are on £5.84 an hour, a difference of £1,243 a year.

One restaurant worker, Marian, said:

"This is a great victory for the women in the restaurant. They deserve every penny they get, this is a just pay award."

The victory for the women workers resulted in increased Union membership and strengthens the demand in other sections for pay increases.

Cramptons

Building workers' victory

BUILDING workers have just won a huge victory at Cramptons in Dublin.

The company has reinstated all 16 sacked workers and agreed to eliminate subcontracting. All bricklayers will now be employed directly by Cramptons under the PAYE system.

The building workers virtually shut down two major Crampton sites, in Clonskeagh and Dublin City University, after sustained picketing by rank and file building workers.

One of the building workers involved explained to *Socialist Worker* what happened.

"The dispute began when workers at the Smurfit Business Park site in Clonskeagh, asked to be employed directly by Cramptons.

"They presented their P45 but were told by a 19 year old subbie to remain on the dole. When they refused they were sacked."

Pickets

The bricklayers put up unofficial pickets to demand the right to be employed directly, but Cramptons responded by getting a High Court injunction against the bricklayers.

In the past injunctions were enough to stop pickets. However as another bricklayer said, "We openly defied the Industrial Relations Act and

were willing to go to jail if we had to.

"The Industrial Relations Act is being used to crush the union and we're not standing for it."

Immediately after Crampton's obtained the Court injunction the rank and file organised over 100 workers to break the injunction at the Clonskeagh site.

A further 30 workers picketed the DCU site. Pickets were extended to the site at NCAD where after two days of sustained picketing they forced the contractors out.

Cramptons engaged in intimidation tactics, photographing workers and taking pictures of their car registration numbers. "It's all about intimidation but this time it

won't work", one worker commented.

But Cramptons were under extreme pressure to get their contracts completed in time or else face penalties. The bricklayers held the power to force Cramptons to concede, and concede they did.

The bricklayers' strike is

having huge ramifications throughout the building industry. In the week following the victory, bricklayers at the Rohcon site at Baker's corner demanded to be employed directly by the company.

(Rohcon is also one of the subcontractors run out of Cramptons during the dispute).

When the company refused, pickets were put up and within two hours one of the company directors went down to speak with the picketers and caved in on the demand for direct labour.

The bricklayers at the Cramptons sites showed exactly what workers' power can do.

SIPTU

Carolann Duggan campaign takes off

CAROLANN Duggan's campaign for the post of General Secretary of SIPTU is receiving tremendous support.

Her opponents, Brendan Hayes and John McDonald, have been able to do walkabouts in factories through permission of friendly personnel managers.

But Carolann's support is coming entirely from the shop floor.

"When we visited this factory in Athlone, the Human Resource manager kept watching us like a hawk. But the sup-

port from the floor was tremendous," one of her campaign team told *Socialist Worker*.

For two days Carolann interrupted her campaign to join the pickets at Dublin airport.

"This is the type of action I have long advocated. Solidarity action has always been what unions have been about," said Carolann.

Support

Afterwards several Aer Lingus workers took leaflets and pledged support.

The SIPTU leadership are putting everything

into defeating her. Union activists have received well printed leaflets to their home address that comes from SIPTU's own database.

Union activists are now planning to raise this disgraceful bias by a head office which is supposed to be neutral.

Throughout the campaign Carolann Duggan has stepped up her opposition to Partnership 2000.

With IBEC standing over Ryanair's "right" not to recognise unions, the mood against social partnership is growing.

Voting for the post of

General Secretary ends 28th March and the result is expected shortly afterwards.

TEAM

No comfort in offer

WORKERS at TEAM Aer Lingus are being offered lump sums to give up their terms of employment.

Aer Lingus wants to sell off the maintenance subsidiary to the Danish multinational FLS and is trying to get out of commitments it has made to the workforce.

When TEAM was launched, Aer Lingus agreed to retain a 51 percent stake in the subsidiary.

Transferred

Aer Lingus employees who transferred to TEAM were given "letters of comfort"—this means they remain semi-state workers and cannot be made redundant forcibly.

Workers at TEAM will face an uncertain future if the company is privatised and they lose their job security.

For that reason they rejected the first offer of £25 million—which

would have given the average worker £9,000.

The latest offer is £47 million but this has to be divided between 1,500 staff.

The lump sum will be based on length of service and salary.

The top managers could receive £68,000 each and retain their positions.

But most TEAM workers will get much less than this.

Plus, money owed to the workers has to be

taken into account, including:

■the first phase of Partnership 2000, which still remains unpaid;

■two annual increments lost as a result of a company pay freeze;

■back money due for productivity;

■wages due since the four week lockout in 1993 and the six month lockout in 1994.

As one TEAM worker told *Socialist Worker*: "I reckon I'll be offered £15,000 in a lump sum

but the company already owes me £10,000 in back money.

"So I'm being given only £5,000 to move from being a semi-state worker to a private sector worker."

After privatisation, the workers at Team can be made redundant at any time and will only be entitled to statutory redundancy.

Already the Shop Stewards' Committee for the craft workers is recommending rejection of the latest offer.

An Post

UNOFFICIAL action by the largest Branch of the Communications Workers Union has forced management to withdraw attacks on overtime.

An Post had brought in the anti union Operations Manager Peter Ryan from the Royal Mail. He refused to negotiate with the union over overtime rates for the months of the year with the big-

gest workload.

March and April see a huge increase in the amount of mail, mostly due to the end of the tax year.

The 1,200 members of the Dublin district branch, took action the same weekend as the Ryanair workers brought the airport to a halt. After the three days of the dispute An Post bosses were forced to back down and institute extra payments.

Derry pro-choice march

ON INTERNATIONAL Women's Day, 70 people marched through Derry to demand the right to free abortion in the North.

They also protested against an anti-abortionist SDLP councillor, Shaun Gallagher, who asked the council to withhold £2,000 in funds from the local Women's Day committee because the day included a pro-choice demo.

Gallagher joined forces with two of the worst sectarians on Derry city council, the DUP's William Hay and Gregory Campbell, to stop the pro-choice march. He will ask the next council meeting on 24 March to rubber stamp the

decision to stop the Women's Day funds.

But already 100 people have signed an open letter against Gallagher's shameful behaviour.

The Socialist Workers Party plans a noisy lobby outside the council meeting. Although some Sinn Fein councillors are for the right to abortion, the party has unfortunately abstained in the council votes.

Censorship

Gallagher's censorship of the abortion issue backs up the "pro-life" bigots who are organising again in Northern Ireland.

They refuse to accept that, although abortion here is illegal, many women have one in England, Scotland and Wales.

Forty women a week go from Northern Ireland to England for an abortion.

Yet the anti-abortionists have organised "pro-life" marches against Labour extending the 1967 Abortion Act to Northern Ireland.

They are against contraception, too, and are picketing a Belfast family planning clinic, the Brooke Centre.

Socialists are for women controlling their own fertility and the right to free and safe abortions on demand. Before Christmas, hundreds of people signed petitions in Belfast and Derry to legalise abortion.

This support needs to be transformed into a strong movement to challenge the bigots wherever they organise.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p

Inside:

The scandal of the arms race - Page 5

1848:
The year
of
revolutions
—PAGE 8

Solidarity price £1

North is low pay blackspot

£5 AN HOUR

MINIMUM

WAGE

The trade unions need to fight

THE NORTH of Ireland has the lowest wages in Britain, according to a report from the Northern Ireland Economic Council.

The report claimed that 74,000 workers in the North are currently earning less than £3.50 an hour and 150,000 are on less than £4 an hour.

Yet the report only argues for a minimum wage of between £3 and £3.50 an hour.

"Such a rate would eradicate the worst cases of low pay and in-work poverty without creating damaging losses," claims George Quigley, head of the Ulster Bank and of the Economic Council.

Quigley is one of the richest men in the North. Would

he be prepared to work for £135 a week, the rate he is recommending?

Unfortunately, the Blair Labour government is likely to listen to people like Quigley rather than its own supporters.

Blair is waiting for a report from the Low Pay Commission. Its report is due next month. But Blair can reject its recommendations and set a minimum wage which keeps the bosses happy.

Poverty

Blair is unlikely to set the minimum wage at a level which could affect poverty. He has already accepted the argument that people need to be prepared to work for poverty wages to get a job.

The government's new Wel-

fare to Work scheme is based on giving employers handouts of up to sixty pounds per week to take on an unemployed person. The worker would only receive an extra £10 a week on top of their dole.

The new childcare places the government has promised for working families have not been backed up with money.

This means that the money available to pay the wages of childcare workers is only a few pounds per child. The rest will have to be made up from the pockets of parents or else childcare workers will have to accept low wages.

There are many things the Labour government could do to address low wages and unemployment. It could recruit nurses to the NHS, by offering better wages, or recruiting more teachers to lower class sizes. But it has promised to keep to the Tories spending limits.

THROUGHOUT Southern Ireland, the ICTU have put up posters to demand a £5 an hour minimum wage.

They should be doing the same in the North to publicise this just demand.

But posters alone will not work — we need action against low pay in Northern Ireland.

Demand

Last week, John Edmunds of the Trade Union Congress in Britain (TUC), threatened to call a trade union equivalent of the Country-side Alliance march, to demand that Blair give workers a minimum wage and the right to join a trade

union.

He's right. We need to get on the streets and force this government to make concessions to workers.

Because if he is left alone, Blair will pull out all the stops to keep the minimum wage down.

For the past few months, workers have watched as politicians from "both sides" have debated a settlement for the North.

But none of them see this settlement bringing any real change for workers.

But a real fight for a minimum wage could show the common class interest of workers and point to a different type of country than the one based on sectarian politics.