

# Socialist Worker

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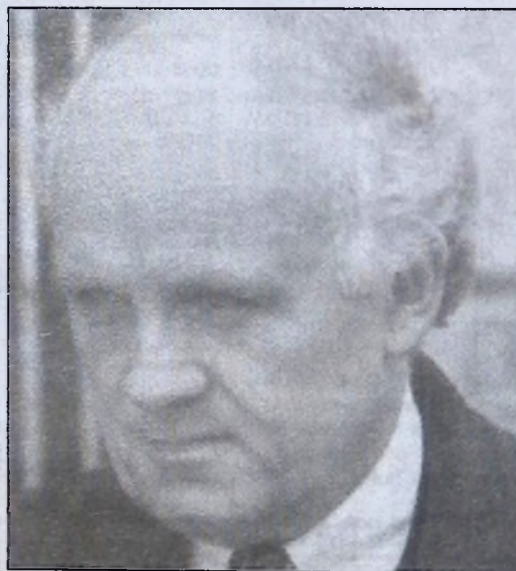
**50p**

**Solidarity price £1**

# His bank stole from workers

# AND HE RAISED

# FUNDS FOR FIANNA FAIL



■ NIB ex-chief executive Jim Lacey

**MEET Mr Jim Lacey, a respectable member of society who is a personal friend of Bertie Ahern**

Jim Lacey has presided over the robbery of ordinary people at the National Irish Bank. Working class customers in areas like Walkinstown in Dublin were deliberately over-charged to swell the profits of the bank.

But the wealthy customers were encouraged to put their money into tax avoidance schemes.

Jim Lacey, NIB Chief Executive at the time, is a man with connections. Until this scandal broke he was the chairperson of Forum 2,000 the fundraising wing of Fianna Fail.

Lacey's method is simple. He gets businessmen to pledge £1,000 a year to Fianna Fail. In return they are invited to a seminar every three months where they can meet Fianna Fail ministers.

It all helps in establishing connections, gaining influence.

Lacey is also involved with Ahern's own Fianna Fail constituency organisation. This is the branch that is supposed to have bought a house in Drumcondra for Bertie to live in.

You might have thought that everything had changed since Charles J Haughey had departed the scene.

You might even have once believed that Fianna Fail stood for the plain people of Ireland.

But in this tiger economy, there is only one law—the law of the jungle which looks after the fat cats.

The legal system and the Dáil will always make sure that they are looked after.

But they still tell us that a revolution is too extreme.

# NIB scandal...

# Why Fianna Fail tried to cover up

WHEN RTE first revealed that National Irish Bank were involved in organising tax evasion for 400 wealthy customers, the FF-PD government tried to play down the issue.

The reason is that both parties are closely linked to the bank. It is just another case of the Golden Circle at work.

The Fianna Fail TD, **Beverly Cooper Flynn**, worked as a manager with the NIB. She was directly involved in marketing the bond product that gave rise to allegations of tax evasion. After the story broke, Flynn went silent and Ahern did not demand she explain her role.

Ahern is closely linked to **Jim Lacey**, the former chief executive of the bank. When Ahern took over the leadership of Fianna Fail in 1994, Lacey was one of a small group of supporters who turned up with Ahern to his first press conference.

## Funds

Lacey recently attended a function in the Royal Hospital Kilmainham to raise funds for Ahern's local constituency.

The chairman of the NIB is **Alex Spain**. This fine upstanding member of society was once the chairman of the shipping company B and I. He ran down the company so much that it was acquired by Irish Continental Group for a knock down price.

But Spain made sure that his own salary was paid to a special consultancy firm, Zeus Management. This allowed him to cut taxes by claiming a large expense account.

Spain's company shares an office with the former EU commissioner, **Ray McSharry**.

This is another Fianna Fail hatchet man who lectured Irish workers about the need for sacrifices in the late eighties whilst he built up his own wealth.

**Mary Harney's PDs** are up to

their necks in debt to the NIB. They have a £300,000 overdraft—and only hope they won't have extra interest loaded on.

Behind the National Irish Bank scandal is a web of rich people who dominate this country and make sure that PAYE workers carry the tax burden.

## ACCOUNTANTS WHO MISS THE FIGURES

THE AUDITORS of the National Irish Bank were the KPMG accountancy group. Auditors are supposed to be able to detect fraud and robbery before they clear the accounts — but KPMG saw nothing.

Which is a bit funny because the same group were also the auditors for the Goodman group.

Then they were known as Stokes Kennedy and Crowley.

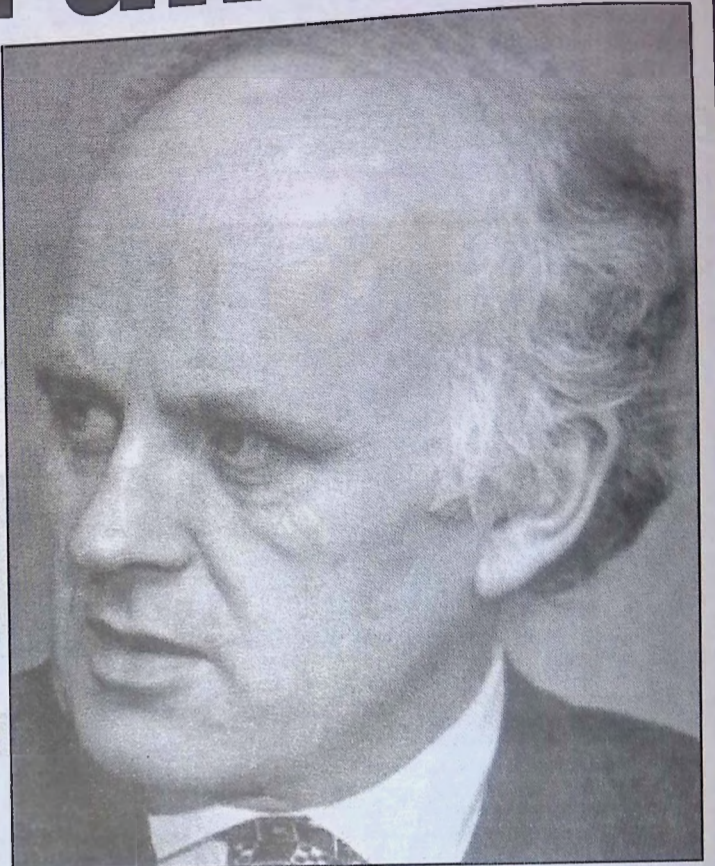
The Goodman group operated two sets of books for tax purposes. Even the whitewash beef tribunal chaired by **Liam Hamilton** — who was later promoted to Supreme Court judge — expressed some unease at a major accountancy firm missing out on this.

But now the accountants have done it again. Remember these are the same people who screamed blue murder when **Ruairi Quinn** even suggested a 'whistle blowers' charter to compel account-

ants to reveal any tax evasion. (Quinn, of course, backed down from this mild suggestion)

Is there any connection between KPMG blindness and the fact that its former managing partner was none other than **Alex Spain**?

## When caught, have an inquiry



Jim Lacey; Former NIB Chief Executive

WHEN the poor are caught robbing they go to jail.

But the rich only ever get an inquiry.

Today there are seven separate inquiries going on into National Irish Bank.

Yet one of these inquiries is being undertaken by **Tom Grace**.

Grace was previously involved in evicting a **Donegal** family from their farm at the

behest of National Irish Bank. It shows what a farce is going on.

None of the many inquiries into the activities of the rich has led to anyone going to jail.

Inquiries like the new one at National Irish Bank are only a way for the government to buy time and hope the public will forget.

Instead of an inquiry, we need to seize the assets of these criminals.

## Beanz meanz jointz

THOUSANDS of people marched through London last month to demand the legalisation of cannabis.

It was the biggest march on the issue since the 1960s and shows the anger against Labour's hypocrisy on soft drugs.

Labour refuses to contemplate any form of legalisation, despite supporting the companies who supply a far more dangerous drug called nicotine.

Funny enough the media here failed to pick up on the story's "Irish angle".

For the march was organised by the Independent on Sunday, the London paper owned by our very own **Tony O'Reilly**.

Does this mean that O'Reilly's food company, Heinz, has its eye on the market for dope-flavoured baked beans?

# It's tough at the top

**MICHAEL Finucane cannot make ends meet.**

"I must live with the help of an overdraft", he says.

But thankfully Michael is getting a pay increase, so he won't be out of pocket much longer.

Maybe Michael works in a restaurant for £3.60 an hour?

Or maybe he packs bags in a supermarket for even less than that amount?

Not likely. Michael is a

Fine Gael TD for Limerick West. His salary of £34,967 has just been bumped up to £36,015.

Michael claims he has only one job, so he feels he deserves the salary. But what about the thousands with

only one job who are paid only one third of what a TD gets?

Or people who have to work at two jobs in order to make an average wage?

Of course Michael Finucane is an exception. Many TDs are also barristers, publicans or big farmers. Several have incomes from a variety of business interests.

Yet these chancers have the nerve to award themselves with an extra £1,000 a year along with new allowances.

## A law unto themselves

THE top politicians and public servants will get even bigger increases than ordinary TDs:

■ **Bertie Ahern** will see his Taoiseach's salary rise from £88,854 to £105,057;

■ **Mary Harney** as Tanaiste will go from £76,086 to £90,412—no doubt she will still try to keep the promised Minimum Wage well below £5 an hour;

■ **The Chief Justice** will "only" get an extra £2,730 but will still end up with a salary of £104,796.

Semi-State bosses will

also get big increases—the bosses of CIE and ESB are set to "earn" an extra £10,000 each, bringing their totals to £116,094 and £115,330 respectively.

### Rules

Bosses of commercial semi-states—like **Alfie Kane** in Telecom and **Gary McGann** in Aer Lingus—are not even bound by the government's rules.

They have private contracts which allow even bigger salaries than other semi-states.

It's a slap in the face for

workers in all of these companies, who have been forced to accept major attacks on their conditions in the name of "viability".

## Buckley's big bucks

THE PAY increases for politicians and top public servants are based on the Buckley Report.

The report was published by a review body chaired by **Michael Buckley** of AIB Capital Markets. Other committee members included **Vivienne Jupp** of Anderson Consulting and **Peter Malone**, boss of Jurys' Hotels.

The captains of industry know the value of awarding big bucks to politicians who do their bidding and judges who keep the rest of us in line. Except the rich will not be paying the big salaries—we will.

## Judges back bishops

THE Supreme Court has ruled that the Department of Education should be allowed to continue paying religious chaplains in community schools.

The Campaign to Separate Church and State has been fighting the case for ten years. They have taken on the might of the four Catholic archbishops, who were represented as co-defendants.

The Supreme Court claimed their judgement would uphold the right of parents to decide on their children's religious education.

But religion should be a private matter and should not be funded out of taxpayers' money.

The judgement shows that the "liberal agenda" is far from achieved and that we still have to fight the power of the bishops.

## Careful crossing the road

**JOHN O'Donoghue's** thirst for "zero tolerance" has led him to order fines of up to £350 for the horrendous crime of "jay-walking".

O'Donoghue claims the crackdown is for the pedestrian's "own good".

But why won't the government fund a decent public transport system to reduce the number of cars on city

streets? Or ensure that pedestrian crossings are more widely provided?

For example, East Wall in Dublin is surrounded by busy streets but the lack of crossings means pedestrians have to run the gauntlet of rush hour traffic.

Instead of rational measures, **John O'Donoghue** offers more repression and a handy excuse for gardai to harass working class youth.

## what we think

# Stop the robbery: Nationalise the banks

**THE National Irish Bank was just unlucky. It was caught robbing its customers.**

Yet the rest of Ireland's bloated banking sector is involved in the same practices.

One of the bizarre effects of the social partnership agreements between the unions and the employers was to pressurise workers onto schemes like Paypath, where their wages were paid in automatically to the banks.

This leaves workers prey to the type of practices that went on at National Irish Bank. According to one expert "the scale of questionable practices at National Irish Bank pales in significance in comparison with other bigger banks".

### Interest

All of them "make computing mistakes" to run up interest charges. All of them love to see overdrafts where they can pile on the interest.

One banking expert, Michael Sands of Cost Reduction Analysts, told the

*Sunday Business Post*, "I tell people they must assume the bank has its hands in their pockets — and will take their money if they aren't vigilant"

It is pretty good advice. Banks engage in legalised robbery to boost the profits of the few.

**Normal bank robbers appear with guns and masks and risk imprisonment if caught.**

But the bank owners rely on computers and complicated organisation. They know there is only an inquiry if "excessive" charges are discovered.

Yet none of the main parties in Dáil Eireann want to take the banks on.

They all say that nationalising the banks or increasing tax on their profits is "unrealistic".

No wonder the main banks give donations to every party from Fianna Fail to Democratic Left for this appalling cowardice.

Ever since the socialist movement was first formed it has fought for the nationalisation of banks.

No group of individuals should be allowed to make a million pounds a day and

**National Irish Bank**



Now those dreams don't have to be just pie in the sky.

■ *Dreams came true for the tax evaders and Fianna Fail*

do with the money what they wish. Bank profits, like all other profits in society, are produced from the exploitation of labour.

At the very least, nationalisation could lift the veil of "commercial secrecy" that the banks invoke to cover their robbery.

More importantly, public ownership of the banks would ensure that the wider financial resources of society are used for the many and not the few.

After the organised robbery at NIB, this is about the most moderate proposal that could be made.

## New Labour, New sell-out

WITHIN weeks of winning two bye-elections, the Labour Party has ditched its policy of opposing privatisation.

The former left winger Emmet Stagg, who once claimed that Russia was a "socialist country", argued that the state should sell its shares in companies like Aer Lingus and the ESB.

One delegate however noted that the party "did not fly these kites before the election" in Dublin North where many Aer Lingus workers live.

### Disaster

Privatisation has been a disaster in Britain where it was first pioneered.

Britain's rail track, for example, has been run down so badly by its new owners, that even Blair's government is contemplating taking companies back into public ownership.

Privatisation has little to do with raising efficiency.

The competing bus companies in Britain only add to inefficiency because they only take on the most profitable routes, and leave other areas without a proper bus service.

Privatisation comes from a Thatcherite philosophy which gives right wing politicians a big stick to wield over public sector workers.

They use it to threaten job losses if workers do not accept worse conditions.

Ruairi Quinn claims that he is trying to give the Labour Party a more modern image.

In reality, Quinn believes that Labour must appeal to a "floating middle class vote" in order to return to a Coalition government.

By following policies that were first pioneered by the Progressive Democrats he hopes that Yuppies who have increased with the Celtic Tiger will back Labour.

This shows that if Labour returns to office, it will surpass its last set of betrayals.

# Help Socialist Worker raise £10,000

**Socialist Worker is launching an appeal for £10,000.**

There are real signs that a fighting spirit is returning to the Irish working class. The stoppage at Ryanair showed how powerful solidarity can be.

The recent victorious unofficial building workers strikes have shown that determined action - and willingness to defy injunctions in the case of the Crampton's strike - can win.

The Socialist Workers Party is the only party in Ireland that has not turned its back on this militancy.

Whether it is producing posters, organising fundraising events or spreading the message, the SWP is geared up to support workers in struggle.

By contrast the Labour Party and Democratic Left were opposed to the shut-down of the airport during the Ryanair dispute and helped call off the picketing before a decisive victory was won.

*Socialist Worker* itself carries news of disputes and much more. It keeps alive the lessons from past struggles and makes the arguments Socialists need to challenge right wing and

divisive ideas. The paper connects the immediate issues of injustice and exploitation to the possibility of winning a socialist society.

We want to raise £10,000 in order to put the paper and the organisation on a stronger footing.

Producing the paper requires a professional office with up-to date equipment. All the posters, leaflets and campaigning activities of the Party costs money.

Fundraising is easy for the right-wing parties. After all, Fianna Fail can appoint men like Jim Lacey, whose expertise includes the running of N.I.B. bank while it

was stealing from its customers. Bertie Ahern's latest appeal is for a million pounds a year from big business.

And if the need arises, generous loans are available to these parties, such as the PD's reported £300,000 overdraft - with the N.I.B.

Since we are out to smash this network of corrupt politicians and big business we have no friends in high places.

Instead we are appealing to our readers and supporters.

Please give as much as you can to help us grow.

*"The contribution made by Socialist Worker to the rank and file—in particular producing posters and leaflets at a moments notice—was invaluable. Especially for the disputes at Crampton's and Zoe's.*

*"The articles in Socialist Worker generated interest in our struggle and our case was carried into the national press."*—Dublin Regional Council member, BATU

**Make cheques or postal orders payable to "Socialist Worker" and send to:**

**PO Box 1648, Dublin 8**

**Or: PO Box 354 Tomb St. Belfast**

**To lodge directly:**

**Socialist Worker, Account no: 85173030 at AIB, 37/38 Upr O'Connell St, Dublin 1. Sort Code: 93-11-36**

**Or: Socialist Worker, Account no: 00812073 at First Trust, 31, High St, Belfast. Sort Code: 93-80-92.**



# news of the world

## Indonesia

# Crisis looms as IMF delays economic aid

**INDONESIA, the world's fourth most populous country, faces deepening economic and social crisis.**

The US dominated International Monetary Fund (IMF) has decided to delay the promised economic aid because of a deep rift between it and Indonesia's President Suharto.

He was "re-elected" last week by the country's People's Consultative Assembly—which he appoints most of the delegates to. Suharto has ruled Indonesia as a dictator since he seized power in a coup in 1966 which saw 500,000 communists and oppositionists murdered.

The US and other western powers backed him as a bastion against Russian influence in South East Asia. They ignored his troops' invasion of former Portuguese colony East Timor in 1975. About 200,000 East Timorese have been killed under the continued occupation.

But the West is not falling out with Suharto because of his appalling human rights record—it has been happy to arm him for three decades.

The row is over whether Suharto and the local capitalist interests he represents will bow before the even bigger interests represented by the IMF.



**CHILDREN QUEUE for food as poor suffer in economic turmoil**

The IMF agreed to bail Indonesia out to the tune of £27 billion in January.

In return it wanted Suharto to let companies and banks go to the wall and break up large monopolies with which Suharto's family and allies are associated.

Suharto signed the deal, and allowed 16 banks to shut, but has recoiled from the austerity measures the IMF is demanding. Instead of clearing out monopoly businessmen he has ap-

pointed them to his cabinet.

Last week he brought his golfing partner, millionaire timber tycoon Bob Hasan, into the government. The new social affairs minister is his eldest daughter.

Suharto is hinting that Indonesia may default on its £88 billion foreign debt. That would bring banks down in South Korea and Japan and could precipitate an international financial crisis. Suharto wants to use the threat of total collapse

to force the IMF to negotiate less harsh conditions for the bailout.

But Suharto is also under increasing pressure from the many riots in cities last month against huge price increases. Students at 30 campuses have demonstrated for greater democracy.

The crisis has robbed Suharto of his support among the middle classes who have prospered under two decades of economic

growth. One bank boss says, "It won't take long for my staff to join in."

The middle class is angry enough at Suharto to put a hatchet through his head." The regime has previously dealt with opposition by repression and scapegoating the Chinese minority in Indonesia. No one knows if it will be able to do that again.

What is certain is that last year's collapse of the Asian Tiger economies is continuing to wreak havoc and cast its effects around the world.

## Somalia

# The hidden massacre

**AS BILL Clinton toured Africa last month, new revelations emerged of a brutal massacre by US troops in Somalia in 1993.**

The US-led peacekeeping force butchered over 1,000 Somalis—five times the previous "official" estimate.

At the time the media presented the UN intervention as a humanitarian mission to bring food and medical supplies to the starving Somalis.

Irish aid organisations like GOAL supported the US intervention and the SWP was the only party to publicly oppose it.

## Emerged

It has now emerged that US troops abandoned their own rules of engagement—to fire only when fired upon—and shot Somali men, women and children at random.

At the time the world's media carried dramatic pictures of naked bodies of US soldiers being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu and fol-

lowed the drama of a captured helicopter pilot.

The Somali dead were a sideshow and it was estimated that about 200 had lost their lives.

On the 3 October 1993, forty of the elite US Delta Force went off to try and capture Somali leaders supporting General Mohammed Farah Aidedee who were meeting in a house near the centre of Mogadishu.

It has now been revealed that US troops took hostages, murdered wounded Somalis and their Somali prisoners and used the bodies as barricades.

The commander of the mission, Major-General William F Garrison described what happened as "a success".

Soldiers who were involved in the massacre were given medals and many of the key players were promoted.

Canadian, Belgian and Italian troops were also involved in atrocities, but even their actions did not match the brutality of the US troops.

Unlike other countries involved, the US has never held a public inquiry or brought any criminal prosecution against those involved.

## Denmark

# Workers threaten all out action

**DENMARK COULD face its biggest strike since the 1985 general strike which paralysed the country.**

Negotiations between employers in private industry and union leaders have broken down.

Unions have moved to call 500,000 workers out on indefinite strike which would be a tenth of the country's entire population.

Workers are angry at bosses' refusal to give any real wage rises or better holidays and pensions.

But the action could be delayed as the government appointed arbitrator can order

a cooling off period.

An upsurge of militant student protests has hit the country, affecting over half the high schools—equivalent to Britain's sixth form and further education (FE) colleges.

At least 87 colleges have seen occupations of one day or more and students also staged demonstrations and roadblocks in some areas.

The Social Democrat (Labour) government is pushing through measures that make it easier to throw students out of college.

The recent election saw the government narrowly retain power.

Although the student protests died down during the general election, they could flare up again.

## Did the police cover up bomb threat?

**DID THE Danish police allow Nazis to murder a young socialist in 1992?**

A police informer revealed shocking new evidence recently.

In March 1992 a parcel bomb exploded killing 29 year old Henrik Christensen. It destroyed the International Socialists' office in Copenhagen. Henrik was the full time IS or-

ganiser in Copenhagen and an active anti-Nazi campaigner.

The finger of suspicion for the bombing pointed towards Denmark's Nazis. Now a police informer has said he told the police intelligence service that one of Denmark's Nazi groups was threatening to launch an attack.

The informer claims he sent police a tape recording of Nazi leader Albert Larsen saying his group was ready to turn to ter-

ror tactics and could attack the IS office.

Yet the police did not warn the IS, or take any measures against Larsen and his group.

The IS and other groups are demanding a full investigation. A demonstration is planned on the release of the Social Democrat (Labour) government's report into the police intelligence service, due to be delivered in April.

## United States

# Clinton's Africa hypocrisy

**US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton has posed as the friend of the people on his trip to Africa.**

It was the purest hypocrisy from a man who champions policies which have led to the deaths of millions of Africans.

The US government has supported the most vile dictators and the cruellest tyrants on the continent.

It was the US which murdered the democratically elected president of Zaire in the 1960s and installed the brutal President Mobutu instead.

The US gave funds and arms and training to terror groups like UNITA in Angola and Renamo in Mozambique.

As Clinton embraced South Africa's Nelson Mandela last week he should have remembered that it was the US and British Tory Margaret Thatcher who were the strongest opponents of sanctions against the apartheid regime.

Clinton has continued with the tradition of backing business and ignoring democracy and

human rights in Africa.

He attempted to invade Somalia in a reversion to classic 19th century imperialism.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has replaced Zaire, US government representatives and top businessmen are manoeuvring to win plum contracts from the new government.

On his trip last week Clinton spoke of how moved he was by the testimony of a survivor of the massacres in Rwanda in 1994.

But in the midst of that slaughter, with 400,000 already dead, it was the Clinton administration which told its officials not to use the word "genocide" about the killings in case it raised a public outcry.

## Oil

As the murder continued, a Clinton aide told newspapers that Rwanda had no importance and no oil or other resources that would make American intervention worth the cost." US companies are among the leading busi-

ness partners of the dictatorial Nigerian regime.

US banks are at the head of the queue of financiers who drain £22 million every day in debt repayments from the poorest countries in Africa.

Clinton said he would support writing off some debts—but only if the governments involved followed the economic policies laid down by the US.

The US plays a crucial role in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund which have imposed harsh economic programmes on dozens of African countries.

Clinton was expected to offer some sort of apology for US involvement in the slave trade which, he admitted, had "a destructive impact on those enslaved".

But such words mean nothing when the US government and companies continue to bleed Africa dry.

Clinton, who attacks workers in his own country and threatened to rain total destruction on Iraq, will never be an ally of peace and real democracy in Africa.

## What's going on in unionism?

THE RECENT confrontation between loyalists and DUP supporters at a rally in Lisburn, and the Ulster Unionist party's annual conference, have shown up the deep divisions within unionism.

That there now exists at least five different parties claiming to represent the unionist cause, testifies to its increasing fragmentation.

These differences reflect the changing nature of Northern Ireland society, and the class differences within the Protestant population.

Although class divisions within Unionism have always existed, they have been exacerbated by the current peace process.

The Protestant business class want a settlement, to create a stable environment in which they can advance their economic interests.

They share these class interests with the Catholic middle class in the north, and the southern bourgeoisie.

This has been encouraged by the development of the European market, which views Ireland as a single economic entity.

It is reflected in concepts such as the "Island Economy", and the proposal for an "economic corridor" between Belfast and Dublin, which would attract foreign investment. However, for this to take place, there needs to be political stability.

### Pressure

This is why the Protestant business class has been putting pressure on Trimble and the Ulster Unionists, to stay within the talks process.

The Unionist opponents of the peace process are mostly Protestant petty bourgeois elements, represented by the DUP and Robert McCartney.

They have a material interest in maintaining the status-quo, and are not prepared to concede even the most minimal reforms required to accommodate Nationalists.

This faction draws its support from those who are dependent on the "war economy", which has been built up over the last twenty five years, to suppress the threat to the state.

They include members of the security forces, civil servants, private security firms, and lawyers (McCartney himself was one of Northern Ireland's leading QC's, before becoming an MP).

Any reform of the state institutions would threaten their position.

As a settlement gets

by **JONATHAN MORRISON**

closer, this faction has moved even further to the right. The DUP is openly associating itself with the LVF, which has engaged in the crudest forms of sectarian violence. In a recent statement, the LVF endorsed Ian Paisley's analysis of the situation.

The sole aim of this group is to destroy any relations between Catholics and Protestants, and maintain a state of sectarian conflict on which it can thrive.

However, the amount of public support they have been able to muster has been limited. The DUP had to call off a series of rallies last year because of low attendances.

### Division

Also, there are signs of division within this camp, as the more "respectable elements" around McCartney draw back from the DUP's overt sectarianism and the violence of the LVF.

The other elements of unionism supporting the peace process have been the Loyalist parties, the PUP and UDP.

These parties portray themselves as the voice of working class Protestants.

Their emergence in recent years, does reflect a desire amongst Protestant workers for secular politics which address economic and social issues as well as the constitutional question.

However, the "progressive" veneer of these parties is a thin one.

They still remain linked with loyalist paramilitaries, and because they are based solely on the Protestant community, their politics are inevitably sectarian.

Despite their radical rhetoric, these parties know their place. It was they who trooped into the Stormont talks on the coat-tails of Trimble.

Also, it was these parties which made dire warnings at the turn of the year, over "concessions to republicans".

Yet when asked to name one concession, all they could come up with was the closure of a Protestant primary school in the Shankill area!

Socialists do not favour one form of unionism over another. The basic objective of all these groups is to maintain the sectarian state, and to bind Protestant workers to their bosses.

Only socialist politics, which expose the links between exploitation and poverty and the oppressive nature of the Northern state, can break Protestant workers from unionism.

# How British intelligence organised the loyalist death squads

THE BRITISH Army's intelligence unit was involved in 92 assassination attempts in Northern Ireland between 1988 and 1990. At least 15 of these ended in murder. These shocking revelations have been made by a bastion of the British establishment, the *Daily Telegraph*.

The paper has seen the "contact forms" between the British military intelligence group, Force Research Unit, and its agent Brian Nelson.

Nelson was paid £28,000 a year to join the UDA in 1988. His army handler claimed his appointment meant that "proper targeting of Provisional IRA members takes place prior to any shooting".

Nelson was given detailed files known as Personality cards on republicans and told to organise their killing.

On May 3rd 1988, the contact form noted that since Nelson joined the UDA's death squads "targeting has developed and is now more professional".

After Gerard Slane was gunned down in September 1988, Nelson's army handler noted that "the level of Nelson's targeting information is already of a high quality and recent attacks have proved this accurate". Nelson had given a photo of Gerard Slane to the UDA.

Sometimes however Nelson set up the "wrong" people. In May 1988, a UDA killer, Winke Dodds, nicknamed "the Big Evil", went to Nelson for some targets in West Belfast.

### Consequence

He was given the name of Declan McDaid of 4 Newington St, Belfast.

As a direct consequence two men burst into this address on May 10th and fired seven bullets at a man they believed to be Declan McDaid.

It turned out to be his brother, Terence, and his young daughter

**The revelations dwarf even Bloody Sunday...the British state has acted no different to a Latin American dictatorship**

had to watch her father dying in their living room.

The contact forms also show that the British army had prior knowledge of assassination attempts on Alex Maskey, presently a Sinn Fein councillor.

In all, Nelson helped to organise 15 murders, 15 attempted murders and was directly involved in a further 62 conspiracies to murder.



British agent and UDA killer Brian Nelson

On each occasion he reported to his handler in British intelligence.

The revelations dwarf even the scandal of Bloody Sunday.

They show that the British state has acted in a way that is no differ-

ent to a Latin American dictatorship.

Behind the hypocrisy about peace, the bloody apparatus that started the loyalist assassination campaign has been exposed.

## The LVF link to wreck the peace

THE *Daily Telegraph* has published the material on army collusion but has implied that it belongs to the past.

Nothing could be further from the truth. One of Nelson's main handlers

has been awarded an OBE by the British state and others have been promoted and given medals. One has even gone on to give lectures on "agent handling" to new recruits in Military Intelligence.

Nelson himself distributed his Personality Cards to several loyalist

paramilitary groups and is now living on financial assistance from the British army.

The *Telegraph* claims that the Force Research Unit was disbanded in 1990 but it in fact it has been re-constituted and is still active in Northern Ireland. On January 15th of this year for example, the RUC encountered two unmarked cars in Ardoyne.

Not knowing that they were a clandestine British army operation they chased the cars until an RUC officer was shot and seriously wounded by an undercover woman soldier.

### Campaign

The clandestine operation was going on at precisely the time that the UDA had launched a major assassination campaign in the wake of the killing of Billy Wright.

Senior loyalists have also told the *Irish Times* that British army intelligence is again involved in assassination attempts organised by the Loyalist Volunteer Force. The aim of the LVF is to disrupt the peace process.

The British state has always operated two strategies to defeat the republicans—and both of them are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

One has been to encourage the republicans to "enter the political process" by going along with a deal that involves power sharing in Northern Ireland and joint North-South bodies.

The other has been to foment splits in the IRA and then to destroy the organisation militarily.

The "securicrats" in the British army are more enthusiastic about this second strategy and believe it is necessary to force the republicans into a poor compromise.

This is why they are prepared to use the LVF today just as they helped to establish the UDA's assassination campaign in the eighties.

## The inquiries that end up in cover up

EVER SINCE Bloody Sunday, the British government has been setting up "inquiries" that invariably end in a cover up. One was the Stevens inquiry into the links between UDA killers and the British Army.

The inquiry was established in September 1989 after the UDA put on display some of the files they had been given by the army in an attempt to justify their murder campaign against "known republicans".

When the Stevens inquiry published its preliminary report in May 1990, it revealed nothing about Brian Nelson and the British Army's Force Research Unit. It concluded that collusion between loyalist killers and the army was "neither widespread nor institutionalised".

The *Daily Telegraph* has now revealed that a week after the Stevens inquiry was set up Nelson was contacted by his handler and "was instructed never to mention his work for this office".

Officers from the Force Research Unit also took back the suitcase where Nelson stored his collection of "Personality cards". Nelson was assured that the cards would be returned to him but that "the time was not yet right".

Despite this, Nelson's fingerprints were found on documents that were found in a police raid. Plans were drawn up for his arrest by RUC officers who did not know of his involvement with British intelligence.

But on the night before the scheduled arrest, Nelson fled to England and the office of the Stevens inquiry team was set alight.

The RUC later said there was "no objective evidence" that arson was involved. But they failed to mention that two fire alarms that were linked to an RUC station failed to work and that telephones to the office were down at the time of the fire.

British Intelligence had organised another successful cover-up.

# As millions perished... The Vatican chose silence

**THE VATICAN'S** long awaited Holocaust document, dealing with the behaviour of both individual Catholics and the church itself during the Nazi persecution of Jews, is a whitewash.

Entitled *We Remember, A Reflection on the Shoah*, the 14-page document apologises for ordinary Catholics who collaborated with the Holocaust but it defends the role of the Vatican itself.

The head of the Catholic Church at the time of the Nazi rise to power was Pope Pius XI. Although he stated that the myths of "race" and "blood" were contrary to Christian teaching—in a papal encyclical in March 1937—he neither mentioned nor criticized anti-Semitism. Instead he signed the Concordat with the Mussolini regime to keep the church's influence and power in Italy.

His successor, Pius XII maintained his "neutrality" throughout the course of World War II in order to prevent a "schism" in the church between those who supported and those who opposed the Nazis.

As early as 1942 the Vatican received detailed information on the murder of Jews in concentration camps but the Pope confined his public statements to calling for a more humane conduct of the war.

The Pope also knew beforehand about the impending deportation of the Italian Jews.

There is evidence that the German Ambassador to Rome, Mollhausen, alerted the Vatican in the belief that a strong stand by the Vatican, could forestall the deportations.

But the Pope did not act. In Germany, the Catholic Church did not oppose the Nazis' anti-Semitic campaign. Instead church records were supplied to the Nazis which assisted in the detection of people of Jewish origin.

## Puppet

Dr Jozef Tiso, head of the Nazi puppet state in Slovakia, was a Catholic priest. He sent many Jewish people to the concentration camps and received no reprimand from the church.

Pope Pius XII never showed the slightest embarrassment in receiving Ante Pavelitch, the Croatian pro-Nazi dictator who murdered 700,000 Serbs.

It is improbable that a strong condemnation or protest by the Vatican and the Church would have changed the course of the Holocaust or stopped the atrocities.

However, it is certain that even a simple pastoral letter, re-stating the belief that killing Jews was a mortal sin would have had some effect.

It was left to individual priests to help expose the Nazis. Some showed great courage in speaking out.

Thousands of Jews were



The Bishop of Paris leaves Vichy headquarters

sheltered in convents and churches and many priests actively risked their lives.

Not only did the Pope not speak out—he did not even make an effort to warn the Jews of the deportations.

Part of the explanation lies in the Catholic Church's long history of anti semitism. In France, the Church aligned itself to a right wing campaign against Jews ever since the Dreyfus affair where a Jewish officer was sacked as a traitor.

The daily paper of French Catholics, *La Croix*, was described as "the most anti-semitic paper in France".

The Catholic church only rejected the notion of collective Jewish guilt for Christ's death in its Vatican II Council document, *Nostra Aetate*.

This document, which was published in 1965, also dropped the phrase "perfidious Jews" from Holy Week prayers.

To some extent the Vatican's complicity with the Fascists was based on a fear of communism.

Pope Pius XII loudly condemned Russian aggression against Finland, while ignoring German aggression in Catholic Poland.

He so feared a Communist takeover of Rome on 19 October 1943 that he actually requested the Germans to put more police on the streets. The same police had staged a round up of Jews just three days before.

But the main reason for the silence was that the church wanted to defend its power.

It was a simple choice: whether to be critical and risk the Nazis moving against the Church's wealth and influence, or staying silent while millions were murdered. They chose silence.

The half hearted apology the Vatican has now made does not face up to this fact.

by SIMON BASKETTER

# As Left gains in France Resistance to fascist

**ON the last Saturday in March 200,000 people** marched in France to protest at the growing influence of Jean Marie Le Pen's fascist party, National Front.

Although the fascists still only command 15 percent of the vote, the more traditional right wing parties have done a deal with them in a number of regions.

This has led to mass anger on the streets. Here CATHERINE CURRAN reports from Paris.

ON 15 MARCH there was jubilation when the results of France's regional elections first came in. The poll gave 37 percent to the Left alliance and only 30 percent to the conservative parties, who include Fianna Fail's allies in the Gaullist party. The fascist National Front also scored 15 percent.

But the leaders of the right soon began a mad scramble to hang onto power.

The celebrations at the Left victory quickly gave way to anger and dismay as the defeated right wing candidates struck deals with the fascists.

Before the elections, the leaders of the neo-liberal UDF and the Gaullist RPR had publicly pledged that there would be no electoral alliances with the National Front.

## Regional

But afterwards five right wing candidates for the presidency of France's powerful regional councils were elected with the support of the FN

The response of the national leaders of these parties was am-

bivalent.

The five UDF members who did deals with the FN were merely suspended, not expelled. Former finance minister Alain Madelin telephoned the suspended members to give them his support. Former prime minister Alain Juppe also declared his support for them.

One third of the membership of the RPR had declared in opinion polls that they supported deals with the fascists.

In fact what stopped the rush of the conservatives into the arms of the Nazis was the sheer level of popular protest.

Hundreds of people spontaneously demonstrated in Lyon as the first deals were announced and several thousand school students abandoned their classes to demonstrate in the centre of Paris.

In the cantonal elections which were decided the week after the regionals, there was a large and unexpected swing to the left. The right got its worst vote since the war.

The Committee for Vigilance against the National Front called for a mass mobilisation across



France, with the support of the Socialist and Communist parties.

The media began at last to denounce the National Front as a Nazi party, condemning those who "collaborated" with it. Even President Chirac appeared on the front page of the national newspapers with the anti-fascist slogan "Le FN ne passera pas" (the FN shall not

pass).

The association of journalists in the FN region declared that it was an ordinary party and was "respectable" like Mus-

Fascists or Hitler. In Paris, protesters carried signs with slogans "They shall not pass"

# Why they must be stopped

**THE IRISH media claim that racists and fascists must have free speech.**

But the activities of the French Nazis show why they must be stopped in their tracks.

Behind its facade of respectability, the National Front advocates a policy of "national preference"—or discrimination against immigrants—favouring white residents in housing allocation and benefits.

In towns where it controls the municipal council, the FN has imposed censorship, closed down clubs and bars where its opponents meet and installed its own unofficial police force. It has also provided strike-breaking thugs for local businesses, fired social workers and closed down community services.

After the regional elections, a National Front leader Alain Jamet threatened to close down any cultural association that did not express "French culture". He said that "90 percent of local cultural associa-

tion support ideas that run counter to the movement's moral and national priorities."

The solution to the Nazi threat is offered by the Socialist Party (PS) is to propose a "Right" alliance between the Left and the Right. The traditional Right are presented as the defenders of a shared set of values dear to all French citizens which are threatened by the FN.

The logic of this strategy is to form electoral alliances with the FN in areas menaced by the FN.

It also means avoiding any official protest which might draw fascists into the arms of the FN.

Already the Socialist Party has planned against the FN. A person has said there must be no dialogue on the left in response to the FN. The PS is also demanding an end to the wave of strikes and has arisen since last summer.

# French elections...

# FN grows threat



## 200,000 MARCH AGAINST LE PEN

The recent demonstration in Paris of 50,000 people was defiant and angry.

The "respectable" right wing parties were attacked by the protesters for doing deals with the fascists, protesters condemned the right wing parties, shouting "Le Pen—fascist, the right—Accomplices!"

Outside Paris the demonstrations were just as impressive, with 5,000 in Amiens, 10,000 in Lyon and over 10,000 in Montpellier.

The mood on the marches was adamant. The FN was a fascist party and people had decided, they must be stopped.

"F for Fascist, N for Nazi".

Faced with this level of popular opposition, the conservatives drew back from any further alliances. But there is now an intense radicalisation in France and as the anniversary of May '68 approaches, many are looking for a repeat of the revolt that shook the rulers of Europe.

# Learn from past mistakes

**THE revolutionary left is gaining serious support in France. The organisation Lutte Ouvriere got 4.5 percent of the vote in the regional elections and returned 20 councillors.**

The Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire received 13.5 percent of the vote in Toulouse.

### Demonstrated

Fifteen thousand people demonstrated against the National Front a month before the vote.

However Lutte Ouvriere, the bigger party, refuses to give a lead in the fight against fascism, arguing that there is basically no difference between the reformist socialists in power and the parties of the right.

They refused to call on their supporters to vote for the socialist candidates for the presidencies of the re-

gional councils, thus risking the victory of the right or the FN.

Lutte Ouvriere are repeating the fatal mistake of the German Communist Party in the early 1930s, who refused to unite with the more moderate Social Democrats calling them "social fascists".

The result was that Hitler came to power.

Lutte Ouvriere argues that if the FN comes to power there will be a spontaneous and immediate rising of the workers, which will overthrow the fascist government.

This is to underestimate the threat. Just like the 1930s, the French Nazis will try to break up working class organisations and open concentration camps for socialists and immigrants.

A mass movement is needed now to smash the fascists before they make any more gains.

This has to involve a united front with millions of workers who now support the Socialist Party but who can be won to revolutionary politics.

## What do socialists say?

### Trotsky in 1930s

**THE MASS unemployment of the Great Depression, the triumph of fascism in Germany, Austria and Spain, and the unrestrained dictatorship of Stalin in Russia made the 1930s a nightmare for working people East and West.**

These were also dark years for the Marxist movement.

That the continuity of the Marxist tradition was not broken entirely was thanks to a tiny handful of revolutionary militants.

And by far the most important of these was Leon Trotsky.

Throughout the decade he fought unceasingly for the reconstruction of the international Marxist movement.

One key element in this struggle was Trotsky's devastating critique of the Stalinist state. In *The Revolution Betrayed*, he demonstrated that the Soviet bureaucracy had become a counter-revolutionary force completely alien to socialism.

It was a critique which laid the foundation for his painstaking exposure of the Moscow trials.

### Opposition

Equally important was Trotsky's uncompromising opposition to Popular Frontism.

After the disastrous ultra-leftism that opened the door to Hitler in Germany, Stalin—perceiving the threat Nazi Germany posed to the Soviet Union—swung the line of the Comintern through a 180 degree turn.

From the rejected United Front with the social democrats, the policy became one of forming the broadest possible alliance against fascism.

Trotsky argued that such class collaboration inevitably meant a betrayal of the working class.

First, because any alliance with the bourgeoisie would have as its condition the sacrifice of the interests of the workers. Second, because it would fail in its declared objective of defeating fascism.

Beating fascism, Trotsky insisted, required the mass mobilisation of the working class. An alliance with bourgeois forces necessarily blocked this.

The experience of Leon Blum's Popular Front government in France and the tragedy of the civil war in Spain proved Trotsky right.

Sadly, the prediction of disaster was not in itself sufficient

to build a movement and each successive defeat made it all the more difficult for Trotskyism to attract more than a handful of supporters.

The terrible threat of fascism actually strengthened Stalin as people looked desperately for some power to set against Hitler.

Trotsky's personal and political courage—his total intransigence in a situation in which his wife was continually under threat, his children murdered and he himself driven from one country to another—was unparalleled. But the isolation of his movement inevitably took its toll.

By and large the mass workers' movement remained closed to Trotskyism and recruitment was mainly from petit bourgeois and intellectual circles. Such circles, by the conditions of their existence, are especially prone to intrigue and factionalism.

Trotsky fought tooth and nail to overcome these problems, directing his supporters towards a mass movement and even experimenting for two years with the entrism tactic of joining the reformist socialist parties. But it was to no avail.

The objective difficulties caused by the general epoch of reaction were too great.

And in the end isolation had certain distorting effects on the political line of Trotsky himself.

He had proclaimed the need for a Fourth International in 1933, but recognised that it could not simply be declared when the forces to make it meaningful were lacking.

However, in 1938 when the Fourth International was launched the forces involved were scarcely greater.

Its founding conference consisted of 21 delegates representing organisations in 11 countries—none more than a small group and some more or less fictional. It was an act of desperate substitutionism which could only encourage illusions of grandeur.

Trotsky attempted to bridge the gap by means of a political programme—the Transitional Programme, as it became known—which announced the final definitive crisis of capitalism and predicted powerful revolutionary storms in the years ahead.

Just about credible in 1938, it was a perspective soon to be falsified by events.

None of these criticisms detract from Trotsky's immense achievements in defending and developing Marxism and Leninism.

When he was assassinated in 1940 by a Stalinist agent, he had succeeded in transmitting the core elements of the revolutionary tradition to a new generation of militants, few though they were.

by JOHN MOLYNEUX

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## New book pushes old ideas

# Does science back up 'family values'?

**MEN AND women are naturally different. Men want sex with lots of women while women want to find one trusting partner to give her children.**

These traditional ideas could have come from the Catholic Church in the hey day of the 1950s. But now the same arguments are appearing in a more modern guise.

The media has picked up on a new book by Steven Pinker to justify a stance on family values

Most of Pinker's book, *How the Mind Works*, is a long and technical discussion on the workings of the human mind and Pinker's particular theories are the subject of genuine debate among scientists.

But in part of the book he pushes some very old, and very wrong notions about human nature. Pinker himself has also contributed to papers like the *Daily Mail* to back up these arguments.

Here **HELEN SHOOTER** looks at the fallacies involved in using science to back up family values.

**T**HE CORE of Pinker's argument on human nature is given away by the title of one chapter in his book: "Family Values".

He argues that the family and the unequal roles of men and women are eternal and natural. Our biology, he argues, makes us designed to compete and means that a woman's place is in the home.

He concludes that marriage is the best way to bring up the next generation. The mother is the family's core and she wants the commitment of one man to provide for her and the children.

By contrast the father wants to safeguard his offspring but is also programmed to want to mate with as many women as possible. This means that the idea that men are more easily sexually aroused than women is not sexist for Pinker, but "natural".

Pinker also argues that blood is thicker than water, that we naturally love our family and distrust strangers.

He bases his case on fashionable notions about people being the product of our "selfish genes".

Well known biologist Steven Rose is just one who has slammed this argument. Rose suggests that Pinker, a language expert, does not really know what he is talking about when it comes to genetics.

And Rose argues that Pinker's "caricatures" suggest "he has scarcely read, still less attempted to understand," what biologists who take a different view to his have argued.

The core of Pinker's argument can be seen as old and wrong without going into the details of genetics.

As Steven Rose writes, Pinker and others like him argue that our genes and human nature "evolved to suit humanity's Stone Age existence". Un-



■ Does our biology mean that a woman's natural place is in the home?

fortunately, says Rose, "The Stone Age they portray has something of the Flintstones about it, American suburban morals transported into the dim past."

**S**OME of Pinker's conclusions are easy to dismiss. He argues that men are genetically programmed to be attracted to women with long hair as a hangover from cave dwelling days when long hair implied a healthy mate.

The obvious point that hair length has changed dramatically in relation to the whims of the fashion world has obviously escaped him.

Pinker does not base his arguments about the "natural" parental roles of men and women on any serious study of human history but, as he openly admits, on surveys of "middle class families in the United States" today.

Sometimes his arguments are even more ludicrous. So he argues people's support for major social upheavals has depended on whether they were a first born child.

With the Reformation of the 16th century, the scientific revolution of the 17th century and the 18th century French Revolution, "later born were more likely to support the revolution, first born were more likely to be reactionary!"

Pinker's central argument about the family being something fixed and natural in human nature is completely wrong.

Of course people have always formed relationships, had children and cared for them. But the form this has taken has repeatedly changed throughout human history.

The idea that people have lived as man and wife with two children in a little house with a garden surrounded by a white picket fence may appeal to Pinker, but bears little relation to real human history.

For 99 percent of human history people lived in what anthropologists call "hunter gatherer" societies. Some similar societies have survived into the 20th century in parts of the world.

In such societies both men and women are involved in obtaining foodstuffs, so the women do not in any way bow down to the mythical "man the hunter". And, similarly, childcare is not the sole responsibility of the mother but is shared between all members of the group, male and

female alike.

Women are as much involved in making decisions as men and each is free to end a relationship and start a new one.

Since the development of the first beginnings of agriculture, and later of societies with property and class division, the "family" has taken many different forms.

Sometimes men have had more than one "wife", in others a woman has been "married" to more than one man. In some societies women have had key economic and political roles too.

**I**N MORE recent human history the "family" has continued to take a variety of forms. In feudal times in Europe, for instance, the family for most ordinary people was an economic unit based around production.

Men, women and children all worked, and often people lived in much more "extended" families than the image of the small "nuclear" family of man, wife and children pushed as natural today. And the families of the lords and feudal rulers

were very different indeed to those of most people.

In modern times, with the rise of capitalism, the family has been transformed who looks after the children.

Women make up half the workforce and don't want to be forced to stay at home. More people than ever live in a variety of different households, quite different to the traditional image.

Nor is the family today the wonderful expression of love and security that Pinker would have us believe. People marry in the hope of realising this dream, but are often disappointed.

The family is important to those at the top of society today—both for economic and ideological reasons. And that is why they welcome ideas which say that both the family and women's role within it are natural, and unchangeable.

So there are resources in the world today to free women from the burden of childcare through providing proper and free nursery facilities and the like. But our rulers benefit from the cost of child rearing being borne by the individual family instead.

And the idea that women's real role is as wives and mothers also helps reinforce keeping women's unequal position at work. All the sexist ideas that go with such notions about men, women and the family also help divide workers.

The real conclusion of arguments like Pinker's is either that women's oppression does not exist, because nature intended life this way, or it is that if inequality does exist there is nothing you can do about it.

These ideas have implications beyond arguments about the family and women's role.

**I**F GENES and human nature can be used to justify the inequality and prejudices of our society, then capitalism is not to blame.

Where all this can lead is seen even in places like the leading US Science magazine which has visions of finding genes for alcoholism, crime, unemployment, domestic and social violence and drug addiction.

Science's editor Daniel Koshland was asked why the money shouldn't be spent on the homeless. He replied, "What these people don't realise is that the homeless are impaired... Indeed, no group would benefit more from the application of human genetics."

If the homeless are to blame for living on the streets, not the system of the free market that prices people out of a home, then government spending on the poor and unemployed is unnecessary. They are naturally like that.

Of course our biology does have an impact on the way we live. We need food, shelter, warmth and social contact or we do not survive.

But our behaviour is not fixed by our genes and neither are we simple products of the environment. Each continually interacts with the other. So some basic physical characteristics, such as height, have changed as society has changed. And society itself has been continually transformed throughout history.

Above all there is no such thing as unchanging human nature that has existed for centuries regardless of the changes in society around us.

Humans have transformed the world we live in over and over again throughout our history, and we still have that capacity today.



## MAGDALEN HOMES

## Why the church must pay

THE CHANNEL 4 documentary *Witness: Sex in a Cold Climate* vividly illustrated the horror of the Magdalen laundries.

The first Magdalen asylums, built by the Good Shepherd nuns in the 1920's in Dublin, Waterford and Limerick, were named after the repentant prostitute Mary Magdalen.

The majority of the young women incarcerated there were unmarried mothers, although some were sent merely on the suspicion that their "chastity" had been violated. One woman tells how she was sent there by her family after being sexually assaulted by her cousin.

The young women who made the journeys there had no idea of the fate that awaited them. Forced to give up their new born children, their hair was cut and their clothes confiscated.

They were given long brown shapeless dresses made of coarse cloth in order to make them appear as unattractive as possible. Just as Mary Magdalen, the repentant prostitute, had to reject her sexuality in order to be saved, so too would they.

The regime was relentless with the women being forced to work in silence six days a week, fifty-two weeks a year. The labour they were forced to do was symbolic, the purifying of sin by the washing of dirty laundry. One woman tells of how she was ridiculed when she asked to be paid for her work.

The asylum in Limerick had an orphanage attached, where many of the children of these women were kept. Any contact between the Magdalens and the orphans was strictly forbidden.

Brigid Long who grew up in the orphanage befriended one of the Magdalens and attempted to allow her access to her daughter. They were both severely beaten with the long black rubber belt the nuns had specially designed to beat the children.

One of the nuns shaved their heads with a razor and scissors, forcing them to stare at themselves in the mirror.

"My forehead all swelled up and my neck was bleeding where she had stuck the scissors. Blood was running into my eyes, but she made me open my eyes, shouting 'you are not so pretty now'."

## Targets

The women were also the targets of sexual abuse from the priests who came to hear their confessions, "our so-called moral tutors".

Lessons should have been learned from *Dear Daughter* (February 1996), the documentary on children incarcerated in the institutions, but clearly they have not. The following two months after the programme was aired the media was never silent on the story, while politicians promised to raise the matter in the Dail. All this interest was quickly followed by an intense silence.

Christine Buckley recently published a plea in *The Irish Times* for a full public inquiry, a plea which has been largely ignored. A file was sent to the DPP who rejected all claims made by the women incarcerated in these barbaric institutions. Not one, in his opinion, warranted further investigation.

The state refused to prosecute because there was no evidence of sexual abuse. This is outrageous, there should be immediate prosecution for physical and psychological abuse.

Some 30,000 women are thought to have passed through the Magdalen walls in the course of the century, although the Church still continues to refuse to release the records concerned. The Church should be forced immediately to release these records. No liability has been admitted by the Church nor any compensation paid. Compensation has been offered in Australia and Britain where it is expected to run into millions.

The comments that followed the Channel 4 documentary in the national media have been insistent on removing the majority of the blame from the Church. *The Irish Times* claimed that the Church should not be asked to bear the sole responsibility for what occurred in these institutions, rather the individual families and Irish society generally are to blame.

However it was the Church and organisations like the Knights of Columbanus that viciously moved to prevent society from providing such services. It was the Church that was the driving force behind the rejection of Dr. Noel Browne's Mother and Child scheme. Nor was it society or the families that produced the horrific tombstone inscription: "Here lieth the penitent women of the Magdalen Home".

There remains no monument to the thousands of women who suffered and died in these asylums. It is women who suffered and died in these asylums. It is women who suffered and died in these asylums. It is women who suffered and died in these asylums. It is women who suffered and died in these asylums.

by SINEAD KENNEDY

## film

# Film that made Orange bigots see red

LOYALIST politicians have reacted furiously to *Resurrection Man*, the new film about the 1970s UVF gang known as the Shankill Butchers.

The PUP, the UVF's political wing, has urged a boycott of the film. DUP councillor Edwin Poots was granted a private showing for Lisburn Council before deciding whether they would allow the public to see it.

In any case, the film is only being shown on one of the North's 40 cinema screens.

Cinema owners have said they cannot get their hands on a print, while Virgin Cinemas say it would not be "commercially viable" to screen it.

*Resurrection Man* shows a UVF murder gang torturing and mutilating their catholic victims with knives before killing them.

## Symbols

The gang surrounds itself with the symbols of the British Empire and Orangeism—pictures of the Queen, the Union Jack, King Billy and the sash.

The film shows the deep racist hatred the loyalist death squads have for catholics. No wonder Unionist politicians—having

by SEAN McVEIGH

so recently associated with Billy Wright and the LVF—are embarrassed by the film.

But some Orange bigots are more outraged at the depiction of gay loyalist characters in the film. It is as if showing UVF members as gay is a worse insult than depicting their thirst for blood!

At the centre of the film is Victor Kelly—based on Lenny Murphy who led the real Shankill Butchers.

While *Resurrection Man* recreates the horror and depravity of Murphy's activities, it falls well short of explaining why they came about.

The fictional Kelly is presented as a demonic figure, influenced as a child by too many American



The DUP hate it, but the film falls short of explaining the killings

gangster films.

We only get an individual psychological explanation for his actions.

But no understanding of the loyalist death squads is possible without taking into account the history of sectarianism and the way

it was nurtured by the unionist establishment over decades.

The Shankill Butchers were members of the UVF which, according to its former leader Gusty Spence, was reorganised in the mid 1960s on the ini-

tiative of prominent members of the Ulster Unionist Party.

A central character in the film is McClure who is based on a 1970s loyalist leader called John McKeague.

McKeague began as a supporter of Ian Paisley but later helped to set up death squads.

He also worked as an agent for British Intelligence.

His links with Paisley and the security forces are not mentioned in the film.

Nor do we see the fear and hatred that most ordinary protestants felt towards the Shankill Butchers.

The 1977 loyalist "strike" called by Paisley, was a miserable failure because most protestants were appalled at the killings being carried out at the time.

Eoin McNamee wrote the screenplay for *Resurrection Man*, which is based on his novel of the same name.

## Safer

In some ways McNamee has provided a "safer" screenplay. In the novel Kelly is safely driven through a security checkpoint by an off duty member of the security forces—the killers could not have evaded arrest for so long without collusion from the RUC.

The novel also describes the shadowy world of loyalism in Belfast in the 1970s where killers, politicians and government spies all moved in the same circles and fed off each other.

But the film leaves out the role of the sectarian state, and instead presents loyalist violence as the product of a few evil minds.

*Resurrection Man* is showing at Yorkgate Cinema, Belfast.

## book

## Taking Marx down from the ivory tower

THE *Sunday Times* recently had a feature article claiming that Marx was right after all. The *Irish Times* ran an article urging readers to turn to Marx to understand the world around us. There is a new college economics text book out on Marxist Economics.

Terry Eagleton's small (and cheap) book is part of this new interest in Marx.

Terry Eagleton is a Professor of English Literature at Oxford. Unlike so many academics Eagleton comes out of the ivory tower and gives a full scale defence of Marx.

His book is a very useful summary of Marx's main ideas and has a great selection of Marx's most famous passages.

He shows that Marx's philosophy was a practical affair that was as much about changing the world as thinking about it.

Marx could bring ideas and action together because he understood that ideas themselves were shaped by the material world.

Marx believed that human beings were tremendously creative and that they had to cooperate in order to develop.

But under capitalism we are cut off from our creative capacities because we do not control the work we do. This was what Marx called alienation.

The worker, as Marx puts it, feels at home only when he is not working and not at home when he is working.

Eagleton shows in a fresh way how a socialist society could be organised differently.

Marx's socialism is not about some dead leveling of individuals. It's

about allowing people's differences to come into their own for the first time.

"Socialism for Marx is just the practical movement to bring about a state of affairs in which labour would be automated as far as possible so that men and women would no longer be re-

Eagleton explains clearly how social classes arise in their relation to the means of production and how it is the struggle between them, not individuals, that gives birth to new societies.

Eagleton, however, is weakest on the idea of revolution.

He rightly stresses that capitalism provides the material basis for socialism but he seems to believe that the workers also need some ideas about democracy from the capitalist class.

He seems to think Stalinism arose because there was no long period of parliamentary democracy before the Russian Revolution.

Whether Eagleton would have supported the Revolution is not quite clear.

This is a pity because everything else in this book points towards revolution, not away from it.

Marx by Terry Eagleton; Phoenix £2 —Marnie Holbrow



Karl Marx

duced to mere tools of production and would be free instead to develop their personalities in more fully rounded ways."



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 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 BOSSES VICTIMISE WORKERS**

**How do we win union recognition?**

"O'LEARY OFTEN stands above us staring at us for a half an hour. Two or three of them are up in their office with mobile phones, pointing and talking about us."

That is how one Ryanair worker described the atmosphere of intimidation in the company.

Striking baggage handlers only returned to work after Ryanair promised to attend an inquiry and not to victimise anyone.

But the agreement has already been broken with the sacking of three workers who were on probation. "They are trying to whittle down the 39 baggage handlers.

**Probation**

There are about 15 of us on probation and if O'Leary gets away with this victimisation now, you don't know who will be next.

"They have also posted up notices about promotion. This is another way of pulling people out of the union because if you are promoted, you go back on probation for a year."

Problems are also emerging with the inquiry itself. Inquiries have become the main way by which this government gets itself out of a fix.

Mary Harney has set up no fewer than eleven inquiries although she has only been in office for seven months.

The Ryanair inquiry now looks like it is just another way to put the issue of union recognition on the long finger.

"We have been given no deadline for when this inquiry is supposed to end.



**UNIONS RECRUIT** when they are willing to fight

Harney says it will be a few weeks—others have said it might go on a few months. But the longer it drags on, the more the issue fades from

public view." Unfortunately the SIPTU leaders are bending over backwards to look moderate while O'Leary is turning on

the pressure. SIPTU should be telling Ryanair that they will not tolerate any worker being victimised when they are on probation.

And if the inquiry team does not tell Ryanair to rehire these workers, then it is time to return to industrial action.

**Blair backtracks**

**UNION LEADERS** in Ireland are closely following the debate in Britain on union recognition.

The British Labour party gave an election pledge which promised recognition "where a majority of the relevant workforce vote in a ballot for a union to represent them".

The Irish union leaders hope that a similar promise can be extracted from political parties here.

But already there are prob-

lems with Blair's commitment to union rights.

Before the election, Blair struck a deal with Rurert Murdoch to gain the support of his newspapers for Labour.

Murdoch is an anti-union employer who broke union organisation at his Wapping print works.

Murdoch and the British bosses organisation, the CBI, are now pressing Blair to backtrack on union rights.

In return for a formal granting of union rights the bosses are demanding that:

- All firms with fewer than

50 employees be exempt from the new law.

Yet these firms account for 97 percent of companies and employ a third of workers in the private sector.

■That strikes for union recognition be made illegal and that employees on training or personal contracts be excluded from collective bargaining.

■That a majority of all those eligible to vote be required for union rights. This means that abstentions would be counted as a vote against joining the union.

■That employers can

choose the "bargaining unit" to which the vote on union recognition applies.

■That there be provision for union de-recognition as applies under US law.

If the employers get their way, the legal right to join a union would be made meaningless.

In some cases, the situation could even be worse for workers.

This is why British union leaders are now talking about calling a special TUC meeting and organising huge protest demonstrations.



**SOCIALISTS SUPPORT** any legal measure which compels employers to give union recognition.

But the British case shows the dangers in pinning hopes on this legal route.

Union membership has actually risen in Ireland—particularly where unions have shown a willingness to fight.

The nurses union, the bricklayers union and the shop workers union

**Extract**

MANDATE all increased their membership after showing non-union workers that they could extract gains from the employers.

Unfortunately SIPTU and the ICTU are adopting a different approach. They want to concentrate on lobbying for a new law rather than organizing for a fight now.

That is why the SIPTU leader Des Geraghty is hinting that he will adopt a "flexible" approach to union rights at Ryanair.

But even if a new government said it would bring in a new law, all the problems that are emerging in Britain would occur.

That is why we should push now for all-out action to win union rights at Ryanair and for the launching of a national recruitment campaign.

This campaign should be backed up with a guarantee to all non-union workers that they will get full support for industrial action for a £5 an hour minimum wage.

**JOIN THE SOCIALISTS**

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

Name .....

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Phone.....

**SWP branch meetings**

**BELFAST CENTRAL**  
Meets every Thurs 8pm, Garrick Bar, Chichester Street.

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

**CORK**  
Meets every Weds at 8pm in Dennehy'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/Beamount 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'Connells Pub, Richmond St.

**DUBLIN RATHMINES UPPER**  
Meets every Mon at 8pm in O'Connells 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

**OUT NOW: Refugees are welcome here, The case against immigration controls by DEIRDRE CRONIN, available £2.00 from SW paper sellers and branch bookstalls plus 50p postage from SW Books, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8**

## USI

**FIANNA FAIL** supporters in the national students union, USI have abolished full time of officer posts for women's rights and lesbian, gay and bisexual rights at a conference held in Westport this year.

They claim that there is no need for them in today's "post-liberal" Ireland.

But in many colleges gay societies are still banned and women students still face sexist attitudes.

The new USI officers claim that education is a business and want more links with employers who want to profit from colleges. This is a major retreat from the idea that education is a right and not a privilege.

The conference sessions were all carefully managed in an effort to silence any dissenting voices and to avoid any embarrassing questions like the excessive expenses run up by USI President Colman Byrne.

## Boycott

The conference was solely concerned with the financial running of the union. The women's session was constantly postponed, prompting 15 delegates to boycott sessions.

Despite the right wing backlash, delegates voted to retain the union's Pro-Choice stance.

This involved a major fight with the pro-lifers and the right-wing.

Since the 1992 X-Case there has been a turn to the right within the Union of Students of Ireland.

A deliberate attempt was made by Fianna Fail and pro-life to gain control over USI and the local unions on an "apolitical" basis.

## Politics

They hid their own politics and then tried to claim that the left was trying to take over the Union.

But their hypocrisy was exposed when USI president Colman Byrne used his position as a student president to try to secure a Fianna Fail nomination.

The new President-elect Dermot Lohan is also a member of Fianna Fail.

The only opposition that emerged at the conference was from the Socialist Worker Student Society.

The takeover of USI by Fianna Fail means that students will need to set up their own independent initiatives outside USI and their own local unions.

Where students have taken direct action they have gotten results. There have been a number of significant strikes and occupations in places like Cork RTC (now IT), Dun Laoghaire Art college and Rathmines DIT in the last year.

Students can no longer wait for the Fianna Fail dominated USI to offer a lead.

## Limerick builders

# Lightning strike wins direct employment

**BUILDING** workers in Limerick won a victory for direct employment after a city-wide lightning strike against subcontracting in late March.

Workers, members of BATU, were responding to Arch Construction's refusal to honour an agreement to end the system of sub-contracting and employ bricklayers directly.

## Disregard

One of the strikers told *Socialist Worker*, "Subcontractors operate with a complete disregard for conditions. They bring in non-qualified workers and undermine conditions throughout the sites.

"This forces men to

work with none of the benefits that result from permanent direct employment and has opened the floodgates to the employment of casual labour."

Arch Construction boss John Murphy at first tried to tough out the dispute by sending solicitor's letters to the men's union.

Workers responded with a lightning unofficial strike that brought building work to a virtual standstill in Limerick city.

Strikers told *Socialist Worker* they were determined to stand their ground despite garda harassment as picketers were asked for their names and addresses. "This job is hard enough and we're not driving round in £50,000 limousines," said one.

Another added, "We

reckon we have 95 percent of the city's building workers out in support".

Within hours management had conceded talks and caved in.

Last September building workers with Lynch Construction in the city gained direct employment after a lightning strike.

## Roche Ireland

# Strike against redundancies

**SEVENTY FIVE** SIPTU workers at Roche Ireland, Clarecastle County Clare, have been on strike since the beginning of March over nine compulsory redundancies.

The 75 chemical process operators voted unanimously for strike action when the company refused to offer alternative jobs to the nine men or to apply the compulsory redundancies on a last in first out basis.

Each morning the 75 workers hold a mass picket of the plant with

## Zoe Developments

**THE VICTORY** of the Crampton building workers has sent huge stirrings through the building industry.

Inspired by the direct action of the Crampton workers, Zoe building workers placed unofficial pickets on all Zoe sites, effectively shutting them down.

The dispute dated back to last November. There

have been numerous meetings with the Labour Commission but the company has refused to make any serious attempt to deal with the workers and is intent on dragging out these procedures to the end.

The company would not even have met the union if there had not been a threat of an immediate stoppage, following the death of James Masterson. The company was forced to concede on the

issue of health and safety. The workers have essentially three demands: parity of payment with other sites, continuing vigilance on health and safety, and improvements in toilet and canteen facilities.

Zoe workers placed two day unofficial pickets on all Zoe sites. These pickets were removed after a meeting with the Labour Relations Commissions in an attempt to reach a settlement.

## Teachers

**THE TEACHERS** unions all have their conferences around Easter.

The TUI conference will demand that part time teachers in RTCs and DITs be paid for preparatory work as well as teaching time.

## Forced

The Department of Education has forced colleges to stay within budgets by recruiting part timers to teach less than the statutory 8 hours a week.

The INTO conference will discuss demands for more teachers to be trained to cope with the worsening pupil teacher ratio.

There is also a motion calling for more resources for refugee education. Delegates should oppose

the scandal whereby teachers have been instructed not to teach the children of asylum seekers.

The ASTI will debate the outstanding claim for retirement after 30 years. Teachers struck two years ago for this demand but union leaders have been dragging their heels.

A motion on discipline to the ASTI conference calls for a reduction in the pupil teacher ratio but also calls for a code of discipline.

One TUI activist told *Socialist Worker* that there is a danger of the focus being put on "problem" pupils rather than more resources.

He said this would play into the hands of politicians who would seek out scapegoats for the government's education cut-backs.

## Impact

**DESPITE** major intimidation by management, 130 civil servants marched to the Dail against the use of notionally self employed subcontractors in the Office of Public Works and Duchas - The Heritage Service.

The march was organised by the local IMPACT branch and was well supported by members of the other civil service unions.

## Bausch and Lomb

# Ballot for action

**WORKERS** IN the Optima section of Bausch and Lomb in Waterford have voted 64 to 14 for industrial action.

The company wants to increase productivity to save £650,000.

But Bausch and Lomb already makes huge profits and the workforce has contributed by continually accepting flexibility and speed-ups.

Many workers are under severe stress and fear more pressure will affect their health.

SIPTU balloted their members in Optima after management broke procedures by threatening to suspend workers who refused to

carry out additional duties.

The dispute has gone to the Labour Court but that will at best address the issue of payment for the speed-ups. The Labour Court will not stop the new measures going

ahead, nor will it challenge management's bullying tactics.

If there is no speedy resolution, the workers should implement their mandate and put up pickets.

## Waterford mutiny

**WATERFORD** DOCKERS have shown tremendous solidarity with the crew of the Maltese ship, Imeros.

The ship's crew mutinied because they have not been paid for up to eight months.

The Seamen's Union obtained a High Court injunction to put the Imeros "under arrest" to try and force its owners to pay the crew.

Local dockers provided food to the mutineers—who include Egyptians, Ukrainians, Indonesians and Greeks—a gesture which contrasts with the racism of politicians towards immigrants.



Workers on the Picket line at Roche Ireland

picketing continuing on a 24 hour basis. The other workers in the plant, technicians and security, have also been balloted for strike action in support of the chemical process operators.

Roche is one of the world's biggest pharmaceutical companies, em-

ploying 50,000 people worldwide, and in 1996 made a profit of nearly \$6 billion.

## Choose

The company announced last September that it was seeking sixty voluntary redundancies from the 250 workforce.

## Pro Choice

# Derry protest for abortion rights

**THE Socialist Workers Party** held a successful lobby of Derry city council on 24 March to stop SDLP councillor Shaun Gallagher's attempt to cut off £2,000 in funding from the local Women's Network.

His move is an attempt to silence the campaign for legalised abortion in the North which shared an International Women's Day platform with

the Women's Network.

Around 25 SWP members and supporters demonstrated outside the Guildhall.

Gallagher did not show his face while the protest went on, but DUP members Gregory Campbell and William Hay, who expressed support for Gallagher's censorship motion, appeared and had to make their way through a noisy picket.

Gallagher says he is still against any city council money going to "the promotion of abortion. If that belief makes me a bigot then on this

occasion I am very happy to be called a bigot," he said.

Every week, 40 Protestant and Catholic women from the North go to England for an abortion because they can't have one here. Not one politician will stand up for these women as long as unionist and nationalist parties worry about losing their traditional voters.

The SWP will continue to fight for the extension of the 1967 Abortion Act to Northern Ireland to give women here access to safe and legal abortions.

## Health Service

# Bosses deal rejected

**FOUR THOUSAND** craftworkers in Health Boards, Voluntary Hospitals and Local Authorities have rejected a Labour Court deal by a 20 to 1 majority.

Ballotting for all-out strike was due to start on 30 March. A previous 20 to 1 strike mandate was deferred when the Labour Court intervened to investigate the claim for a

£27.69 a week increase.

The Court has only recommended a £12.67 increase, which may be phased over three years.

They tried to present this as an £18.67 rise by adding in the £6—or 2 percent—already due under Partnership 2000. The employers also want agreement on a list of productivity demands, aimed at slashing jobs and services.

The deal is in breach of the 1979 analogue agree-

ment, which links pay for public sector craftworkers to agreed private sector rates.

The craftworkers also agreed to productivity in 1994 on the understanding that the full analogue would be secured after the old PCW agreement ran out.

These breaches of agreement could result in a huge vote for strike action by 4,000 craftworkers and 30,000 general operatives.

# Socialist Worker

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## TIME TO TAKE A STAND

# For a £5 an hour minimum wage and union rights

**TONY BLAIR** is deliberately talking down the level of a new minimum wage.

The signs are that the Labour government is bending towards the bosses and will betray the hopes of working people.

The bosses organisation, the CBI, is pressing for a low minimum wage and wants exemptions for workers under 26.

They also say that the minimum wage should not apply to small businesses and to "low wage regions" like Northern Ireland.

Bosses in the North have been threatening that any rate above £3.50 an hour would lead to a loss of jobs. But if they took a cut in their profits, there would be no need for redundancies. Low pay is a scandal in the North and it is linked to the lack of trade union rights.

A report last year by the Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network found that at least 32,000 workers earn less than £3.50 an hour and 131,000 earn less than £4.

A recent study by the Trade Union Congress in Britain showed that pay rates are lower

in firms where there is no trade union.

Major employers like Marks and Spencer refuse to deal with trade unions.

Far from creating jobs, thousands of workers have been sacked in the North as the big retailers like Tesco and Sainsbury's have driven smaller companies out of business.

This leads to massive levels of poverty in the North.

The Child Poverty Action Group says that over 32 percent of two parent families and almost 90 percent of lone parent families in the North survive on less than £150 per week.

### Partnership

Blair talks of partnership between employers and workers to make Britain work. But he spends most of his time throwing money at employers.

The budget in March handed another £1.5 billion to employers in a further cut to corporation tax.

Blair's Welfare to Work scheme will throw £60 a week at ruthless employers who take on the unemployed for all sorts of menial jobs with no guarantee of work after six months.

Desmonds clothing manufac-

turers have appeared on national TV to promote the New Deal. Yet Desmonds has forced its very own new deal on women workers which nearly doubles their workload while cutting their money.

Recently 220 of them walked out of the Claudy factory and picketed the plant in protest.

But workers can organise to defeat Blair's right wing policies. Protests over the cuts to lone parent benefits and the threat of disability cuts have already forced Blair to back away from the worst plans.

This shows what could be achieved if the trade unions organised protests and marches.

Some union leaders in Britain are now calling for an emergency meeting of the TUC over union rights and want to call demonstrations over the minimum wage.

But the same union leaders continue to argue that we have a "Labour government that is listening to us" and that workers "must be patient."

It's time our trade union leaders took a stand for a minimum wage and trade union rights and backed it up with mass action. That is the only way to ensure that it is workers' voices that Blair listens to.

## Peace talks won't solve poverty

**WHATEVER** happens in the peace talks in the next couple of weeks, it is clear that the last thing the parties are concerned about is the level of wages or workers' rights.

The only vision offered by a settlement is Protestant and Catholic communities competing for low wage, non-union jobs with the multinationals.

### Recipe

That is a recipe for further sectarianism.

The new high-tech industries in the North are dependent on massive government subsidies and have no obligation to guarantee jobs, wages or trade union rights.

No wonder that wages in the North are up to 20 percent lower than for the same work in Britain. That is the terrible cost of sectarian division which has weakened the working class movement.

Any settlement that is forged between John Hume and David Trimble will only encourage ruthless bosses, North and South, to make workers compete against each other for jobs.

The trade unions North and South should push for an island-wide minimum wage of £5 an hour and full trade union rights and back it up with protests and industrial action.

Workers unity will have to be built from our own struggles because the politicians involved in the multi-party talks have no other interest than maintaining communal divisions.