

Socialist Worker

Inside:

**Rosa Luxemburg's
the Mass Strike:
When workers
fight and shake
the chains—PAGE 8**

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**VOTE NO
TO THE
AMSTERDAM
TREATY**

No military alliance

INSIDE THE CELTIC TIGER...INSIDE THE CELTIC TIGER...INSIDE TH

EVERYONE knows that the Celtic Tiger is booming for only a minority. But recent reports from the *Irish Times* and other sources show the extent to which important public services continue to be starved of resources, while the rich pay little or no tax. *Socialist Worker* examines the facts.

Education

Schools starved of funds

Ireland spends less per primary student than any other country in Western Europe, North America or Australia.

And Irish pupil-teacher ratios are the worst among 12 comparable European countries.

A typical four-teacher, 100 pupil school would get £5,000 per year from the Department of Education and a £3,000 grant to cover repairs.

Sponsored

This has to be topped up by a £1,000 "parish collection" and a further £3,000 raised by parents from sponsored events and cake sales.

Without voluntary fundraising, the school would only be able to afford insurance, heat and light.

Many primary schools cannot even afford art paper, not to mention computers and videos.

Education Minister Micheal Martin has increased the budget for

Left to rot

THE main primary teachers' union last year revealed that many school children endure what could be described as Third World conditions. The INTO's 1997 survey of primary schools found that:

- There were still 35 schools with outdoor toilets;
- Nearly 130 did not have a phone;
- Seventeen percent had classrooms in pre-fabs, most of them over 20 years old;
- One third of schools could not afford to be cleaned every day;
- Three quarters of schools did not even have hot water in the children's wash hand basins.
- Fire and safety hazards, vermin, rotting windows or doors and overcrowding are all common problems.

primary education by nine percent.

This will barely alleviate the scandalous conditions of the worst funded schools, with very little left over to increase funding in the average school.

It is too little too late—when the recession hits, the politicians will claw back what little gains have been made in the boom.

Who pays tax?

The drugs company Elan, who made profits of \$180.6 million, had the lowest effective tax rate in Ireland last year. It only paid \$1.2 million in tax which was an effective tax rate of 0.65 per cent.

Only \$268,000 of this was paid in Ireland. This very low tax rate is due to the fact that Elan derives almost all of its income from patents which are virtually exempt from Irish corporation tax.

Most of the top 20 companies in Ireland paid on average a 23 per cent rate of tax which is 13 per cent lower than the standard rate of corporation tax of 36 per cent.

As the Celtic Tiger booms for the rich, the ordinary PAYE worker is squeezed. A PAYE worker must pay at least 27 per cent in tax on their wages while the big banks and multinationals who earn millions in profits every year pay a mere 23 per cent. In Ireland taxes are obviously not for the rich!

Health service

Dying for a bed

THERE are 32,000 people waiting for hospital treatment in Ireland.

Patients wait hours for casualty. Those who are admitted to hospital can spend up to a week on a trolley or even in an armchair.

Some people have waited six years for heart bypasses and others have died while waiting.

Yet more than £70 million has been spent on reducing hospital waiting lists since 1993.

This appears to have been a cosmetic exercise, with figures being massaged by deferring admissions from one year to the next.

Scam

This scam cannot disguise the effect of the health cuts that have been systematically carried out since the mid 1980s.

Since 1980 the number of hospital beds per 1,000 patients has been cut by 40 percent. This is the biggest reduction in a table of 16 OECD countries—it is ten times the reduction carried out in Germany.

Patients are also being released too soon to ease the pressure on beds—the average stay in an Irish

hospital has gone down by 29 percent.

The cuts mean that up to 98 percent of hospital admissions are now emergencies.

This means routine admissions are postponed, leading to more emergencies—even death—because of the lack of early treatment of illnesses.

State of the art?

GOVERNMENTS have occasionally created big headlines, often near election time, by opening "state of the art" hospitals.

But these hospitals are then starved of funding for years afterwards.

The Cork University Hospital was known as the "Wilton Hilton" when it opened in the late 1970s. But it has not been maintained properly since and is grossly understaffed.

For years people in Tallaght campaigned for a local hospital. But now it is being opened at the expense of inner Dublin, where the Meath, Adelaide and National Children's hospitals are all being closed.

CALLOUS COWEN



HEALTH Minister Brian Cowen says he will not increase spending despite the boom.

In fact he claims the boom is not the time to increase spending because it will only cause "disruption" when the economy goes bust again.

But if that is the case, when is the right time to spend

money on health?

When the recession hits, the government will be looking for more cuts because they will want us to tighten our belts.

But that rule does not apply to people who can afford to go into the plush private clinics which have sprung up since the health cuts began.

Public transport

Fuelling the car culture



Hiding behind gimmicks

DUBLIN Bus bosses have unveiled a series of gimmicks called "Customer Focus 2000".

These include painting bus lanes red and renaming the 46A the "Stillorgan Flyer".

Dublin Bus chief executive Alan Westwell has extensive experience running privatised buses in Britain.

Off-peak services have been slashed there, as chancers like Stagecoach cherry-pick profitable runs and attack drivers' conditions.

Other European governments fund between a third

to four-fifths of the operating costs of buses but Dublin Bus has had its government subsidy withdrawn this year. Now all operating costs must be met from passengers' fares.

This includes the £12 million a year needed to replace worn-out buses. This has meant that off-peak services have been cut back or eliminated and integrated ticketing cannot go ahead.

CIE bosses have banned managers from discussing the withdrawal for fear of embarrassing Minister for Enterprise Mary O'Rourke.

PUBLIC transport is in crisis in Ireland. The Government can invest hundreds of millions in motorways while public transport is simply regarded as a costly drain on the public purse.

It was only last year that Iarnrod Eireann was allowed to buy 10 new carriages for the overcrowded DART line.

This was the first addition to the system since it came into service in 1984.

Nothing

However the Government obviously sees nothing wrong with giving huge tax breaks for the building of multi-storey car parks in the middle of urban areas that are already choked with traffic.

The economy is booming and new car sales have

reached record levels, yet the public transport system has never been so bad.

The Government's attitude to public transport is obvious when 78 percent of the £230 million EU-aided budget was spent on

roads and just 4 percent was spent on public transport.

Obviously the Government ministers in their chauffeur driven cars do not have to stand all the way home like so many commuters.

Who goes to jail?

THE SCANDAL of the Beef Tribunal, that cost the taxpayer more than £35 million, is still continuing almost 6 years later.

Once again the real criminals have gotten off. The latest case at the Goodman owned AIBP plant at Rathkeale Co. Limerick involved a scam using false meat stamps on meat that did not have proper health marks.

Three former executives at the plant, a former accountant and a former boning manager were all charged and found guilty of defrauding the Department of Agriculture. However they all only received suspended sentences.

Contrast that to the case of a man from the travelling groceries, who was sent to jail for stealing. When he appealed the sentence the judge accused him of wasting the court's time and doubled his sentence. Another woman was jailed for throwing stones at a chip shop. While the real criminals go free, people accused of small petty crimes are sent to jail.

what we think

Vote No to a military alliance

THE GOVERNMENT'S decision to call a vote on the Amsterdam Treaty on the same day as the referendum on the Northern agreement is a disgrace.

While people are concerned about peace in Ireland, Fianna Fail and the Progressive Democrats are trying to hide the fact that they are moving closer to a military alliance in Europe.

The political establishment claims that the Amsterdam Treaty will give European workers new social rights. But the Treaty adds nothing to the measures that have already been agreed. It is about building of a war machine.

■The first article of the treaty states that, "The Union shall define and implement a common foreign policy covering all areas of foreign and security policy."

The elite who run Europe want to move from a common economic zone to constructing a political-military power.

Their aim is to establish a rival war machine to the US.

As the former EU supremo Jacques Delors put it, there are "resources wars" to be fought in the next century.

■The key institution for this defence policy is to be the Western European Union which was founded in 1948 at the start of the Cold War.

Today it acts as the European wing of NATO.

The WEU supports the use of nuclear weapons to "confront a potential aggressor with an unacceptable risk". It is a military machine designed to attack rival powers and people who fight back against Western colonialism.

Yet the Amsterdam Treaty says that the EU should "foster closer relations with the WEU with a view to the possibility of the integration of the WEU into the Union".

■The Treaty calls for the use of "combat forces in crisis management". It gives "peacekeeping tasks" as an ex-

'Irish troops should be prepared to fight to defend North Sea oil'

—Des O'Malley, PD spokesperson on Foreign Affairs.

ample.

But the case of Somalia shows the reality behind this rhetoric. After the former Labour leader Dick Spring persuaded the Dail to send Irish troops on this "peacekeeping mission" it was revealed that the US and Canadians shot down hundreds of Somalians in cold blood. Instead of bringing peace, the UN forces brought murder and racism.

■The Treaty calls for support for the European arms industry. It says that a common defence policy must be supported "by co-operation by states in the field of armaments".

Already £40 billion is spent each year in producing weapons in the European Union.

An *Afri* report has shown that a small Irish arms industry has already to develop.

But the bureaucrats who run Europe feel that their arms industry is falling behind the US. This is why they want to step up support for their merchants of death.

Only three countries in Europe making up 2% of the population—Denmark, Portugal and Ireland—will actually get a vote on the Treaty.

We should use it to vote NO.



1,500 in protests against racism

HUNDREDS of people marched against racism and deportations in April.

In Dublin 1,500 attended a demonstration and 350 marched in Cork.

Racist attacks are on the rise in Ireland.

One Zairean refugee told *Socialist Worker* that he never goes out alone, that he always tries to walk in a group and stays inside after 11pm.

The real responsibility for the attacks on black people lies with the Fianna Fail government.

Since they came to power they have promoted the myth that refugees are "a burden" on Ireland.

Up to 70 refugees are now facing immediate deportation.

In April, a Turkish man who was visiting his Irish partner and child was forcibly removed

by the Garda and deported.

Afterwards his partner said he was treated like "an animal".

John O'Donoghue regularly produces exaggerated figures on how much refugees are costing the country.

Yet in opposition O'Donoghue argued that refugees should be allowed to work rather than being forced to draw benefit.

O'Donoghue has changed his tune because he wants to use the refugees as scapegoat to cover for the rich criminals who back Fianna Fail.

While he denounces refugees as "spongers", the Minister for Finance Charles McCreery allows the banks to engage in legalised robbery and tax scams.

Instead of turning on refugees, we should be fighting the rich criminals who organise corruption at the top of society.

The hate message that guides the sectarian killers

THE Democratic Unionist Party led by Ian Paisley claims to have no connections with the LVF.

But a report in the British newspaper *The Observer* exposes this as a lie.

Two weeks ago a young Catholic student, Kieran Heffernan, was kicked to death as he walked home at night near his home in Crumlin, Co Antrim.

RUC sources claim that his killers attended a rally addressed by the DUP representative, Sammy Wilson just hours before. The rally was organised by Antrim Concerned Protestants—a front organisation that links the LVF and DUP activists.

Murdered

Many of the 300 loyalists at the rally wore T-shirts to commemorate Billy Wright, the murdered loyalist leader known as King Rat.

During the speeches there were several chants of "Up the LVF". When one of the speakers Clifford Peebles burnt a copy of the Good Friday Agreement, there were cries of "Burn the Fenians too".

With this message of hate literally ringing in their ears, the LVF death

squad went in search of a Catholic. In the space of just three hours, they had found Caren Heffernan.

The link between the DUP's message of sectarian hate and the death squads could not be more clearly exposed.

Today there are major splits developing within Unionism as many Protestant workers feel disillusioned that they have gained little from the link with Britain.

One wing in the DUP believes that the only hope of preserving the Unionist monolith is by intensifying sectarianism to fever pitch. This is why they have no qualms about openly aligning with the LVF.

Another section around Trimble believe that Unionism has to follow the dictates of big business and modernise its sectarian structures.

But socialists do not choose between these two wings and pretend one is "progressive". The message of hate which has spawned the LVF was built into the sectarian state from the beginning.

Instead of looking for an accommodation with Trimble, we should be building a force that links Protestant and Catholic workers into a fight that overthrows the bigots who dominated both parts of Ireland.

Will you help Socialist Worker raise £10,000?

THE Socialist Worker fighting fund is under way with £1,736 raised. Thanks to our readers for donations.

We aim to raise £10,000 to enable the party to expand in the year ahead.

The SWP encourages militancy and puts its resources at the disposal of workers in struggle, such as the recent strike at Crampton's.

Socialist Worker also challenges the ideas of the right wing.

This week we will be printing thousands of factsheets explaining the threat to neutrality posed by the Amsterdam Treaty.

To support our fighting fund please send cheques/postal orders made to "Socialist Worker" to PO Box 1648, Dublin 8 or PO Box 354 Tomb St. Belfast.

"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



news of the world

GERMAN REGIONAL ELECTIONS

Nazis cash in on despair

A BREAKTHROUGH by Nazis in regional elections in Germany on Sunday has sent shock waves throughout Europe's biggest country.

The Nazi German People's Union (DVU) won almost 13 percent of the vote, on a 70 percent turnout, in elections to the parliament of Saxony-Anhalt, a region of eastern Germany.

That is the highest vote for a Nazi party in Germany since the Second World War.

Support for the Christian Democratic Union, the party of German Conservative leader Helmut Kohl, plummeted 12 percent to under 22 percent in the Saxony-Anhalt poll.

That points to a defeat for Kohl, who has been in power for 16 years, at the nationwide general election due later this year.

Kohl's challenger nationally is the Social Democratic Party (SPD), equivalent to Ireland's Labour Party.

Fronted

But the SPD, fronted by "German Tony Blair" Gerhard Schroeder, was not the main beneficiary in Saxony-Anhalt from growing discontent with the Conservatives.

The SPD vote increased by only 4 percent.

The Nazis came from nowhere to tap into people's despair at spiralling unemployment and pick up the 12 percent support that deserted the Conservatives.

One in three DVU voters is unemployed.

It ran a campaign of scapegoating foreigners for unemployment which stands at 24 percent in Saxony-Anhalt, Germany's poorest region.

Only 3 percent of the region's population are immigrants.

Its campaign slogans included, "Criminal Foreigners out," "German money for German jobs" and, in a sinister echo of Hitler's "racial purity"

population policies, "Social spending for German purposes only." The Conservatives responded to this blatant racism by capitulating to it.

Helmut Kohl spoke in Saxony-Anhalt last week. He told a rally, "Foreigners are guests in our country. If they do not behave like guests, they should be kicked out."

Spent

This and recent mass deportations of refugees served only to legitimise the more overt racism of the Nazis.

The DVU spent more money on its election campaign than the two major parties combined.

Its founder is millionaire Gerhard Frey made

his money from publishing right wing newspapers and is an admirer of Adolf Hitler.

The DVU is even more openly racist than other Nazi parties in Germany, like the Republikaner which has previously gained electoral support in the west of the country.

It has few members in Saxony-Anhalt, but Frey used his millions to flood the area with propaganda.

Its worrying breakthrough does not mean the growth of the far right is unstoppable.

It has everything to do with the sharp economic crisis that is gripping Germany and the failure of mainstream politicians to point a way out of the misery it has caused.

Largest economy in deepest slump since the 1930s

GERMANY IS Europe's largest economy. For decades it was seen as the stable heart of Europe, able to combine high profits and full employment.

But it is now in the middle of its deepest economic crisis since the 1930s.

That is polarising politics between left and right. Bosses want to scrap the welfare measures and workers rights they were forced to concede a generation ago.

They and Kohl's government have provoked big strikes and protests over the last four years with attacks on workers' living standards.

That has propelled large numbers of German workers to the left.

Support for the SPD has grown. In the east the PDS, seen as to the left of the SPD, has also gained support. It won about 19

percent of the vote in Saxony-Anhalt.

But attacks on workers have also opened the door to the far right.

The crisis has hit eastern Germany hard. Eight years ago East Germany became unified with West Germany ending the cold war partition of the country.

East Germans held huge expectations that the West's market capitalism would raise their living standards.

Now those hopes lie shattered. Unemployment across Germany as a whole stands at over 12 percent.

In eastern Germany over 70 percent of young people on some working class estates in Saxony-Anhalt are unemployed. Gangs of young people hanging around with nothing to do.

Support in eastern Ger-

many for the Conservative government of chancellor Helmut Kohl has collapsed.

Kohl was identified as the "unification chancellor". Support for his Christian Democratic Union was higher in the east than in the west in the early 1990s.

Disillusion

Now there is enormous disillusion that unification has failed to deliver.

The Nazis have been able to get a foothold in some of these gangs by exploiting the rivalry between them.

Left wing youth group Linksruck told Socialist Worker how the Nazis have been helped to gather this protest vote by the behaviour of the SPD leaders.

The SPD is in opposition nationally, but it runs

many regions and towns.

It mouths opposition to Helmut Kohl's economic policies which are about letting the market rip and driving down workers' living standards.

But it has offered no resistance to the national government as the Conservatives have closed and benefits have been cut.

Worse, the SPD has aped Kohl's probusiness language.

The economics minister in the SPD government of Saxony-Anhalt, for example, was previously a manager in Treuhand agency.

The Conservatives set up this quango to privatise east German industry.

Ordinary workers blame it for throwing hundreds of thousands out on the dole. But the SPD says it is "proud to have such business figures in its cabinet".

Australia:



AUSTRALIAN WORKERS have shaken their Tory government in their fightback against the attempt to smash the Maritime Union of Australia. The country has been in turmoil ever since the Patrick docks company, backed by big business and the government, sacked 1,400 dockers and shipped in scabs to try to break the union. Regular mass pickets have ensured that no goods have left the docks and solidarity from 2,000 building workers prevented the police from smashing the picket. The dispute has rocked Australian bosses who are trying to use the courts to defeat the dockers. It is essential that the support on the ground is built on by the dockers if they are to beat back the bosses

Alarm bells from Europe

THE SOCIAL Democratic Party selected Gerhard Schroeder only weeks ago as its candidate to take on Kohl at the general election.

The papers were full of claims that the "moderniser" Schroeder was the only SPD politician capable of beating Kohl because he could move sharply to the right and steal the Conservatives' clothes on the economy and law and order.

Just as in Britain after the general election commentators claimed the future of politics lay in the centre.

But the shock result from eastern Germany is further proof that the centre is cracking.

This is not only in Germany but across Europe. The spread of the market into all areas of life is producing enormous uncertainty and bitterness at the base of society.

Yet at the top politicians are scrambling to claim they best represent big business and are more pro-market than their opponents.

This means that politicians can become completely out of touch with the concerns of millions of people.

But as the market leads to recession and utter despair millions of people are forced to look to for answers.

They do not find them from the politicians of the centre.

The SPD in Saxony-Anhalt could not gain as ordinary people deserted the Conservatives because it sounded just like the Conservatives.

There was no clear voice from the left so the shrill voice of the extreme right was able to get a hearing.

There is no reason why that should be so. The Nazis have built some support in eastern Germany. But that has in turn created a more vibrant, youthful anti-Nazi movement than elsewhere in the country.

That has the potential to mobilise the vast majority of German workers who are appalled at what the Nazis stand for.

And over the last five years every fightback against the employers has brought workers together and weakened the scapegoating on which the Nazis thrive.

The lessons are clear. The mass anti-Nazi mood needs to be drawn together to prevent the Nazis from gaining a foothold, even in countries like Britain where they are a pathetic force.

And everyone who wants a decent society needs to rally to the left and build a real socialist alternative.

Analysis

The peace deals that fell short

THE NORTHERN Agreement follows the pattern of the various peace deals of the past decade.

In Central America, the Arias plan brought together radical nationalists such as Nicaragua's Sandinistas with death squads which had been set up by the US.

In Palestine, a US brokered deal was supposed to give the Palestinians autonomy in return for ending the conflict with Israel.

In South Africa, the peace deal was supposed to end apartheid and bring wider change.

These deals raised the hopes of millions of people that an end to oppression and war was at hand.

But the deals fell far short of the aims of the national liberation movements in the different regions.

A number of main features show the limitations of the peace deals:

■ **A favourable climate is created for big business to exploit the local working class.**

In South Africa, the ANC abandoned most of their reforms in favour of "fiscal rectitude". They retained the Finance Minister from the Apartheid regime and later replaced him with an equally conservative white banker.

Under the Arias plan in Central America, the Sandinistas of Nicaragua agreed to "restructure the economy" in favour of the multinationals.

In both South Africa and Nicaragua the former revolutionaries privatised industries and imposed wage cuts.

These policies flowed from an "all class alliance" strategy. One Nicaraguan socialist summed it up by saying that the Sandinistas, "want to be on good terms with all classes: they give subsidies to the workers, credits to the peasants, high profits to the bosses".

Needless to say the main emphasis has been on high profits!

■ **The working class do not gain from the peace deals.**

Under South Africa's ANC-led government the majority of blacks continue to suffer poverty wages, poor housing and lack of running water. Official Apartheid has been replaced by economic Apartheid.

A minority of middle class blacks jumped on the gravy train, as new positions opened up to them in the state machine. When Bishop Tutu attacked big salaries for ANC politicians he was accused of being "racist", despite being black himself!

■ **The ex-revolutionaries "manage" discontent.**

Yasser Arafat has been the most blatant. He used an iron fist policy against dissent from ordinary Palestinians, torturing and imprisoning his internal opponents.

Most of the Palestinian authority's budget has been spent on Arafat's police and secret security forces.

After the Arias plan the Sandinistas dropped most of their socialist rhetoric and called for free market reform.

The ANC has made a similar shift in South Africa. For example, former left winger Joe Slovo cracked down on rent boycotts by poor blacks, promising not to bow to "populism" and to "restore the rule of law".

■ **The death squads and the old repressive machinery remain in place.**

The Arias plan was supposed to end the terror in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. But its real aim was to contain the Nicaraguan Revolution.

So the former death squad leaders were allowed into government in El Salvador. Meanwhile the Sandinistas agreed to give food, shelter and protection to the murderous Contras.

Disillusionment with the Sandinistas led to their electoral defeat by the Contra backed government of Violeta Chamorro.

Meanwhile, the South African ruling class can still rely on the white dominated police force and the Israeli army remains on standby in case Arafat loses control over the Palestinians.

The outcome of the peace deals around the world provide a warning of the dangers behind the Northern agreement.

There are major differences between the different situations—Sinn Fein, for example, has a base in a minority community and does not have the working class backing that the ANC had.

But there are already signs that its rhetoric about republican socialism has changed.

Today the party supports the Catholic middle class who will jump on the "gravy train" while Catholic and Protestant workers will be encouraged to squabble over scarce resources.

Disillusionment will follow this agreement, as it has done elsewhere, but socialist politics can turn the anger in the direction of workers' unity.

AS REPUBLICANS DEBATE SETTLEMENT

Worries grow about

Belfast Agreement

THE DECISION by the Sinn Fein leaders to postpone their final verdict on the Good Friday settlement until a special conference reflects growing divisions in their ranks.

Before the last Ard Fheis senior Sinn Fein figures indicated that they might be able to take a final decision there. But the scale of opposition, especially from Southern delegates, took them by surprise.

Divisions

This explains Gerry Adams' bizarre suggestion that the party might "cherry pick" sections of the agreement, urging members in the South to vote No because of Articles two and three while Northern members voted Yes to the overall package.

The divisions reflect the wider difficulty facing republicanism.



DID THEY fight for Gerry Adams to join David Trimble in cabinet

The armed struggle has come to a definite end. Enlistment in the IRA has declined because most republicans supporters rightly believe that an armed campaign cannot win.

The only alternative available within republicanism is to enter conventional politics. Fianna Fail, Clann na Poblachta and the Workers

Party have all made this transition from armed struggle into establishment politics.

It represents a fundamental shift, but the republican leadership is playing it down by hinting that they will adopt confrontational politics inside a Northern Ireland Assembly.

As one Belfast socialist explained:

"The Adams leadership is very talented and complex. They will put on a left face to cover their retreat. So at the Ard Fheis Adams was assuring his members that Sinn Fein was in the business of revolution.

"But you can see how hollow this rhetoric is when you compare it with what he said at the Belfast Chamber of Commerce. There he endorsed the call to cut taxes on the profits of Northern companies to bring them more into line with the South."

Opposition

In order to win the vote, Adams will use the credibility built up by struggle and suffering to call for "trust" in the leadership. Already a private meeting of SF delegates in the North has come out for the agreement.

Opposition to the deal in republican ranks is also built on a weak foundation because it is focused on Articles two and three.

Opponents rightly point out that it is not the cause of sectarian division in the North—but the articles are entirely tokenistic.

The Fianna Fail constitution of 1937 was designed to construct a Catholic state for a Catholic people. It paid lip service to re-taking the "fourth green field".

Symbol

The North was only used as a symbol of a national wrong that could help unify the Southern population around their new exploiters.

The real reason for opposing the deal is that it is a bosses' settlement—a capitalist solution to the historic agreement that is aimed at producing stability while modernising the sectarian divisions in the working class.

How the deal will institutionalise sectarianism

THE NORTHERN Ireland office is distributing copies of the Good Friday Agreement to every house in the North.

But they will be hoping that many do not notice the small print which will institutionalise sectarianism for decades.

One of the first things that any elected member of the new Assembly will have to do is to classify themselves as "unionist, nationalist or other".

This is supposed to be a mechanism to ensure that there is cross-community support for any measure.

But in reality, the votes of non-unionist or non-nationalist parties will count for little.

On any of the key decisions such as the election of the Chair of the Assembly, the First Minister, or the deputy First Minister, there has to be a system of "parallel consent" whereby the winner has to have won a majority of either unionist or nationalist camps.

By a special petition of thirty members the system of parallel consent can be extended to other decisions particularly to do with fair employment.

Instead of politics being debated on left-right lines, the key issue will always be which "side" won or lost.

Agreements which attempt to structure politics on sectarian lines have a poor record of maintaining peace.

Hostilities

In Lebanon in 1943, for example, the hostilities between Christians and Muslims were supposed to be overcome by an agreement.

This agreement ensured that the Christians automatically got "ownership" of the Presidency and the Muslims got the post of Prime Minister.

Every Lebanese cabinet was supposed to have six Christians for every five Muslims and this proportion was used in all public offices.

The arrangement meant that official politics were never ar-

gued on class lines. As the numbers of the Christian and Muslim population began to change, the main issue was always "which side" was winning or losing.

In 1958, the whole system broke down in a bloody civil war.

After many died it was patched up again in a "no victors, no vanquished settlement" which brought more of the same.

But tensions continued to mount until another civil war broke out again in the mid seventies.

There are huge differences between Northern Ireland and Lebanon but there is one common pattern—inscribing sectarianism divisions into the heart of politics is a recipe for continued conflict rather than peace.

Instead of supporting the bosses' solution to the Northern conflict, socialists point to a different route.

Working class unity has to be forged at the bottom of society around a struggle for common class goals.

Should we defend the Constitution?

DISCUSSION on the Good Friday settlement in the South is being narrowed down to whether or not Articles two and three have to be changed.

But the fact that the 1937 constitution was introduced to defend the interests of the new nationalist ruling elite and their allies in the Catholic Church is being hidden.

The 1919 Democratic Programme of the First Dáil was a mildly radical document which limited the rights of private property and promised social welfare services and equality.

Originally drafted by the Labour leader Tom Johnson, it was not really acceptable to the majority of the leaders.

One of the republican TDs later said that it would not have been voted for if "there had been an immediate prospect of putting it into force". De Valera was determined to get rid of these radical traces in his 1937 constitution.

The 1922 Constitution of the Irish Free State, introduced by the Provisional Government, was shaped by the Treaty and the undertakings given to the British empire. Its tone was far more conservative than the Democratic Programme. But under the terms of the Treaty the Constitution was required to be secular in tone.

The 1937 constitution was supposed to establish the 26 counties as a sovereign independent country. But it is full of articles that defend secular and religious privilege.

De Valera drafted it in conjunction with Archbishop John Charles McQuaid and also received advice from even more right wing clerics such as the Jesuit E.J. Cahill.

The constitution echoed many of the Papal encyclicals, all of which De Valera had studied in detail. He refused to listen to any dissenting voice that did not correspond to his vision of an ideal Ireland.

Article 43 of the Constitution guarantees that the state will pass no law which abolishes "the right to private ownership or the general right to transfer, bequeath and inherit property".

This catch all clause is still used by builders who claim compensation when planning permission is denied - arguing that their "right" to dispose of their property has been interfered with.

The new Constitution recognised the "special position" of the Catholic Church and this was only removed in 1973.

McQuaid himself practically wrote the Article on education, that guaranteed State funding for Catholic schools.

McQuaid also wrote the Preamble which claims that the document is derived from "the Most Holy Trinity, from Whom is all authority and to Whom...all actions of men and States must be referred".

This is still in the Irish constitution and was used by the former High Court Judge Rory O'Hanlon to claim that no democratic decision on divorce was legitimate.

Active

De Valera had never wanted women to take an active role in society and so the 1937 Constitution specified that women must give priority to their duties as wives and mothers - whether they liked it or not.

A few years beforehand Fianna Fail had introduced the Conditions of Employment Act which gave the state the right to exclude women from certain jobs.

To this day, the Irish Constitution still states that "the State recognises that by her life within the home, woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved."

In May discussion on the Irish constitution will focus on Articles 2 and 3. However Articles 2 and 3 have never ever been more than symbolic, and have never influenced any Southern government to attempt to retake the "national territory".

De Valera put them in the Constitution to cover up the retreat of Fianna Fail from their Republican ideals.

Within five years of their introduction the State was interfering and torturing Republicans.

The modernisers who argue for a change the Constitution by getting rid of Articles 2 and 3, are unwilling to tackle the other "outdated" articles which define the position of women or give absolute rights to private property.

They know that the Constitution has been designed to defend the ruling elite and their allies among the Bishops. And they want to keep it like that.

by SINEAD KENNEDY

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WITH HOUSE PRICES CONTINUING

The greed of the property

OWNING your own home may be "unrealistic" in the future. This is what the President of the Irish Auctioneers and Valuers Institute told his annual conference.

With an 80% rate of home ownership, Ireland topped the Europe league until recently.

The relatively small size of the country, the traditions of resisting landlords and a policy of selling off local authority houses in the seventies all contributed.

But now this is all set to change. In the last three years the number of first time buyers of houses has declined by nearly a quarter.

And it is no wonder. House prices are escalating out of the reach of the average PAYE worker.

Last year the average industrial wage was £14,000 but the average price of a house in Dublin was £114,000. In other words, more than seven times what an ordinary workers earned in a year.

The government and the media claim that the decline in home ownership is part of a general European trend. In a modern urban society, they say, people are supposed to live in high density rented apartments.

But no one has explained why accommodation is worsening for ordinary people at just the time when the Irish economy is supposed to be most successful.

In reality the cause of the crisis is the greed that drives a market economy.

Three main groups are making a fortune from the current crisis.



■ No investment here—left out of the property boom

Builders

THE building bosses—both large and small—are famous for backing Fianna Fáil. Now they have gone wild on a speculative boom.

"Today the spec builder will sell off a typical scheme of 200 houses in stages but the cost will rise by say £30,000 between the first stage and the last even though there is no extra expense," one bricklayer told *Socialist Worker*.

"Many of these builders will have purchased banks of land during the recession when it was cheap.

"They are not facing any major increase in costs of materials—the price of a bag of cement for example has fallen by 50p a bag—but they are just jacking up the prices".

Cutting

One of the ways the builders keep up the price is by cutting back on the number of houses they build.

Last year, for example, 9,325 less houses were built in Dublin than in the previous year. Many builders like Zoe have shifted into constructing one bedroom apartments where

the price increases of 25% a year are higher than in other sectors.

"Zoe bought up a stock of land from the Corporation ten years ago at knock down prices. They are charging nearly £200 per square foot to re-furbish old buildings when most architects will tell you that £80 is a fair price.

"In the Jervis Street development, Zoe did not announce any fixed price on the apartments.

"They opened their auction and then closed it down for a few hours. Afterwards they pushed up the price by several thousand. It is sheer greed that is driving prices up."

Speculators

BANK sources indicate that 60,000 households in Ireland are now earning more than £100,000 a year.

These are the new rich that have gained from the Celtic Tiger.

They buy up the apartments, rent them out and pay no tax on that income.

Meanwhile, the value of their property

rises every year.

The halving of the Capital Acquisition Tax means they can make a fortune from their windfall profit.

The Central Bank has estimated that 30% of property is now being bought up by these sharks.

Loan Sharks

THE inflated bubble economy is being encouraged by the banks and newly privatised building societies.

In the past the mortgage market was dominated by staid mutual societies who restricted loans according to strict criteria.

Not any more. After the privatisation of Irish Permanent, nearly two thirds of all loans are given by banks or privatised bodies who are determined to "maintain market share".

Although they are supposed to be supervised by the Central Bank they push 95% mortgages on properties that are valued at over £100,000.

Even if the boom collapses they cannot lose out, they can simply repossess the houses of workers who can no longer afford the huge mortgages.

...ING TO RISE...

by KIERAN ALLEN

...that fuels ...erty boom

What do socialists say?

Pol Pot and the killing fields

THE WESTERN media described the recently deceased Pol Pot as "one of the most evil men this century has produced".

This view will strike a chord with anyone who has heard about the "killing fields" of Cambodia, where the late dictator butchered two million people during his reign in the mid 1970s.

But the media verdict hides two things.

The first is that the West created the conditions which brought Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge to power and they later supported the tyrant when it suited their interests. The second is that Pol Pot was not simply "evil": his barbaric policies flowed from his attempt to rapidly develop Cambodia's economy after the country had been devastated by the West.

It is impossible to understand the rise of Pol Pot without seeing the US role in Cambodia.

The US organised a coup in Cambodia in 1970 at the height of the Vietnam War. An invasion from South Vietnam was followed by blanket bombing by American B52s.

Killed

The bombing killed almost one million people. In one six month period the US dropped the equivalent of five Hiroshima bombs on the country. Cambodia was plunged into backwardness.

Pol Pot emerged as the strongest opponent of US imperialism and by 1975 his Khmer Rouge had come to power.

Pol Pot was originally a follower of Mao, who had toppled China's warlords and driven out the imperialist powers.

Mao brought about reforms but his version of "socialism" involved trying to develop China's economy by rapid industrialisation from above, leading to the horrors of the Cultural Revolution.

Mao provided the model for Third World nationalist movements who wanted to kick out the big powers and create independent states. Such movements often called themselves Communist but their policies were state capitalist. They tried to create a form of capitalism based on state control of industry.

State capitalism had existed in Russia since Stalin had crushed the last remnants of the 1917 Revolution.

Pol Pot followed a similar logic to Mao and Stalin but called it "socialism without a model".

Cambodia, he argued, was so devastated by US bombing that the economy had to be rebuilt from scratch: it was

necessary to "do away with all vestiges of the past".

The Khmer Rouge forced the population of the capital, Phnom Penh, into the surrounding countryside to till the land. The aim was to build up agricultural exports and lay the basis for industrial development. But this was to be achieved at an appalling cost to millions of people.

The major powers all but ignored the horrors taking place under Pol Pot. But this changed in 1978 when Vietnam invaded Cambodia and installed a new government led by Hun Sen, a former Khmer Rouge member.

The US ruling class now decided to forge an alliance with Pol Pot in order to take their revenge on Vietnam. But they kept it a secret. In 1981 the US national security adviser Brzezinski revealed the truth:

"I encouraged the Chinese to support Pol Pot", who, "was an abomination. We could never support him. But China could."

The US imposed sanctions on Cambodia and United Nations aid flowed to the Khmer Rouge camps in Thailand. The UN even gave Cambodia's seat to the Khmer Rouge.

When Vietnam withdrew its troops in 1989 but the US prevented the Khmer Rouge from regaining complete control. Instead the UN imposed a "Peace Plan" on Cambodia, creating a ruling council from the remnants of both the Khmer Rouge and Hun Sen governments.

Faced with this coalition of tyrants, workers and students revolted against the "Peace Plan" imposed by the big powers. When police opened fire on demonstrators in Phnom Penh in December 1991—killing at least eight people—the UN forces did nothing.

Barbarism

The tragedy of Cambodia shows that the major powers are the main cause of barbarism in the Third World. But it also shows the horrors of the state capitalist project.

The drive to compete in the world economy could only be carried out on the backs of millions of people.

Today the rulers of East Asia have embraced the free market—but the anarchy of the world economy means that the Asian Tigers now face collapse.

There is an alternative to both state capitalism and the private market. The working class are huge and powerful in this region.

By fighting for genuine socialism based on workers control they can do away with the tyrants for ever.

by DAVE MCDONAGH

A report with no solutions

THE PRESS hailed the recent Bacon report on housing. But aside from mild measures of restricting the Section 23 tax exemption, it will do little.

In some cases it will even make matters worse. The report recommends that builders be given a stake in providing sewerage and water facilities in housing estates.

This is a back door method of bringing in more charges. It also calls for more tax cuts for selling off building land.

The Bacon report is weak because it accepts the argument that "you cannot buck the market". So government intervention has been kept to a bare minimum.

Misery

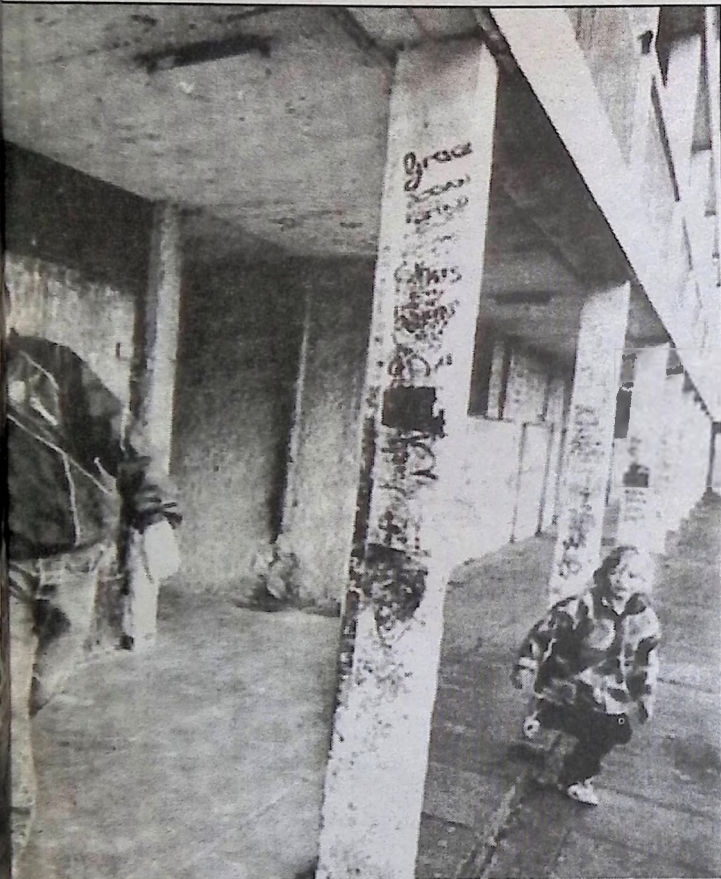
But the market has created misery for working class people. The number of homeless are growing; traffic is increasing as people are forced to live out in the furthest suburbs; huge mortgages are putting an intense strain on relationships.

Cheap and plentiful accommodation for working class people will only be provided by socialist policies that put people before profit.

Building land should be nationalised immediately to end the type of corruption that comes with re-zoning scandals. Rent restrictions should be imposed on landlords and their income should be heavily taxed.

The big building companies should be taken into public ownership and regular employment—including the training of apprentices—should be guaranteed.

Real planning for peoples needs should replace the anarchy of the market.



The cutbacks that add to the greed

THE past manual workers could hope to get accommodation on the corporation estates. Local authorities were obliged to build houses in order to keep the housing list down.

But ever since Haughey pushed through the first partnership agreement with the unions in 1987, this began to change.

The number of local authority houses has been slashed from an average of 6,000 a year

to only 3,000 today.

The right wing economists claim that this has been necessary to reduce debt.

But in reality it is forcing people into the clutches of private landlords—and the state is giving those landlords huge subsidies in rent.

In 1989, £6 million was handed over in rental allowances to landlords. Today this has risen to £96 million—or a third of all rent in private accommodation.

Investors who buy several houses or apartments are now guaranteed high rent—thanks to state subsidies.

THE property boom has accelerated due to the tax scams that have been given to the rich.

SECTION 23: The rich could write off tax on income from rent if they build property in "designated areas". Although the recently published Bacon Report called for this to be abolished, the government will maintain the scheme on an "exceptional" basis.

SEASIDE RESORTS: The rich can write off the costs of building holiday apartments—provided

they rent them out for ten years.

LEASE AND BUY BACK: Martin Naughton, the rich business man from Newry, and Lochlain Quinn—Ruairi's brother—have invested £50 million building an office block for Citibank to rent in the Financial Services Centre.

Why? They can get an 100 percent allowance on the building costs and Citibank get a double rental allowance for tax.

This way all the sharks gain.

The tax scams

ROSA LUXEMBURG'S *THE MASS STRIKE*

When workers fight and shake the chains

“WE HAVE entered a new epoch in the development of the labour movement, the era of the mass strike,” said the great revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg in 1906.

In her brilliant book *The Mass Strike* Luxemburg proclaimed her excitement at the Russian revolutionary uprising of 1905—the “dress rehearsal” for the victorious revolution of 1917.

Her work is a hammer blow against people who argue big strikes are ineffective or counterproductive and parliament is the only way to get change.

Luxemburg's book describes the rising waves of struggles in the Russian Empire from 1896 to 1905.

Often the strikes began over small matters. But in fighting for these demands, workers came into conflict with the state.

This was true in the run up to the 1905 revolution. Two workers at the Putilov factory in St Petersburg had been dismissed for being in a legal union.

All 12,000 workers at the plant struck in solidarity. The strikers pressed for demands like the eight hour day and freedom of speech.

Within days 140,000 workers joined the strike.

Then 200,000 workers marched to the Tsar's palace. The Russian monarch's troops opened fire and the massacre sparked off a huge uprising.

Luxemburg wrote: “The conflict of the two Putilov workers who had been subjected to disciplinary punishment had changed within a week into the prologue of the most violent revolution of modern times.”

ORGANISATIONS like the Labour Party rigidly separate economic and political issues. Politics is for the MPs, economics for the trade unions.

But Luxemburg shows a constant interplay between political and economic battles during mass strikes.

“Every new onset and every fresh victory of the political struggle is transformed into a powerful impetus for the economic struggle.”

The mass strike encourages all the exploited and oppressed to begin their own fight for freedom.

“The first general direct action awoke class feeling and class consciousness in millions upon millions as if by an electric shock.

“The proletarian mass quite suddenly and sharply came to realise how intolerable was the social and economic existence which they had patiently endured for decades in the chains of capitalism.

“Here was the eight hour day fought for, there was piece work resisted, here were brutal foremen ‘driven off’ in a sack on a handcart, at another place infamous fines were fought against.”

The mass strikes won immediate demands—many got wage increases. Others: got holidays or a cut in hours.

These were often clawed back when the strike ended. But “the most precious, because lasting thing, in this rapid ebb and flow of the wave is the mental sediment



THROUGHOUT the century workers, like these in Portugal in 1975, have shown the power of the mass strike

the intellectual, cultural growth of the proletariat.”

The German trade union leaders in 1906 denounced mass strikes for endangering their patient work of building membership.

But Luxemburg says struggle builds the unions best. “The guardians of the German trade unions fear that the organisations will fall in pieces in a revolutionary whirlwind like rare porcelain. The Russian revolution show us the exactly opposite picture.

“Out of the fire and glow of the mass strike and the street fighting rise young, powerful, buoyant trade unions.”

Luxemburg's *The Mass Strike* was a direct intervention in a crucial political argument.

She was a member of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), the equivalent of the Labour Party.

At the time it was the world's largest socialist party, describing itself in 1883 as “revolutionary with no illusions”.

But by the turn of the century it had become focused on purely parliamentary methods.

Many of the party leaders and almost all the trade union leaders argued that the mass strike might be appropriate for more backward countries with a new working class and no parliamentary democracy.

But it was not relevant to a highly developed society like Germany where you could vote for change.

Luxemburg confronted this head on.

She argued mass strikes in any country were “the natural method to mobilise the broadest possible proletarian layers into action, to revolutionise and organise them”.

Russian workers were not using some old fashioned tactic—they were pointing towards the future.

Some on the SPD's left criticised Luxemburg by saying mass strikes would be good but “couldn't happen here”.

Luxemburg explained that mass strikes were not started by socialist agitators but were a result of economic and social processes, often lasting several years.

“If, therefore, the Russian revolution

Trade union leaders also criticised Luxemburg, arguing that “the general strike is general nonsense”.

In Germany the level of struggle had been very low during the previous 15 years.

Only in 1905 itself did the struggle rise with over 500,000 workers on strike in a single year a third of all union members. The strikes were much longer and in more significant workplaces.

Before 1905 there were few mass strikes anywhere in the world. But afterwards there were many more, and at an accelerating rate.

The strikes went right across the world in 1910-14. In 1919 virtually everywhere in the industrialised world from Europe to the US had experienced the mass strike.

Further general strikes followed in Germany in 1920, China in the mid-1920s, Britain in 1926, France in 1936, East Germany in 1953, Hungary in 1956, Belgium in 1961, France in 1968 and Poland in 1980.

As governments fell across Eastern Europe from 1989 to 1991 there were general strikes in Albania, Bulgaria and Belorussia.

In the last few years there have been huge strike waves in countries like South Korea and Zimbabwe.

Today in much of Europe mass strikes and monster demonstrations have become almost commonplace, sometimes called by the trade union bureaucracy themselves.

Mass strikes can begin to raise the question of revolution. They are not the revolution itself.

Except in Russia in 1917, there was not the political leadership to turn the awesome power of workers into a successful challenge for state power.

Instead the sort of people who opposed Luxemburg in 1906 used the slogan of parliamentary democracy to throw back the workers' movement and allowed the bosses and the state to carry out bloody revenge.

The Mass Strike shows why workers' struggle is more important than any election. But we also need a socialist political party to move from strikes to revolution.

Luxemburg says struggle builds the unions best. ‘The guardians of the German trade unions fear that the organisations will fall in pieces in a revolutionary whirlwind like rare porcelain. The Russian revolution show us the exactly opposite picture. Out of the fire and glow of the mass strike and the street fighting rise young, powerful, buoyant trade unions.’

teaches us anything, it teaches above all that the mass strike is not artificially “made” or “decided” at random. It is an historical phenomenon which results from social conditions.

“It is a universal form of the proletarian class struggle resulting from the present stage of capitalist development and class relations.”

These conditions—capitalism in crisis, workers' growing bitterness, the system's inability to deliver a decent life for the immense majority—were present throughout the world.

So spontaneous mass strikes would happen. The party and union leaders would either have to champion them as a breakthrough for the working class or attack them.

But the trade union leaders reacted with horror.

They screamed about strikes draining union funds. The main trade union conference in 1906 said, “The trade unions need peace and quiet above all.”

Luxemburg tore into those who feared the coming storm.

She argued they had become obsessed with the union's assets and bureaucratic structures.

They valued these above the struggle itself. In the short term Luxemburg lost the argument at the SPD 1906 conference.

Delegates passed a resolution which turned its back on mass strikes, and the “modernisers” celebrated that the “party will again devote itself with undivided heart to the positive exploitation of its parliamentary power”.

But Luxemburg was quickly vindicated.

film

Should the Irish language revived?

WHEN De Valera had a vision of an Ireland of comely maidens dancing at the crossroads, he thought they would be talking "as Gaelige" as well.

The 1937 Constitution specified Irish is the first official language of the country, taking precedence over English. It symbolised the hypocrisy that has surrounded the language since.

The demise of the Irish language was caused by British colonisation which tried to stamp it out by the most insidious means. Up until the beginning of this century Irish parents were encouraged by the British authorities to use corporal punishment against children who spoke Irish.

Some school children had to wear little wooden sticks around their necks and anytime their parents caught them speaking Irish they would cut a notch on the stick. The child would be punished by the teacher the following day.

But it was probably economic destruction which did most to destroy the Irish language. As emigration rose after the Famine, English took on a higher status because it facilitated access to jobs and earnings.

When Ireland won independence the resurrection of the Irish language was to be an integral part of the birth of a new nation. But only the relics of De Valera's vision stayed in place while the number of Irish speakers showed a continual decline.

This hypocrisy is only now being challenged. At the INTO conference this Easter the primary teachers called on the government to recognise that not every teacher had to have an Irish language qualification.

The change in attitude is to be welcomed. The Irish language qualification is a discriminatory measure that is used against foreign teachers in Ireland. Some years ago a Dutch teacher went to the European Court because she could not get a permanent job in a second level school teaching art because she did not have an Irish qualification.

But while the Irish language can be used to foster discrimination, government policies do not adequately cater for the 4% of the population who speak the language regularly, and the 79,000 people who live in the Gaeltacht areas.

The state body which is supposed to promote the language receives £2 million a year. They pour money into sports such as hurling and greyhound racing rather than worthwhile education initiatives. It is normally the middle classes who benefit.

Working Class

The Irish speakers in the Gaeltacht, are mainly working class people who live in extremely poor and underdeveloped peripheral areas. The state grants mainly go to small business people and the local middle classes.

The Gaeltacht authority helps businesses to set up in these areas and there are all kinds of grants for buildings and even signs in Irish. But it is a different story for those they employ.

A busman who does a run around some of the factories in Spiddal says that he picks workers up at 7am and they're left home at 6pm—a lot of them are coming away with only £100 a week.

The Northern Irish language community is also mainly working class. Like the rest of the Catholic population they have been grossly discriminated against.

Working class parents have built and financed all-Irish schools from their own wage packets.

The Irish language is a cultural symbol for many Irish people, but the political identity of a people cannot be embodied in a language alone. To get real liberation you have to change the underlying rotten political system. Fascists, bigots, and exploiters can all be Irish speakers because the language itself does not guarantee anything.

Socialists advocate a multicultural and multi-lingual society. Certainly teach Irish on the curriculum, but also teach Japanese and Spanish. Television stations like Teilifis na Gaelige are positive developments but so too are other cultural initiatives such as setting up centres for African refugees.

Consistent democracy—and not De Valera's hypocrisy—is what all linguistic discussion requires.

by ÚNA Ó LAOGHAIRE

How to cheat in your exams

by Leaving Cert student JOHN KAVANAGH

HOW To Cheat In The Leaving Cert is a new Irish film that has caused an uproar in the Department of Education.

The film centres around a Leaving Cert student named Fion whose friend, Cian, commits suicide after being caught cheating in the exam.

Fion decides to take action and assembles a group of friends with the ultimate aim of achieving the daydream of every studious teenager, to beat the college entry system without actually studying.

Fion and his friends



Education is reduced to preparation for examinations

come up with a plan to steal copies of the exams from a storage depot in Athlone with military precision.

The result is a cross between *The Dead Poets Society* and the S.A.S.

As the plot unfolds the film becomes less of a comedy sketch and more of a statement against a system which destroys minds.

How To Cheat In The Leaving Cert emphasises the point that the Leaving Cert suppresses talent and flair.

Fion sums this up well when he says: "There are lots of types of intelligence, the Leaving Cert

is only interested in one".

Here he hints at the idea that education should be liberating and a lot more than just feeding established knowledge and then demanding it to be regurgitated in a three hour exam.

Atmosphere

The film captures the "musty" atmosphere which can only be found in secondary schools and morgues.

But it's a lot more than a story about a group of

teenagers trying to beat the system, it's an honest analysis of how messed up the "simple" world of a Leaving Cert student actually is.

All the characters are people who want to make a statement against this insanity.

How To Cheat In The Leaving Cert is inspiring and a must for anyone sitting state exams in the next few weeks, that is if you can get away from study for a few hours.

music

Dance rhythms rage against oppression

R.A.F.I. IS a fantastic album, from one of the brightest new bands in Britain at the moment.

Asian Dub Foundation use a fusion of the dance rhythms of jungle, hip-hop and dub reggae to provide the soundtrack to lyrics which rage against racism and oppression and celebrate resistance and black and white unity.

The recent single *Free Satpal Ram* is a cry for justice for a Bengali man from Birmingham who has been in jail for ten years after he defended himself from five racist attackers, one of whom later died from his wounds.

"An Asian fights back, Can't afford to be meek, With your back to the wall, You can't turn the other cheek."

Racism

The rise of fascism in the East End of London, where they are based, and police racism are particular targets.

On *Operation Eagle Lie* they are scathing about the new community policing methods. "Meet PC PR the designer policeman, Putting up a smokescreen with his

by COLM BRYCE

multicoloured truncheon."

The songs are more than just a list of injustices. The whole album encourages defiance and resistance.

Naxalite recovers the untold story of a peasant uprising in West Bengal in the late 1960's, challenging the notion of passive villagers. "Check out our history, So rich and revolutionary, Aprophecy, That we will rise again."

ADF's politics are a product of the mass movements against the Criminal Justice Bill and especially against the Nazi's in the last five years.

While their music is unmistakably modern, they take their inspiration from the earlier period of Rock Against Racism in the 1970's.

Pandit G, their DJ, told *NME*: "We want to do for Asian people what 2-Tone did for Afro-Caribbeans and whites, getting mixed crowds."

If you are turned off by repetitive and unimaginative dance music, this album will inspire you.

journal

Understanding the collapse of the tigers

THE NEW issue of the quarterly journal International Socialism is now out.

Published by the Socialist Workers Party's sister party in Britain, the major focus is the crisis in the South East Asian economies and the political fall-out.

The economies of countries like South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan grew rapidly over the past twenty years while the rest of the world economy slowed down.

A young workforce recruited from the country into the low wage economy of the emerging industries in the

towns was kept in line by repressive regimes.

A small number of leading families typically controlled government, banks and major companies.

Uncertain conditions and lack of social welfare forced workers to save a large proportion of their meagre incomes.

This the heavily controlled banks recycled into cheap loans to the developing industries allowing them to undercut competitors.

The US military operations from the Korean war in the 1950s through Vietnam to today's military presence provided a stimulus to the growing economy.

The boom could not last and the unfolding crisis is spectacular.

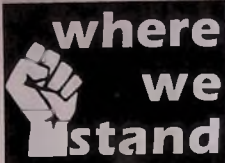
A South Korean Socialist describes how the growing crisis has sparked inner conflicts in the ruling order and student and workers revolts.

Other articles include a review of the writings of radical journalists Alexander Cockburn and Christopher Hitchens and class divisions in the gay community.

International Socialism is available £3 from SW Books, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8 or local branch book-stalls.



BUILD THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST PARTNERSHIP 2000



Workers create all the wealth in capitalist society. A new society can only be constructed when they collectively seize control of that wealth and plan its production and distribution.

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM
The present system cannot be reformed out of existence. Parliament cannot be used to end the system. The courts army and police are there to defend the interests of the capitalist class not to run society in a neutral fashion. To destroy capitalism, workers need to smash the state and create a workers' state based on workers' councils.

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST:
The SWP welcomed the break-up of the USSR and the end of the East European dictatorships. These states were not socialist but were run by a state-capitalist class. We are against the domination of the globe by imperialist powers and we oppose their wars. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION
We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women.

We stand for: free contraception and free, legalised abortion and the right to divorce; the complete separation of church and state, an end to church control over schools and hospitals; an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians; an end to racism and anti-traveller bigotry.

We argue for working class unity in the fight against oppression.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH:
Northern Ireland is a sectarian state, propped up by the British Army. Catholic workers are systematically discriminated against by the state. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers weakens the whole working class.

Workers' unity can only be won and maintained in a fight to smash both the Northern and Southern states.

We stand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. Violence will only end when workers unite in the fight for a workers' republic.

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT:
Trade unions exist to defend workers' interests. But the union leaders' role is to negotiate with capitalism—not to end it.

We support the leaders when they fight but oppose them when they betray workers. We stand for independent rank and file action.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY:
To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party. This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system. The SWP aims to build such a party in Ireland.

Time to scrap 'Partnership'

OPPOSITION TO the fraud of "social partnership" is growing in the trade union movement.

Rank and file workers are becoming more and more disillusioned with Partnership 2000 as the boom in the Irish economy translates into a 3 percent increase for workers but mega-profits for the rich.

At the annual conference of the shopworker's union Mandate in April a motion to withdraw from Partnership 2000 was only narrowly defeated.

Delegate after delegate rose to support the motion but the top table pressurised a small majority of delegates to reject the motion which also called on the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to withdraw from the Agreement.

One delegate noted: "Consensus and partnership have been used to create a low wage economy".

Mandate represents low paid workers as many as 70 percent of whom are employed part-time. Since the Dunnes Stores strike four years ago the union has in-

'Consensus and partnership have been used to create a low wage economy'.

creased its membership by 50 percent as young workers, forced into worse conditions and Sunday work on low pay have streamed into the union.

These workers know that talk of partnership with the bosses of Dunnes and Tesco is a bad joke.

It was this heightening mood of anger which meant the union opposed entering Partnership 2000 last year.



IN THE mood for a fightback

SIPTU branches oppose P2000

SIPTU MEMBERS attending the recent Annual General Meeting of the Offaly Branch recently passed a motion demanding a special conference to pull out of Partnership 2000.

One member told *Socialist Worker*, "The motion was hotly debated for 40 minutes. The feeling was strongly in favour of pulling out. The vote was 70 percent.

"One lad said in the debate: 'In nine years my take home wage has risen by just £12'.

"The 3 percent a year rise is useless. Now it's time we got a decent rise.

"Ryanair crystallised it for many people. There was no partnership there.

"Workers were bullied by Micheal O'Leary and denied basic trade union rights."

Among many union members the feeling is that P2000 is falling apart.

An Offaly SIPTU activist

'In nine years my take home wage has risen by just £12.'

remarked: "Groups of workers are managing to break the 3 percent pay limit. The nurses broke it—and fair play to them. We should all move ahead."

Anger at the failure to address low pay was also expressed. "Low pay is a big issue in the Tullamore hospital for example. 3 percent of peanuts is useless".

This is echoed by union activists in the SIPTU Education Branch which recently

voted to pull out of P2000.

One activist told *Socialist Worker*, "Ordinary working class people feel left out of the economic prosperity.

"Percentage rises are practically nothing. We have people in security or catering getting £200 a week.

"In addition there are more and more people on contracts. They suffer very bad conditions.

"As well as that the employers used the last national agreement, the PCW, to break the 'analogue' link with other public and private sector workers for the maintenance workers in somewhere like UCD.

"The fact is that ordinary working class people have been left out in the cold.

"Workers on low to middle incomes have seen none of the benefits of the "Celtic Tiger" economy passed down to them.

"There definitely would be wide-spread support for pulling the plug on P2000. The nurses broke through and now even the gardai, there is a feeling on the ground to break it."

Another SIPTU branch to vote to pull out of Partnership 2000 is the Dublin Electrical and Engineering Branch.

One activist told *Socialist Worker*: "Many of the workers in our branch are in the private sector. The private sector firms have never had it better.

"For the last few years they've been cleaning up.

"Previously we would have expected a rise of 14 percent. For the last few years we've had no bonuses, no profit-sharing, just the basic 3 percent and no proper deal on pensions.

"The fat-cats are getting richer—you see it every day. Our people are in no mood to put up with crumbs any more."

What you can do

The degree of opposition to partnership with the bosses is large and growing. But it needs to be harnessed.

Now a major campaign has been launched by Carolann Duggan and her election team in SIPTU to pressurise the union leaders into a withdrawal. There are two aspects to this campaign.

The first is a mass petition which is now available for circulation in workplaces. The petition calls on the union to submit special "catch-up claims" of £20 a week to ensure that workers benefit from the Celtic Tiger. It also calls for withdrawal from P 2000.

The second is a model resolution which calls on the union to organise a special conference to discuss withdrawal from P 2000.

Copies of the petition and the resolution are available from *Socialist Worker* at P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8.

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

Address.....

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

DERRY
Meets every Tues in Badgers Bar at 8pm

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

ENNIISKILLEN
Meets every fortnight Contact national address for details

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

MAYNOOTH
Meets every Thursday at 6.30pm Class Hall D Arts Maynooth college

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

DUBLIN NORTH-WEST
Meets every Tuesday at 8:00pm in The Snug, Dorset St.

DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm Artane/Beaumont Recreation Centre opp Artane Castle

DUBLIN DRIMNAGH
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in the Black Forge (formerly the Bentley), Drimnagh Rd

DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL
Meets every Wed at 8.30pm in Conways, Parnell St

DUBLIN RATHMINES LOWER
Meets every Wed at 8.30pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond St

DUBLIN RATHMINES UPPER
Meets every Mon at 8pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond St

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL
Meets every Thur at 8pm in the

Trinity Inn, Pearse St.
DUBLIN TALLAGHT/CLONDALKIN
Meets Monday at 8pm in the Steering Wheel, Clondalkin

There are *Socialist Worker* members in:

COLERAINE; LURGAN; CAVAN; DONEGAL; NAAS; KILKENNY; DUNDALK; ATHLONE; DROGHEDA.

If you would like to get in touch, contact our national office at (01) 872 2682, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

SOCIALISM into the MILLENNIUM

A weekend of political meetings organised by the Socialist Workers Party
Friday-Saturday 8th-9th May, G20 Science Building, University College Cork

Fri 8pm How do we get change in society—Declan Walsh (Labour Party); Kieran Allen (Socialist Worker)
Saturday 10.30: Does Republicanism offer a radical alternative?—Brid Smith/12.00: Socialism, Feminism and Women's Liberation—Marnie Holborow/
2pm: Marxism versus Post-modernism—Richard Boyd Barrett/3.30: Karl Marx: How he became a Marxist—Kieran Allen/4.45: The fight for socialism today—Carolann Duggan (SIPTU)
Admission £2 (Students/unemployed £1)

news & reports— politics; the unions

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

Social Security Agency

Civil service walkouts after sectarian threats

CIVIL servants in Banbridge and Belfast took industrial action on 23 April after a new death threat from the LVF.

Social security workers in Banbridge received a sympathy card from the LVF the day after Adrian Lamph, a council worker, was murdered in Portadown.

Around 400 workers walked out from social security offices in Castle Court in Belfast on Thursday when they heard of the new threat.

Threatened

Disgracefully, civil service managers threatened staff involved in the action. A notice from management said that where staff were refusing to work normally, "special measures" would be used including "the suspension of flexible working hours, the stopping of flexi-leave and a limit of annual leave."

Workers were furious at management. "We just want the threats lifted," said a Social Security worker from Belfast. "We are being attacked by management for trying to defend ourselves. They sent us letters several weeks ago urging us to step up our personal security after the LVF issued the initial threat. Now they

want us to work regardless of those threats. It's a contradiction in terms."

The action resulted in a victory, as management were forced to withdraw the threats on Friday morning.

A mass meeting voted to return to normal working. "We were concerned about some people not getting any benefit for the last few weeks, so we've decided to return to work. But we made it clear that if there were any new threats or if any of the threats were acted upon we would do the same again," said one worker.

Civil servants across the North banned public contact and led a series of walkouts in April after the LVF issued a death threat and the INLA threatened fraud squad workers in Strabane. The INLA were forced to withdraw the death threats last week and offices in Strabane, Omagh and Derry returned to normal working. The threats from the LVF remain in place.

Other political parties have called for the threats to be lifted but condemned the industrial action. Sinn Fein lower Falls councillor Fra McCann called for workers to return to work, saying "Industrial action creates thousands of personal crises for citizens and should be used only when necessary."

But industrial action is a vital element in challenging the continued crack-down on claimants by the Blair government.

A worker from another civil service office in Belfast told *Socialist Worker*: "When these threats are made we should be getting a call from our union, NIPSA. It's being left up to each office to decide and they're saying it's just a health and safety issue, don't involve

the union. Management have made this a union issue.

"They're talking about merging two departments and we're planning a big campaign against it next year. If management are allowed to get away with this intimidation, we'll not be able to do that."

CIE

THE NATIONAL Loco Drivers Committee have written to their unions and the Irish Rail management warning that they can expect industrial action after June 28th.

The drivers are looking for a major increase in pay and are opposed to the viability plan which is about to be imposed on them.

A representative of the Loco Drivers Committee explained the background to *Socialist Worker*:

"We are looking for better work patterns, improvements on our pension and sickness scheme and a consolidation of basic pay.

Premiums

"At the moment 50 percent of our earnings come from bonuses and shift pay premiums—we now want to see real improvements in our basic pay.

"Three years ago the

union leaders of SIPTU and the NRBU foisted a productivity agreement on us by pushing us into an aggregate ballot which we opposed.

"That deal led to the elimination of the mileage rate and as there were no costs involved management now have drivers running up and down the line until they are at the point of dropping.

"They want to bring in annualised hours where we are working days five days over seven. There will be different levels of earnings as some drivers work 48 hours and others work 42. It is all about breaking up the national bargaining unit because they know we are powerful.

"They have already implemented parts of the viability plan by cutting training time for drivers from 72 weeks to 48 weeks." Anger among the loco drivers about the behaviour of the union leaders is high.

Nurses

Student nurses held a huge militant protest of over 1,000 outside the Department of Health.

In a letter handed into the Minister for Health Mr. Cowen they demanded an increase in financial support for student nurses.

The nurses have already voted overwhelmingly to reject the £1 million package offered by Mr. Cowen.



PHOTO: AIDAN DALY

Allowance

Student nurses as well as undertaking a 48 week academic year must work 35 hours a week.

They are demanding a £75 a week allowance in addition to free meals

Nurses demonstrate at the Dail

when on placement and payment for the cost of short term accommodation while on placement away from their main hospital.

Nurses training has now

become a degree courses at university, but unlike other students they must pay for their courses.

The INO is demanding the abolition of these fees.

Schindlers lifts

Schindler and Otis are giant multinational corporations dominating the lift industry world-wide.

The TEEU made a claim on the back of unofficial action of its members last year of £11.00 per hour for lift engineers. It imposed an

overtime ban and a ban on emergency call-outs.

At present apprentices can expect £3.05 per hour in their first year, under £5.00 in year two, rising eventually to a miserly £9.16 per hour when qualified.

Management rejected the claim and retaliated with new working proposals demand-

ing increased flexibility of workers, de-skilling, contracting out, reduced holidays, reduced pay and larger travel zones.

Management also want to remove meal and travel allowances.

The dispute went into conciliation in January and to the Labour court last March.

The union argues there is a lack of training and qualified electricians in the industry.

The Court recommended that the management proposal be accepted with some minor alterations but including the imposition of a confidentiality clause to gag workers in the industry.

Worker dissatisfaction and lack of trust is at an all-time high. "It's not worth the paper it's written on," says one lift engineer of the proposals. Asked what he thought of the Labour Court, "they're a shower of bankers", he said.

The independence of the Labour court from the interests of big businesses like Schindler and Otis is a sham.

The Labour court result shows that the workers were right to take unofficial action and proves that the only way to beat the bosses is to fight.

Craft workers

CRAFT workers have voted by 1,943 to 118 against a management offer to settle their analogue claim.

The workers are looking for a £25.26 pay increase to compensate for falling behind other groups of workers.

Strike notice has now been served on the local authorities and the strike is set to start on 11th May.

It will immediately affect 4,000 craft workers in the health boards and local authorities.

SIPTU workers outside Dublin are also due to join

the strike on the same day.

They are linked to the craft workers pay rate and stand to gain 80% of whatever increase they get.

One craft worker told *Socialist Worker*: "This is a clear mandate for action. This time around it must result in all out strike action."

"We have now been balloted three times but the situation has not changed. We want our full demands to be met".

Other workers should give full support to this important struggle that could break Partnership 2000.

Telecom

TELECOM is planning a major restructuring and privatisation under the guise of an Employee Share Option Plan (ESOP).

The company are proposing 2,500 redundancies, the elimination of a bonus scheme and a 6 day liability which means that workers have to be available to work 6 days a week.

Working hours will be officially from 8am to 8pm to cut back on overtime rates.

At the moment the company pays pension contributions, but wages were kept lower to balance this.

The workers will now have to pay 5.3 percent from their own wages.

The union leaders of the CWU, CPSU and others have argued for acceptance in return for a 14.9 percent share of Telecom and a voice on the management board.

They claim that all this will give them greater control over the working of the company.

Cuts

But on their own calculations workers are being asked for £100 million in immediate cuts PLUS an open ended Transforma-

tion Document.

On top of this the unions are taking out a loan of £60-£90 million.

Workers will have to pay this loan off to fund part of the share option.

Workers should reject this disgraceful deal and organise against any attempt at privatisation

Jim Connell

SIX hundred people turned up to a commemoration march to mark the unveiling of a plaque to Jim Connell at Crosskiel, Kells County Meath.

Jim Connell wrote the song *The Red Flag* at the end of the last century and it has become an anthem of the labour movement since.

The song was inspired by the London docks strike of 1889.

It was taken up by workers across the world, most notably the Band Miners of South Africa who sang it as they went to the gallows.

Tommy Grimes of the Meath Trades Council gave a good speech where he said that Jim Connell would be on the side of the Ryanair workers today.

The assembled crowd finished by singing *The Red Flag*.

SEVENTY students turned up to protest outside the Dail against the re-introduction of university fees.

Two years ago the Government brought in free fees for University degree courses. However since last year it has dramatically increased the registration fees from £150 to £250. The increase was brought in during the Summer when the colleges were closed and many students were working abroad.

It's understood the Department of Education is now planning to increase the registration fee again, this time by another £150 to £400.

This is clearly an attempt to reintroduce fees through the back door.



PHOTO: AIDAN DALY

Teachers conferences

TUI rejects inspections

DELEGATES at the TUI congress have come out against the introduction of Whole School Inspection (WSI) at second level.

The scheme would be a first step to subjecting teachers to the sort of inspector harassment that is common in Britain.

Reduction

Delegates called instead for a reduction in the pupil teacher ratio. The av-

erage pupil teacher ratio in the EU is 8.7 whereas in Ireland it is over 20.

The Department of Education was also roundly attacked for exposing students to health and safety

risks by not collecting volatile chemicals from schools for years on end.

Anger is also growing in the union against Partnership 2000.

The TUI originally

voted by a 2/3 majority against the Partnership 2000 deal and delegates are now demanding a pay deal on the same basis as the nurses or the gardai's 39% pay claim.

INTO SUPPORTS REFUGEE RIGHTS

INTO delegates agreed to demand a Refugee Educational Support Service with only one dissenting vote.

The teachers condemned the discrimination against refugees.

In some schools teachers, who are employed to work with children of refugees from Bosnia are not allowed work with children of asylum seekers from elsewhere.

The motion called for an expansion of the service to take account of the needs of children of asylum seekers, migrant workers and those from minority communities.

Socialist Worker

Inside:

**Rosa Luxemburg's
the Mass Strike:
When workers
fight and shake
the chains—PAGE 8**

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THE BELFAST AGREEMENT

A bosses' settlement that won't end sectarianism

THE BELFAST Agreement has been hailed as a "new start".

Many hope that it brings peace to the working class areas that have suffered most during the conflict.

So far the loudest opposition to the deal has come from the DUP who are forging an open alliance with the LVF.

When asked to condemn the presence of LVF supporters, Paisley could only say that he always "welcomed whoremasters and sinners" to his meetings.

But while Paisley is voting No because he wants a return to Stormont rule, there are also good reasons to oppose this settlement from the left.

■ It does nothing to dismantle the sectarian structures of the North.

There are no definite arrange-

ments to disband the RUC. Instead, RUC chief Ronnie Flanagan calls it the "finest in the world" and does not even want to drop Royal its title.

Appointed

Blair has appointed an ex-Tory, Chris Patten, to head the commission to examine it. Patten worked closely with the RUC while he was a junior Minister in Northern Ireland.

The North-South bodies are only concerned with a business agenda. Under the guise of tackling "social welfare fraud", for example, they will co-ordinate attacks on welfare recipients in both parts of Ireland.

■ The agreement institutionalises sectarian division.

It has been worked on by the

business and political establishment for years.

They want stability to make profits—but they want to keep the sectarian divisions that weaken the labour movement.

This is why Northern politics is to be organised for decades around cabinets that must have unionists and nationalists.

Trimble will almost be given the job of First Minister and will use the sectarian structures to claim he is the representative of Protestant workers.

Closures

Every time there are closures or cut-backs in public spending Trimble will use the institutionalised sectarianism to claim he did well for "his side".

■ The settlement doesn't even begin to tackle the poverty that affects both Catholic and Protestant workers.

Today 37% of families in Northern Ireland live below the poverty line and social security benefits made up over one fifth of weekly household incomes.

Yet all this deal does is to make Northern Ireland safer for the multi-nationals to exploit workers on low incomes.

Blair's aim is to cut back on spending on Northern Ireland over the longer term.

Having Gerry Adams in a cabinet with David Trimble will only mean that both preside over student fees, cutbacks and poverty.

For all these reasons socialists call for a No vote against this agreement.

What's the alternative?

The alternative is not civil war or armed conflict. Only a tiny minority of people in working class areas want a return to violence.

The pressure for a settlement came from both the elite at the top and workers at the bottom of society.

Tens of thousands of workers turned up to peace rallies to demand an end to the armed campaign.

In the unlikely event of the settlement being rejected that same pressure for peace would continue and socialists would give it every support.

The real solution to sectarianism lies in common class struggle.

In 1932, for example, at the height of a world recession the Shankill and the Falls fought together against unemployment and poverty.

The ingredients for this struggle have re-emerged today.

As the traditional industries decline, many look enviously for a job as a contract worker in the civil service or private industry.

With the revival of working class struggle across the world, there will be more occasions when Catholic and Protestants fight together.

But socialist politics are also needed to forge a real and lasting unity.

Only socialist ideas can tackle the loyalist view that Protestants are superior precisely because it has no truck with the republican myth all Catholics must support a pan-nationalist alliance.

Where is the common interest between the Catholic millionaire Sean Quinn who pays peanuts and an unemployed youth from the Bogside?

Some will say this approach is unrealistic. But how realistic are those who claim the agreement is a "stepping stone" as they hint that Catholics will eventually outbreed Protestants?

It is time to break from all the sectarian agendas and put class politics to the fore. Making No to this deal will mark a start.