

# Socialist Worker

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## Press baron Tony O'Reilly



TONY O'REILLY is the richest man in Ireland. For more than a decade he has bought up most of the country's newspapers.

Today he has a bigger grip on the Irish media than Rupert Murdoch has in Britain.

Every day the Independent Group of newspapers, which he owns, spreads right wing views which is used to justify huge inequalities.

They never criticise the fact that O'Reilly can buy his wife a diamond ring for £2.5 million while millions starve or waste away from disease.

When did you ever see the *Irish Independent* expose the rich who avoid tax as "spongers"?

When have you ever seen the paper support workers who are on strike for decent pay?

A long running dispute at Arcon Mines was barely mentioned by the Independent group. Why?

Because it was owned by O'Reilly's son, Tony O'Reilly Jnr.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO**

# THE BILLIONNAIRE WHO BUYS POLITICIANS

## The billionaire who buys politicians

From page one

The biggest donation to Fianna Fail last year came from O'Reilly's Waterford Crystal.

This is the same company which enforced wage cuts on its workers, claiming that they were paid too much.

The second biggest donation to Fianna Fail came from Arcon Mines.

And that is not all.

The most recent scandal shows that another company controlled by O'Reilly gave £30,000 to Ray Burke in a cheque made out to "cash".

Like Ben Dunne, O'Reilly will claim that he is a generous man. His public relations machine even argued that he just wants to promote the democratic system.

### Hypocrisy

What blatant hypocrisy! In the last election the Independent Group ran a headline saying that "Its pay back time" and called for a vote for Fianna Fail.

The O'Reilly group were furious that the Fine Gael-Labour Coalition had not cracked down hard on people in rural areas who were using deflector systems to get British television.

So they switched to Fianna Fail.

And what an investment they made! Ever since Fianna Fail came to power, they have looked after the rich very well.

### Fortune

Capital Gains Tax has been cut in half so that directors who sell shares can make a fortune.

The top rate of tax has been cut back so that the 60,000 Irish households on an income of over £100,000 a year do not go short.

The most recent scandals have shown that Irish politics is run by big business — for big business.

It's time to get rid of the nonsense about "social partnership".

We need a strong socialist party that is going to take on the likes of O'Reilly and the corrupt politicians for once and for all.

# Dounreay to go— now shut Sellafield

**APOLOGISTS for the nuclear industry have suffered a major blow with the closure of Britain's second biggest reprocessing plant at Dounreay in Scotland.**

The closure came after a series of accidents and following Tony Blair's defence of a delivery of

deadly uranium from Georgia.

But Dounreay will only shut in 2006 and reprocessing will continue until then.

And Sellafield, Britain's biggest nuclear plant, will remain open despite shocking new evidence of contamination from the site.

■ A recent TV report showed how bird drop-

pings had caused widespread radiation at nearby Seascale.

The affected birds, from a local sanctuary, had to be destroyed;

■ A new report shows a dramatic increase in contamination of the Irish Sea since the opening of the Thorp reactor at Sellafield.

Lobster samples had 250 times the levels of the

radioactive substance TC-99 as samples taken in 1993.

British electricity consumers foot the bill for British Nuclear Fuel's lucrative reprocessing contracts.

But the nuclear industry is not even considered economically viable.

It is high time these dangerous plants were shut for good.

## HOSPITAL BONANZA— workers need not apply

The new Tallaght hospital, planned to open this month, is proving a bonanza to rich consultants. But workers in the hospital will not get such favourable treatment.

The new hospital will replace Dublin's Meath, Adelaide, St Loman's and National Children's hospitals.

Now 25 high-earning consultants - including surgeons and anaesthetists - are demanding up to £25,000 each to make the move.

That is in addition to their disturbance money and their normal salary.

They want to be compensated for loss of private practice earnings.

They have been using the hospital facilities to earn huge private practice fees in addition to their regular work.

During the move these operations have been wound down and the consultants are looking to the taxpayer to keep up their mega salaries.

### Disrupted

But workers whose lives are disrupted by the move cannot expect such sympathetic treatment.

A number of workers have applied for early retirement rather than take the move and the terms they have been offered are an insult.

One porter aged 62 and with 18 years service told *Socialist Worker*: "I take home £158 for a flat 39 hour week.

"The move to Tallaght will mean travelling a lot further to work. I was offered just over £6,000 as a lump sum and £14 and a few pennies a week pension if I took early retirement.

"The fat cats in Leinster House get a big pension after just four years, but workers like me with a lifetime of honest work for not much pay are treated like dirt."

## A YEAR AFTER PORTADOWN MURDER...

# Hamill family still fighting for justice

**IT is over a year since Robert Hamill was murdered by a loyalist mob in Portadown while the RUC looked on.**

And the Hamill family and their supporters are still fighting to have the truth come out and justice done.

In April last year Robert Hamill and a small group of friends walked home from a dancehall through the centre of Portadown.

They were set upon by a gang of 30 loyalist thugs just yards from where an RUC landrover was parked and in full view of the officers inside the vehicle.

### Kicked

The RUC made no attempt to intervene as the mob pulled Robert Hamill to the ground, kicked and jumped on him shouting "Die, you fenian bastard!"

The police waited until an ambulance arrived 15 minutes later before getting out of the landrover.

If they had fired a shot

in the air as they watched the assault they would have dispersed the mob and saved Robert Hamill's life.

They chose not to do so.

Robert died of his injuries in hospital 12 days later.

The RUC issued lying statements about the attack and delayed 13 days before arresting six men.

By that time evidence was lost and all but one of the men were released with charges dropped.

Since then Robert's sister Diane Hamill and her supporters have been campaigning to have an independent inquiry into the events of that night.

They are raising money to mount a private prosecution of the RUC men involved.

"The support has been very encouraging," Diane told *Socialist Worker*.

"So far £39,000 has come in for the appeal for legal expenses of the private prosecution and Mike Mansfield QC has agreed to represent us."



Diane Hamill campaigning for justice

## PASS THIS MOTION

A FACTSHEET outlining the details of the murder of Robert Hamill and the actions of the RUC is being produced. In addition is the following model resolution for trade union branches:

■ This section/branch/trade union body expresses grave concern at the circumstances surrounding the murder of Robert Hamill in Portadown in 1997.

■ We are appalled that an RUC landrover was parked within sight of the attack on Robert Hamill and did not intervene.

■ We call for an independent inquiry into the circumstances of Robert Hamill's murder and the behaviour of the RUC in those events.

■ We call for the suspension of the four RUC officers from duty until the outcome of that inquiry.

□ Donations to: The Robert Hamill Justice Fund, Bank of Ireland, Portadown. Sort Code: 90 23 54, A/c number: 26672139

## F.F. backtrack on parental leave

JUST OVER a month after the Dail parties got the referendum on the Amsterdam Treaty passed, the hypocrisy about moving to a "modern, progressive Europe" is being exposed.

The Fianna Fail government has received a special exemption to stop Irish people getting cheap and easier divorces in other EU countries and having them

recognised in Ireland.

People here still have to wait five years before applying for a divorce and then can end up paying huge legal fees.

The Fianna Fail government has also introduced a Parental Leave Bill which is supposed to implement a European Union directive to give both parents an opportunity to take time off to look

after their children.

The bill does nothing of the sort.

The Bill only gives leave for children born after June 1996. The ICTU has rightly criticised this as "wrong and discriminatory".

The EU directive specified that leave could be taken until the child was eight.

But Fianna Fail has re-

duced this to five.

More crucially, the leave is completely unpaid.

The cynical politicians know that low paid or moderately paid workers on big mortgages have not the slightest chance of being able to take leave.

This way they can pretend to be "progressive" while ensuring that their rich business friends do bear any extra costs.

## Tuberculosis is the scourge of the poor

**TUBERCULOSIS is now the biggest killer of young women worldwide. According to the World Health Organization:**

■ a shocking 900 million women are infected with TB;

■ one million will die

and 2.5 million will catch the disease this year;

■ TB is the main cause of death among women of reproductive age;

■ it accounts for 9 per cent of deaths among women aged 15 to 44.

India and Pakistan are among the worst countries affected. Their treatment

programmes are a shambles, even though the rulers of both countries can afford to spend money on nuclear weapons.

But TB does not just occur in the Third World; the US government's war on the poor has caused the disease to return to the ghettos of New York.

## what we think

# ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS: Playing the old sectarian tunes

Jeffrey Donaldson, the wonder boy of Ulster Unionism, is in state of deep shock because Mo Mowlan has consulted with Rita O'Hare over the future of the RUC.

Ms O'Hare is apparently on the RUC's wanted list for an incident that occurred more than twenty years ago.

But Donaldson had not the slightest difficulty when the Ulster Unionist Party sent a delegation to the LVF murderers in the H Blocks last Xmas.

Its all part of the sectarian game to whip up support for the Assembly elections. The Unionist Party is a Tory party by any other name.

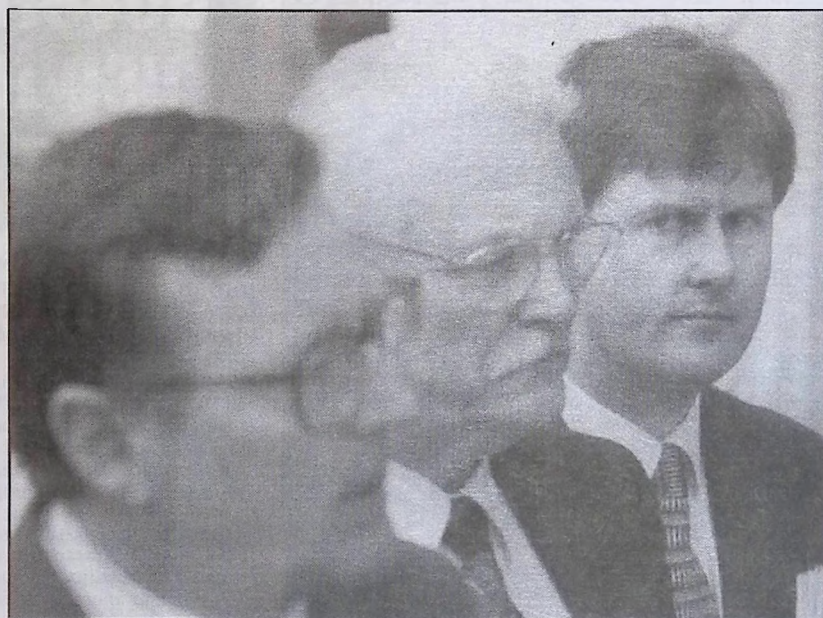
### Congratulating

None one else in Britain wants to be associated with the defeated Conservative party but Trimble has rushed to William Hague in the hope of reopening the decommissioning issue.

Yet after the referendum, Gerry Adams and John Hume were congratulating Trimble and promising to forge a partnership with him in a new cabinet.

The nationalists parties have every right to demand "equality agenda" in Northern Ireland.

There is no reason, for example, why they should



The Unionist Party is a Tory party by any other name.

cover up for the Patton commission which is designed to preserve the RUC.

(The real surprise about the leaked letter from the Northern Ireland Office was not that Mo Mowlan was talking to Rita O'Hare but rather that her officials got the impression from Martin McGuinness that he would make no public protest about the commission.)

But while they can attack the hypocrisy of the Unionists, neither the SDLP or Sinn Fein can undermine the

basis of its sectarianism because they refuse to talk about class politics.

If anything, they both play the game of institutionalised sectarianism by demanding investment and grants for their areas only.

### Alternative

There are a tiny number of socialist candidates worth voting for in the assembly elections.

But they probably will not

do very well and the real alternative will have to be built outside.

Because, for all their claims to represent two rival communities, the reality is that Gerry Adams will soon be sitting alongside David Trimble in the same cabinet which presides over students fees, tax cuts for the rich and a public sector pay freeze.

That is one good reason for building a genuine revolutionary socialist movement in the North.

## TAX SCAMS: WHY AREN'T THESE CRIMINALS BEHIND BARS?

The economists Brendan Walsh and More McDowell have come out against tax cuts for the low paid.

Their argument is that because Ireland has joined the single currency and has no control over interest rates it has to avoid anything which might "overheat" the economy.

There was a stony silence from these same "experts" when successive governments cut taxes on company profits and reduced the Residential Property Tax.

Yet at the slightest hint of concessions to PAYE workers, they scream about the dangers of inflation.

The Fianna Fail/PD government will probably not heed the advice of our "objective" experts. And this is not because they have any great concern for workers.

### Concessions

They know however that massive pressure is already building up on Partnership 2000—their main mechanism for holding down wages for the past decade.

If they don't give the promised tax cuts, they could face a PAYE revolt on the same scale as the early eighties.

Instead of risking this, the traditional Fianna Fail approach has been to pay for the small tax concessions by huge cut-backs in the public sector.

This can only mean longer queues for hospital beds or further overcrowding in the schools and colleges.

This of course is an outrage. Government inspectors have discovered a vast web of off-shore accounts to enable the wealthy to avoid tax.

They began their investigation with the Ansbacher account which was a £40 million offshore fund from which Charles J Haughey drew his bribes.

But now it has been revealed that 300 wealthy individuals have been called before the Moriarty Tribunal to explain what they were doing with offshore accounts run by banks like Guinness and Mahon and National Irish Bank.

The unions should be calling for the immediate arrest of these criminals and the imposition of special tax on their property.

If working people are jailed for not paying television licences, why should business men who have caused social misery by not paying their tax bill be left to walk the streets?

But we should also make sure that the current pay revolt that has begun among workers gathers steam.

Building workers, train drivers, and other groups of workers are all moving into revolt against the atrocious conditions imposed on them by Partnership 2000.

The best way to hit back at the sharks who have gained from the Celtic Tiger, is to back rank and file workers in the whatever strike action they take.

## Socialist Worker £10,000 appeal

SINN FEIN are now second only to Fianna Fail in receipt of financial donations.

This startling fact was revealed when political parties in the South had to declare donations received in excess of £4,000 since May of last year. Most of Sinn Fein's donations come from the US where Gerry Adams has been lauded as great statesman on Wall St.

For socialists, imperialism does not start and end with a British uniform and a British gun.

US companies are closely tied to the Pentagon and have played their part in destabilising "unfriendly" governments.

Sinn Fein members may claim that Adams "is only using" the Wall St mob. But history shows otherwise.

In the 1920s Fianna Fail spoke with a radical voice to workers while they supported Irish business all the way to the bank.

Before long, it was clear which master they were serving.

The Socialist Workers Party has not received one penny from big business looking for favours. We rely only on our members and supporters to fund our attacks on their system. This is why we urge our readers to give urgently to our appeal fund which has reached £5,040 over the last month.

£10,000

£9,000

£8,000

£7,000

£6,000

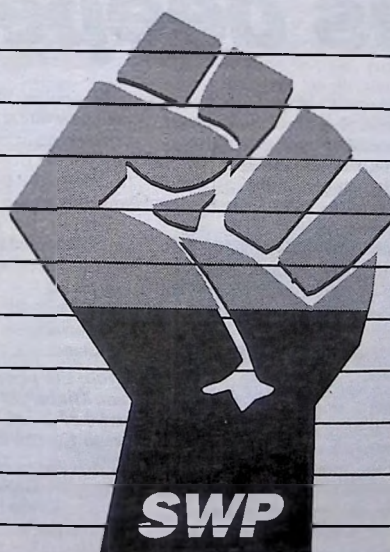
£5,000

£4,000

£3,000

£2,000

£1,000





# news of the world

## Nuclear Testing

# Deadly cost of the nuclear arms race

**MILLIONS of people were shocked and horrified as the ruling elite's of India and Pakistan engaged in a nuclear testing war.**

The Indian government began the race when it exploded the first tests.

The rulers of Pakistan, determined not to be outdone, ordered six nuclear tests, one more than the Indian government's five.

### Condemned

The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif says "We will go further and start producing nuclear weapons.

"The Pakistani people will be very proud that in the subcontinent they now have the upper edge and that the military balance is now in favour of Pakistan."

The tests have been condemned by Western leaders like Bill Clinton and Tony Blair.

The US has implemented sanctions against both India and Pakistan.

This is unbelievable hypocrisy.

Both the US and Britain have substantial nuclear arse-

nals, they are both major arms exporters and have helped to fuel arms races throughout the world.

They have never issued sanctions against Israel, a state known to have a large nuclear capability.

What is more, the US has long been one of Pakistan's major suppliers of military equipment including that necessary for the manufacture of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear weapons only contribute to human misery.

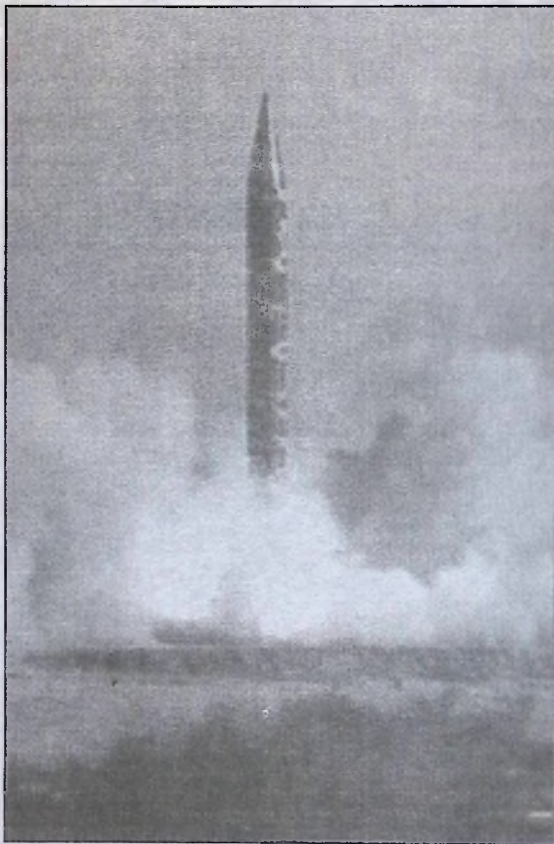
They threaten entire continents if not the whole planet with destruction.

Many of the countries currently developing nuclear weapons are Third World countries where the majority of the population are living in absolute poverty.

Pakistan for example has foreign debts totalling \$30 billion and a current account deficit of \$4 billion.

This region has one of the world's highest levels of military spending.

Money being spent on weapons and warfare should be used to provide healthcare, sanitation and education instead of defending the warring interests of the ruling class.



■ One of the world's highest levels of military spending.

## Governments use tests to shore up rule

**THE nuclear tests in the Indian subcontinent have taken place in an already unstable region of the world.**

The conflict between India and Pakistan is not "age old". It dates back to 1947 when the British rulers divided the subcontinent between India and Pakistan before abandoning their empire.

Ever since then the rulers of India and Pakistan have whipped up hostility against each other to shore up their rule.

The creation of Pakistan was surrounded by brutal killing. The country was extremely underdeveloped, inheriting only a tiny proportion of the industry that had developed in the region.

Ten years after its creation the army took over the reins of

power in Pakistan.

Vast amounts of US military aid were negotiated as the military agreed to watch over US interests in the region.

The two countries became immersed in the Cold War when Russia invaded Afghanistan. India sided with her ally Russia while Pakistan sided with the US.

### Predicted

In order to defend their interests in the region the US government helped one of the cruellest of modern dictators Zia ul-Haq, keep in power in Pakistan for 11 years.

The conflict between India and Pakistan was encouraged as they were played off against one another.

Just before India first tested nuclear weapons in 1975, former Pakistani prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto predicted that if India got the bomb Pakistan would too "even if we have to eat grass" in order to match Indian capabilities.

The truth is that those who make the decisions never eat the grass

The government of Pakistan has now imposed a state of emergency with the prime minister Nawaz Sharif declaring that government spending will be slashed. Sharif declared that his government would "eat lentils", not chicken.

"If they eat lentils then we will starve" said a Pakistani woman in response.

Opposition leaders like Benazir Bhutto and Imran Khan have also supported the governments actions.

The attacks on the poor are mirrored in India. The coalition government is dominated by the right wing Hindu nationalist party BJP.

All the major political parties are supporting it's position.

Even India's two communist parties, who have a long Stalinist tradition, have supported the tests proclaiming them to be "a blow against imperialism".

But it will be the ordinary people of India and Pakistan that will suffer.

## South Korea

# Socialists jailed as crisis deepens

**TWENTY-SIX members of the International Socialists of South Korea have been imprisoned in South Korea as the government there is becoming increasingly nervous at the huge rise in working class militancy.**

This is set to increase even further with the overthrow of the Indonesian dictator Suharto, as the whole region becomes more and more destabilised.

The National Security Planning Agency (now renamed the National Intelligence Service) ordered police to assault the ISSK from three directions at exactly the same time on the same day,

10pm on 7th May.

Several tens of policemen, supported by hundreds of riot police outside assaulted a pub in which members of the east Seoul branch of the ISSK were having a meeting.

They exploded smoke shells to hide themselves from the public eye and fired shots to prevent their attempts to resist.

### Students

The secret police also assaulted a student circle room at Hanyang University, where three other members were arrested.

At the same time hundreds of riot police attacked another part of the university in order to divert the attention of other student supporters.

The police also targeted another meeting at the Inha University campus in Incheon city. Students at the University came out to defend the ISSK armed with square bars and iron pipes.

Despite the ISSK being severely targeted by the South Korean secret police, their support is growing.

Solidarity for these South Korean socialists is urgently needed in Ireland.

■ **Join the protest: fax the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 00 82 2 720 2682 and/or the South Korean embassy**

■ **Forward copies to the Committee to Defend South Korean Socialists, c/o 1 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QE**

## Ethiopia-Eritrea border war

**THE BORDER war between Ethiopia and Eritrea in east Africa has unhinged US government policy in the region.**

Until June's air raids and troop movements the US and other Western countries regarded the two governments as pillars of progress in Africa.

Ethiopia's prime minister, Meles Zenawi, and Eritrea's leader, Afewerki, were presented as joint leaders of a US-led coalition against the Sudanese government.

Now the fighting has broken that apart. Eritrea was colonised by Italy in 1890 and then handed to Ethiopia in 1952.

Eritrean struggles for independence were one of the most powerful factors in bringing down the Mengistu Ethiopian regime in 1990.

Eritrea became independent soon after, although the border was never fully defined and instead the old colonial federal one was generally used.

Now the governments of two of the poorest countries in Africa are fighting over 155 square miles of barren border.

These are the same forces which fought together against Mengistu.

Ordinary people are already suffering, with dozens killed and hundreds injured last weekend.

In both countries there have recently been moves to further integration into the world market, with Eritrea launching a new currency.

Sections of the Ethiopian government have long resented Eritrea's command of the route to the Red Sea.

These moves have strained the already fragile local economies and, with some signs of rising internal tensions, both governments have become unwilling to make concessions even over such a petty issue as a border in a desert.

The last thing the people of Eritrea and Ethiopia need is a continuing war.

**AS NORTH'S PARTIES ADOPT A PRO-BUSINESS AGENDA**

# An opening for class politics

**ALL the main parties who are standing for the new Northern Assembly have adopted a pro-business agenda. Even Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams is now feted in Wall Street.**

Their aim is to attract the same level of multi-national investment that exists in the Celtic Tiger. This is the "common ground" they claim can create a "new era" of politics in the North.

What is missing is any focus on the common problems of poverty, low wages, and lack of trade union rights that can unite Protestant and Catholic workers.

But when *Socialist Worker* spoke to a number of shop stewards and activists from the North's main trade unions we found a cautious optimism that class politics have a better chance of reviving than at any time over the past 25 years.

Kevin Cooper, Belfast NUJ branch secretary, feels that "for the first time this may be a real opportunity for trade unionists and those on the left to ensure that all those issues are galvanised in a meaningful way and pressure is brought to bear on this assembly."

## Sceptical

But Paul Laughlin, a NIPSA shop steward and member of Derry Trades Council, is more sceptical. "There's certainly a need for class politics - but whether or not the agreement presents an opening remains to be seen, because the new assembly leaves the old sectarian structures intact, even though all the parties talk about a new era," he says.

"From a Trades Council point of view, we need to chal-

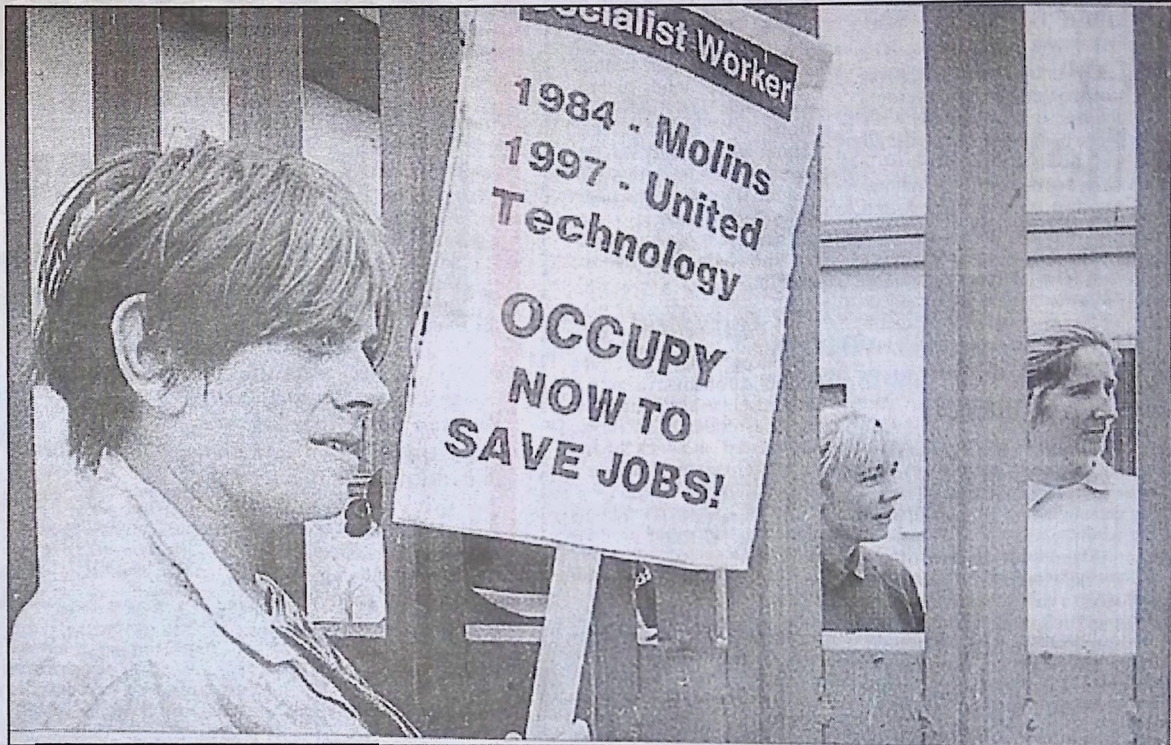
**"Working class people everywhere face the same struggles, it's not a question of hoping that middle class politicians will throw you a few crumbs."**

lenge the political parties in the elections to make it clear where they are standing on the issue of the minimum wage, trade union recognition, the anti-union laws and privatisation. We want to be clear if they are in favour or against."

"If republicanism wants to represent working class people it'll not happen through an alliance with US imperialism or the cute hoor politicians in the Republic.

"And unionism is still explicitly sectarian and I haven't really seen a move away from that throughout the talks process or in the run-up to the referendum.

"Working class people everywhere face the same struggles - on education, wages, or a decent health service. It's not a question of hoping that middle class politicians will throw you a few crumbs. Instead you need to talk about class politics and raise issues such as the ones on your Charter for Class Politics."



## Community politics or class politics?

**PETER Black, an ATGWU shop steward in Belfast's Mayfield Leisure Centre, has little time for the communal politicians who will dominate the**

**new assembly.**

"It is a sectarian set-up with nationalists and unionists in their own camps and it's no place for socialists. They're simply bourgeois parties trying to figure out how to run the state."

Gerry Quigley, an ATGWU member in Derry's shipyards, also doesn't trust the politicians. "None of those parties in the assembly will push trade union rights," he says. "The DUP, the UDP and Sinn Fein tend to confuse community politics and class politics but they're not the same thing."

"Sinn Fein, when they came to my door recently, didn't talk about a minimum wage or trade union recognition. They didn't mention women's rights or the rights of young workers who'll be exempted from the new minimum wage if they're under 21 years of age."

"They don't even talk about the South which is as bad as here regarding the working class. All Sinn Fein want is a satisfactory conclusion to the armed struggle."

"Then there's the unionists—they are not going to go into an assembly and say 'come here, we'll give you a £4.60 an hour minimum wage'. All they're interested in is policing and marching. David Trimble doesn't give a flying you-know-what about the Protestant working class. He's an out-and-out Tory."

"And John Hume, well, he's a Tory with a conscience, saying 'I'll give you jobs in Derry'. But they're not unionised. I don't like this attitude that any job is better than no job."

The North has been hit by a

wave of redundancies in recent months but there have also been some signs of industrial action in recent weeks.

## Action

Mark Hewitt is a teacher in East Belfast and member of the NASUWT.

He says: "We recently had an 86 per cent vote for action over our workload, for a watered-down version of work-to-rule."

"You immediately saw the effects at our last union meeting in Belfast where you had a few reps who, for the first time, had to lay down before the principals what they were and weren't going to do."

"I don't think there is a mass anger out there just yet. However, there are more people starting to campaign about things. At this year's May Day march we saw the fire brigade with leaflets saying 'cuts cost lives' and then there was

that enormous demonstration in Dungannon against the hospital closures, which really showed the mass anger that exists over individual issues."

In the civil service, says Paul Laughlin, it would only take "some focus, some struggle with a hope of victory to challenge management and it could spark something bigger."

Blair's public sector spending freeze could be an explosive issue, suggests the NUJ's Kevin Cooper. "Blair must invest in the public sector and pensions. I can understand this two-year hold on finances. But now there is a growing national surplus and yet we have growing hospital waiting lists, growing class sizes."

"And no one is addressing the pay squeeze in the public sector. If you couple the issue of union recognition laws and the public sector fiscal squeeze it's bound to lead to confrontation along the line."

## Sold out by Blair

**WHEN BLAIR first came to Northern Ireland as Prime Minister he got a huge welcome because many were relieved to see the Tories go.**

But now many activists are disgusted at Tony Blair's first year in office.

The Liverpool dockers' dispute left a bitter aftertaste, says Montupet striker John McAleese: "I didn't agree with what Labour did with the dockers. Our strike was more political but there weren't many involved while the Liverpool dispute was more solid and Labour owned quite a share of the company."

## Worries

There are also worries about the state of the trade unions.

Most shop stewards mention their leaders' fears of breaking the anti-trade union laws. Gerry Quigley says young workers now often risk being sacked for joining a union.

Sub-contracting has made it harder to unionise certain sectors. Thomas Harkin is a young union activist in UNISON, the health workers' union, who works in Derry's Gransha Hospital.

"The union isn't well recognised and I

tried to join up some of my mates but they didn't really understand why they should join," says Thomas. "And I also thought the union would defend me when I had problems with my boss but it didn't. If I'd won that case all my friends would have joined the union."

Defeats such as the one in Montupet have taken their toll. "Management has said we'll give you permission to talk amongst yourselves - as long as one of the supervisors is there," says John McAleese. "But the union still isn't recognised and a lot of the strikers never went back to work for them."

And the T&G's Peter Black worries about the union leaders' talk about "partnership" with the employers.

"There aren't many socialists in the trade unions now - since the 1970s, really. But we need to get socialists mobilising other workers."

And yet he's optimistic. "I saw shop stewards at this year's May Day march in Belfast who you'd never seen before. It's a turn in the economic tide."

"The conditions of revolution are like a tide coming in every so often and as socialists we should be in the right place at the right time. Now we'll have to get the surfboard ready for the time when workers mobilise this time round."

## A charter for class politics

**Scores of trade union activists in Northern Ireland have signed a charter for class politics which calls for a decent minimum wage, repeal of the Tory anti-union laws, free education and the abolition of the 11 plus system, no privatisation and a policy of taxing the rich.**

**You can order copies of the charter to take around your workplace by writing to Charter for Class Politics, PO Box 354 Tomb Street Belfast.**

# MICROSOFT CASE A monopoly in cyberspace

**BILL** Gates has fallen out with his once great friend and supporter Bill Clinton. The US government has taken Gates' company Microsoft to court, accusing it of trying to establish a monopoly in the market for programmes used to access the internet.

Currently internet access is controlled by Netscape. Rather than compete with Netscape, Microsoft tried to set up a cartel with it - Microsoft would cover one section of the market and Netscape the other.

The US government alleges that when Netscape refused, Microsoft tried to buy off its opposition by offering distribution companies money not to distribute Netscape.

## Monopoly

The internet is a growth area in the computer industry. It is estimated that there are between 30 and 50 million users world-wide.

Microsoft is one of the world's largest companies and it has a virtual monopoly in the market for word processors, spreadsheets and databases.

Microsoft are, according to the US government, using the fact that almost all computers use the operating system Windows and other Microsoft products to squeeze Netscape out of the market.

It seems to make sense for the US government to try to limit Microsoft's power.

However the fact that most computers use Windows makes it easier to share information.

Serious competition with Windows would not only make life more difficult for Microsoft it would also make it harder to use computers. It makes sense that all computers work in the same way.

The problem is that capitalism is an unplanned, undemocratic system. There is no co-ordinated planning.

The only way that consistency can be achieved is if Microsoft imposes it, thereby increasing its own profits.

This is the stark choice we face under capitalism—either competitive chaos or an exploitative monopoly.

The internet is an important technological development and one that is of enormous benefit to human beings.

Surprisingly it was invented by the US military. At the height of the cold war, the Pentagon was searching for a communication system able to withstand a nuclear attack.

It came up with a way of sending signals through a network of links without having to go through a single centre.

The internet tends to provoke a wide spectrum of responses.

Some argue that it will become the most powerful weapon that our oppressors have yet developed.

Others see it as a fountain of free knowledge and free expression.

## Outdated

Some even view it as a radical political alternative that will usher in a new age of liberty in this "post-industrial information society" in which the free market delivers and Marxism is outdated.

The internet is certainly one of the most important developments in recent technology and it brings with it many fantastic possibilities.

There is no reason why every person in the world should not have access to a world wide computer network. The technology exists. Any one could have access to any book, video, piece of music they wanted. The educational and cultural opportunities would be enormous.

But this could never happen under capitalism.

Bill Gates is only interested in developing the internet as another commercial arena where everything and anything can be bought and sold. Information becomes private property.

Now as in Marx's time capitalism is capable of enormous technical advances—but the benefits such advances bring are denied to all but a few.

Time after time technology which could improve people's lives is used in a way which is either pointless or actually makes those lives worse.

Information technology makes it clear how capitalism has outlived its potential to take human society further.

Instead, as computers and the internet develop they give new resonance to the need for a socialist society.

by SINEAD KENNEDY

# The Burke scandals shows

# The web of corruption surrounds Fianna Fail

**IN THE** five years between 1987 and 1992, Ray Burke took £500,000 in donations from big business.

In just one day, June 8th 1989, Burke drove to his bank in Swords and cashed a cheque for £30,000 from Fitzwilton — a company owned by Tony O'Reilly.

When he got home he was visited by two representatives of the building firm Joseph Murphy Structural Engineers who gave him another £30,000 in a brown envelope.

Yet Bertie Ahern and Fianna Fail insist that "no favours" were given. This was just a normal business contribution to support the demo-

cratic system.

That is a blatant lie.

Fitzwilton received £2.5 million in IDA grants in the ten years since the donation.

After O'Reilly's company gave a donation to Burke, another of his companies, Prince's Holdings, got most of the licences for the MMDS television service.

## Expensive

This is a system that allows the broadcast of overseas channels to areas where it is too expensive to lay cables to.

O'Reilly hoped to make money out of charging people to watch British television.

(He also believed that the network of masts could be linked to a mobile telephone system—but un-

fortunately for him he lost out to Esat after its owner Denis O'Brien gave a donation to the new Fine Gael led government.)

O'Reilly's problem was that local people often clubbed together to set up cheap defectors to boost British channel signals.

He needed to get a government Minister to clamp down hard on these independent operators. He got this assurance after the £30,000 was paid over to Burke.

In a letter to Joe Haynes, the managing director of the *Irish Independent*, Burke promised to "bring the full rigours of the law to bear on illegal operators".

In other words a Fianna Fail Minister promised to turn ordinary people into criminals in order to protect the profits of Ireland's richest billionaire.

# O'Reilly and the right wing press

**THE** latest scandal has drawn Ireland's most powerful businessman into the web of corruption.

Tony O'Reilly has a personal wealth of £1.29 billion. He has used that money to capture most of the newspapers in Ireland.

Over two thirds of papers sold in Ireland on a Sunday are owned by his Independent group.

It runs *The Star*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent*, *Sunday World*, the *Evening Herald*, some of the *Sunday Tribune* as well as ten local weeklies including *The Kerryman* and the *Drogheda Independent*.

These papers are used as a huge propaganda machine to promote the right wing ideas that back up parties like Fianna Fail.

The *Sunday Independent* is the most blatant example. The paper is made up of right ring columnists like Shane Ross



O'Reilly

and Ellis O'Hanlon who go on a rant each week about trade unionists, politically correct liberals, spongers.

The *Star* and the *Evening Herald* are directed to a more working class audience. Occasionally *The Star* runs popular stories that fit the mood of workers who know they have gained little from the Celtic Tiger.

But it has an agenda of spreading racist ideas by printing stories which give the impression that refugees are spongers.

Despite the hypocrisy about being a "free press" O'Reilly does not hide the fact that he uses his papers as weapons to advance his own interests and that of the wider capitalist class.

Just after the latest scandal broke, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Sunday Tribune* ran stories in defence of O'Reilly which had been planted by Jim Milton of Murray Consultants — the public relations advisor to the Independent Group.

The following week when one of his loyal hacks, Bruce Arno, wrote a mildly critical story about the present scandal, it was censored.

O'Reilly is open about how he uses the press to gain influence.

As he said himself, "Since I own 38% of the newspapers in Ireland, I have close contact with politicians".



Burke and Ahern thick

# What h

**BERTIE** Ahern pretends he belongs to the Fianna Fail that has put Haughey past behind it.

But his behaviour during the scandal shows that he is up to neck in the web of corruption envelopes Fianna Fail.

Ahern claimed that he carried out a full investigation of Burke before he was appointed as Minister.

But they did not even check their own accounts to see what Burke raised for the party.

When it was first revealed that Burke had gotten £30,000 from JSME builders, Ahern had his explanations saying that "he was quite satisfied with the matter".

## Pinnacle

The reality is that Burke and Ahern are closely linked to Haughey's game. Ahern could not let Burke down because they were both at the pinnacle of the party.

More than a decade ago, Haughey even described Ahern as "the most skillful hatchetman" and the most cunning of them all.

Ahern and Burke were in the cabinet as Haughey's men to La gave massive donations to Goodman.

They both covered up Haughey's event until the Sunday

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VS...

by SIMON BASKETTER

# Corruption that



Burke and Ahern thick as thieves?

## What has Burke got on Ahern?

BERTIE Ahern tends that he belongs to the new Fianna Fail as put the Haughey past it. But his betwixt and between is up to his neck in the envelopes of the investigation on appointed For-

check their what donations But they did own accounts revealed that 30,000 from understood behind that "he was matter".

ke and Ahern Haughey re-ot let Burke th have been Anna Fail for abed Ahern as most devious ing" of his t in the same en Fianna Fail ons to Larry s eventually

named him as the Million dollar man who got money from Ben Dunne.

During Ahern's period of Taoiseach, key files from the Department of Finance that might reveal how Haughey swindled on currency transactions have gone missing.

Ahern has also been financed by an Ansbacher account holder

who backed Haughey.

John Finnegan is one of the few names that have been publicly exposed for holding £2 million in the Ansbacher account designed to avoid tax.

Finnegan was a key backer of Charles Haughey and helped to organise his property deals.

Finnegan also made donations to Bertie Ahern's constituency ex-

penses over a number of years.

Despite this Ahern made no declaration of a conflict of interest when he voted against a bill to investigate the Ansbacher account holders.

Despite his clean image, Ahern belongs to the Haughey tradition of brazenly denying his links with the corrupt businessmen who run his party.

**This is how the ruling class works**

**THE latest scandal shows that Ireland is run by a tiny ruling class who have far more power than the TDs in the Dail.**

A close knit network brings together top politicians with businessmen like O'Reilly, Smurfit and Goodman.

Publicly, the politicians claim that Ireland is run through democratic structures where there is a separation of powers between the parliament and the judiciary.

But the reality is that individual businessmen buy influ-

ence for the particular favours they want. Sometimes this brings them into conflict with others and these splits bring about an exposure of their activities.

### Unite

But even when there is a "scandal" about how one businessman like O'Reilly operates, the wealthy as a whole unite to press for policies that benefit them.

Since 1987, taxes on the rich have been cut so much that other governments in Europe complain that Ireland is undercutting them.

This system can never be changed

simply by getting a few TDs into the Dail, because the power of the money cannot be broken by speeches and laws.

There needs to be a stronger force that can take on the rich and root out their corruption from every area of life.

That force is the mobilisation of hundreds of thousands of workers.

Only a revolution where the mass of workers intervene to shape events will rid Ireland of corrupt politics.

We can start on this path today by starting a massive argument inside the working class movement to break the influence of those who advocate social partnership with those who are robbing us blind.

## THE FUTURE SOCIALIST SOCIETY

### Can we tell what socialism will be like?

"WHAT WILL things be like after the revolution?" This question is often put to Marxists. It has to be said that the answers given are frequently vague.

Certainly the writings of Marx in this area are slight compared with his monumental analysis of capitalism and his works on history and contemporary politics.

There were good reasons for this.

Before Marx, the dominant school of socialism was that of the "Utopians", like Saint Simon and Fourier of France and Robert Owen of England.

The Utopians specialised in drawing up grandiose schemes for the future organisation of society but lacked any strategy for bringing them about, apart from appealing to the goodwill of the ruling class.

Marx was determined to differentiate his scientific socialism from this middle class day-dreaming.

He stressed that socialism could arise only from the actual contradictions in capitalism—the anarchy in capitalist production, and the antagonism between the working class and the bourgeoisie.

This set very strict limits to predictions about the organisation of socialist society, limits which excluded any attempt at a detailed blueprint.

In the main, these limits remain in force today.

Since socialism emerges out of capitalism as a result of a successful struggle against it by the working class, the specific measures introduced by the revolutionary socialist government will obviously depend on the particular economic, social and political conditions obtaining at the time.

### Forecast

We cannot know in advance what those will be any more than we can now forecast the date of the revolution.

Also, since the whole point of the socialist revolution is to place society under the conscious control of the working class, many questions must simply be left to workers of the future to decide.

There is, for example, no point in trying to draw up plans now for the design of housing under socialism. It will all depend on the kind of houses people in the future choose to live in.

Nevertheless, questions remain. If people are to take up the struggle for socialism, they want to know what they are fighting for.

Moreover, in certain respects we are better placed than Marx to answer some of these questions.

A further century of capitalist development has involuntarily prepared the ground for socialism in many ways and made it easier to envisage how

**Since socialism emerges out of capitalism the specific measures introduced will depend on the particular economic, social and political conditions obtaining at the time.**

certain goals set down in principle by Marx—such as the achievement of material abundance or the overcoming of the division of labour can actually be realised.

Also, we have the advantage of a century of workers' struggle.

We do not, as yet, have experience of full socialism in the Marxist sense.

But we do have the experience of a few years of socialist revolution in Russia, and of numerous near misses—the workers' revolutions that failed, like those in Spain, 1936, or Hungary, 1956—which contained the seeds of socialism.

One preliminary point needs to be made. Socialism—or communism, to use Marx's original term—is not a ready-made state of society that can simply be introduced the day after the revolution.

Rather, it is a historical process. This process begins with the destruction of the capitalist state by workers' revolution.

It is completed only when a fully classless society is achieved on a world scale—that is, when the whole human race collectively manages its affairs without class antagonism or class struggle.

### Overthrow

Between the overthrow of capitalism and the classless society lies a period of transition called by Marx, "the dictatorship of the proletariat", it is more simply referred to as "workers' power".

When discussing the socialist future, it is always essential to bear this distinction in mind.

For what can and will be done in the initial stage when the working class, although in power, is still locked in struggle with the dispossessed bourgeoisie, is not at all the same as the possibilities that open up when humanity is at last fully united.

by JOHN MOLYNEUX

## As crisis hits the Asian economies...

**LOW WAGE** policy is vital to maintaining the boom." This is what Kevin Daly, a highly paid treasury economist at Ulster bank, wrote recently. A chorus of experts is already lecturing Irish workers about the need to lower expectations.

However slumps in capitalism are not caused by workers seeking higher wages. No serious economist has argued that the collapse of the Asian Tigers occurred because wages were too high.

The "Asian Tigers" were once hailed as the success stories of capitalism, proof that the free market could work.

Leading economists such as Will Hutton of the *Observer* argued that they provided an alternative and more successful model than Anglo-American capitalism.

Others claimed that their success was due to "traditional Asian values" which were supposed to emphasise obedience and discipline.

South East Asia underwent enormous expansion between the early 1980s and 1995. The numbers working on the land were slashed as millions went into the cities. While the Celtic Tiger has grown at the rate of seven percent a year since the nineties, countries such as China, South Korea, Indonesia, and Hong Kong have surpassed this rate since the early eighties.

The experience of the boom was contradictory for workers. Some sections experienced marginal but very real gains, while others saw their already miserable conditions grow worse.

Infant mortality in the region fell and life expectancy grew slightly. Yet despite the economic growth 400 million people in the region, mainly in China, still lived in absolute poverty.

**The Asian boom produced a tiny minority of fabulously rich millionaires. The sales of Mercedes Benz per head of population in Thailand, for example, was second only to Germany.**

These new Asian "entrepreneurs" had access to huge pools of cheap labour and they used it to compete against their US and European rivals.

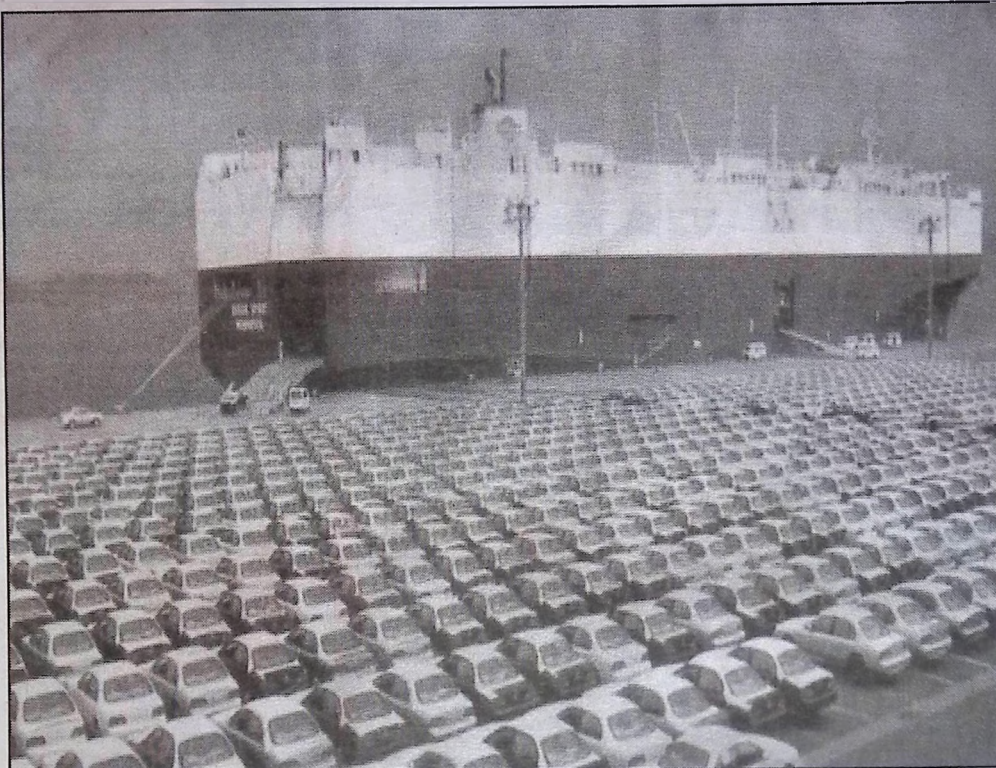
But low wages alone are not enough to explain the growth of the Asian Tigers. After all, wage levels are cheap in much of Africa or South America. Alongside the poverty of the working class there are other factors which have contributed to the growth of the region.

In all of these countries state repression was directed against the Left and the working class. The one thing that all the rulers of the region have in common is ruthless hostility to working class organisation and struggle.

The region also experienced a huge amount of US involvement during the Cold War. The modern state of South Korea owes its entire existence to the US military. The region as a whole benefitted enormously during the Vietnam War where it was a major supplier to the US army.

Throughout South East Asia there was a very close relationship between the state, banks and industry.

The state reorganised local capitalism into a few major firms and then gave them grants and subsidies to export. Indonesia is the most notorious example of this general trend as



Thousands of cars stockpiled in Japan, trapped in a collapsing economy

# When the tigers collapse

Suharto's friends and relatives enjoyed local monopolies and owned many of the major banks.

**But this "crony capitalism" is not unique to Asia, as the relationship between Fianna Fail and Irish big business shows.**

Here "cronies" like Goodman were selected as part of the IDA's "Pick a winner" strategy which chose certain successful companies and groomed them for the world market.

Most of the leading capitalists in Ireland such as Dunnes, Smurfit, Desmond and O'Reilly have been caught bribing politicians.

But under capitalism yesterday's success stories have a habit of becoming tomorrow's disasters. Marx noted over 100 years ago in *Capital* that "Business always appears excessively sound right on the eve of a

crash... Business is always thoroughly sound until the debacle takes place".

The crisis began last summer when countries in South East Asia experienced a sharp devaluation of their currencies.

The devaluation raised the price of imported goods and reduced living standards. A "rationalisation" of industry followed, bringing the sacking of millions of workers.

**Today the situation is so serious that the IMF, which started off talking about raising \$4 billion in loans to deal with the crisis in Indonesia alone, has now put together a \$37 billion package.**

This comes on top of a separate \$17.2 billion package for Thailand and another big loan for South Korea.

If the slump had been confined to the newly industrialising countries in the region, the world's ruling class could have breathed a sigh of relief.

**But Japan, the world's second largest economy, is also in serious trouble. Japan was once hailed as a miracle economy and some of its methods, such as "just in time" production, were copied all around the world.**

Many "experts" even believed that it would overtake the US in size early next century.

Now companies such as Nissan are on the brink of bankruptcy. The banking system is a disaster as huge debts have mounted.

The slump in Japan threatens a 1930s style collapse of the global economy because shares prices in the

world stock markets have been inflated out of all proportion in recent years.

**The Asian crisis is a symptom of the underlying problems with the general economic situation. The most fundamental problem of capitalism is that it cannot find a method of orderly restructuring.**

When the system is in boom, capitalists over-extend themselves to outdo their rivals. They buy up raw materials at inflated prices.

They take out huge loans in the expectations of greater markets. But problems soon emerge because there is no planning or agreement on economic targets.

Once key companies begin to cut back panic spreads. Bankruptcies grow and trigger off other collapses. Before long the "soft landing" has turned into a nasty slump.

This present crisis is not unprecedented. Capitalism is characterised by a series of booms and slumps.

But the booms are getting shorter and the slumps are harder and longer. In the last 23 years we have seen three large scale recessions. The last one, which began around 1990, hit Europe and the US the hardest.

This pattern shows that there is little point in Irish workers tightening their belts.

**A world recession is looming and the Celtic Tiger will inevitably be pulled into it—no matter how much sacrifice workers make.**

Instead of believing the propaganda about partnership, workers gain more by organising against the logic of the market. Here the example of the South Korean working class is tremendous..

By the mid 1980's the Asian boom produced a skilled and educated workforce unwilling to tolerate repression and low wages.

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

These strikes helped force the election of a civilian president, Kim Young-sam, in December 1992. However he made few changes and continued to rely on oppression to control dissent.

In January 1997 another huge strike wave was launched.

These were the first political strikes and had a deep impact on worker's consciousness.

Trade Unions were strengthened and the socialist movement revived.

After a series of inner conflicts, the ruling class replaced Kim Young-sam with a new president, the former dissident Kim Dae-jung, who has a more popular base of support.

Yet he too is in trouble because he is demanding that workers be more "flexible" and carry the burden of the anarchy of capitalism. Last month, South Korean unions launched a two day general strike to demand an end to the sackings.

The best strategy for Irish workers is to build up the strength of their rank and file organisations now while there is a shortage of labour.

If that strength is linked to a set of socialist politics which challenges the anarchy of the market, capitalism will have truly created its own gravedigger.

by SINEAD KENNEDY



## Bloomsday

# James Joyce's Ulysses

THIS MONTH the Bloomsday celebrations take place to commemorate, the day Joyce set his most famous novel *Ulysses*.

Huge expense and planning has gone into the celebrations this year with a world wide link up involving chapters of the novel being read in Irish pubs across the globe.

Yet despite the hype the real legacy of Joyce, a revolutionary in both his writing and his politics, has been obscured and distorted.

Joyce was part of the Irish Literary revival at the turn of the century which was linked to the movement for Irish independence. Joyce along with contemporaries like Yeats were concerned to challenge colonial stereotypes of Ireland and offer a vision of Irish liberation and independence.

*Ulysses* begins with a scene in a Martello tower, a symbol of British colonial rule. This marks the beginning of a metaphorical journey away from colonial subordination towards freedom and independence.

But while Yeats harked back to mythical views of an Irish past, Joyce was concerned that an independence could still leave intact the power of the Catholic Church. He thought Ireland could still be dominated by a conservative middle class.

In 1907 he said "I confess I do not see what good it does to fulminate against English tyranny while the Roman tyranny occupies the palace of the soul."

Joyce saw a split between writers whose view of Irish freedom was narrow and conservative and those who wanted a much more thorough-going revolution in Ireland.

He said "It is not far fetched to say that my action, and that of men like Ibsen, is a virtual intellectual strike. I would call such people as Gogarty and Yeats and Colm the blacklegs of literature."

Joyce flirted briefly with Sinn Fein but soon grew disillusioned with the conservatism of the movement.

He attacked Arthur Griffith, the founder of Sinn Fein, for hypocrisy in championing Irish freedom while supporting racist pogroms against Jews in Limerick in 1904.

He saw this as proof that Irish nationalism would not lead to real liberation for the mass of people.

He accused Griffith of "educating the people of Ireland on the old pap of racial hatred whereas anyone can see that if the Irish question exists, it exists for the Irish proletariat chiefly."

### Lyrical

Joyce's decision to set *Ulysses* in 1904 and make Leopold Bloom, a Jew, the central character is a clear reference to Griffith's anti-Semitism.

Throughout the novel the figure of Bloom is used to highlight the hypocrisy of the Irish middle class.

In one chapter a character called Citizen waxed lyrical on the horrors of British rule and then goes on to attack Bloom for being a Jew and a foreigner.

Another chapter makes a reference to the tram divers who stuck against the Irish Independent in 1913 and satirises the Independent's headlines.

Joyce also pioneers an array of revolutionary techniques in literature which he uses to get beneath the surface of Irish society and expose the repressive social and sexual morality of the Catholic Church.

He describes such things as masturbation, going to the toilet and the sexual fantasies of women to show them as natural human activities rather than things that should be hidden away and not talked about.

Joyce's fears about the new Irish state were confirmed. For fifty years Fianna Fail and Bishops dominated one of the most repressive states in Europe.

Not surprisingly Joyce's work was effectively banned in the new state. The Irish Independent accused him of "fouling the nest" of his native city of Dublin.

In recent years the grip of Fianna Fail and the church has begun to weaken. But Joyce's belief that the struggle for real liberation has yet to be achieved remains as relevant today as ever as does his greatest work *Ulysses*.

by RICHARD BOYD BARRETT

# Rise and fall of a thug

THE IRISH media have hyped up stories about Dublin's crime bosses in recent years, filling acres of newsprint with the lurid activities of criminals with strange nicknames.

Crime stories have been the circulation battle ground for the O'Reilly owned press. So it is a bit much for the same papers to complain that John Boorman's film *The General* is cashing in on crime.

Brilliantly shot in black and white, the movie shows Martin Cahill's exploits in an enthralling way. It doesn't run away from the viciousness of

by SIMON BASKETTER

the man. Dramatising Cahill's propensity for ruthlessness and violence: stealing into the bedroom of a witness and intimidating her; knee-capping a gang member who has raped his own daughter to keep the man out of court and crucifying another whom he wrongly believes has swindled him, on a pool table.

### Contempt

The fine performance by Brendan Gleeson shows Cahill's utter contempt for authority, he

### book

## Ireland and the fight back for civil rights

DURING Daniel O'Connell's campaign to repeal the Act of Union the former black slave, Frederick Douglas, visited Ireland and gave sixty lectures to offer support and to explain the black struggle in the US.

by JOE

McCARROLL

As Brian Dooley's book, *Black and Green*, reveals, that magnificent gesture was not always reciprocated. Archbishop Hughes of New York condemned Daniel O'Connell's support for the abolition of slavery, claiming the slave "should bear with his lot and be faithful to his master".

The temperance campaigner, Fr Matthew, refused to condemn slavery when he went to the US.

### Agitation

In the postwar years blacks campaigned for civil rights long before Northern Catholics began their agitation. In both countries women began the movement: In the US the Women's Political Committee, and in Dungannon the Homeless Citizens League. Both movements coincided with an increase in educational attainments by US blacks and northern Catholics.

The tactics were the same: peaceful demonstrations, boycotts, sit-down protests and occupations.

In 1963 the famous Selma to Montgomery March took place and inspired the Belfast to Derry march 5 years later.

On the day that Martin Luther King addressed 200,000 people in Wash-

ington with his "I have a dream" speech, 67 catholic women in Dungannon occupied houses which were left vacant by Protestants and were due to be demolished.

The physical link between Ireland and US blacks was Irish America. Irish America was, however, born on the other side of the tracks.

When Bernadette Devlin emphasised the need for Irish America to champion black civil rights she met with a stony response and had to abandon her first lecture tour in 1969.

She did not give up however. In 1971 she returned to the US and observed about the right wing Irish Americans "They said exactly the same things about blacks that the loyalists said about us at home."

Brian Dooley's book is a fascinating account of the links between the fight for civil rights in Ireland and America.

Although sometimes naive on the role of the police, it is well worth reading.

**Black and Green—The Fight for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland and Black America, Brian Dooley, Pluto Publishers, London and Chicago.**



Brendan Gleeson Adrian Dunbar in the *General*

refuses to move out of his corporation flat when it's demolished until he is rehoused.

The media, politicians, paramilitaries and especially the cops are treated with contempt.

Cahill was a thug, but the film portrays the Gardai as equally corrupt. The cops are shown as violent, vindictive and stupid.

The police surround Cahill's house, kill his pigeons, jostle and insult his pregnant girlfriend.

Even John Voight who

plays the supposedly clean cop who brings Cahill's downfall, is happy to beat up prisoners.

### Foolish

At every opportunity the cops respond to looking foolish with violence.

The accusation that the film romanticises Cahill doesn't wash.

*The General* shows up Cahill's thuggery but it also shows that the anti-hero cannot escape

the system by crime. Cahill's gang is made up of misfits, drug addicts and a child abuser, and all end up either in prison or dead.

*The General* shows Cahill's decline and fall. The gang breaks down, the cops move in and the Provos build up to killing him.

Cahill's world closes in around him and he is destroyed.

The film is at times funny, moving and thought provoking. See it.

### TV

## The Windrush generation

FIFTY years ago the Empire Windrush ship arrived in Britain. Aboard the Windrush were 492 Jamaicans, marking the beginning of post World War Two black immigration into Britain.

Now the BBC is running a series of programmes to mark the anniversary. It should be essential viewing for those following the immigration argument in Ireland.

### Symbol

The Windrush is a symbol of the rich transformation of British society which took place with the arrival of the first groups of black people.

But those aboard the Windrush and those who followed also encountered racism and hostility.

After the war British capitalism, hampered by a labour shortage, needed workers.

Peter Fryer, author of the marvellous book *Staying Power, The His-*



Immigrants arriving in Britain in 1956

*tory of Black People in Britain*, was assigned as a young journalist to cover the docking of the Windrush. His account of their arrival was headlined, "Five Hundred Pairs of Willing Hands".

As Fryer writes, "British industry gladly absorbed them. In some industries the demand for labour was so great that black workers were actively recruited in their home countries."

But although British capitalism, at that point, needed labour, that did not mean the immigrants had an easy time. One of the programmes showed how black chil-

dren had to hide in their school playgrounds after Enoch Powell whipped up racism with his "rivers of blood" speech in 1968.

Black people did not take such attacks lying down. Fryer says that one group, "reasoning that attack was the best form of defence, made a pre-emptive strike against a local fascist headquarters and a club where white men were known to be planning racist attacks."

Windrush continues on Saturdays at 8pm on BBC2. —HASSAN MAHAMDALLIE

**where we stand**

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.

Book reveals truth about...

# Ireland's bullying bosses

Report by  
**DAVE  
McDONAGH**

**CARLA is a civil servant who works for a "Jekyll and Hyde" boss: some days he is all smiles but at other times he criticises Carla's every mistake, making her working life a misery.**

Mary put up with similar mistreatment from her manager and finally left her office job after he humiliated her in front of her workmates.

Peter lost confidence in his skills as an electrical apprentice because the foreman regularly taunted him, in front of other staff, about his "shoddy work".

These are just three of the people whom Lucy Costigan has dealt with in her work as a counsellor. They feature in her new book *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace*.

*These and other case studies give a glimpse of the hidden traumas faced by thousands of workers in Ireland.*

Some face sexual harassment. Lynn was eighteen and working as a hairdresser when the owner asked her to stay behind one evening and then—after locking the door—sexually assaulted her. This behaviour continued despite Lynn's attempts to avoid her boss.

**Withdrawn**

Anne was a 51 year old insurance clerk whose manager continually disparaged her age, calling her a "frustrated spinster". When his taunts became even more crude and suggestive, Anne became withdrawn and suicidal.

Trade unions have only in recent years begun to compile reliable statistics on the levels of bullying and harassment. But it is clear that the cases discussed in this book are only the tip of the iceberg.

The Irish Nursing Organisation found that more than nine in every ten nurses had been the victims of bullying.

Lucy Costigan's book

**Trade unions have begun to compile statistics on the levels of bullying and harassment. It is clear that the cases discussed in this book are only the tip of the iceberg**

reveals cases of harassment going on under the noses of management in respectable legal firms and semi-state bodies.

It shows that very often senior management are them-



Low wages and no union can often encourage bullying in the workplace

selves the perpetrators, or they collude in the abuse.

## What you can do

**IF YOU are the victim of bullying or harassment at work, there are a number of steps you can take:**

■ **Join a union. Even if you cannot come out openly as a member, the union will offer help and advice until you are confident enough to take a case against the abuser.**

■ **Seek additional advice from the Employment Equality Agency.**

■ **Keep a log of all incidences of harassment, including dates, times and the names of any witnesses. Send a copy of this log to your union and to the Employment Equality Agency.**

■ **Keep copies of all memos to and from your employer or manager. Also keep copies of work performance reviews and references. Your personnel file should also be made available to you, if you insist on seeing it.**

■ **Tell your doctor about the abuse. If bullying leads to stress or illness, this can be recorded on a doctor's certificate.**

■ **Get your shop steward or union official to take up the case. If you have a well organised workplace, make sure you link your case to others who have experienced similar treatment.**

■ **Demand that supervisors or managers who bully are moved or sacked.**

## UNITY IS STRENGTH

**TRADE unions have begun to insist that employers issue a policy on bullying and harassment in the workplace.**

If your job does not have such a policy, raise the issue with your union.

An employer who does not take steps to prevent harassment could be held liable for damages.

But the law does not guarantee a fair hearing.

As Frank O'Malley of SIPTU says: "The law is based on protecting the

rights of property and hence the moneyed classes, much more than on protecting an individual's rights."

The Labour Court can award compensation, but only up to two year's salary.

**Costs**

The civil courts can award much more, but a worker who loses a case there may have to pay huge costs.

The worker usually bears the burden of proof. But

bullying in the workplace is often very insidious and other workers may be afraid to stand up for a colleague who is being victimised.

The best way to fight against harassment is when workers take action together.

Workers in St Michael's Hospital in Dun Laoghaire threatened to go on strike against bullying on the wards.

When we act alone, management can isolate us. But when we stick together we can isolate the petty tyrants who stalk the workplace.

## Rotten to the core

**BULLYING in the workplace is not just caused by a few bad managers, but flows directly from the way society operates.**

Despite being told we live in a democracy, our workplaces are organised like petty dictatorships.

Workers have to obey rules and instructions or face the sack. Public criticism of management is usually forbidden: for ex-

ample, striking baggage handlers in Ryanair could not talk openly to the media.

The drive for flexibility puts increased stress on workers.

**Performance**

Managers crack down on tea breaks and sick leave and start to nit pick about workers' performance.

"Trouble makers" are singled out and their work

is monitored more closely than others.

Where a job is unionised, the employers can be forced to cut out the worst excesses of bullying. But capitalism is a competitive system.

The demand for profit will always be put before workers' health and welfare unless we organise to end the present set-up.

**Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace** by Lucy Costigan  
Columba Press IR£7.99

**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 Thursday 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.

**ENNISKILLEN**  
Meets every fortnight Contact national address for details

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

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

**WATERFORD**  
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in

ATGWU Hall, Keyser St.

**DUBLIN NORTH-WEST**  
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in The Snug, Dorset St.

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

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

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

**DUBLIN PORTOBELLO**  
Meets every Wed at 8pm in O'Connells Pub, Richmond St.

**DUBLIN RATHMINES UPPER**  
Meets every Mon at 8pm in O'Connells Pub, Richmond St.

**DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL**  
Meets every Thur at 8pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse St.

**DUBLIN TALLAGHT/CLONDALKIN**  
Meets Monday at 8pm in the Steering Wheel, Clondalkin

There are Socialist Worker members in:  
**ATHLONE; COLERAINE; LIMERICK LURGAN; CAVAN; DONEGAL; NAAS; KILKENNY; DUNDALK; ATHLONE; DROGHEDA.**  
Contact our national office at (01) 872 2682, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

**Public Meeting As Tony O'Reilly funds Fianna Fail: THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM TODAY**  
Terry O'Dea's Pub Mulgrave Street Limerick  
8.00pm Wednesday 17th June

**Socialist Worker Public Meetings:**

**1798**



**Year of Revolution**

- **DUBLIN: Thursday June 18th, ATGWU Hall, Middle Abbey St**
  - **BELFAST: Wednesday July 1, Garrick Bar, Chichester St**
  - **DERRY: Tuesday 30th June, Sandinos Bar, Water St**
  - **GALWAY: Thursday 2nd July, Currans Hotel, Eyre Sq**
  - **CORK: Tuesday 23rd June, Metropole Hotel**
  - **WATERFORD: Thursday 25th June, ATGWU Hall, Keyzer St**
- All meetings start at 8.00pm

**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

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# News & reports—politics; the unions

send in your reports: telephone (01) 872 2682; fax: (01) 872 3838; e-mail: swp@clubi.ie

## Zoe Developments

# On strike for a decent pay rise

**FORTY two bricklayers at Zoe construction company are on strike for a 64 percent pay increase.**

The company has offered a 23 percent increase but the workers say that it is not good enough.

They want to bring their wages up to the rates paid in other building firms.

"Zoe has seen the price of its apartments jump by 200 percent in the recent period so they have plenty of money to pay their workers" one striker told *Socialist Worker*.

The dispute was originally referred to the Labour Court but it refused to adjudicate on it as even Zoe's offer completely breached the Partnership 2000 agreement.

"This shows the reality be-

hind all the talk of social partnership. The employers are making obscene profits but we are supposed to be stuck on tiny increases. We feel fully justified in taking action so that we make sure that we get a share in the wealth we help to create" one of the strike leaders from BATU said.

Zoe have decided to break up into three companies—Zoe Ltd, Dillinger Properties Ltd and Crossman Properties.

### Redundant

Many workers believe this is a ploy for the company to make half of its 360 workers redundant.

Zoe are furious about recent union gains and will use every dirty trick in the book against its workforce.

The company have also hired a PR company Drury

Communications to help refurbish its image.

It has been planting stories in the press that the bricklayers are earning £750 a week. But as one worker said,

"We would be more than delighted to take the £700 and give back the company £50 a week".

Tragically, the SIPTU officials have told the labourers to cross the pickets of the bricklayers.

The union just got into Zoe after a public outrage developed over the death of James Masterson at the Ringsend site. But labourers on the sites are still being paid a miserable £4.40 an hour.

Instead of encouraging workers to break the picket lines, SIPTU should be encouraging the labourers to come out and advance their own demands.

## BBC

# BECTU strike against privatisation

**BBC workers in Belfast and Derry took part in a national strike over pay rates and privatisation on Thursday 4th June.**

Lively picket lines of BECTU union members outside the BBC buildings in both centres ensured a solid strike. Many programmes had to be replaced with re-runs of old quiz shows.

One striker in Belfast said, "This has been building up for years. Technical staff have seen sections have their staffing lev-

els cut by half. It's just a continual push to work harder and undercut our wages."

The BBC plans to transfer technicians into a separate company, called Resources Ltd, which workers believe will pave the way towards privatisation.

The decision depends on the Labour government giving the go ahead and BECTU have planned a lobby of MPs on June 9th. The BBC are also planning to drop automatic salary increases for new staff.

"We were very pleased with the turnout," BECTU chair Willis McBriar told *Socialist*



*Worker*. "Hardly any of our members went to work and we were pleased at the support given to us by many National Union of Journalists members who refused to cross the picket line."

## Public Sector workers

**BALLOT results for the craft and general workers in local authorities and hospitals are due in from mid June.**

Workers originally demanded a substantial pay increase because their 'analogue payments' had fallen behind.

However the Labour Court recommended they only get their increase if they gave major productivity concessions.

For general workers these involved agreeing to move to other hospitals in a health board area if they were requested.

For craft workers it meant an acceptance of multi-skilling so that they would work as 'jack of all trades'.

A major rank and file rebellion has emerged over the issue and high votes against the deal are expected. However the union leaders have mounted a major campaign to pull a Yes vote.

SIPTU union leaders have tried to denounce the Socialist Workers Party for causing the discontent.

But at meetings in Tullamore

and in Blanchardstown, they were given short shrift when they engaged in this red baiting.

The reality is that many workers have already given massive productivity and are not interested in being duped again.

"The SIPTU leadership are very nervous. They firstly hid the deal from the membership for nearly a week. The SWP were right to circulate copies of it around the hospitals."

"The officials may be able to swing some of the branch committees to join in a campaign of attacking socialists. But on the ground workers are more interested in who is telling the truth about their conditions." In the craft unions, the leaders were in a weaker position.

But they got a few shop stewards in Dublin to issue a statement supporting the deal and made sure that Pdraigh Yeates, the union officials favourite industrial correspondent, got it printed in the *Irish Times*. Few workers were fooled however by this sad manoeuvre.

### Planned

The union leadership in Britain called off a planned second strike day on June 9th, as talks began with BBC management. Union leaders claimed that the Thursday strike "had achieved everything that we wanted it to."

But the BBC has only agreed to talks. It is also clear that the BBC won't accept the unions demands after one day of strike action. During a similar dispute in 1994, the BBC dragged out negotiations for two months.

A striker at the BBC in London argued, "We have to escalate the action. All out action during the World Cup would soon make BBC management and the government have a rethink."

"The mass meetings on every site have been vital in building the one-day strikes. BECTU officials should now call another round of meetings to argue for the sort of escalation that can win this dispute quickly. That means an all-out strike."

## TEAM

**WORKERS from TEAM have refused to be bullied into allowing TEAM to be sold off.**

Fifty-nine percent of TEAM workers rejected a £54.4 million offer from the Danish company FLS, for letters of guarantee which assure them of continued employment with Aer Lingus.

These letters of guarantee say that the workers have a right 'to remain a member of the Aer Lingus staff' until they retire.

If the sale to FLS goes ahead it is almost certain that many TEAM workers will lose their jobs.

Management are now trying to blackmail workers into accepting the deal by threatening to liquidate TEAM if workers refuse to accept.

However as one team worker said "management threats have only strengthened our resolve not let the sale happen".

Management are saying that TEAM in its current form is no longer a viable enterprise and must be sold in order to stay more competitive. But it is working with the order books 80 per cent full for the next two years.

### Figure

TEAM maintenance work for Aer Lingus has been deliberately undervalued. The maintenance bill was £53 million in 1993 but it has declined to half that figure today.

Artificial accounting is being used by both managements at TEAM and Aer Lingus to drive home their plans to privatise both companies. The workers at TEAM should begin a major campaign against the government blackmail.

They should not accept any idea that Mary O'Rourke is pro-union. Instead they should take to the streets and begin a loud protest against the threat of privatisation.

They should also make firm links with Aer Lingus workers because if TEAM is privatised the airline is next.

## Iceland

**THIRTY shopworkers, members of MANDATE, are on strike at Iceland in Ballyfermot for basic rights.**

The Welsh multinational—which has 750 non-union stores in Britain—has kept the workers on 8 hour contracts for anything up to two years of employment.

This has led to the company ignoring the law with respect to the workers' statutory entitlements.

Only five of the forty staff are full time. There has been very limited holiday entitlements. One worker employed since December has only received two days holiday.

"How are we supposed to get loans for a house, when all we can point to is an eight hour contract?" said one worker. And it means they can cut the hours of people they see as being un-

ion activists.

"There's also the Health and Safety issue. The law says we can elect our own rep but the company has said the store manager is the rep."

"Just how dangerous that is was shown when we had a fire here and no-one had been trained to use the extinguisher. And there were pallets in front of the fire exit."

The company is expanding in Ireland and has just opened a new shop in Thomas St. in Dublin.

The workers have hit the one shop hard, with a solid strike forcing the shop to close at the cost of between £16,000 and £20,000 for Saturday's takings.

But if the company digs in, using the resources of its huge parent company, then the workers will have to take the picket up to the new store.

## Ballybrack:

# Left behind by the Celtic Tiger

by DAVID O'SULLIVAN

**THE DUN Laoghaire Rathdown Council has spent £250,000 drawing up the five year draft development plan which excludes Ballybrack.**

They have consistently failed to provide services like a local library which has been promised for years.

There are now 1,600 waiting to be housed in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown area.

This is up from 1,300 last year. Yet the council has done nothing to address this. They are planning to house just 160 this year.

They recently rezoned the whole of Ballybrack to remove density limits on housing.

There is little enough space left as it is but the council want to cram even more people in.

The number of houses being built in the Cherrywood site in Loughlinstown increased from 600 to over a thousand because of this rezoning.

This means less for the people who live there and more profits for the property developers.

Because there are no local authority houses being built, property developers are making a killing while working class people can't afford the houses that are being built.

The council has built 30

houses on the Wyattville road. But they were built by a company which used a subcontractor to do the bricklaying for cash in hand.

This same thing also happened the Leopardstown road where two local workers were sacked after they asked to be employed on a PAYE basis by Clonmel Enterprises.

Rumours continue to circulate in Ballybrack of a prominent councillor supplying the names of subcontractors to building companies.

The Celtic Tiger has been created by working people yet, as the example of Ballybrack shows, this boom has not filtered down to workers.

## Telecom

**THE BALLOT on the ESOP share deal in Telecom is set to take place around the end of this month, preceded by general meetings.**

The ESOP is being presented as a breakthrough for partnership in the workplace, with Communications Minister Mary O'Rourke being applauded for "making it happen".

But Telecom are still withholding the 2.5 percent pay increase due since last November under Partnership 2000. One Telecom worker told *Socialist Worker*:

"The company magazine tells us cheerfully that we will

get last year's 2.5 percent this November along with the 2.25 percent which then falls due.

"They say the double payment of 4.75 percent will 'almost offset' the 5.3 percent pension payment we will have to pay under ESOP.

### Payment

"But P2000 is a stand alone deal—it's not meant to offset anything. Telecom are the ones using the pension payment to offset our P2000 entitlements."

Telecom should be forced to pay up before any ESOP is agreed.

But the ESOP itself is a bad deal. Workers will only get the shares if they agree to

widespread flexibility—longer opening hours; cuts in overtime payments, travel and subsistence plus another 2,500 job losses.

"The union leaders are trying to hide the open ended commitment to change contained in the Telecom Partnership document. The 5 percent portion of the 15 percent share will only be handed over as change is 'verified'."

"But the changes don't stop with what is contained in the document—we will have to agree to ongoing change when the company deems it necessary."

"If we accept ESOP, they will have us over a barrel for years to come—that is why we should vote No."

## HOME HELPS

**THE HOME Helps for decent wages campaign continued on June 2 with a picket of the Southern Health Board executive at the County Hall in Cork.**

Around fifty home helps and supporters attended.

Home Helps are employed by the regional health boards and their pay rates are set differently by each of these.

They care for elderly and disabled outpatients and are of-

ten the major point of contact their patients have with the outside world.

Yet the health boards have set pay rates of as little as £1.70 an hour for this vital service.

Mary Arrowsmith, a spokesperson for the home helps addressed the health board meeting.

She called upon the board to negotiate with the ATGWU, the union which represents the majority of home helps.

But the health board refused this request insisting that they would only deal with SIPTU, even though only a small number of home helps are in this union.

The health board also stated that their final offer was to be a puny 30p rise to £2 an hour.

In response the Home Helps stepped up the tempo of the picket launching a loud and proud chant of "LOW PAY. NO WAY".

Eventually, because of the noise of the picket the Health Board were forced to cancel the meeting altogether.

The home helps will continue to picket health board meetings until their demands are met.

They are seeking an interim payment of £3 an hour until the introduction of the £4.40 an hour minimum wage. Home helps in other areas are now expected to organise and join in the campaign.

## CIE

# Train drivers set to strike

**IARNROD Eireann's 350 locomotive drivers are set to take industrial action from 28 June.**

The call has been made by the National Locomotive Drivers Committee (NLDC)—a rank and file body representing most of the drivers in both SIPTU and the NBRU.

The NLDC organised a successful one-day stoppage last year.

The drivers are demanding movement on a stalled pay and conditions package.

"We work seven day weeks for up to 40 weeks a year. We want a package that gives us back some quality time," one driver told *Socialist Worker*.

"We are also demanding movement on pay that reflects our skill and responsibility."

If the company has not adequately responded by the deadline the NLDC will call a meeting to organise action that is likely to include a series of one-day strikes.

The loco drivers' demands have been on the table for three years.

Since then CIE have come back with a "Viability Plan" throughout public transport looking for cuts, flexibility and privatisation.

Another driver told *Socialist Worker*, "Management and the unions think we are bluffing, but we are determined. We have issued an ultimatum and will not hesitate to act on it."

# Socialist Worker

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## MINIMUM WAGE INSULT

# ASK TONY BLAIR IF HE COULD LIVE ON £3.60 AN HOUR

**COULD you live on a wage of £3.50 an hour?**

That's the figure the Low Pay Commission recommended for the minimum wage. It works out at a take home pay of £117 for a 38 hour week.

Tony Blair doesn't think he can live on that. His £105,223 a year works out at over £53 an hour and his super rich wife gets almost double that.

The elected members of the Northern Ireland assembly will be getting around £30 an hour.

Sir Colin Marshall is one of Tony Blair's favourite bosses. As head of the bosses organisation, the CBI, he demanded a figure of 'between £3.50 and £3.60 an hour as the minimum wage and Blair obliged. Yet Marshall gets a grotesque £232 an hour.

The minimum wage figure is an insult to tens of thousands of workers across the North.

They had hoped that Labour could make a real difference to their lives. But £3.60 an hour is still

poverty wages.

Behind all the talk of an 'historic breakthrough' after the referendum, Northern Ireland's bosses want to keep it that way.

The reason why the US Commerce Secretary William Daley came here with a delegation of 17 businessmen has nothing to do with congratulating people for voting left in the referendum. They want to use the sectarian divisions that exist to keep wages down so that profits flow to the multinationals.

The major parties who are standing for the Northern Ireland assembly have little interest in challenging this state of affairs.

When Gerry Adams was feted as a great hero in Wall Street, none of the multinational bosses were too worried that he would encourage workers to organise picket lines in West Belfast to insist on their right to a £5 an hour minimal wage.

We need a different set of politics in Northern Ireland which puts class politics to the fore. We should be telling the union leaders to organise protests to condemn Blair's insult.

**...one of his bosses gets £232 an hour**



Sir Colin Marshall, head of the CBI, demands low pay