

# Socialist Worker

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# Refugees must have the right to work!

RECENTLY a young African man was beaten by a gang of white racists who called him a monkey.

Yet no one has yet been convicted of organising these attacks. When the assaults are reported to the Gardai, little is done.

Responsibility for the racist atmosphere must rest with a government that has tried to label refugees as "spongers".

Justice Minister O'Donoghue has even claimed that 90% of refugees who come here are bogus.

As the racist attacks increase, O'Donoghue washes his hands of responsibility and issues hypocritical condemnations.

It is a bit like Paisley saying he has no responsibility for the violence that follows his sectarian ranting.

■ TURN TO PAGE 3

# STOP THE DEPORTATIONS

# Hundreds wait a year for heart ops

**THE Department of Health is closing hospital wards over the summer in order to save money.**

In the Mater Hospital in Dublin, 45 beds have been shut down until October for budgetary reasons.

But while Fianna Fail ministers engage in this penny pinching, hundreds are waiting in fear for their lives for heart operations.

The figures on the cardiac

waiting list have just been released in reply to a Dail question.

They show that 1,412 patients are waiting for cardiac surgery and 909 of these have been on the waiting list for over a year.

## Figures

The figures include 46 children, some of whom have life threatening illnesses.

Meanwhile the Irish Nurses Organisation has warned of an

impending staff crisis. Many are leaving nursing or emigrating because of the terrible conditions they face.

One of the main grievances of nurses is that the health boards are refusing to give many of them permanent jobs. Instead they try to use contract labour or agency nurses.

These cuts in the health service result directly from the policy of successive governments of slashing taxes on the rich.

# Virgin flies in to low-tax Ireland

Virgin Express, the Brussels-based low-cost airline, is planning on moving to Ireland. It wants to transfer its headquarters and employment contracts to Ireland, while continuing to fly most of its scheduled services out of Belgium. The reasons for the move show just why Ireland has become a paradise for the multinationals.

Virgin Express is leaving Belgium because of what it termed "excessive government and union interference", something it doesn't see as a problem in Ireland. This expectation will be con-

firmed by the Ryanair report. Virgin Express, 51 per cent of which is owned by Richard Branson's Virgin Group, is hoping to increase its profits in the move. In Belgium social charges represent 37 per cent of employees salaries where Irish firms only pay 9 per cent.

Virgin also know they will pay very little in taxes. Previously the low corporation tax rate of 10 percent only applied to manufacturing and international service companies, but under new plans all corporate profits tax will be harmonised at 12.5 percent in the next few years.

## SAVE THESE HOSPITALS

WITH the closure of the Meath, Adelaide and Harcourt Street Hospitals, the people of the South Inner City have been left without adequate health services.

We need a hospital in this area now before people die. The opening of Tallaght hospital masks the huge cutbacks in hospital services in Dublin.

There will be 100 fewer beds in Tallaght than were in the three closed hospitals combined.

The hospital has to deal with the enormous areas of Tallaght, Clondalkin, Terenure, all of the South inner city, in addition to parts of Kildare and Wicklow.

To add insult to injury the former Adelaide Hospital is being advertised in the papers as a prime location for property development.

There was no need to close this hospital or any other. They could have been kept open in addition to Tallaght Hospital.

A demonstration is being organised at 5pm, on Thursday 23 June outside the Meath Hospital and marching to the Department of Health, Hawkins Street.

# GET YOUR PAY CLAIM IN

**THE PRESS and the government have gone hysterical about the pay claim of the teachers union, the INTO.**

But the teachers have every right to make gains in a booming economy which is

the fastest growing of all the industrialised countries.

## Purchase

Like thousands of other workers, teachers can no longer afford to purchase a house after prices rose by

another 15 percent last year.

Those who are renting accommodation can now pay around £250 a month for a room in Dublin.

No one should accept the argument that the Gardai are a special case.

Yet they were allowed to

come back and get a second rise after their two day blue flu campaign.

## Argument

Even the miserable Partnership 2000 contains a clause nine which states that

if economic conditions change, either the employers or workers can press for adjustments.

Workers in both the public and private sectors should use this to the full to put in catch up claims to meet the rising costs.

# Now soldiers join in the pay revolt

**DISCONTENT in the Irish army is at an all time high following Defence Minister Michael Smith's announcement of the closure of barracks.**

The soldiers' union PDFORA is now considering placing pickets on a variety of government buildings.

"Smith gave us an election pledge that there would be consultation on the closure of barracks. But he just railroaded it through without consultation.

"We could have to move as early as September — but there has been no negotiation on compensation for the extra travel", one soldier told *Socialist Worker*.

## Morale

Morale in the army is at an all time low after Smith ran a campaign to turn the public against the deafness claims of soldiers.

"Smith held soldiers up to ridicule to cover over for the fact that a series of reports since 1979 warned against government negligence.

"At least 85 percent of those

deafness claims were genuine because each year we have to do hearing tests. You are graded H1, H2, H3, or H4. When you got the lowest score, you knew you had a claim."

The soldiers have also watched as the pay levels of nurses and Gardai have risen in recent years. They have been told that they have no right to go on strike. But the same restriction does not apply to the Gardai who got the blue flu.

At the moment negotiations are still going on about payments to soldiers under the old Programme for Competitiveness and Work.

A soldier's pay is normally made up of the basic rate plus a military service allowance for unsocial hours.

But now the government is proposing to scrap this allowance for periods when soldiers are on duty for less than 24 hours and give them a general increase instead. But the new increase will still leave the soldiers behind comparable groups.

The vast majority of non-commissioned officers are drawn from working class backgrounds.

They have to put up with terrible accommodation and are subject to heavy discipline.

This is why they deserve the support of every socialist and trade unionist for their claims.



Soldiers turning their back on the government?

## GIVE THEM THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

**IF soldiers carry out their threat to picket government buildings, they could face arrest by the military police and be charged with public agitation.**

Although we are supposed to live in a democracy, the ruling class rules the army like dictators.

They want working class soldiers at their beck and call so that

they can be used to protect their wealth.

One example of this is the Wicklow ambulance strike.

The army was sent in to break this important group of workers even though they were willing to give emergency cover.

Soldiers have also been used to break strikes by busworkers and corporation workers.

In future, they could be used

to deal with radical activity.

Soldiers took a major step forward when they formed their own union PDFORA.

But now they should fight for the right to act like a real union.

That means being able to protest on the issues that concern them today and to object to being used as blacklegs against their fellow workers.

## Tell Clinton to decommission

Bill Clinton says he is visiting Ireland in September to "underscore support" for the Belfast peace agreement.

He should be told to cut the hypocrisy and start decommissioning his own huge weapons stock instead. Today the US is the largest supplier of weapons in the world. Last year its budget for its own arms rose to a staggering \$256 million.

The cost of this huge war industry is borne by ordinary Americans. Money which could go to hospitals and schools, is wasted on weapons. No wonder the US has the highest infant mortality rate in the industrialised world.

Clinton says this firepower is necessary to keep the world "safe for democracy". In reality, it is used to defend the profits of huge multinationals.

Clinton's main ally today in Latin America is the Colombian regime. It gets half of all US aid that goes to the continent. But according to Amnesty International, this gangster regime is also the worst violator of human rights in Latin America.

Clinton is using his Irish visit to don the mask of a statesman for peace. But he presides over a government that promotes violence for profit.

# Sellafield threat is now 30 times worse

**RADIOACTIVITY levels on the east coast are now thirty times greater than they were four years ago.**

This has happened because of Sellafield's increased emission of a substance called Technetium-99 into the Irish Sea since 1994. Technetium-99 has a half life

of 213,000 years, so it will continue to contaminate the coastlines of the Irish Sea for thousands of years to come.

## Industry

For years British nuclear bosses and politicians have claimed the British nuclear industry was safe.

When the Chernobyl disaster happened in 1986, the Tories blamed it on Russian "inefficiency" and claimed such an accident could not happen in Britain.

Now the Labour government has been forced to announce the closure of the Dounreay nuclear plant in Scotland and 100 MPs have backed a motion to ban nuclear emissions

in Britain.

The Irish government has dragged its heels over Sellafield. Joe Jacob, the junior minister responsible, says we have to be "realistic" and accept that the plant will not close overnight.

But Sellafield is like a timebomb ticking away and could yet produce a disaster far worse than Chernobyl.

## what we think

# REFUGEES MUST HAVE THE RIGHT TO WORK Stop the deportations!

**REFUGEE organisations have responded to O'Donoghue's attacks by launching a campaign for the right to work.**

At present they are forced to live on social welfare because the government denies them the right to study or seek employment while they are waiting for asylum applications to be processed.

The campaign has won the support of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed, Trocaire and one hundred other organisations.

Even right wing politicians like Liz O'Donnell have backed the call for a change in the law.

She knows that there are skill shortages in Ireland's booming economy and wants to use immigrant labour to fill them.

### Request

But the Fianna Fail dominated government has turned down the request to give refugees the right to work.

O'Donoghue even claimed that "Ireland attracted a disproportionate number of refugees in recent times".

This is simply a lie.

Less than 1 percent of refugees coming to Europe arrive in Ireland.

The few thousand who come here are a drop in the ocean compared to the estimated 100,000 Irish 'illegals' who were encouraged to go to the USA in the eighties.

Today there are fewer refugees living in Ireland than there are Irish emigrants in Munich in Germany.

O'Donoghue has also announced that he is going to deport more refugees. Many of these will be sent back to the countries which tortured them or threatened their lives.

### Opposition

O'Donoghue's callousness was shown in the case of Samir Lakhelf.

This Algerian man was about to be deported in July until the High Court quashed the expulsion order.

Samir was a member of the main opposition party in Algeria, the FIS which has been banned by the military government.

Several of its members have been imprisoned or assassinated by death squads.

Samir's father was jailed for three years and his brother has disappeared.

After the police came to

Samir's house in March 1996, he fled.

Yet O'Donoghue wanted to send him back to the butchers who run Algeria.

The truth is that Fianna Fail are using refugees as

scapegoats for the bitterness in Irish society.

### Corrupt

Thousands of working people are sick of the corrupt politicians and the fail-

ure of the Celtic Tiger to deliver real gains.

This is why it is crucial that we win the argument that the real spongers in Irish society are the wealthy elite who bribed politicians like Haughey and Burke to get

special favours.

We can start to turn the tide on the racism of the Irish state, by helping to build the Anti-Nazi League *Rage against Racism* carnival on August 22nd.



■ The Anti Nazi League organising against racism

## It's right to resist sectarian siege

THE Garvaghy Road residents were subject to a violent siege by the Orange Order to force them to submit.

During the height of the campaign of terror, workplaces in Portadown reported a ninety percent absentee rate.

Many knew that their resistance would lead to further attacks on individual Catholics when they went into Portadown at night.

But still they said NO to bigotry and intimidation.

Even when SDLP Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon tried to get them to accept an Orange march they still refused.

Some will label this intransigence. In fact, the residents of Garvaghy Road understood the real

nature of Orangism.

Behind the myths about "cultural rights" the marching season always brings murder and violence.

This year the victims of sectarian hatred were the three little boys in Ballymoney, Richard, Mark and Jason Quinn.

Their distraught mother was absolutely right to say their deaths had "everything to do with Drumcree".

### Neutral

If the siege of Garvaghy Road had happened to a black ghetto in America or a Jewish neighbourhood in Russia, every socialist would have given the besieged their full support.

Yet tragically many sections of the labour movement adopted a neutral

stance on Garvaghy Road.

The Northern Committee of the ICTU did not condemn the sectarian siege.

In the South, Labour and Democratic Left gave no support to the resistance.

Even the Socialist Party TD, Joe Higgins, spoke about a "conflict of rights".

But racism or sectarian bigotry will never be defeated by making concessions to it.

The defeat of the Orange Order shows that the people of Garvaghy Road were right to resist.

Everyone who stands for class politics in Northern Ireland should now recognise that it is only by resisting Orangism that workers unity between Catholic and Protestants can be forged.

## RAGE AGAINST RACISM

**STOP RACIST ATTACKS!  
STOP DEPORTATIONS!  
GIVE REFUGEES THE RIGHT TO WORK!**

March and Carnival  
Saturday August 22nd

Featuring:

Canice & Brian Kinealy  
of Engine Alley

Heavy Flow

The Chicks

Happy City  
Samba School

Rumble

King Sativah

Yemanja

Admission Free

Assemble Garden of Remembrance  
Parnell Square 2.30pm March to Temple  
Bar Music Centre

Speakers include: PATRICIA McKENNA (MEP);  
MOHAMMAD HAJI (Assoc of Refugees and Asylum  
Seekers); SENATOR DAVID NORRIS; TOM McCANN (Irish  
Travellers Movement); CAROLANN DUGGAN (SIPTU);  
Speaker from STEPHEN LAWRENCE CAMPAIGN

Called by Anti Nazi League



# news of the world

## United States

# Striking workers humble car giant

### STRIKING GENERAL Motors workers in the United States continue to humble the US car giant.

The seven week long strike by just under 10,000 workers in Flint, Michigan, has laid off nearly 190,000 other GM workers.

GM's North American operations are at a virtual standstill.

The company is beginning to feel the pinch.

The action has so far cost GM over \$1.2 billion.

The company announced last week that its profits for the second quarter of 1998 fell by 81 percent as a result of the strike—but the bosses still made \$389 million profit.

### Muscle

What is more, the workers' muscle is affecting the US economy as a whole.

Industrial output in the US fell by 0.6 percent in June as a result of the strike.

The bosses' *Financial Times* predicts the strike will cut 1 percent off US GDP.

The dispute is now a major confrontation with the workers' United Auto Workers' union (UAW).

Negotiations have so far come to nothing.

GM bosses are talking tough, saying they will ride out the action.

GM bosses were to go to the courts this week to try to get the strike declared illegal, make the strikers return to work and get the unions to take part in arbitration.

The issue at the heart of the strike is job security.

For years the leaders of the UAW have accepted job losses and management hiking up productivity in order to make the company more profitable.

Jobs have been savaged as a result.

Now workers in Flint, the home town of GM, are angry that investment promised for one plant has not been delivered.

They say this means GM is to shut the plant.

"They've downsized so

much they have us working like dogs," says striker Charlene Stewart. She is a mother of four and has worked for GM in Flint for 25 years.

"We're getting older," Charlene says. "And a lot of us already have repetitive strain injuries."

"I am happy this has come to a head now," says another striker. "GM promised us \$350 million in investment in new machinery."

"They promised us new work. They haven't done any of it."

### Effect

The strike is already, in effect, an all out strike.

Yet there were further blows to GM bosses recently.

The 7,200 workers at GM's plant in Spring Hill, Tennessee, voted overwhelmingly to request authorisation to strike.

And there are talks between the union and the company at two other plants because the workers are also threatening to strike there.

The GM dispute is one indication of growing working class militancy in the US.

Many US workers will be watching the outcome of the GM fight closely.



■ The strike has brought General Motors American operations to a virtual stand-still.

## Nigeria

# Revolt against dictatorship

### RIOTS BROKE out in many of Nigeria's cities when news broke that the main opposition figurehead, Mashood Abiola had died in prison—possibly murdered by the regime.

At least 55 people died and over 400 were arrested as the police and military attacked protesters. The regime has now been forced to promise elections in May but many want them sooner.

In a letter written just before he died, Abiola said, "I was like a man put in an open grave".

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country with over 100 million people. Since independence from Britain in 1960 military dictatorships have ruled for more than two thirds of the time.

The present military ruler, General Abukar took over in June after the death of General Abacha.

The military have been able to hold onto power because the oil companies cooperate with them. More than £12 billion in oil is pumped out of Nigeria every year. Nigeria is now the fifth largest supplier of oil to the American market. Its light low sulphur crude is highly desirable for unleaded petrol and aviation fuel.

### Profits

But the profits are used to boost Shell, Chevron and Mobil and to pay off the generals.

The result is that Nigeria is the thirteenth poorest country in the world despite its natural resources. One in five children die before they are five

years old.

Abiola won the fairest elections in Nigeria in 1993 and should have become President. His freedom became a central issue for most Nigerian democracy groups. But he was no radical.

He was a former friend of the military and achieved great wealth after he joined the US telecommunications company ITT.

This company was one of the most corrupt in Africa. Its infamy was marked by the popular singer Fela Kuti's song; ITT: International Thief, Thief".

The elections of 1993 only occurred because Nigerian workers had grown increasingly militant and the generals were forced to allow a ballot.

When the military leader General Babangida refused to accept a win for Abiola

and annulled the result, it acted as a flash point for years of hatred against the government. As riots and strikes broke out, Abiola called for the fighting to stop.

### Gunned down

When he returned to Nigeria in 1994, he was imprisoned. His weight fell by six stone in a year — a factor that may have contributed to his heart attack. One of his wives, Kurdirat, was gunned down in 1996 in a roadside ambush.

Throughout all these events, the US and Britain made limp protests. UN General Secretary Kofi Annan even tried to persuade Abiola to give up his democratic claim on the Presidency just before he died.

As always the Western powers were more concerned about oil profits than democracy in Africa.

### CLASS STRUGGLE OR ETHNIC DIVISION

Media commentators claim that Nigeria will break up along ethnic and regional lines. The divisions between the ethnic groups are certainly a major factor in Nigerian politics.

But they are far from centuries old. One recent academic study pointed out that "the vast majority of people who now know themselves as Yoruba did not do so in 1900. Originally the word referred to just one Yoruba grouping".

Now however the ruling elite is encouraging ethnic and regional differences in the hope of fracturing the opposition. In the longer term they risk a repeat of the Biafran civil war in the 1960s when many died.

But at the high points of class struggle, ethnic divisions have been overridden by a sense of unity.

In 1993, many civil servants in the Hausa speaking north joined stoppages that spread from the southern region of the country where Abiola had his base.

During the 1994 oil strike 150,000 workers struck for two months. They were joined by up to four million other workers and in some areas there were signs of workers setting up committees to take over basic economic functions as the strike hit. Even the British bosses' magazine *The Economist* noted that "for a start it cuts across ethnic lines".

The real hope for Nigeria is that workers' action become the key to toppling this brutal dictatorship.

# AFTER THE DEFEAT AT DRUMCREE...

# Why the Orange Order is in crisis



■ Orangemen make a lonely protest

"To tell you the truth, I'd rather be doing the gardening then coming here, to the House of Orange, day after day, night after night, to deal with this'. This is what David McNarry, a member of the Orange Order's new strategy committee told the *Belfast Telegraph*.

It reflected the demoralisation that has spread throughout the Orange Order after the defeat at Drumcree and the murders of three young boys at Ballymoney. The signs of a crisis are everywhere.

"The parade through Belfast was smaller this year than for many years previously.

"It used to take about three hours to pass a certain point.

"This year it only took an hour and a half' one observer told *Socialist Worker*.

Even though Orange leaders expected 15,000 at a protest rally in Portadown only 2,000 turned up.

Hundreds have already resigned from the order in disgust and new splits are opening up with the hard-line Spirit of Drumcree Group.

The most immediate reason for the crisis has been the shock over the murders of the Quinn family.

In the past, the "respectable" Orange leaders could whip up bigotry during the marching season—and then disown the violence which followed.

But not any more. The Orangemen could only force their march down Garvaghy Road by initiating a campaign of violence throughout Northern Ireland.

So on the Carnary estate where the Quinns lived loyalists built a barri-

**But today the majority of Protestant workers in urban areas want to reach an accommodation with their Catholic neighbours.**

cade in support of Drumcree and had sent bullets to Catholic families in the area. In all over one hundred Catholic families were driven out of their homes during the week of Drumcree.

This type of violence has happened before. In 1969, Orange mobs killed eight Catholics and injured hundreds of others.

Yet the Order did not fragment.

The difference today is that there are important pressures from the top and from the bottom of society.

## Prestige

Firstly, the ruling class has put its prestige and credibility on the line with the Belfast agreement.

This agreement establishes the political structures which, they believe, will create stability for multinational capital.

In the longer term the British ruling class want to cut the £3.6 billion annual subsidy that has turned Northern Ireland into a "workhouse economy".

They believe that if the armed conflict is displaced onto economic competition between Catholic and Protestant workers, Northern Ireland could become a low pay enclave that will

attract investors.

A defeat at Drumcree would not only have destroyed their longer term plans—but also weakened their credibility in the eyes of workers well beyond Northern Ireland.

Secondly, the mood among the majority of Protestant workers has diverged from the leadership of the Orange Order.

The Orange Order is based mainly in the respectable Protestant middle classes who stand to lose most from a settlement that creates a space for their Catholic counterparts.

One key group of its supporters are those employed in the security industry. If Northern Ireland had the same police force as Kent—which is its equivalent in population—there would be 3,000 in the RUC.

Yet at present there are 11,500 on high wages.

This embittered middle class and the rural fundamentalists in Armagh and Antrim are the backbone of the Spirit of Drumcree Group led by Joel Patton who have pulled the Orange Order to an ultra right wing stance.

But today the majority of Protestant workers in urban areas want to reach an accommodation with their Catholic neighbours.

What that accommodation means may not be very clear. But they want an end to the violence—and a significant minority also want an end to their own manipulation by the "fur coat" brigade.

The divergence is shown sharply in opinion polls.

The Orange Order in Portadown voted by 94% against the agreement but in the urban areas 57% of Protestants voted for it.

The crisis in Orangeism is similar to the crisis the Catholic Church faced in the South in the late eighties.

This institution was so used to getting its way in the past, that the first experience of defeat provoked splits and demoralisation.

In a similar way the defeat of Orangeism at Drumcree, will create major openings for socialists among Protestant workers.

## CAN THE ORANGE ORDER REVIVE?

EVEN before Drumcree, the Orange Order was a declining force. Its membership in 1969 was 120,000.

Now it is estimated to be just 40,000 strong.

The revolt of Catholics combined with the decline in Orange manufacturing companies means that lodges can no longer give their members access to jobs or houses.

One executive officer of the Orange Order, George Patton inadvertently captured the decline when he described walking as "the primary expression of our culture".

But this does not mean that the Orange Order could not revive in a more virulent form.

The new cabinet that is

formed from the Northern Assembly will preside over a huge level of attacks that can only add to the present insecurity of Protestant workers.

The fact that the SDLP and Sinn Fein are in that cabinet could give the Paisleyites ample propaganda to explain the crisis in terms of Catholics making further inroads on Protestants.

Only a strong socialist movement can point to an alternative where all workers, Catholic and Protestant can gain.

This why a network of socialists in Protestant areas is the key to defeating the bigots who will want to fight the battle of Drumcree over and over again to restore their claim to supremacy.

## Protestant, socialist and fighting

The republican movement has written off Protestant workers as one reactionary block. It argues that Catholic workers should form an alliance with the right wing US elite and Fianna Fail in the South rather than forge a class unity with Protestant workers.

But it is a myth that a left wing movement has never been built among Protestants.

After the unemployed riots of 1932, hundreds of Protestant workers joined James Connolly Clubs and the Independent Labour groups. Led by Robert McVicar they marched to the grave of James Connolly in 1934 and pledged themselves to act as "the vanguard of Protestant workers".

During the Second World War nearly 2,000 people joined the Communist party in Northern

Ireland. At the same time Ireland's first small Trotskyist group was formed in East Belfast and distinguished itself by supporting an apprentices strike in Harland and Wolff.

In the early sixties the Northern Ireland Labour Party won significant support among Protestants.

The tragedy was that the left wing movements among Protestants never challenged Orangeism. The Communist party, for example, captured the leadership of a number of unions—but then invited Paisley and other bigots onto platforms over hospital closures or other local agitations.

As a result, socialist influence was easily crushed when the sectarian temperature was increased.

What is needed in Northern

Ireland today is a socialist organisation that opposes Orangeism with the same determination that it fights racism.

Such an organisation needs to be thoroughly secular—it needs to be able to point to its record of fighting any sign of "Rome rule" in the South. It cannot have any allegiance to either state in Ireland - it must fight for an end to the "carnival of reaction" that came from the creation of two sectarian states. Above all it must advocate the most militant and revolutionary activity by workers to show that socialism is not a dream but a practical necessity.

This is the basis on which the Socialist Workers Party is launching major recruitment campaign to win many more Protestant workers and socialists to our ranks.

# Socialist Worker special report

# Voices of resistance from where the Nazis ruled



COUNCIL WORKERS on strike in Vitrolles recently gather outside the town hall

## HOW THE 'BROWN PEST' WON VOTES

VITROLLES lies just a few miles up the motorway from Marseilles, the second biggest city in France.

It is one of a string of overspill towns developed in the 1970s bordering the Etang de Berre, a lake around which an important industrial zone had developed.

Oil refineries, a cola plant, a Euro-copter factory and food processing plants line the area.

The old village of Vitrolles, a typical small southern French town, lies at the top of the hill.

### Soulless

Further down lies the new town, which is very different.

A concrete and soulless shopping and commercial centre is surrounded by districts of housing estates, all linked by a succession of anonymous roads and roundabouts.

People were attracted to Vitrolles by the promise of jobs and a new, more prosperous life.

The promises proved false. Unemployment and insecurity soared during the 1980s and 1990s.

For years the council was run by the Socialist Party, France's equivalent



KARINE: "Many people are fed up with the established political parties"

of the Labour Party.

In the 1980s the Socialist Party under President Francois Mitterrand ran the national government.

The Socialists bowed to the dictates of business and presided over soaring unemployment, savage public spending cuts and a growing feeling of betrayal and despair.

### Web

At national and local levels Socialist Party politicians sank into a web of shady business deals and corruption.

The Nazi National Front railed against established politicians, and talked of the need to tackle unemployment, rotten housing, insecurity and corruption.

And it blamed all the problems on immigrants.

For years the left failed to either chal-

lenge the Nazis or do anything about the social conditions they fed off.

As a result the National Front was able to build a significant electoral base, especially across southern France from the Italian border to Marseilles and its suburbs.

Today it routinely wins over 30 percent of votes in much of the region.

Vitrolles was fixed on several years ago by Bruno Magret, the ambitious deputy leader of the National Front (he hopes to succeed its ageing leader Jean-Marie Le Pen) as a testing ground.

Last February the Nazis achieved the breakthrough they had been working for when they won control of the council.

The result shocked millions across France, and was the spark that ignited the surge of anti-Nazi protest that has grown over the last year.

Sitting in the Socialist Party headquarters, Laurent, a young activist, argues:

"In Vitrolles the key reason for the National Front success was that it was a vote against the old Socialist Party council."

VITROLLES IS a small town near Marseilles in Southern France.

A year ago elections there sent shock waves across the country, when the Nazi National Front won control of the town hall.

It was the fourth council in the region the National Front had won, after Toulon, Orange and Mariagnane.

Vitrolles has a special significance, both for the Nazis and those fighting them.

The mayor is the wife of Bruno Magret, deputy leader of the National Front and the real power behind the council.

Almost every area of life was affected by the Nazi victory in Vitrolles.

People who once said good morning to each other in the streets now shunned each other, wondering which way they voted.

The National Front's racism has particularly sharp effects for some.

"There has been increased harassment of Arabs. You shouldn't exaggerate, but it happens," says Pierre, a member of the local Socialist Party.

The council has made a series of symbolic changes. It would like to go much further in its racism and repression but is constrained by the council's limited powers.

The most grotesque move is the attempt to introduce a "birth bonus", under which white French families get a £500 bonus when they have a child.

### Masked

Billboard posters with a smiling white baby advertised the racist scheme, though anti-Nazi activists quickly defaced the posters by adding a Hitler style moustache.

And at least one local white woman has already returned the racist bonus, saying she could not accept it "and still look myself in the mirror".

The National Front is not simply a racist party. It also targets workers' organisation.

During a national lorry drivers' strike earlier this year the strikers set up a blockade and picket line near Vitrolles.

In the middle of the night a group of masked men attacked the pickets

**PAUL McGARR visited Vitrolles recently to investigate life under the Nazi council, and to talk to people fighting back**

with iron bars.

A certain Patrick Buncl is under official investigation over the attack. He is the Nazi head of security in Vitrolles.

The Nazis have renamed the town as Vitrolles-en-Provence. The reference to the province of Provence is designed to send a message about defending "French" culture against "immigrant" influences.

The council has renamed the town's Nelson Mandela Square as the Provence Square.

It has also launched a particularly savage assault on community and cultural associations.

A key victim was the Submarine music cafe in the town centre. The official reason for the closure was security.

But everyone knows the real reason was that it was the centre of a lively multi-racial youth culture. Money has been diverted from community groups and used to hire municipal police.

These are just like normal police and armed, but under council control. Francoise, a council worker who is an activist in the CGT union, says, "The atmosphere has changed. There is fear and paralysis, although there is also resistance."

But the attacks from the National Front are only one side of Vitrolles. The majority of people in the town are not racist.

Some 1,500 people joined the anti-Nazi demonstration in February in the town to mark "one year of the brown pest".

Last week in nearby Toulon the Nazis lost their only parliamentary

seat too. In the parks and streets of Vitrolles mixed groups of black, white and Arab children play together.

In the cafes and bars, especially those where young people gather, there is a multi-racial culture.

Much of the National Front support, as it is nationally, is among older, lower middle class people.

There are many anti-Nazi organisations in France. Among young people in Vitrolles the Ras L'Front (Fed Up With The Front) anti-Nazi organisation is particularly active.

It has organised demonstrations, stunts and anti-Nazi postering around the town. It also produces the red triangle badge which has become for many the symbol of anti-Nazi resistance.

Everyone involved in the anti-Nazi resistance in Vitrolles agrees that, while the National Front gets a big vote, it is much weaker when it

comes to its strength on the ground.

The town is a no-go area for the Nazis and certainly not enough to create a climate of break those opposed to them.

At the Calcaire Social Centre the south of the town anti-Nazis line the walls.

Said, a worker there proudly, "We've become a centre of resistance to the National Front."

Upstairs in a small room Calcaire is Run Provisoire, a community radio station run by K and some friends.

"We are on every day around 10.30 and around 3p also Sunday evenings. Our audience is mainly young people."

"We do not have a discussion education. We also have 'Press reviews' which is hard anti-fascist, exposing the National Front."

Back in the town centre a group of women met in a room. Genevieve, Anne and Simon lived in the town for years involved in the Vitrolles Dem Movement (MVF).

"We organised a meeting the day after the elections. 70 people came. We knew to do something."

"The worst day was when Magrets were inaugurated. Y him on the town hall balcony. You just cried."

"But since then there have been series of mobilisations which that show we are anti-fascist a real force."

The women proudly we anti-Nazi resistance. "I'm not frightened of the union but in the town we are in the CGT group of activists. Communists are busy organising."

They, along with the CFT ion, linked to the Socialist Party a strike by council workers next day.

The workers are fed up with job cuts, the budgets and the loss of private from the council.



**'OUR CENTRE has become a centre of resistance to the National Front.'**

Since the election the resistance has really developed. It's not political parties in the forefront but ordinary people organising.

Sometimes there are too many leaflets and not enough discussion with people, such as going door to door.

Here in Vitrolles I'm realistic that it's a hard fight, but also very positive that we can win and kick the National Front out."

SAID, a worker at the Calcaire Social Centre in Vitrolles

# Report from Vitrolles in France

# Resistance

## A failure of politics

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THE NAZI council promised a "birth bonus" to "French families"

Francoise, a CGT activist, argues, "There are many poles of resistance to the National Front in Vitrolles. Now we are working to try and make links between them."

"The forces of the left are definitely growing here. I don't ask if we can win."

"I look at the immediate tasks and then what we have to do."

The next day over 150 council workers walked out on strike, gathering directly in front of the town hall.

It is a marvellous blow against the Nazi council, and points to the power of workers—black, white and Arab—to turn the tide.

Corine, a community worker in the CFDT union, explained, "We have already been on strike twice

since the election. Today we are out in solidarity with the other council workers."

A group of primary teachers arrive to join the protest, swelling the numbers in the town square.

"We are on strike today as part of a national day of action for primary teachers over conditions," explains Nichole.

"But we are also here to support the council workers on strike."

"We have to fight the National Front."

Vitrolles is a terrible warning of the Nazi danger in France—and for elsewhere.

But the striking workers and anti-Nazi activists in the town also point to the potential to crush the Nazis and change the sick society they feed off.

THE SOCIALIST Party (similar to the Labour Party) in Vitrolles has sought to reinvigorate itself since the council election defeat.

It has distanced itself from the old guard and attracted many new activists who really want to fight the National Front. As a result it now has over 300 members in the town.

"Many people voted for the National Front last year because they wanted to censure the old council. Now we've got a new team and are trying to take up issues that really concern people, like housing and poverty," argues Pierre.

Pierre also explained how the election of a new Socialist Party government in France last year had changed the atmosphere: "Many people have a new hope now."

Those national elections saw the Tories swept away and the Socialist Party ride to victory on the back of

the strikes and protests that have hit France in recent years.

In Vitrolles that mood, and the wave of anti-Nazi feeling, has also had an effect. In recent departmental (county council) elections the Socialists beat the National Front in the town.

### Bows

The continuing pressure from below in France has forced the national government to give some reforms.

But locally and nationally the Socialist Party remains committed to running the existing system and bows to pressure from the bosses.

In Vitrolles the Socialist Party activists tend to see the problem as mainly one of the "old team" in the party.

They are reluctant to see the Nazi growth as being rooted in the wider failure of the politics of their party, of refusing to mobilise workers to fight for real change



## Fight for change to defeat Le Pen

"We need real socialist politics, not what we get from our Jospin or Britain's Tony Blair!"

We have to fight to change society, for real improvements to people's lives. We have to fight to win the 35 hour week and for jobs, and push the government to deliver on its promises on these. Unless we change people's lives like that we won't stop the National Front."

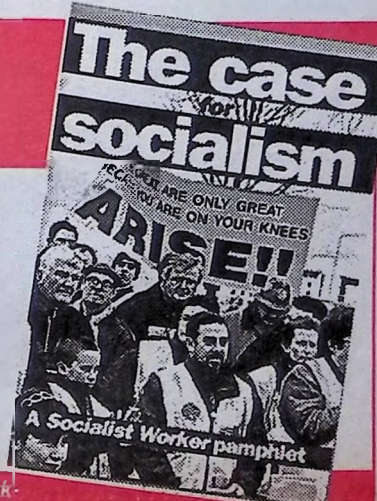
■ FRANÇOISE, a CGT union activist in Vitrolles

## New edition out now!

Millions of people want a better society—but how would it work and how would we get it? This book explains what socialism would be like and where socialists stand on trade unions, sectarianism, racism and fascism, women's and gay liberation, the state, internationalism and much more.

It reveals a genuine socialism, fiercely opposed not only to the madness of the 'free market' but also to the discredited Stalinism that once dominated Eastern Europe and the feeble 'socialism' of parties like Labour and Democratic Left.

£2 from Socialist Worker paper sellers, SWP branch book-stalls or plus 50p from SW Books, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8



## FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE START OF THE COLD WAR

# Why Eastern Europe was never socialist

**F**IFTY years ago in 1948 the Cold War began. The world was divided into two opposing camps, the communist bloc that lay behind the "iron curtain" and the "free world".

But behind the myth there were two ruling classes who had built their military power by exploitation.

The USA and the USSR originally fought as allies during the Second World War. Together they drew up plans to ward off the type of revolutionary upheavals that had followed the first world war.

At conferences in Potsdam and Yalta Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt made secret agreements which carved up Europe between their respective countries. Each Great Power was given a free hand to establish its "sphere of influence" and to defeat any upheavals.

In 1944 for example, Stalin agreed with Churchill that Greece should be in the British "sphere of influence".

This was despite the fact that Greece's Communist-led resistance movement—known as the EAM—had fought the Nazis and was now—with two million members—in effective control of the country.

When British troops arrived in Greece, EAM was brutally disarmed and the country was treated as an occupied territory.

Former Nazi collaborators were put into powerful positions and an unpopular king was returned to the throne.

Even though thousands of EAM members were imprisoned, Stalin ordered the Communist Party to comply. The Greek movement was sacrificed in a bargain that gave Stalin a free hand in most of Eastern Europe.

**I**n Poland in August 1944, as Russian troops advanced behind retreating German troops, a socialist inspired resistance movement launched a rising in the capital, Warsaw.

But Russian troops halted their advance and refused to intervene to assist the rising. They watched as Nazis burned and massacred the uprising.

Stalin wanted his troops to take over a defeated population that his local Communist agents could dominate. He was happy therefore to watch Hitler do the dirty work for him.

Stalin used the Red Army to create a ring of compliant states around the USSR. His strategy was to dominate them economically and to use them as a buffer against any possible Western military action in the future.

*The Communist Parties across Eastern Europe were very weak, and with the exception of Czechoslovakia lacked mass support.*

Under Stalin's orders their strategy was to form broad coalition governments—and they were not fussy about who they joined up with.

In Bulgaria the CP entered a government headed by General Kimon Georgiev, whose far-right military coup in 1934 had abolished parliamentary rule and made trade unions illegal.



■ During the Prague spring in 1968 students and workers rose against Stalin's tanks

Elsewhere the CP sought liberal and social democratic partners.

Everywhere CPs used the Red Army to "persuade" their coalition partners to give them control over the police and army. These were the crucial centres of state power.

Once they took government office the Communist parties grew rapidly. Careerists, bureaucrats and even some former Nazis joined in droves.

In return for unquestioning obedience to the party bosses, members were given access to scarce resources in these devastated economies.

These included the homes and lands of ethnic Germans who were expelled from areas like the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia.

*The Cold War began after the US introduced the Marshall Aid plan, aimed at drawing the economies of Western Europe closer into its orbit. US officials encouraged the expulsion of Communist party members from governments in Western Europe and during the Italian election of 1948, its navy patrolled the Mediterranean as a warning against voting communist.*

Stalin introduced similar measures on his side of the Iron curtain. Over the course of 1947 and 1948 the non-Communist "allies" in the coalition governments were removed and the Russian satellites were christened "People's Democracies".

The local Stalinists used their control of the security police to intimidate their opponents

Their methods included show trials, torture and censorship. But there was also a carrot: offers of rapid promotion

helped produce a loyal and obedient layer in the government bureaucracy.

With the levers of power firmly in Communist Party hands, a series of coups were launched against their erstwhile coalition allies and extensive nationalisation of property took place.

These actions were taken without the mass involvement of the working class movement.

**T**he one exception was Czechoslovakia where the CP manipulated a series of armed demonstrations to give the appearance of sizeable support.

But the core of the insurrection was 6,000 armed police who were mobilised to take over key cities.

Russian troops massed on the border. A one hour general strike was called to support the action. Police and CP loyalists beat up workers who refused to participate.

In Yugoslavia the communist regime of Marshall Tito was established by a different route. Tito had been a loyal and enthusiastic Stalinist who had murdered Trotskyists and other left wing dissidents

But he had come to power at the head of a national liberation movement that had defeated the Nazi army. Unlike in the rest of Eastern Europe, his regime had not been installed by Stalin and so was not beholden to Russia.

He resisted Stalin's demand that Yugoslavia be economically subordinated to Russia.

When Tito moved to form a union

of Balkan states to stand up to Russian demands, the Yugoslav Communists were suddenly accused of every imaginable crime by Stalin's propaganda machine.

*Russia's rulers eventually reconciled themselves to the loss of Yugoslavia but they were terrified that elements within the East European Communist Parties might follow Tito's example.*

The heat was now turned on anyone in the Communist Party who might question the line coming from Moscow. "Purges" and show trials saw masses of loyal lifelong CP members imprisoned or executed.

Tragically many left wingers at the time accepted the notion that the Eastern European countries were socialist or were "deformed" workers states.

The one Marxist classic which challenged this argument was Tony Cliff's book *State Capitalism in Russia*.

*Marx had argued that socialism could only come from the self-emancipation of the working class. Yet workers had played little or no role in the transition in Eastern Europe.*

Challenging the notion that Eastern Europe was socialist however had wider implications.

These countries had after all the same social structure as Russia itself. There were nationalised industries and state direction of the economies.

How could you argue that Eastern Europe was not socialist and still claim that Russia was a worker's state that had to be defended?

Cliff answered this by arguing that all vestiges of the Russian Revolution had been obliterated when Stalin con-

solidated his power during the five year plans in the late 1920s.

**S**talin represented a class of bureaucrats who had become the real rulers of Russia. Their aim was to build up heavy industry so that Russia could compete militarily with the West.

This required the suppression of all remaining worker's rights and the seizing of land from the peasants through forced "collectivisation".

The aim was to squeeze as much resources from the population as possible to fuel the breakneck industrialisation of the economy.

Cliff argued that Russia's rulers exploited the workers every bit as intensively as bosses in the West.

The difference was that whereas much industry was privately owned in the West, in Russia it was all owned by the state. Far from being socialist, the country was organised on a variant of capitalism—state capitalism.

*Eastern Europe was merely an exact replica of Stalin's state capitalist Russia. It showed that the key was not the amount of nationalised property—but whether or not there was genuine worker's control over industry.*

Nearly ten years ago, the communist regimes of Eastern Europe collapsed. Nowhere did workers intervene to defend the nationalised property.

If ever there was confirmation that these states were state capitalist and not socialist, that was it.

by KEVIN WINGFIELD



**Eamonn  
McCann**

## Struck dumb by Mowlan

**There is a connection between the intellectual emptiness of New Labour and the refusal of Mo Mowlam to face up to entrenched Orange bigotry.**

The connection was exposed on the day the Drumcree stand-off began, when the *Observer* published the results of an investigation revealing members of Blair's inner circle as little more than wide boys on the make.

"Old Labour" was anything but a shining example of selfless idealism, but it was never surrounded by as sleazy a cabal of spivs and cheats as the "lobbyists", "special advisers" and snake-oil salesmen around Blair and Brown.

**Similarly, Old Labour at least had a point of view on the Orange Order and the North.**

It hardly amounted to a radical or sharply-focused approach, but in theory at any rate it was generally opposed to sectarianism and to organisations whose raison d'être it is to encourage and celebrate one community's sense of separateness from the other. By and large, Old Labour was against that sort of thing.

But not Dr. Mowlam, as far as we can tell. She misses no opportunity to reassure "the Orange" that their traditions are not just respected but revered in the marble halls of New Labour. Next week or month, of course, it will likely be the turn of "the Green" to be told that New Labour dotes on their aspirations as well.

### Against

**New Labour cannot say what it is against because, on the North as on so much else, it doesn't know what it's for. New Labour is an empty vessel into which, from time to time, almost any ideological concoction can be poured.**

The day after the foul murder of the Quinn children in Ballymoney, Mowlam issued a statement, published prominently and in full in the *Irish News*. She declared: "I was asked on Sunday what I would say to the Orangemen who believe they are making their last standing (sic) on the hill at Drumcree.

"My message remains that they should not fear for their traditions and culture..."

What she didn't tell them was: "Go home". Even though to say this would have been no more than to say they should obey the law. Even though by this stage David Trimble and the Co. Armagh Orange chaplain, the Rev. William Bingham, among many others, had told them to go home.

Mowlam couldn't bring herself to go that far. Over the previous week, as Orange Order supporters poured unhindered into Portadown every evening to crank up the threat to the people of the Garvaghy Road, the NI Secretary, a woman who sometimes says plenty when she has nothing to say, was apparently struck dumb.

She had no direct comment to offer on the medieval melodrama being played out nightly at Drumcree, involving guns fired and blast-bombs thrown at the police and a banner erected in the field proclaiming in foot-high letters the gathering's objective of making "Croppies Lie Down".

The whole world, it sometimes seemed, had a view on the matter. But the New Labour Minister supposedly in charge ambled around her castle at Hillsborough, possibly finding solace in her mantra that right and truth in Northern Ireland lies exactly mid way between what she and her ilk call "the two traditions".

### Mutant

And all she could contribute when she finally emerged from purdah was to reassure the Orangemen that their culture was safe—this on the day after a mutant strain of the same "culture" had incinerated three children!

**But perhaps we should expect no more from the representative of a government which, as we now know from "lobbyist" Derek Draper, is run by "17 key people", all of them yuppie snots ruining good suits.**

Their venality and opportunism on union rights and privatisation, their utter lack of principle with regard to arms sales and foreign policy, their sleazy love-in with Rupert Murdoch, all this is of a piece with their policy on the North, which consists of little more than shepherding the proles into the corals of their "own" communities while flogging off the economy to fat-cats. (Or "encouraging investment" as it is sometimes laughably described.)

The fight for a decent settlement in the North is best approached as part and parcel of a general fight against the class treachery of New Labour.

film

# Revolutionary of the cinema

**SERGEI Eisenstein, one of the greatest film directors of all time, was born to a wealthy Russian family in 1898.**

But the 1917 Revolution released him from the conformism of respectable society and gave him his political, artistic and personal freedom.

At the age of 19 he volunteered for active service in the Red army even though his father fought with the White army.

Eisenstein first worked in the radical theatre movement, *Proletkult*, but later moved to cinema.

In 1925 he was commissioned to direct a film commemorating the revolution of 1905.

The film was originally to be an eight-part epic covering the events of the entire year but while filming in Odessa, he decided to limit the film to only one incident—the mutiny of the crew of a battleship.

### Remarkable

The result was *The Battleship Potemkin*, one of the most remarkable films in the history of cinema.

Eisenstein put human beings firmly at the centre of the film.

Revolutionary fervour spreads from the sailors to the people of Odessa and then to the navy fleet who lets the mutineers' ship pass.

Eisenstein shows brilliantly how the ordinary people of Odessa were caught up in an event of historic importance, that had the potential to change their lives forever.

We see the brutality of the Tsarist troops in the slaughter on the Odessa Steps.

This episode dis-

by **SINEAD  
KENNEDY**

played a horrific violence that was unprecedented in silent film making and it quickly became the single most important sequence in world cinema.

To accompany Eisenstein's visual brilliance Edmund Meisel wrote a highly original score that broke decisively with the "pot-pourri" tradition of film music.

The film attracted huge audiences across the world, although in most countries, it was highly censored.

It became a rallying point for left-wing political activity through screenings in worker's clubs and political meetings.

One writer of the time, Volkov, explained the genius of Eisenstein in *Potemkin*: "He knows that the revolution is not a personality but the masses, and he seeks a language to express emotions of the masses".

Eisenstein's cinematic achievements were part of a general explosion in art and culture that followed the revolution of 1917, a fact usually ignored by critics.

**Special Screening of Potemkin in Temple Bar Square, Dublin, Saturday July 25th.**



Eisenstein during the making of *The Battleship Potemkin*

tv

## Big Women: a big disappointment

**THE WRITER Fay Weldon has recently been hauled on to every chat show and news programme to justify her flippant statement that rape was not the worst thing that could happen to a woman.**

Ironically she is the writer of a drama series *Big Women* which traces the feminist movement in Britain from the 1970's up to current times.

Weldon is a post feminist. In her opinion it's no longer

"cool" to fight discrimination, we're supposed to be beyond that.

Not surprisingly the main protagonists in her TV series are portrayed as stupid, back stabbing dilettantes.

The series is set in Medusa press, an all female cooperative publishing house. The house's opening ceremony is a witchlike ritual where all the members dance around naked.

Layla, is a rich, beautiful long legged sister who has a tendency to go off with all the other sisters' partners.

Her main competitor is Stephanie who leaves Medusa when it goes commercial and sets up her own magazine cooperative, called Menstra.

Then there is Zoe, a misunderstood housewife and budding writer who commits suicide. It is not clear whether this is because Medusa has turned down her book or because her husband burns her only copy.

Weldon defends the se-

ries by saying it shows the sacrifices involved in fighting for the ideals of the time.

The only problem is that you have no sense of these "ideals". The series certainly gives no sense of the reality of fighting for the right to work, the right to equal pay, or the right to control your own body.

The writer has completely lost the plot. There is no social context provided at all. The series concentrates on the insular context of the Medusa publishing house, and a script packed with crazy man-hating diatribes.

There were enormous limitations to the feminist movement.

The few benefits gained were only felt by the middle class women who comprised the movement. For working class women little changed.

Now Fay Weldon has painted a ridiculous picture of the movement, at a time when a decent analysis could have been both useful and far more entertaining.

—UNA O'LAOGHAIRE

journal

## Return of Marx

**FOR YEARS media commentators and academics told us Marx's writings had nothing to tell us about the modern world.**

Now many of those same people are admitting that Marx may have got it right.

Marx's comeback is the theme of the New issue of *International Socialism* the quarterly journal of the Socialist Workers Party in Britain.

Lindsey German's excellent article puts the case for the relevance of the *Communist Manifesto*

today.

German's article is both an ideal introduction for anyone reading the Manifesto for the first time and an inspiration for others to return to it.

German argues that the Manifesto's importance lies not only in its descriptions of the way capitalism works, but also because it is a revolutionary guide to action.

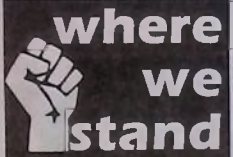
Also in this issue Judy Cox tackles some of the most common questions socialists are asked.

Why do people accept ideas pushed by our rulers? Can peoples ideas change?

Cox shows how Marx's theory of alienation can provide a material explanation for the hold of ruling class ideas and how they can be undermined.

There are articles on Marxism and Science, modern art, and the origins of Blair's New Labour. These articles are not dry academic texts but vital tools in the struggle of socialists to change society.

by PAUL MURPHY



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.

## DUN LAOGHAIRE HARBOUR

# SINK THE MARINA

**IT DOESN'T come much more arrogant than this. For years, hundreds of local children in special summer projects have used Dun Laoghaire harbour for cheap canoeing and water activities.**

These projects are now under threat from a multi-million pound plan that will turn almost all the harbour into a luxury marina.

The watersports activities in Dun Laoghaire are so popular with local summer projects that places are booked up weeks in advance.

### Angry

Lelia O'Reilly, chairperson for Dun Laoghaire Summer projects, is angry.

The plan to provide £5,000 mooring berths for wealthy yacht owners will, she says, cut out the "only place with public access". The children from Ballybrack, Shankill and Dun Laoghaire will be squeezed out. "There wouldn't be space to run the facilities."

A green picnic area, a boat storage yard and the coal harbour piers are to be turned into car parks for the yacht owners.

Yet a couple of years ago the Chartered Institute of Transport in Ireland described Dun Laoghaire as "saturated" with

cars. Now it's beyond saturation.

Paul Nash, of St Michael's rowing club, also actively opposes the plan.

Speaking at a street protest against the marina he described the plan as a threat to "seventy years of our maritime heritage."

The rowing club which was founded early this century faces extinction if the plan is allowed to succeed.

Its one hundred and fifty members will have nowhere to practice because there are no plans to give alternative accommodation.

Other clubs such as the local boy scouts will also lose out.

The PAYE workers who will lose from the marina, will end up footing most of the bill. Already £3 million of public money has been stumped up by the government. This taxpayer's money will build facilities for the rich.

It is a very different story when it comes to facilities for local working people. The local council has closed the public baths and the Blue Pool has been privatised.

The marina is part of a general strategy of turning Dun Laoghaire into a resort for the rich and famous.

According to David O'Brien, editor of sailing magazine Afloat, "it could be like La Rochelle if Dun Laoghaire could get its act together."



Protestors demonstrating against the Marina at Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown council's AGM

## Working class people will not be wanted

**THE IRISH rich are very confident today. Many of the yacht owners are drawn from the 60,000 households who are now earning over £100,000 a year.**

There has been a massive redistribution of wealth in the Celtic Tiger. But it's a redistribution in the wrong direction.

The rich have pushed property prices through the roof with investments that gave them tax free profits.

The rich may be confident but they are not unbeatable. When a privatised marina was proposed in 1989, it was defeated by local opposition.

### Developers

This is why the developers have repackaged their proposal, promising to include local people and local clubs in any development.

Seamus O'Scollain, a former member of Dun Laoghaire Interim board, even claimed that the marina would "increase public access". But contrary to the hype, the opposite is true.

As Paul Nash says "it leaves no room for the people of Dun Laoghaire." Promises by the developers have nearly always been renege upon.

Opposition to the project is

mounting. The planning permission granted for the first two phases of the project is currently being appealed to An Bord Pleanála.

Public meetings opposing the marina have been held and a noisy protest by local people gathered outside Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown council's AGM on July 13th.

Now a Harbour Day of Action has been called for Sunday August 9th assembling at 4pm at the Green at Dun Laoghaire.



- Collect petitions against the marina in your workplace/area.
- Help to publicise the March on August 9th at Dun Laoghaire Harbour.
- Call the Dun Laoghaire Harbour Campaign at 2844217 or write to 8 Clifton Terrace, Monkstown, Co. Dublin.

## A harbour built out of protest

**DUN LAOGHAIRE** harbour is itself the product of public pressure, according to local maritime historian John de Courcy Ireland.

Before the harbour was built there was little settlement in the area apart from a small fishing hamlet.

The waters were made treacherous by fierce easterly gales.

A huge disaster which claimed over 400 lives in 1807 prompted a local campaign led by a retired Norwegian sea captain to open an asylum harbour.

A nine year campaign of what Mr de

Courcy Ireland describes as "petitions and argument" wrested funding from Westminster parliament.

Work began on the "asylum harbour" in 1816.

The harbour came first, the town grew later, he says. He opposes the new marina and the threat to local clubs including St. Michael's which he says, by teaching local children to row, "gave tremendous value to the children of poorer areas."

To save the harbour as a public amenity, it is time once again "for petitions and argument".

### SWP branch meetings—all welcome

**ATHLONE**  
Meets every fortnight. Contact (01) 872 2682 for details

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

**BELFAST SOUTH**  
Meets every Weds at 8pm, Queens University Students Union Club Room. 29th July: Has feminism gone too far or not far enough? Speaker: Nuala McNamee; 5th Aug: Globalisation: Can we resist the market, Speaker: Paul Smyth

**CORK**  
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Dennehy's Pub, Cornmarket St. 30th July: 150 years on, The relevance of the Communist Manifesto, Speaker: Michael

O'Sullivan; 6th Aug: What do marxists say about the state? Speaker: Dave Black

**DERRY**  
Meets every Tues in Badgers Bar at 8.00pm.

**DUN LAOGHAIRE**  
Meets every Tues at 8.30pm in Christian Institute. 28th July: The Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx, Speaker: Richard Boyd Barrett; 4th Aug: Lenin and the Revolutionary Party

**ENNISKILLEN**  
Meets every fortnight. Contact (01) 872 2682 for details  
**GALWAY**  
Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square 30th July: Can Protestant and Catholic workers unite?

Speaker: Paul Smyth; 6th Aug: Why do we need a Revolutionary Party? Speaker: Kate Martin

**LIMERICK**  
Meets every fortnight. Contact (01) 872 2682 for details

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

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

There are Socialist Worker members in:  
**BRAY; CLARE; DONEGAL; DUNDALK; DROGHEDA; KILKENNY; LURGAN; OMAGH; ROSCOMMON; SLIGO; TRALEE**  
Contact our national office at (01) 872 2682, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Dorset St. Wednesday 29th July 8.00pm PUBLIC MEETING: The Celtic Tiger and Poverty, Speaker: Brid Smith, St Brigid's Community Centre, Church Avenue, Blanchardstown Village.

4th Aug: State and Revolution, Speaker: John Kavanagh

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

28th July: How can workers change society; 4th Aug: 1798 and the year of Revolution

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

**DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL**  
Meets every Wed at 8:30pm in Conways, Parnell St.

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

**DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL**  
Meets at 8.30pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse St.

Wed 29th July: Race and Class—Why we need a revolution to end racism, Speaker: Melisa Halpin; Thurs 6th Aug: Their democracy and ours.

**DUBLIN TALLAGHT/CLONDALKIN**  
Meets Monday at 8.30pm in the Jobstown Community Centre, Tallaght

27th July: Is there a National Culture? 3rd Aug Will there always be booms and slumps?

### JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

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

Name .....

Address .....

Phone .....

# News & reports—politics; the unions

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

## AMBULANCE DRIVERS NATIONAL STRIKE

# 'Management are guilty of criminal negligence'

Ambulance drivers have voted by a huge margin of 376 to 58 to call a national strike in support of their colleagues at Wicklow.

The stoppages are due to take place on July 29th and August 5th. After that an all-out strike in the ambulance sector is scheduled.

Nineteen Wicklow ambulance drivers have been on strike for over two months in an important dispute that has implications for the rest of the ambulance service.

The dispute began after a new ambulance base was opened in Arklow at the cost of £310,000. But there was little discussion with the workers on the staffing levels.

"We are all for an ambulance base in Arklow but we need the proper staffing levels" one worker told *Socialist Worker*.

The workers are demanding that new jobs be created in Arklow to run the service.

### Rostering

They object to a rostering system whereby they would only get 8 weekends off in the year compared to the present 14.

"At the moment the service in Wicklow is only run because we are called in when we are off duty. You can imagine what is going to happen when they open the Arklow base"

Throughout the strike management has attempted to blacken the names of the strikers.

But support in Wicklow is overwhelming. Collections have been organised in most jobs—including even the local Garda station. Many shops display a poster in support of the drivers.

"This management is guilty of criminal negligence. When the Tour de France passed by here, there should have been a professional ambulances service" one worker said.

"Legally there is a cardiac situation every time more than 5,000 people congregate. But management relied on the army who do

not have the proper training.

"Last week, for example, it took them an hour and a half to deal with a case near the Wicklow gap.

"They are doing everything to break us but they will not succeed."

The ambulance service has a strategy of moving to small bases—so the Wicklow strike has important implications.

The government will try to whip up a press hysteria against the workers during the national strike.

But workers should stick to their guns because it is the management who have provoked this situation.

## TEEU

# Lift strikers going up for £35 pay rise

A STRIKE by 150 lift mechanics started on Monday 13th July. All the workers are members of the TEEU.

They are fighting against a coordinated agenda by eight elevator companies to cut back on their pay and conditions. One of the key shop stewards in the strike told *Socialist Worker*, "IBEC are playing dirty tricks.

They have united all the employers against our claim for a £35 pay rise. This represents a breakdown of what they are trying to take back from us."

After a victorious strike in 1982 the same group of workers won payment of a meal allowance, an hour's travel time and overtime in holiday pay. These are the conditions that the employers are trying to claw back.

And a Labour Court recommendation has conceded to the employers demands. One of the workers put it like this, "There is no motivation in working for multinationals like Schindler and Otis.

"They just want and want and want. We fought hard and won our pay and conditions and we won't give in to their greed."

Pickets are well organised and the strike committee is made up of one steward from

each of the following companies - Schindler, Otis, C.J. Boyle Lifts, Industrial Logistics Ltd, Irish Lift Services, Pickering's Ltd, Ennis Lifts and Mid-Western Lift Services.

In Ballymun Towers the workers employed by Pickering's have been out for two weeks now because of the suspension of a colleague and on the pay issue. But they are providing emergency cover and ensuring that at least one lift is operating in each tower.

### Attacks

Their action has led to savage attacks by the media on the strikers. But as one local told *Socialist Worker*, "In 1982 during the lift strike the residents of the Towers picketed the home of the owner of the company who controlled the lift service.

"I remember it as a kid. He lived in a posh house in Santry and hundreds of us marched up and down outside his house telling him to pay the workers.

"That sort of solidarity is what is needed today and not the divisions that the media and the bosses would try to stir up.

TEEU strikers believe they are in for the long haul but are well prepared for it. One of the pickets told *Socialist Worker*, "I have never seen us so united before. We are closer and better organised even than we were in 1982 and we won that one."

## Train drivers

Train drivers are planning further action. This follows a near total shutdown of Inter City services on Sunday 12th July. They are demanding progress on their claim for pay and conditions.

That day's action was called by the rank and file National Locomotive Drivers Committee.

Negotiations on the drivers' demands have been stalled for a year while Iarnród Éireann has come forward with its demands under a Viability Plan.

Iarnród Éireann management and union leaders had denounced the action as the work of "mavericks".

However the Loco Drivers Committee answered these smears with a magnificent display of solidarity. It proved that the NLDC represented the real mood of the drivers.

Of Irish Rail's 360 drivers less than thirty turned up for work. Most of these work the DART network in Dublin which has separate conditions.

Only three or four drivers turned up for work on the main line and there were no scheduled Inter City services.

### Guarantee

One driver told *Socialist Worker*, "The National Loco Drivers Committee had warned the company that unless real negotiations began on our grievances we could not guarantee rail services after the end of June.

"The company and union officials thought we were bluffing. Well, we proved that we mean business."

The National Loco Drivers

Committee has now demanded guarantees from the company, unions and LRC that talks will resume as promised on August 17th and continue until the matters are resolved. If no such undertaking has been given by 26th July further action will be taken.

Such action could mean a shut down of services over the August 3rd bank holiday.

SIPTU official Tony Tobin has sent threatening letters by registered post to Brendan Ogle and another member of the National Loco Drivers Committee.

Tobin demands they sever their links with the rank and file body or face expulsion from the SIPTU committees to which they have been elected.

Tobin also hints that further action will be taken against Brendan Ogle.

Ogle was previously threatened with disciplinary action by SIPTU officials but hundreds of drivers made it clear they would not accept this and the official was forced to back down.

These disgraceful threats to union activists are a serious development. The NLDC by taking action on behalf of drivers have shown the way to fight while officials like Tobin have been too willing to accept much of the company's agenda.

Union officials must not be allowed to get away with this sort of intimidation. Any disciplinary action against Ogle or others must be met with a campaign throughout the whole of SIPTU that clearly tells union officials they should be organising the fight against the employers not attacking union activists.

## Ryanair Report:

# Attacks on unions planned

DURING the Ryanair dispute, the company claimed its staff "earned more money, had more time off and better benefits than their equivalent numbers in Aer Lingus or Servisair".

But a report into the dispute compiled by the former leaders of the ICTU and IBEC, Phil Fynn and Dan McAuley "does not support the contention". In other words, it recognises they were lying.

This single statement is the only worthy point made in a report that has been deliberately delayed until the height of the holiday season.

Its level of bias is extraordinary. The word "lock-out" is never mentioned in connection with Ryanair. Sixteen groups of non-union employees were met by the enquiry—but at nearly all the meetings Ryanair's legal advisor or head of personnel accompanied the groups. How workers were supposed to speak freely while their personnel manager was present is never explained.

During the enquiry, five union members on probation were sacked—despite Ryanair's pledge of no victimisation. The company refused to hand over full personnel files when requested by the enquiry. Yet instead of openly attacking the company, the report merely calls for another detailed inquiry into the cases.

More dangerously, the report prepares the ground for a new attack on

the unions on two key fronts. Firstly, on the issue of union recognition, it introduces the idea of a limited role for unions which could serve as a model for other companies.

Under this scheme unions would function as professional representatives who could only have "the right to make representations to an employer on behalf of its members about grievances ... on an individual basis"

Instead of collective bargaining, there would simply be individual case work. Instead of a right to hold meetings and organise ballots for action, the union would function like lawyers.

In order to achieve even this representation, unions would have to commit themselves to binding arbitration.

### Moderate

This proposal contrasts with the moderate measures currently being introduced by the Blair government in Britain. The White Paper Fairness at Work proposes that a union must be recognised when a majority of those in any bargaining unit vote for it—provided more than 40% of those eligible vote.

The British proposals are restrictive—in effect they mean that abstentions are counted as a no vote—but they are miles ahead of the proposals in the Ryanair report. The irony is that Ryanair in Britain may be compelled to recognise unions—while this report will be used to limit the scope of union activity in Ireland.

The report makes no mention of sanctions against Ryanair—such as paying back the huge state subsidies it received. But the pretence of balance is dropped with a demand for extra legal measures against union activity.

It calls for new amendments to the Industrial Relations Act to give the state power to impose a "cooling off" period in disputes of "special importance". In other words to ban strikes outright for a period.

Already Mary Harney and the Independent Group of newspapers have seized on this issue. They have felt the rise in militancy and want to arm themselves with new repressive measures.

The overall result is that Michael O'Leary has managed not only to effectively defeat SIPTU—but through the Flynn/McAuley report has won backing to shift the agenda on other anti-union measures.

Nothing could more clearly expose the bankruptcy of the SIPTU leadership. For nearly ten weeks they urged Ryanair workers to engage in a consumer boycott rather than a strike.

Then when rank and file militants took control of the struggle by shutting down the airport in a magnificent gesture of solidarity, they did everything to get it called off.

They told Ryanair workers that they would get justice from the inquiry.

All of this was argued for in the name of social partnership and the new modern "flexible" approach to trade unionism. The report shows just why SIPTU needs a powerful socialist network.

## Socialist Worker

# Rank and File Trade Union Conference

19th September 11am to 5pm  
Teacher's Club Parnell Square

Creche facilities available

Meetings on:

- The Alternative to the Union Leaders' Strategy
- Trade Unionism in Northern Ireland
- Building the union on the shop floor
- Rank and File movements: The experience
- Establishing a Solidarity network

Speakers include:

Carolann Duggan, Brid Smith plus shop stewards from Building workers Against the Black economy; Busworkers Action Group; TEAM, Waterford Glass; Limerick Corporation, Fire Brigades Union, Northern Ireland Public Services Alliance  
"Anything that shows solidarity between workers no matter what job or trade they do has got to be good. This conference will bring together rank and file workers from around the working class, just like members of the SWP from all walks of life showed solidarity and support for the building workers picket lines. We have learned how sticking together can get results and welcome this conference to build on that experience." — Billy McClurg, Chair, ShopStewards Committee, BATU Dublin Branch

I want to attend the Rank and File Trade Union conference

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Union position: \_\_\_\_\_

Send a £3 Registration Fee. For the full programme and leaflets for fellow workers, write to Socialist Worker PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p

**Inside:**

**AFTER DRUMCREE:**

**Why the Orange Order is in Crisis**

—PAGE 5

Solidarity price £1

## After bigots murder in Ballymoney



**CLASS POLITICS CAN UNITE CATHOLIC & PROTESTANT**

NEARLY A hundred shop stewards have taken an important initiative to help open the way for class politics in Northern Ireland. Called *A Charter for Class Politics*, it is a statement calling on working people to unite around issues of common concern.

The Charter was started by socialists in Belfast and Derry after the referendum on the Belfast agreement.

In a statement the organisers say, "One of the purposes of the Charter is to demonstrate that those people concerned with working class issues are not isolated individuals".

It is meeting a magnificent response from workplaces all over the North because many are tired of the old sectarian bigotry that has repeatedly brought violence. The charter reads in full:

*WE THE undersigned, believe that the main division in Ireland, North and South, is one of class. For too long the workers' movement has been weakened by sectarianism.*

*Until now, workers have been told to wait until the question of the border is solved. The time for those excuses is over. The promise of the referendum was an era of peace and prosperity.*

*We believe that this will not be handed to us by multinational investors or their political representatives, but will take campaigns and struggles by working people.*

*Many of our trade union leaders are advising partnership with the bosses to attract inward investment. This can openly mean a scramble for low-paid, insecure, non-union jobs.*

*We believe the way to finally overcome sectarianism is a united struggle of all workers in their common interests. Therefore we unite behind the following demands:*

- A minimum wage. For a full TUC claim of £4.61 an hour, with no exemptions.
- For full trade union rights. Repeal the Tory anti-union laws.
- Free education. No tuition fees, abolish the 11 plus
- Stop privatisation of public services
- Tax the rich to pay for hospitals and welfare

*We further pledge ourselves to support any group of workers involved in campaigns or industrial action over these or other progressive issues.*

□ For copies of the Charter phone (01504) 308 662 or (01232) 594 025 or write to PO Box 354, Tomb St, Belfast

# NEVER AGAIN

The response of the Portadown Orangemen to the murders of Jason, Mark and Richard Quinn has been disgusting.

Joel Patton tried to slander the family by claiming that the murders were drug related.

Davy Jones said it was a plot by British intelligence to discredit the Orange Order.

He also said that the blast bombs found at Drumcree "could have been

placed there by nationalists for to be picked up at later times".

These responses to the murders are not meant to convince. They are simply a cynical ploy to humiliate the victims of Orange terror.

### Mixed

The Quinn family committed the worst crime in the eyes of the bigots—they were from a religiously mixed relationship.

Although the media quickly called the children "Catholic", the labels dis-

guised a more complex reality whereby they went to Protestant schools and even attended an Orange bonfire.

Orangeism was founded to keep Catholics in second place.

This is why every marching season is accompanied by a form of "ethnic cleansing" where Catholics are accused of encroaching on Protestant areas.

But Orangeism is also about keeping Protestants in line, warning them that they must stick to the Tory outlook of the Unionist Party.

All forms of deviation, from "communism", to gay relationships, or even mixed marriages are disapproved of.

The only people who benefit are the upper classes who feed off the low wages and poverty that comes with a divided working class.

Now is the time to break from the bigotry that has divided working class people.

By fighting together on class issues, we can start to remove the scourge of sectarianism that killed the Quinn children and so many others.