

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p Solidarity price £1

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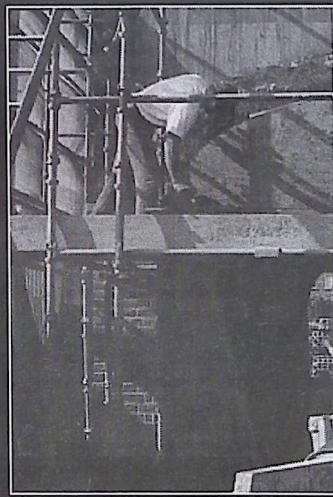
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16 workers killed because

BUILDING BOSSES PUT PROFIT BEFORE LIVES



THE PROPERTY boom has brought huge profits to the bosses — and death and injuries to a growing number of construction workers.

Sixteen building workers have already died on the sites this year — surpassing even last year's record.

In the rush for profit, the bosses cut corners on safety — failing to provide adequate scaffolding or to properly shore up trenches.

One Dublin company even sacked a crane driver for refusing to work in gale force winds of 56 miles per hour.

Yet not a single employer has been sent to prison for breaching safety laws. In 1996 the average fine on building bosses was a mere £726.

No wonder they risk the lives of their own workers.

James Masterson was the third building worker to die on sites owned by Zoe Developments. After he heard what happened, even the right wing Judge Peter Kelly had to denounce the company as 'recidivist criminals.'

Yet Zoe and the other criminals in the construction industry are still in business. They are pushing up the prices of houses so high that many working people can no longer aspire to own their own home.

The building bosses are getting away with murder because they are the strongest backers of Fianna Fail. It was a brown envelope from the building firm Bovale Developments that sparked off the resignation of Ray Burke.

This is why you will never hear a whimper out of John O'Donoghue about 'zero tolerance' when it comes to safety laws. O'Donoghue's targets are always only the poor.

The legal cover-up being organised on corruption

CHARLES Haughey has managed to delay the investigation into the source of his wealth and has prepared his ground for a major cover up.

The Supreme Court has ruled that the Moriarty Tribunal did not follow proper procedure in demanding bank statements and other documents relating to the Haughey family.

This means the Tribunal will have to begin its investigations all over again.

Discovery

The Supreme Court order also means that Haughey has the right to question why every discovery order was made.

The court also quashed 'discovery orders' by the

NIB follow Charlie

ANOTHER legal cover is being organised by National Irish Bank who are being investigated for the overcharging of NIB customers and the use of offshore accounts to help rich people avoid tax.

The bank claims it is only defending its "staff" from the possibility of self-incrimina-

Flood Tribunal relating to bank accounts of Michael Bailey and his building company Bovale Developments. These were alleged to have paid over £30,000 to Ray Burke.

The judgement was supposed to protect the Haughey families right to privacy.

But the courts never show any concern for privacy when the houses of working class families are being raided by the police.

One of the judges who framed the ruling was Justice Liam Hamilton who wrote a white wash report for the beef tribunal which managed exonerate both Albert Reynolds and Larry Goodman of any wrong doing.

Soon after he issued the report Hamilton was appointed as Chief Justice.

tion. But these are not ordinary staff: they are bank managers and top executives, the sort of people who presided over corrupt practices.

One of the key staff in the NIB was Beverly Cooper Flynn who according to one customer openly advised him not to pay taxes.

In reality, NIB is trying to obstruct the investigation in the same way that Haughey is delaying the probe into his affairs.

NIB has tried to salvage its image by paying back over £130,000 to customers it overcharged. But this is a tiny amount for a bank which made a profit of £16 million in the six months up to last March—that's £87,500 per day.

By paying this amount, NIB is admitting to wrong doing yet it has not suspended any of the managers who are under investigation.

Relates

In any case the £130,000 payment mainly relates to the five NIB branches which were investigated by Arthur Andersen consultants.

The Andersen investigation only dealt with branches that were the subject of media allegations. In the case of each branch, enquiries only covered a limited time period during the late eighties and early nineties.

Ross Pinney, managing director of National Australia Group Europe—NIB's parent bank—claims NIB is "probably the cleanest bank in Europe".

So why are Pinney and his cronies are determined to have the Supreme Court hamper the inquiry?

And Haughey may never face court!

THE appearance of Charles J Haughey at the District Court recently on a charge of obstructing the McCracken Tribunal may be his only court case on a criminal charge.

He was scheduled to appear before jury in the Circuit Court but according to the *Irish Times* 'senior legal sources have pointed to a number of issues which will delay the trial or ensure one does not take place'.

Refusing

Haughey's 'big fellow' pal Ben Dunne is refusing to give a statement.

Meanwhile Haughey is still being driven around by a chauffeur on tax payers money and is even a member of the Council of State which is supposed to advise the President.



■ A SWP-organised protest against the cover up

Dun Laoghaire marches against Marina

ONE HUNDRED and fifty people marched against the building of a marina in Dun Laoghaire on Sunday 9th August.

If built the marina will exclude local working class clubs and children in the summer projects from the harbour.

The Harbour Company has not given details of how the building of the marina will be financed.

PAYE workers could end up paying for this exclusive marina.

The marina is part of a wider

development plan by Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council to turn Dun Laoghaire into a millionaire's paradise.

The council has backed the building of luxury seafront apartments but has done nothing to ease the housing crisis in working class areas.

There are 1,600 people on the waiting list but only 160 of these will be housed this year.

The Dun Laoghaire Harbour

CORCORAN state prison in California is known as the deadliest jail in the US.

An inquiry in Sacramento has heard how:

■ Warders "limbered up" before a bus arrived bringing black inmates whom they then forced through a gauntlet of batons and kicks.

■ A small frail prisoner who kicked a female warder was put in a cell with another prisoner who repeatedly raped him in return for new tennis shoes.

■ The warders ran "gladiator" contests where gangs of prisoners were pitched against each other in savage fights.

The warders' union—which has blocked two investigations into the scandal—is a major donor of funds to California's Republican governor, Pete Wilson.

FAT CATS GET THE CREAM

IN THE last budget Finance Minister McCreevy cut the Capital Gains Tax from 40% to 20%. But it is only now that the full effects of these cuts are emerging as the rich engage in an orgy of greed.

In recent years company directors are increasingly given extra income in the form of share options. Now many of them are selling the shares off as they realise they have only to pay £20,000 in tax on a £100,000 gain — in contrast to the £40,000 charge that applied last November.

These sharks are now paying less in tax than many low paid civil servants.

Among the recent big winners of McCreevy's bounty are:

£ Michael O Leary: This union buster is £2 million pounds richer after he sold shares worth £10 million.

£ Eugene Murtagh: The boss of the Kingspan building products group only paid £2.9 million on the £15 million he got from selling shares instead of £5.8 million he would have paid last year.

Meanwhile Fianna Fail continue to claim that there is absolutely no connection between the donations it gets from big business and these tax cutting policies.

The donations are only made to keep Ireland safe for democracy.

Who are the scroungers?

GOVERNMENT ministers are living the high life at PAYE workers' expense.

The biggest spender is Foreign Affairs minister David Andrews who clocked up over £40,000 in "expenses" in the two months up to 30 June.

This included his bills for some of Europe's poshest hotels, like the Sheraton in Stockholm and Le Grand in Paris. Bertie Ahern claimed £39,159 in expenses during the same two month period, including £3,603 for make-up.

Mary Harney ripped us off to the tune of £12,700. Yet she has the nerve to smear unemployed people as "scroungers" and hound them off the dole.

TAKING STOCK

UNTIL the late 1960s, tens of thousands of children were taken from orphanages in Britain and sent to Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

It has emerged that successive British governments—both Labour and Tory—were helping to populate the former colonies with "good white stock".

One migrant described how a clergyman in Australia welcomed British children saying, "Australia needs you. We need white stock... We are terrified of the Asian hordes."

The migrants suffered systematic physical and sexual abuse at the hands of Christian Brothers and other religious orders.

The scandal shows how the rulers of empire had as much contempt for "their own" as they did for the black people they conquered.

what we think

THE REAL CLINTON SCANDAL

DID BILL Clinton have a sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky? What are results of the DNA test on Ms Lewinsky's dress? And who really cares anyway?

Certainly not the fawning Irish politicians who will welcome him here in September.

These upright Catholics will turn a blind eye to his sexual indiscretions and make sure the population turn out for the US television networks.

Yet the real scandal in Washington lies barely concealed under the surface.

Clinton, who poses as a man of peace, is responsible for more bloodshed than any other political representative on earth.

Take, for example, the most recent piece of hypocrisy on Iraq. Anxious to deflect attention elsewhere, Clinton is again threatening Iraq with military

action because it will not do the bidding of a US weapons inspector.

Yet Iraq has been subject to UN sanctions for seven years. Almost every imaginable item from shoe laces to toilet paper has been banned from sale. Iraq may only buy a limited number of medical items — and these do not include anaesthetics (which do not cure), cotton, or syringes. Even ventolin, a drug for asthma, is prevented from sale.

Sanctions

No wonder an estimate 1 million Iraqis from a population of 20 million have died as a direct result of Clinton's sanctions.

Clinton's justification for inflicting all this horror is that Saddam Hussein is a man of war.

Yet there has never been the slightest talk of sanctions, when US allies such as Israel or Turkey wrecked havoc on their neighbours.

And when it comes to war mongering, Clinton and the US military industrial complex is in a league of its own.

Today the US is spending as much on weapons as it did at the height of the Cold War.

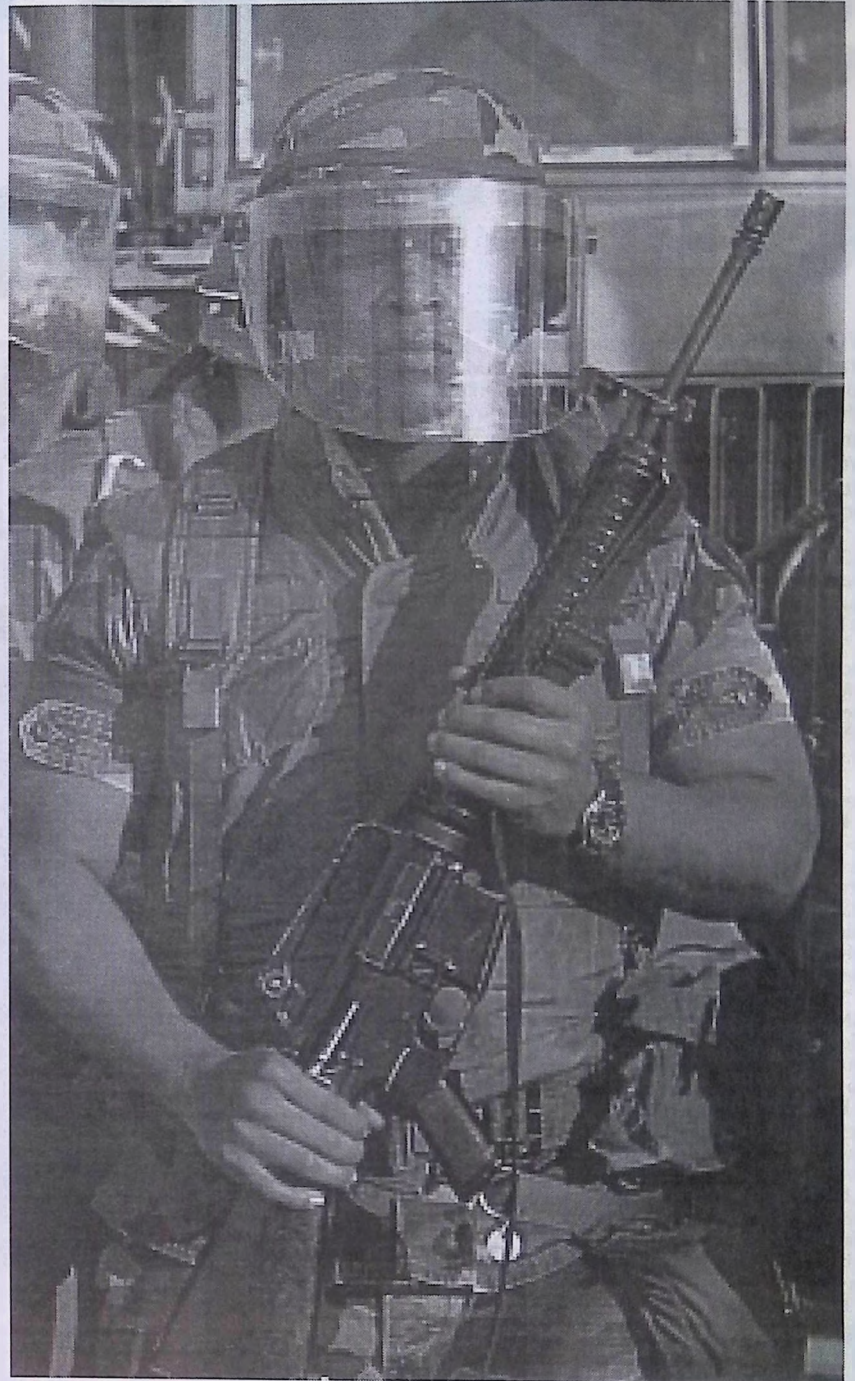
At over 265 billion dollars, it is spending seventeen times more than the combined spending of the six countries identified by the Pentagon as its enemies — Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea and Syria.

And that is only the official arms industry. The US private sector defence industry dominates the global arms market.

With Clinton acting as its chief salesman, military sales by US corporations now account for 75 percent of the world market.

The vast majority of these weapons are sold to developing countries where ordinary citizens have no vote.

Beside this scandal, the Lewinsky affair is utterly, utterly trivial.



THE LAPD: The real face of Bill Clinton's America

Democratic Left to join New Labour?

THE LABOUR Party and Democratic Left are to hold special conferences in November to discuss a merger or a closer alliance.

Few will be surprised if they join up because their policies are virtually identical. Finding the difference between them is like measuring the width of cigarette paper.

Yet in the past, Democratic Left was seen as a more left wing alternative to Labour. When it was first formed it promised to combine parliamentary and extra parliamentary activity.

Two of its TDs — Pat Rabbitte and Eamonn Gilmore — were even pushed out of their posts as SIPTU officials because they were seen as a more left wing alternative to Labour.

Some will argue that Democratic Left changed because its leaders became corrupted by the attractions of government office.

Phronias de Rossa certainly turned his back on his own supporters when he started the campaign against 'social welfare' fraud that Mary Harney is now building on.

But there is more to DL's shift to the centre than simply the comforts of office. The reality is that the party never saw socialism coming from the struggles of workers themselves.

The core of the party came from the old Workers Party which saw Eastern Europe as socialist. They saw socialism in terms of state ownership rather than workers actually having control of their factories and of-

ices.

Once the tyrannies of Eastern Europe collapsed, the leaders of DL came to believe there was no alternative to capitalism and tried to manage it in a more efficient and humane way.

But instead of managing capitalism, DL Ministers in the last government simply conformed to the dictates of the rich.

The only power that could have resisted those demands was the organised strength of workers. But the DL leaders argued that the working class had declined in the new 'post-industrial society'.

One DL theoretician, Paul

Sweeney, even argued that consumer boycotts would replace strike action as a more effective form of protest.

As DL shifts towards a merger or closer alliance with Labour, the opportunities for genuine socialists will increase.

On one side are the new DL-LP alliance which defend Partnership 2000, privatisation, and tax cuts for the rich.

On the other are the genuine socialists who stand with workers when they press for wage rises and better conditions — while always pointing to the need for a real alternative to the madness of the market.

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

"I want to welcome this conference for shop stewards who are opposed to partnership. I have always been totally opposed to national deals and believe we should have local bargaining. But despite all the opposition we are still stuck with P2000. It is vital to discuss how we get change and hopefully by the next time the deal comes round we will have a genuine rank and file alternative to build for change from below. The SWP can have a big input into bringing about that change and I would like to encourage every active trade unionist to get to this conference."

JOHN KELLY, SHOP STEWARD— TOYOTA IRELAND, SIPTU NO. 14 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



news of the world

General Motors

Strikers force GM to back down

WORKERS AT General Motors returned to work last week after beating off attacks from the world's largest industrial corporation.

The two month strike by 9,200 workers in two of the company's parts plants succeeded in forcing GM to back off.

The action cost GM more than \$2.5 billion as over 190,000 GM workers were laid off, and halted GM's north American operation.

The strike forced GM bosses to agree to:

- Honour the pledge to make \$180 million of investment at the Flint Metal Centre stamping plant. Workers were angry that the lack of investment meant GM planned to shut the plant.

The strike began when GM bosses removed the die stamping machinery from the plant. GM has now returned it.

- Promise that it will not sell the Delphi East parts plant before the year 2000.

- GM will also give a week's pay to all striking and laid off workers who missed a week's holiday pay because of the strike.

- The deal also won

the return of 13 crates of chairs that GM had removed so workers were unable to sit down!

The UAW was threatening to spread the action to three further parts plants. Those disputes are also settled.

In Buick City the company has agreed not to send work in one part of the plant out to an independent supplier.

The workers' union, the United Auto Workers, did make some concessions.

Stamping

It agreed to a no-strike deal at the Delphi East plant until the year 2000 and to productivity increases at the Flint stamping plant.

But Flint's workers felt a definite sense of victory as they voted to accept the deal.

"This has inspired the workforce. We know now that we can stand up to GM," said one worker.

Striker Jeri Cooper says, "You have no idea how good this feels—a winning strike."

The business press were also angry at GM for not having stuck the boot further into the workforce.

GM shares fell on news

of the deal.

"General Motors appears to have gained little from its bruising struggle with the United Auto Workers," wrote the Financial Times.

"By holding out for nearly two months, the car maker had raised hopes that it was bent on winning a substantial victory. But the settlement that has emerged so far looks more like a temporary truce."

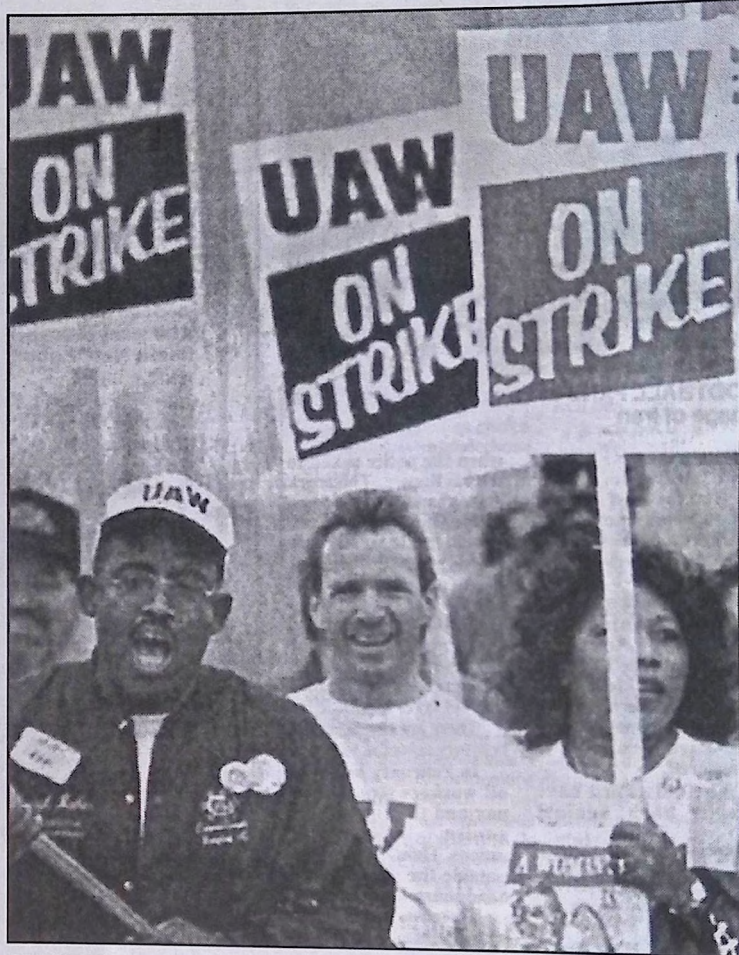
And one analyst said, "I don't think GM got anything they couldn't have gotten in June. GM's cheering section on Wall Street may become a little bit quieter now."

Many long term issues remain unresolved. The company still wants to wipe out 50,000 more jobs.

GM workers know there will be more battles to come. So too do the bosses.

As the US magazine *Business Week* says, "The relative calm that should prevail for a while could be followed by an even more cataclysmic battle next year."

Nevertheless, GM workers will go into future battles with the confidence this victory has given them.



STRIKERS win victory over General Motors

Africa

THE UNITED States heralded a new era of stable trade relations with the "new leaders" of African countries less than 18 months ago.

The leaders of this "African renaissance" were supposed to be united in driving through market reforms.

Yet less than 18 months later the band have fallen out with each other.

Congo is the flashpoint of the conflict. It is Africa's third largest country and is rich in minerals.

The US, which did not want to lose influence in the area, backed the overthrow of the corrupt and unpopular regime of Congo's dictator Mobutu last year.

Overthrow

The rebellion which overthrew Mobutu was also backed by the rulers of Rwanda, Uganda and Angola.

But Congo's current ruler, Kabila, who replaced Mobutu, is proving as corrupt and unpopular as his predecessor.

Now Kabila faces an uprising by his former Tutsi allies.

Their rebellion is getting support because Kabila has not changed things for the better for ordinary people.

The US is now blowing cold on its former ally because he cannot ensure the stable market for profits that it wants.

The region is like a tinderbox. UNITA rebels are fighting the regime in Angola to the south of Congo, and Ethiopia and Eritrea are threatening 'full scale' conflict over a disputed territory.

A summit proposed by Zimbabwe's leader, Robert Mugabe, is set to discuss the possible intervention of a UN peace-keeping force.

But UN intervention is no solution.

When US troops—under the guise of the UN—went into nearby Somalia in 1992, the conflict escalated and hundreds of ordinary people were killed.

Monsanto

GENETICALLY MODIFIED DISASTER

A STRING of reports has emerged which show exactly why we cannot trust genetically modified foods.

Evidence has emerged that genes put in crops like rapeseed and maize to make them resistant to weedkiller can spread to weeds. The result could be a new type of superweed, immune to existing controls.

The giant company Monsanto uses genetic engineering to make crops resistant to its Roundup pesticide.

But genes can spread from one crop to another through cross-fertilisation

between plants, with pollen carried by wind. Bees also carry pollen from one plant to another. Beekeepers warned last week that they are worried new genes in plants could end up in the honey that bees produce.

Some of the genes involved are designed to make crops resistant to antibiotics which are widely used in agriculture.

Humans eating honey containing such genes could find they become more resistant to antibiotics too.

The prestigious Rowett Institute in Aberdeen had been conducting a series of trials with types of genetically modified potato.

They found that in some cases when the modified potato was fed to rats it significantly lowered the effectiveness of their immune system.

There could be a similar risk to humans eating such potatoes.

Denounce

Some people, such as Prince Charles, denounce all genetic engineering of crops as interfering with 'realms that belong to God'.

That is misguided. Humans have always interfered with nature and modified the genetic makeup of plants and ani-

mals through selective breeding.

Indeed without such genetic modification millions of people would starve to death as we could not feed the world's existing population.

There is no reason why modern science could not be used to further modify crops for all our benefit.

But to do so would mean careful scientific research coupled with open public discussion and debate of the results before such crops were released for use.

The problem is that under capitalism this is not what happens.

Huge companies which are interested only in profit push through new genetically modified crops without proper research and debate.

So Monsanto's rush to make crops resistant to its Roundup pesticide ignores the fact that in California, where the crops are widely used, the pesticide is already the third most common cause of illness among farm workers.

Other dangers were highlighted by Friends of the Earth last week.

It pointed out studies which showed a worrying consequence of a genetically modified crop known as BT Maize, developed

by the giant Novartis company.

The maize has been approved for use in the European Union and has a gene which induces the plant to produce a poison which kills certain pests trying to eat the maize.

But it now seems the same poison also kills the lacewing insect, which plays a key and beneficial role in controlling other agricultural pests and is also a vital food source for birds.

It all shows why we need to get rid of a system that puts profit before people — before it damages all of us.

Fighting together for ALL workers

CLASS AND not religion is the biggest divide in Northern Ireland. Hundreds of trade union activists, from whatever background, agree with this statement.

This is reflected in the fantastic response to the Charter for Class Politics, a five-point list of trade unionists' demands. By now, more than 100 shop stewards have publicly supported the Charter.

The politicians in the new assembly which opens in September will market the North as a low wage investment location, with lax trade union rights. This makes the fight for full trade union rights and a decent minimum wage more crucial than ever.

Siobhan Reynolds, an USDAW shop steward in Tesco's, Belfast, is one of those who signed. Her place is well unionised and they earn more than the minimum wage, but she is livid with Tony Blair and his "business-friendly" politics.

"I was at a lunch with the Low Pay Commission recently and one of the guys from the employers' federation, the CBI, said there had to be a special minimum wage rate for the North and it shouldn't be more than £3.20. "I looked at him and I thought: 'I wish I could see you work for £3.20 an hour—you wouldn't soil your fingernails for it.'"

Both shifts in her supermarket signed the Charter within one day. "I wasn't surprised at the response," says Siobhan. "Everybody is interested in these issues. Still, the bosses will always find ways around paying proper pay—the Youth Training Programme in the '80s was nothing but slave labour."

We will not work as slaves

Casualisation is something that Tommy Rock, a SIPTU shop steward in another Belfast leisure centre, and his members have also tried to fight.

"Belfast city council only wanted to replace people on temporary contracts in the last five or six years," he says.

"On the Charter, the demand to stop privatisation and for trade union rights were the big ones for me. We were under threat of privatisation for a long time and we fought it, but now we're under review again. Labour - this new conservative party - have changed the rules to 'best value', but who sets the rules?"

He slates Blair's minimum wage: "People have to become more aware that even £4.61 an hour is £3 an hour after tax. That means

'How can we do a proper job with the cuts?'

THE FIREFIGHTERS have long backed all of the Charter's demands, says Jim Barbour, a Bangor-based shop steward and executive council member of the Fire Brigade Union.

"The repeal of the anti-trade union laws has great appeal for people like ourselves," he says.

His colleagues in Essex have been striking against a £1.2m budget shortfall, but Jim can't legally call a solidarity strike under current trade union laws.

"We as a union support a decent minimum wage and also the abolition of college tuition fees - that motion actually came from Bangor branch to our national conference."

He is also concerned at the privatisation of public services: "In my opinion it's a concerted attempt to starve the public sector of funds," he says.

"In 1984 we had 24,000 call-outs. In 1995 we had 38,000 and now our budget has stopped increasing. We have a £9 million shortfall between our £43.7 million budget and what the chief fire officer thinks we need to do the job properly - £52 million."

Lobby

Jim says the FBU will lobby the new assembly's politicians for decent funding. But the assembly itself won't change anything, he feels. "We can hold local politicians accountable, but the purse strings will be held tightly from Whitehall."

And, he says, the trade union leaders show no sign of putting pressure on Tony Blair.

Dawn Stewart, a Transport & General Workers Union shop steward in a Belfast leisure centre, worries that class politics will be sidelined by the new assembly.

"People will talk about bureaucratic things. And this division into unionist and nationalist parties is a problem. The old divisions remain and one party will stick to the issues of the unionist or the nationalist side. Class unity will never be talked about."

"The assembly is just more of the Protestant/Catholic thing," agrees Kevin McCafferty, a Communications Workers Union shop steward in British Telecom in Derry. "But although peace seems to be at the forefront of people's minds and class politics may be on hold, maybe when the assembly settles down you'll find that it comes to the fore."

you have to work 50 hours a week for £4.61. It takes away from your family time—I reckon we should demand £10 an hour.

These people who run SPAR and those supermarkets - they pay their workers £2 or £3 an hour and yet they're becoming millionaires!"

He also sees huge problems in the way the trade unions are run. "People only join a union because of the strength of the steward, it's got nothing to do with the leadership. These people are on £70,000 a year - how can they be representative?"

Demanded

"And they're signing up to these partnership deals in the South, yet the bosses are much stronger than them. The unions should have demanded an agreement from the government that every company

coming to Ireland has to be unionised."

"In the global economy people will be crucified and we need to take on the bosses. We need to say 'no, you'll come in here on our terms' and if they say 'no, we'll go somewhere else instead' then we have to say we're not working as slaves for you!"

By itself, the Charter won't put an end to Blair's attacks or non-union multinational firms. It only shows the anger amongst trade unionists at New Labour and sectarian politics.

But that anger needs to be turned into a force on the ground. That will require socialist politics which can translate the aspirations for working class unity into a political force that can uproot sectarianism.

The Charter has opened up a real dialogue among left wing trade unionists in the North. Now is the time to build on it.



ICTU demonstration for peace uniting Catholic and Protestant

Charter for Class Politics

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.

□ To sign the Charter, for extra copies or to invite a speaker to your union meeting phone (01504) 308 662 or (01232) 594 025 or contact PO Box 354 Tomb St, Belfast

Dark clouds of world recession

RECENT panic selling on the world's stock markets has resulted in the biggest overnight falls since the crash of 1987. This reflects deep uncertainties about the outlook of the world economy.

Over the past year the recession in South East Asia has grown deeper. Currencies have been devalued, banks have crashed and factories and offices have shut up in Malaysia, Indonesia and South Korea throwing millions into poverty and possible starvation.

Commentators are now worried that China will devalue its currency, the yuan, in order to cut the cost of its exports. If it does this could provoke a new wave of competitive devaluations, spreading chaos through the global system.

At heart of the Asian financial crisis is Japan, the second biggest economy in the world.

Millions of Japanese are hanging on to their savings and consumer demand is falling sharply for the second year running.

With demand falling, manufacturers are forced to cut output, laying off workers.

A contracting economy could affect the ability of the Japanese government to keep up its debts repayments. Already one major US credit rating agency has announced it may lower the rating of Japan's government debt.

Bankrupt

Large parts of Japan's financial system are effectively bankrupt. Demands by the US to reorganise it along the free market lines could drive Japan deeper into recession.

So far the booming US economy has prevented the rest of the world following the Far East. But the signs are that the US boom is coming to an end.

The US boom is fuelled by unprecedented borrowing. Spending outstripped income by 3.3 percent in the first quarter of 1998.

As in previous booms this exposes households and companies to an unsustainable level of borrowing. 1.3 million US citizens filed for personal bankruptcy last year.

A central feature of the US boom has been a "bull market" — a sustained period of steeply rising prices of stocks on Wall

Street. Based on speculation, the shares have risen far beyond what any expected future earnings could justify.

Money managers have claimed that the boom will go on indefinitely and playing the market will make millions rich. Before the bubble burst in 1929 and again in 1987 this was also the sort of chatter bandied about by the "experts".

But the real economy in the US is slowing down dramatically. First quarter growth in 1998 was 5.4 percent, today it is just 1.4 percent.

While pundits claim this slow down is the "Goldilocks economy"—not too hot, not too cold — in reality it points to grave problems. US farmers have seen exports to Asia slump by a third and commodity prices fall.

But most importantly the manufacturing sector is in big trouble. A world over-supply of computer chips has meant that companies like Intel are laying off 3,000 of its workers worldwide.

Imports from Asia—cheapened by the massive devaluation of most of the regions currencies — have undercut US firms leaving them with warehouses full of unsold stocks.

Up to now unemployment in the US has remained at its lowest since 1970 and this has strengthened the bargaining position of workers who are demanding wage rises.

If firms are able to pass on these rises in the form of increased prices inflation will rise.

Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank has said that if wage rises eat into profits he will push up interest rates to slow down the economy and force unemployment up again.

His threats provoked the big falls on Wall Street. Higher interest rates would almost certainly choke off the speculative boom and plunge the US — and with it the whole world — into deep recession.

Britain, which is still the largest market for Irish owned business, has also moved closer to recession with major lay-offs in the manufacturing industry.

In all this turmoil, it would be foolish to believe the ESRI economists who claim that the Celtic Tiger boom can continue for another decade — if only workers accept miserable pay increases.

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

Rage Against Racism Anti Nazi League March and Carnival

★Stop Racist attacks!★Stop Deportations!

★Give refugees the right to work!

March and Carnival Saturday August 22nd
Assemble Garden of Remembrance Parnell Square
Dublin 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 (SIFTU activist); and speaker from Stephen Lawrence Campaign

Plus music—admission free
Anti Nazi League PO Box 4007, Dublin 1 Phone: (01) 878 8170

AS SOLDIERS PICKET DEPARTMENT

'WE WANT TO AS WORKERS

NEARLY 200 soldiers joined a picket outside the Department of Defence in August. This radical move, which was staged under the guise of a press conference, was a sign of the discontent that is sweeping through the Irish army.

Soldiers have been treated terribly by our rulers. In the late eighties conditions were so bad, that Defence Force chaplains protested that many could only survive by drawing state benefit on top their army pay.

Soldiers wives had to stand in

elections to highlight the terrible conditions in barracks. This agitation led to the formation of the Permanent Defence Forces

Other Ranks Representative Association — the trade union which organises soldiers, below the grade of officer.

For the first few years

PDFORRA made some gains. But now it says 'it is being discarded in its ongoing efforts in

relation to pay and conditions'. One of the soldiers on picket duty explained to *Socialist Worker* their grievances.

'We have to stand up for ourselves in some way. We can't keep on taking the flack and doing nothing for ourselves.'

"We want to be seen as workers. We are excluded from the Working Time Directive of the European Union.

"This directive would give us some control over our working hours but the generals don't like soldiers hav-

ing a say. They pre-

army on what. For a question of contr-

"We don't have working hours and that some cities hours are unpaid

The press wavy-

tent flared after Minister Michael Smith the closure of barr-

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Portugal: Soldiers on the side of the people

IN ANY revolutionary upsurge our rulers can begin to loose their grip over rank and file soldiers. This is what happened in Portugal in 1974-75.

During the first wave of the revolution, elite regiments like the COPCON were used to break strikes. But in one demonstration at the Lisnave shipyards, the workers and soldiers began to fraternise.

Recounted

A COPCON soldier recounted what happened, "A human torrent advanced with shouts 'the soldiers are the sons of workers', 'tomorrow's soldiers will be workers' and 'the arms of the soldiers must not be turned against workers'.

The commander soon saw we were not going to follow his orders so he shut up. Our arms hung by our sides and some comrades were crying."

In September 1975 a rank and file organisation Soldados Unidos Vencerao (Soldiers United Will Win) was formed.

When it called a demon-



stration in Porto 30,000 workers marched behind a contingent of 1,500 soldiers. SUV agitated for pay increases and free public transport.

A socialist paper at the time recounted what happened

"In the general headquarters of Porto there were three separate mess halls, one for soldiers, one for NCOs and one for officers. Three days after the Porto demonstration, some workers walked calmly in and sat down in the officer's mess. The next day all the soldiers occupied the officers messes. Since that day there has been a struggle to eliminate the separate mess halls and unify them."

The movement became more and more political. One

SUV leaflet proclaimed that 'our fight is part of the fight for popular power, for the power of the workers. The gentlemen in the gold braid epaulettes do not want to loose their privileges'. At a demonstration in Lisbon, 12,000 soldiers — nearly one fifth of the Portuguese's army — marched alongside workers.

The tragedy was that the revolutionary militancy among the soldiers outstripped that among the workers who were still influenced by reformist and Communist Party politics.

It was only when the revolution was defeated in Portugal that the officers were able to restore discipline in the ranks of the army.

once again the b-

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE

TO BE TREATED

'RS'



PDFORRA members on the picket line at the Department of Defence

HOW OUR RULERS USE THE ARMY

MOST soldiers join the army for a job or because they feel patriotic. But our rulers see the army as an instrument to defend their own class interests.

Soldiers have been used as a strike breaking force against the busworkers, tanker drivers, firemen, ambulance men.

They also provide unpaid armed protection to the banks who are currently making £2 million a day in profit.

Our rulers want the army to work closely with the Western European Union, the European wing of NATO. As Jacques DeLors, the former EU supremo put it — they should be ready to fight 'resources wars' so that the interests of Western capitalism are protected.

The army is organised on a strict hierarchy that mirrors the struc-

ture of capitalism itself.

The officers are drawn from the ranks of the upper class while the privates, who are most likely to lose their lives in battle situations, are drawn from the working class.

Officers demand absolute respect and loyalty. Saluting them is a way of instilling blind obedience. They demand that soldiers be always at their beck and call.

Privilege

Inside the army, class privilege is at its most intense. Officers eat in their own mess which serves superior food. Their accommodation often resembles high class hotels.

To enforce their will, the officers do everything to keep soldiers away from left wing influence.

Socialist newspapers are banned in the barracks. A military

intelligence unit monitors soldiers who become political. The soldiers union PDFORRA is not even allowed to join with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

At times when the class struggle is pursued through 'normal channels', the army is kept in the background. But in times of great upheaval it is moved to the fore.

During the H Block crisis in the early eighties for example, the Irish army moved in behind the police to protect the British embassy with live ammunition.

In Chile, in the early seventies the army was used directly to stage a coup against a left wing government.

This is why even the slightest movement in the army causes consternation among our rulers. It is also why socialists should give every support to soldiers who demands to be treated like other workers.

What do socialists say?

What causes racism?

THE RISE of racism in Ireland demands a clear response. Understanding where it comes from, is the key to developing a strategy to fight it.

One mistaken approach is to see racism as inevitable. Right wing commentators claim that racism arises because people naturally want to stick with their own.

But this cannot explain why millions of white people listen to black music or why the number of inter-racial marriages in countries such as Britain is rising.

A more radical version of this inevitability argument was recently presented by a spokesperson for one anti-racist group who argued that 'racial tension is the inevitable result of asylum seekers being housed in areas where there is already social and economic deprivation'.

The problem here is that almost every group of immigrants finds accommodation in poorer inner city areas at first. Few would claim that anti-Irish racism was caused by the Irish settling in Camden Town rather than Hampstead in London.

The traditional liberal view of racism sees racism as primarily a question of attitude: White people are prejudiced against black people. The solution is to educate people out of racism.

Structures

But this ignores the fact there is a wider structure in society which promotes racism.

And far from racism being confined to the more uneducated, racism can also be actively promoted by educated people such as the news editors to serve their own class interests.

Racism as we know it today began to develop during one of the key periods of capitalist expansion—the establishment during the 17th and 18th centuries of colonial plantations in the New World using slave labour imported from Africa to produce goods such as tobacco, sugar, and cotton for the world market.

Slavery was not the result of racism rather racism was a consequence of slavery. At the time that slavery existed, the first ideas about the 'rights of man' were being developed by bourgeois intellectuals to help undermine the older feudal system.

The contradiction between promoting these ideas and defending slavery was only overcome by the idea that Africans were, in Hume's words, 'naturally inferior' to whites and so should be denied 'the rights of Englishmen'.

It is true that slavery existed in societies of classical antiquity. However it was not based on the idea of natural inequalities between distinct peoples.

The Roman empire enslaved anyone they considered a 'barbarian'. But they never claimed that the white Anglo-Saxons they enslaved were either inferior or superior to North Africans.

by SINEAD KENNEDY

Racism also developed to justify the expansion of the Western powers into Africa and Asia.

Here it was claimed that white people had a mission to 'civilise' the lesser people who were in the words of the poet Kipling, 'half devil and half child'.

This is not to say that racism today is not simply a hangover from the past. Racism continues to have a material basis in today's society. Capitalism has always encouraged workers to compete for the scarce resources it offers to the mass of people.

Racism divides two groups of workers, black and white, who have practically identical interests so that the wages of both can be kept low.

There is also a second mechanism at work here. Racism offers white workers the comfort of believing themselves part of the dominant group.

Thirdly in times of crisis, racism provides a ready-made scapegoat in the shape of the oppressed group.

Benefiting

None of this means that white workers benefit materially from racism. By dividing the working class it weakens white workers as well as black workers.

So for example white workers in the southern states of America often earn less than Northern black workers because their own racism has helped to weaken union organisation.

If racism has such deep roots in capitalist society, it follows that it cannot be combated simply by exhortations to be more tolerant.

Only socialist arguments can challenge the idea that immigrants are taking 'our houses' by showing how the accommodation crisis was caused by policies demanded by the rich.

It is only socialists who point out that reason why the Independent Newspaper group consciously promotes racism is to shift the anger of people away from the corrupt links between its owner Tony O'Reilly and Fianna Fail.

Above all it is only socialists who can show how working class people can gain far more by attacking the wealthy rather than lashing out at poor immigrants.

HOW CAPITALISM EXTERMINATED THE NATIVE AMERICANS

CRUEL MYTH OF INDIAN SAVAGE

A NEW film, *Smoke Signals* about the fate of Native Americans at the hands of European settlers, has opened to critical acclaim in the US.

Unfortunately it looks set to get only a limited distribution in Ireland.

The Hollywood myth of "savage Red Indians" wreaking havoc on decent white civilians persists.

The true history of the American West is the brutal destruction of the Native American tribes in the name of capitalist expansion for profit.

The barbarity intensified the more capitalism developed, reaching a peak in the "Indian Wars" fought by the US state in the 1870s and 1880s.

US cavalry units deliberately wiped out the buffalo herds on which the plains Indians depended. Whole peoples were massacred by the US army or driven onto reservations.

The government used terror to crush resistance. The chief of the Warm Springs Apaches, Victorio, led a breakout from his reservation in 1877. Three years later the US army butchered him and his warriors.

In 1886 a quarter of the US army was deployed to quell the revolt of the most famous Apache chief, Geronimo.

The dying words of Mato-Tope, capture the Native Americans' suffering and what forced them to resist. He was chief of the Mandan tribe, and was attacked and killed by the white settlers.

"I have never called a white man a dog, but today I do pronounce them to be a set of hated dogs.

"They have deceived me. Them that I always considered as brothers have turned out to be my worst enemies... Think of all that, my friends, and rise all together and not leave one of them alive."

Like many of the Indian tribes the Mandans welcomed the new Europeans who arrived on the continent in 1492 and traded with them.

But the new inhabitants brought with them diseases such as smallpox. By 1837 an epidemic had devastated the Mandans and they were almost completely wiped out.

A SIMILAR fate befell many other tribes. Those who did not perish were uprooted and forced to live a marginal begging existence.

Disease was not the only killer.

The rulers of the new European settlements realised the potential for vast profits to be made out of the region and they were not prepared to let anyone, least of all the Indians, stand in their way.

Localised wars and mistreatment of the Native Americans of the east coast



THE IMAGE of savage Indians wreaking havoc on decent white civilians hides the truth of the real savagery used against the Indians by the US army

of North America had given way to a systematic campaign of violence by the end of the 18th century.

The new National Legislature passed two acts which were crucial for westward expansion.

The Ordinance Acts of 1785 and 1787 meant the division and selling off of large tracts of land at extremely low prices for the new capitalists.

Much of this land had been inhabited by Indians for thousands of years. Although the Ordinance Acts claimed to protect their ancestral rights, in effect they led to their forced removal.

Once an area had 60,000 inhabitants the local capitalists could petition for statehood and establish their own legislature. This led to a frenzy of land speculation.

The cattle trade flourished in the old south west and cities quickly grew along the Atlantic coast as manufactured goods could be transported more easily inland by new canals.

Westward expansion was now part of the growing capitalist economy, emanating from Europe and the Atlantic coast. The west became an area instantly desirable for squatters, wealthy landlords and capitalists alike.

Native Americans resisted.

In his second address to the Congress in 1830 President Andrew Jackson (known as "Sharp Knife" to the Indians because of his murderous frontier record) preached a policy of

virtual apartheid between the white man and the Indians.

The Indians had to be driven out of their ancient lands and relocated to new ones west of the Mississippi.

"This would", he said, "enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions." It would also free large tracts of land for unimpeded development.

THE 1830 Indian Removal Act proved an unmitigated disaster for the Cherokees, Choctaws, Creeks, Seminoles and other tribes.

Thousands were harried from their lands east of the Mississippi, while hundreds of thousands of black slaves were moved in to grow cotton on the territory they had vacated.

No sooner had the Indians been relocated than another wave of westward expansion occurred.

The "permanent frontier" was moved from the Mississippi to the 95th meridian and the American government established hundreds of military posts to wage war on the Indians.

It also enabled the Americans to launch war against the Mexicans. The 1845 war with Mexico resulted in the capture of vast areas of land reaching from Texas to California.

The war was unpopular in parts of the east, with demonstrations by Irish

workers in Boston and New York.

But as the war veterans returned home, the speculators moved in to buy land warrants given by the government to the soldiers.

The *New York Commercial Advertiser* said in June 1847, "It is a well known fact that immense fortunes were made out of the poor soldiers who shed their blood in the revolutionary war by speculators who preyed on their distress."

The discovery of gold in California in 1848 led to an eruption of the American-Indian wars. Thousands of Americans were seeking a quick fortune.

The population of California expanded from 14,000 in 1848 to 250,000 in 1852. There was little regard for the Indian land they were invading.

The governor of California preached a war of near extermination against the Indians. Their numbers dropped from 100,000 in 1846 to 30,000 in 1851. Shooting on sight was common.

The American West was now being transformed from a largely rural economy into one where capitalism was the prevailing force.

The catch phrase of American expansionism from the mid-19th century onwards was "Manifest Destiny".

It was summed up by journalist William Giipin in 1846 with an article which was read out to the US Senate: "The destiny of the American peo-

ple is to subdue the continent, to rush over this vast field to the Pacific Ocean ... to teach old nations a new civilisation, to confirm the destiny of the human race.

"Let us tread fast and joyfully the open up before us! Let every American heart open wide for patriotism to glow undimmed, and confide with religious faith in the sublime and prodigious destiny of his well loved country."

The Indians refused to accept the Manifest Destiny of the American nation. So in 1870 the government changed its policy from outright warfare to the forcible removal of Indians onto reservations.

This policy led to the annihilation of many Native American tribes.

The Cherokees were destroyed in this way. They were rounded up and held in camps, then forced to march westward hundreds of miles.

The "Trek of Tears" from Tennessee to Oklahoma killed 4,000 people who died of hunger, cold and starvation.

The Apaches were forced to move and live on the San Carlos reservation.

Some 4,000 were crowded onto land that had originally been home for 800 Apaches.

Conditions were unbearable, food was in short supply and they were forced to walk miles for supplies.

DISEASE WAS rife and the hostility from local Arizona people was summed up by their daily paper which said:

"The kind of war needed for the Chiricahua Apaches is steady, unrelenting, hopeless and indiscriminating war, slaying men, women and children until every valley, crest, crag and fastness shall send to high heaven the grateful incense of festering and rotting Chiricahuas."

Howard Zinn's book *A People's History of the United States* explains why the US government's policy against the Native Americans was central to their economic ambitions:

"Indian removal was necessary for the opening up of the vast American lands to agriculture, to commerce, to markets, to money, to the development of the modern capitalist economy. Land was indispensable for all of this."

It was a brutal chapter in America's history, the consequences of which continue to this day.

Like their forefathers many Native Americans are still forced to live on reservations, in poverty and destitution. For them, this poem written in 1847 still rings true today:

*They waste us—aye—like April snow
In the warm noon, we shrink away
And fast they follow, as we go
Towards the setting day
Till they shall fill the land, and we
Are driven into the western sea.*

by PETER MORGAN

RAGE AGAINST RACISM

SAY IT LOUD...

IN August 1976 Eric Clapton expressed his desire to "Keep Britain White." He also expressed support for the racist Enoch Powell.

Red Saunders, David Widgery and others wrote a letter in response to Clapton's nonsense and sent it off to all the newspapers. Referring to Clapton's hit covering a Bob Marley song it read, "We want to organise a rank and file movement against the racist poison in music. We urge support for Rock Against Racism (RAR). P.S. Who shot the sheriff, Eric? It sure as hell wasn't you!"

The seventies saw a huge rise of the fascist National Front on the back of respectable politicians whipping up racism over immigration. Building around the slogan Black and White Unite and Fight! and NF = No Fun!

RAR held huge concerts in conjunction with the Anti-Nazi League. Bands like Aswad, the Clash, the Tom Robinson Band, Elvis Costello, Stiff Little Fingers and Steel Pulse got the message across loud and clear.

Organisation

The skinhead band Sham 69 joined up and managed to get rid of a Nazi following. As well as the big events, local groups held countless gigs and the organisation's newsletter sold 12,000 copies an issue.

What RAR in the seventies and the Rage against Racism Carnival this month tap into is that popular music has always been about mixing cultures and often it is about protest. While Bertie Ahern's favourite song is *How much is that doggie in the window?* — the rest of us listen to a fusion of genres and cultures.

The history of popular music is a story of integration, not exclusion. The arrival of generations of immigrants to America caused a fusion of songs and styles from around the world. The experience of black America helped to shape popular music. From Ragtime at the turn of the century creating the popular song to rhythm and blues producing rock n roll black music has been central.

Often music is distorted, turned into a commodity and sanitised for profit. Yet time after time the music people enjoy is a blow to racism. For instance Louis Jordan in the 1940's was the first black artist to break into the pop mainstream. What were sold as novelty songs were actually about the experience of urban blacks.

By the time of the sixties Black music crossed boundaries it was not as novelty, but as protest. The black rebellion in the ghetto's of America had Martha Reeves and the Vandellas on the radio singing *Dancing in the Streets* and when Aretha Franklin sang *Respect* she was demanding, not pleading.

Today there is a fusion of Hip Hop and dance. For few months this year RUN DMC versus Jason Nevins topped the charts. This was New York Rap crashing into the dance scene, gaining huge popularity.

Discrimination

Over the years musicians themselves have recognised that this process is not automatic and new sounds are not enough to halt racism. Time and again musicians have written and performed in protest against discrimination.

A proud tradition runs from Billie Holiday protesting against lynching with *Strange Fruit* right through James Browns *Say it loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud* to Public Enemy's *It takes a Nation of Millions to hold us Back*.

The other thing to remember is that songs of protest need flames to fan. The Nazis in Britain were smashed by the organisation of the Anti Nazi League. Thousands of people organised protests and demos, undercutting the racists at every turn.

In Ireland today the Rage against Racism carnival does more than show that the fun is with the anti racists, it encourages people to fight back. To get real integration we need to build to stop John O'Donohue in his tracks.

That won't happen without a movement to challenge the racists in government and the media. So in the words of the Redskins the finest punk/soul band of the 1980's, *GO GET ORGANISED*.

Simon Basketter

film

American nightmare

by SIMON BASKETTER

ALFRED Hitchcock was one of the great film makers of the twentieth century and his films are often more political than is generally assumed.

For instance *Notorious* is a complex morality tale on complicity with the Nazis, while *Foreign Correspondent* was a deliberate attempt to show the horrors of the Blitz.

There is often a threat from the uncontrollable forces of society or from the repression that society creates.

In *The Wrong Man* Henry Fonda is falsely accused of a hold up. The police tell him, "An innocent man has nothing to fear." But he is still framed.

In all the films crime is shown as attractive to respectable people and horror just under the surface, part of the reality of society.

Even when Hitchcock resorted to the more traditional idea of the horror of the outside invader, for instance in *The Birds*, the interest is in the contradictions and secrets of the characters.

The portrayal of women in Hitchcock's

JANET Leigh as Marion Crane in *Psycho*

films is more ambiguous.

Strong women characters attempt to break out of their set roles. (For instance *Blackmail*, *Marnie* and *The Birds*) but they frequently fail and are 'punished' in fairly horrific ways. But their struggle is what we empathise with.

Hitchcock recognised that people identified with big names, so he made a point of putting them in dangerous situations.

He took this to an ex-

treme in 1960 in one of his most dazzling movies, *Psycho*.

The shock for the initial audience was that the star, Janet Leigh as Marion Crane, is murdered inside the first forty minutes.

Scary

Psycho — which has just been remastered and re-released — has much more than the genuinely scary shower scene.

It is a complex and

frightening morality tale about the horror of the American dream.

Marion Crane can't afford to marry her boyfriend because they don't have enough money, so she steals \$40,000 from her boss while he is away from his air conditioned office.

She is murdered as she decides to give the money back and if Marion is an economic victim then Norman Bates is a psychological victim of the repression of the same society.

Hitchcock was the ultimate manipulative movie maker, taking shots and ideas from any source to make a more precise movie experience.

Despite all the pompous academic interpretations, Hitchcock said his purpose was to "make people sweat".

Catch *Psycho* in the cinema to see just how successful he was.

Psycho opens Friday 14th August in IFC Dublin.

book

Reclaiming culture from the revisionists

TERRY Eagleton's *Crazy John and the Bishop* is a series of essays on Irish culture from the eighteenth century to the present day.

It covers a wide range of Irish topics and au-

thors, many of whom are less familiar figures such as William Dunkin, Canon Sheehan and Frederick Ryan.

The book is a response to what Eagleton terms 'the postmodern agenda' that is fashionable in the study of Irish

cultural history. Here questions of ethnic identity and gender tend to assume central importance while other 'less fashionable' matters like class are largely ignored.

'The Ryan Line' is one of the better essays in this collection.

Eagleton gives an excellent account of the ideas of the often forgotten socialist and friend of James Connolly, Frederick Ryan.

His 1896 lecture on 'The Social side of the Irish Question' was a major influence on James Connolly.

Invoking the ideas of James Fintan Lawlor he argued that the struggle against British colonialism could not be divorced from class politics.

Liberalism

Eagleton shows that Ryan was able to harshly criticise both bourgeois nationalism and middle-class liberalism, while at the same time revealing how much they shared in common.

He argues that this is highly relevant to the present revisionist debate on Irish history.

In his essay 'Revisionism Revisited' Eagleton argues that revisionism is motivated by a

postmodernist scepticism and he criticises revisionist writers for neglecting social class in Irish history.

However despite his pleas to the contrary, Eagleton sometimes slips back into a romantic Irish nationalism.

He acknowledges the conservatism of traditional Ireland but there is another unrecognised aspect of this tradition according to Eagleton.

That is "a respect for one's cultural particularity, a refusal to surrender without a struggle to advanced capitalist hegemony, a suspicion of the success ethic..."

Overall this is an interesting collection of essays on Irish culture. But a far superior book on Irish culture by Eagleton is *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger*.

Crazy John and the Bishop and other Essays on Irish Culture by Terry Eagleton. Cork University Press £14.95

—SINEAD KENNEDY

video

Stones' socialist

OLIVER STONE'S film *Killer: A Journal of Murder* which is based on the true story of the serial killer Carl Panzram, is now available on video.

Henry Lesser (Robert Sean Leonard) is a prison guard who befriends Panzram (James Woods).

The year is 1929 and Lesser is Jewish, unusual for a prison guard at that time.

He soon comes up against the anti-semitism of the prison authorities when he is not allowed

time off for the Jewish feast of Yom Kippur.

Lesser is shocked when he sees the casual violence meted out to the prisoners.

Guards

When he befriends Panzram, everyone he knows—his wife, the other guards and even the killer himself—thinks he is mad.

But Lesser is a socialist.

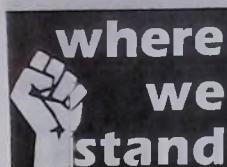
He quotes the American socialist leader Eugene Debs to back up his view that a brutal society creates brutal

people, not the other way round.

Panzram's story confirms this view. Born into rural poverty, he drifted into crime. After being brutally assaulted he decided "might is right" and went on a spree of rape and murder.

But Lesser refuses to let go of the possibility of finding the humanity beneath Panzram's cold exterior. This is a video well worth watching — particularly if you are sick of John O'Donoghue and his zero tolerance policies.

—DAVEMcDONAGH



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.

GET YOUR PAY CLAIM IN NOW!

THE PAY rise to the Gardai has opened the door for workers to demand more from the Celtic Tiger.

The Gardai are now set to receive increases of up to 13.5% and have already entered negotiations for a further rise in the near future.

At the end of this month many Gardai will be receiving a cheque for £1,500 in back pay.

The Garda settlement which followed two day of industrial action is well above Partnership 2000.

Even the Irish Times Industrial Correspondent, Padraig Yeates, who is a well known advocate of partnership had to admit that the down payment for future productivity is 'particularly puzzling'.

Increases

In the wake of the Garda offer other unions have lined up for pay increases. They include the primary teachers and the fire-fighters. The ATGWU leader Mick O'Reilly also indicated that his union may put in for extra rises — but rank and file members will have to keep up the pressure to make sure this is not just rhetoric.

These claims reflect a growing anger with Partnership 2000. The deal contained a clause which allowed for re-negotiations to take place if there were economic difficulties or problems associated with entry to the EMU.

But there was nothing to allow workers to claim more after the economy has grown far quicker than it was expected.

Now the largest union in the civil service, the CPSU, is calling a special conference in November to consider pulling out of Partnership.

One CPSU activist, Dave McDonagh, said, "There are many of our members on low pay who cannot even dream of buying their own house."

"At this year's conference real anger was expressed against P2000 and delegates voted for the special conference on P2000 against the advice of Blair Horan, the general secretary of the union."

Keeping the lid on struggle



Union leaders Des Geraghty, Jimmy Somers, Rosheen Callender, Manus O'Riordan

The union leaders and the employers are working closely to try to put the lid on the growing anger. Three main methods are being employed.

Firstly, some companies are paying increases due under local bargaining early to try to head off the pressure. A survey in Industrial Relations News — a confidential magazine used by union officials and employ-

ers — showed half of private sector firms had paid up early, with 90% paying up 6 months earlier.

Secondly, at a special review summit on P2000 the union leaders and government agreed on a strategy of pressing for extra productivity. Padraig Yeates claimed that 'the public service unions were willing to abandon the arid land of relativity claims to enter the promised land of productivity and performance related pay'.

Increased productivity will

be used as a means of cutting numbers so that the remaining workers enjoy marginal increases. But the experience in the local authorities and health boards where workers voted overwhelmingly against giving extra productivity concessions shows that this will lead to greater anger.

Thirdly, there is a concerted attempt to make a pre-emptive strike against union militants in some cases this has meant threats of victimisation.

Some evidence reaching Socialist Worker indicates

there maybe collusion with the union leaders in this. In other cases there is an attempt to remove supporters of rank and file organisations from union committees. (see Page 11).

All of these are desperate moves by a union bureaucracy that is being exposed for selling their members a disgraceful deal. They can be defeated if rank and file militants solidify their base in their own workplaces and build a wider network across the unions.

THE INFLATION CONTRICK

"WAGE increases will only put us back on the old inflation tread mill. We need tax concessions instead." This is the familiar argument used by the ICTU.

But they never explain why employers get higher profits and tax cuts while workers are asked to trade their pay rises off against tax cuts.

The reality is that inflation has already risen in Ireland and is expected to reach 3.5% by the end of the year. This official figure, however, is an under-estimate because it does not include rising house prices or rents.

Statistics produced in other countries such as Austria and Germany do include these items.

This current rise in inflation shows the fallacy of the argument of the union leaders.

According to Colm Rappale of the Sunday Business Post, average wage costs have fallen in Ireland by 37% although they have risen by 26% throughout the rest of Europe.

Food

One of the items causing the rise in inflation has been the escalating food prices which are currently growing by 5.5%. This causes greater hardship for workers because a higher proportion of their budget goes on food compared to that of the wealthy.

But no one could claim that wage rises for shop workers or meat factory workers caused the increase in food prices. Once there is a major boom in capitalism, inflation begins to rise no matter what the unions do. Wage increases are a response to that rising inflation — they are not the fundamental cause.

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.....

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.
Race and Class: Speaker: Davy Carlin Wednesday 26th
- CORK**
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Denny's Pub, Cornmarket St.
The roots of racism Thursday 20th
The lessons of the 1930s Speaker: Gorrell Horgan Thursday 27th August 8pm
- DERRY**
Meets every Tues in Badgers Bar at 8.00pm.
- DUN LAOGHAIRE**
Meets every Tues at 8.30pm in Christian Institute.
Are Women Still Oppressed Speaker: Ciara Ni Bheolain Tuesday 18th August
Public Meeting Tuesday 25th August
- ENNSKILLEN**
Meets every fortnight. Contact (01) 872 2682 for details
- GALWAY**
Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square
Charlism in Britain in the 1930s and 1940s Speaker: Orla Ni Comhrair, Thursday 8.30
Fianna Fail and Irish Labour Speaker: Ger Quinn, Thursday 8.30
- LIMERICK**
Meets every fortnight. Contact (01) 872 2682 for details
- WATERFORD**
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in ATGWU Hall, Keyser St. Why we need a revolutionary party Speaker: Denis Redfern Thursday 20th August 8.30
The Irish famine Speaker: Dick Roche Thursday 27th August 8.30
- DUBLIN NORTH-WEST**
Meets every Tuesday at 8:30pm in The Snug, Dorset St.
State and Revolution Speaker: John Kavanagh Tuesday 18th August 8.30
Why we oppose immigration controls Speaker: Simon Basketter Tuesday 25th August 8.30
- DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK**
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm Artane/Beamount Recreation Centre opp Artane, Castle
1798: The year of Revolution Israel: The Kidnap State Speaker: Alan Kelly Tuesday 25th August 8.30
- DUBLIN DRINMAGH**
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in the Black Forge (formerly the Bentley), Drinmagh Rd is Human Nature a barrier to socialism? Tuesday 18th August
Socialist Planning or the Free Market Speaker: Kieran Allen Tuesday 25th August
- DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL**
Meets every Wed at 8:30pm in Conways, Parnell St. Why is Japan in crisis Speaker: Paul Murphy Wednesday 19th
- DUBLIN RATHMINES**
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond St.
- DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL**
Meets at 8.30pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse St.

Public meetings

- DERRY: After Drumcree: Protestant Workers and the Fight for Socialism** Speaker: Judith Orr, Tuesday 18th August, 7.30, Sandino's, Water St
- BELFAST: After Drumcree: Protestant Workers and the Fight for Socialism**, Speaker: Judith Orr, Wednesday 19th August Garrick Bar, Chichester St
- DUBLIN: The Fight Against Racism**, Speaker: Richard Boyd Barret, Thursday 27th August, 8pm ATGWU Hall Middle Abbey St
- DUN LAOGHAIRE: Malcolm X and the Fight against Racism**, Speaker Richard Boyd Barret, Tuesday 25th August 8pm Boylan Community Centre
- SWORDS: Refugees are welcome here**, Speaker: Brid Smith, Tuesday 18th August 8pm, Harp Bar, Swords
- TALLAGHT: Refugees, The Housing Crisis and the Fight against Racism**, Thursday 27th 8.00pm, Tallaght Community Arts Centre
- Their democracy and ours Speaker Ann Ryan Thursday 20th 8.30 Public Meeting Thurs 27th August
- DUBLIN TALLAGHT/CLONDALKIN** Meets Monday at 8.30pm in Jobstown Community Centre, Tallaght

News & reports—politics; the unions

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

LIFTS STRIKE

Strikers fight on as bosses sabotage emergency cover

THE strike of 150 lift mechanics, all members of TEEU is continuing.

They are fighting against a co-ordinated attempt by eight lift companies to cut back on their pay and conditions.

One of the shop stewards 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."

Conditions

After a long strike in 1982, this same group of workers won a payment of a meal allowance, an hours travel time and overtime in holiday pay.

It is these very conditions that the companies are trying to take away from the workers today.

The strikers have voluntarily agreed to provide an emergency service, at their own expense.

Yet the employers have tried to

undermine this emergency service, by taking away mobile phones, vans and personal liability insurance of the workers.

When the strike began the company wanted to control all emer-

gency call outs so that they could charge for them.

Service

But the strikers are keeping up the service through their union for

free.

There is some concern that that the companies involved are bringing in scabs from Britain.

If this the case they need to be meet with mass pickets.

Ballymun lifts protests

RESIDENTS of the Ballymun flats complex in Dublin blocked the road in protest at the lack of working lifts earlier this month.

Hundreds of men women and children disrupted traffic in a series of protests designed to publicise their predicament.

Even before recent industrial action, the lifts have been a source of constant irritation to the tenants.

Many are over thirty years old, worn out and in need of constant repair. They are only patched up and break down after a few days.

Since the dispute between Pickerings Lifts and the lift re-

pair workers, an emergency service has been operated by the strikers.

The strikers have maintained, voluntarily and without payment, one working lift per tower block and will repair lifts in the 7 storey blocks in hardship cases.

The *Daily Star* and the *Evening Herald*, which are both owned by Tony O'Reilly, have tried to divide the residents and the strikers by saying they are holding the estate for ransom.

Although some residents were taken in by this hate campaign, the majority of those on the protests are sympathetic to the strikers.

To help build this unity, *Socialist Worker* supporters who live in the area organised a message of

support for the strikers. Scores of Ballymun people signed the message of support.

As one resident said, "The corporation pay Pickerings over a million pounds to fix the lifts each year and yet they are in a scandalous state.

"Pickerings is only interested in profits not in giving us who live in Ballymun a decent service.

"It's no surprise to me that they treat their workers as badly. Of course the lads have got to stand up for their rights. And we should support them."

Ballymun residents also went on a bus to join the strikers picket line at the company headquarters in Dunboyne.

Health Service

The chronic underfunding of the Irish Hospital services has re-surfaced as representatives of the Irish Nurses Organisation met with management of the Southern Health Board to discuss the issue of overcrowding at the board's main hospital, the Cork University Hospital.

The difficulties with bed shortages there are well known to anyone who has ever even visited the Accident and Emergency Unit.

The lack of acute beds on the wards has led to a situation where ill people are sent to A&E for assessment.

Waiting

Because there is nowhere for these people to go and because most genuinely require admission, one could find 10-12 people lying on trolleys in casualty in the morning, waiting for a bed to be found.

This situation is obviously stressful to the already overworked casualty staff who provide an

incredibly efficient and professional service with inadequate facilities.

This use of the A&E department also leads to extremely long waiting times for all patients.

The staff have to bear the brunt of people's understandable frustration and the extra workload. This means that there are no longer any quiet periods during the day for non-urgent work to be carried out.

Pressure

Another result of the situation is that ward staff are placed under extreme pressure to make beds, which can only happen if someone is discharged.

This leads to major difficulties as to whether patients already on the ward should be allowed the extra time necessary to become fully well or whether the new acutely ill patients should take priority.

The strain of such catch-22 decisions is taking its toll on nurses whose work who are already pressurised enough.

It is important the staff organise to take action to force management to make improvements, especially the provision of adequate resources to resolve this situation.

Victory for Wicklow ambulance drivers

Wicklow ambulance drivers returned to work after an eight weeks strike.

They secured a victory over the Eastern Health Board and forced the employer to take on two extra ambulance workers to cover the Arklow depot.

The workers feel they won because of the threat of a national ambulance stoppage. As one of the drivers told *Socialist Worker*, "The huge vote we got in favour of a national stoppage really frightened them. They didn't bank on us getting such significant support."

Ambulance drivers all over Ireland were due to strike in support of their Wicklow colleagues. But the day before the employer agreed to talks.

"We got the main issues sorted out. That was extra workers to cover the Arklow depot. We couldn't have worked the rosters they tried to force on us. We would have no life."

But as one of the workers said "It is an absolute disgrace that the Eastern Health Board could take a decision to break every agreement that ever existed with us and end up costing the taxpayer a fortune.

"We reckon that using the army to scab on us cost an extra £40,000 per week. They gave the soldiers £46 per day more and put them up in B & B and fed them in restaurants."

The Wicklow strikers wish to thank everybody who helped to add to their success, including the Socialist Workers Party and shop stewards in Waterford who organised workplace collections and solidarity.

The local community in Wicklow also gave the strike fantastic support and encouragement.

Belfast cinema sackings

Yorkgate cinema, which is part of the Movie House group, has sacked four workers in a bid to break the union organisation.

BECTU members had been fighting for recognition and all requests for meetings with management have been ignored. The company used an unsubstantiated rumour of a practical joke as an excuse for dismissals.

The rest of the staff have been warned not to speak about the incident to anyone. The workers complained to the union of intimidation by management and believe their workplace falls below health and safety provisions.

Management have hired a specialist law firm which deals with employment and dismissal law to handle publicity and legal problems.

Yorkgate's actions are another example of the high level of exploitation of workers in the entertainment industry.

Students and part time staff are employed on low wages and under terrible conditions to maximise the profits of the bosses.

The union is calling for support from the public in the event of strike action being organised.

C.I.E.

DUBLIN BUS

Drivers reject 'Viability Plan'

DUBLIN busworkers have voted by a margin of nearly two to one to reject a viability plan being promoted by the company, the union leaders and the government.

The busworkers rejected the deal by 837 to 432 despite the fact that SIPTU and the NRBU produced a special joint newsletter to promote the agreement.

One of the reasons the deal was rejected was that it opened the way to a yellow pack grade of new employees. These would have been put on a pay scale where it would take them eight years to earn what a busworker currently earns.

"The company and the union leaders thought that people would not care about this. But many workers said it could be their sons and daughters whose wage rates were cut" one busworker told *Socialist Worker*.

Contract

The other reason why the viability plan was rejected was because it proposed to contract out the school bus service from September. Busworkers saw this as the first step to privatising the company.

The campaign against the viability plan was led by the Busworkers Action Group, a rank and file group which has organised unofficial action in the past.

The union leaders tried to run a red scare against the Busworkers Action Group claiming that it was associated with the Socialist Workers Party and had a 'wider agenda'.

Peter Bunting of the NRBU even claimed that the SWP was too radical for Karl Marx!

But this pathetic red scare backfired on the union leaders. The Busworkers Action

Group has grown over the past few weeks and is now campaigning for special claims to be lodged by the unions for a 15% pay rise and the right to retire at 55.

The groups says that it 'wants trade unions that are rooted to the shop floor accountable to their members and no longer acting as consultants to management'.

IRISH RAIL

SIPTU official gags loco driver leaders

RAIL drivers whose industrial action forced Irish Rail to concede talks on their claims on pay and conditions are being attacked by their own union leaders.

Last month's rail stoppage was called by the rank and file National Loco Drivers Committee which represents the great majority of the country's train drivers.

The committee demanded the company stop stalling on talks on their claims.

But now SIPTU official Tony Tobin is trying to exclude three properly elected delegates to the Negotiating Committee from talks to be held this month.

Tobin is demanding the

three disassociate themselves from the National Loco Drivers' Committee before they can take their rightful seats at the talks.

Liam Tobin of NBRU also

pressurised lay negotiators from that union.

Tony Tobin's disgraceful actions were met with a wave of anger from drivers and other grades on the railway.

Get this petition signed

■ A petition in support of the three drivers is being circulated throughout SIPTU.

Get it signed in your workplace or branch and return to *Socialist Worker* at PO Box 1648, Dublin 8 and we will pass them on.

We the undersigned SIPTU members would like to indicate to our union SIPTU in no uncertain manner our complete opposition to the suspension of Ciaran O'Dwyer (Limerick); Brendan Ogle (Athone) and John Courtney (Inchicore) from their union duties and their exclusion from the National Negotiating Committee for Locomotive Drivers in the forthcoming talks.

These members were elected by their fellow members to negotiate conditions and rates of pay for drivers.

Their fellow members have expressed every confidence in their ability to negotiate on their behalf and would not have democratically elected them if they did not feel that this was the case.

We strongly advice SIPTU to reconsider the untenable position it has adopted on this matter.

Numbers of members of both SIPTU and NBRU in Inchicore depot for a while even threatened to resign from their unions in protests.

Demand

The three delegates plan to arrive at talks scheduled for Monday 24th August and demand to be allowed take their place.

One driver told *Socialist Worker*, "It took a hard fight to get the company to sit down to talks and now the SIPTU leaders are excluding some of our best negotiators who really represent the aspirations of the drivers.

"It's time the officials wised up and backed these men rather than attempting to victimise them".

Meanwhile motions expressing no confidence in Tony Tobin are set to be passed in regional branch meetings of the SIPTU rail workers.

Rail workers across the grades have expressed their disgust at this attempt to muzzle the very people who are standing up for the rights of rail workers.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p

Inside:

What causes racism?
—PAGE 7

How capitalism exterminated native Americans
—PAGE 8

Solidarity price £1

REFUGEES ARE WELCOME HERE!

The lies about Romanians

Romanians have become the main target for those who claim that most refugees in Ireland are bogus.

But it is internationally recognised that the Roma population has experienced severe persecution.

Romania has one of the largest populations of European gypsies. They were kept in virtual slavery until the 1830's.

During the Nazi period it is estimated that about 600,000 gypsies were exterminated.

That was a quarter to a third of their numbers in all of Europe.

Since the collapse of the Eastern Bloc there has been an alarming increase of anti-gypsy racism.

Many job advertisements state that Roma should not apply.

A special Amnesty International documented more than 20 cases of torture, racist attacks and police shootings between 1996 and 1997.

Two dozen Roma gypsy families have been burnt out of their homes in the rural regions of Giuga and Mures.

If these were Catholics families living in Northern Ireland, no one would have any doubt that they suffered from sectarianism.

But the press campaign against the Romanians wants to label them all as 'bogus'.

The racist press

The Independent Group of newspapers is at the centre of the racist campaign to bolster up the right wing political establishment.

■The most recent wave of racist hysteria began when one of the newspapers in the group, *The Wexford People*, claimed that Romanian refugees hung around local schools trying to impregnate young girls.

■Then the *Sunday Independent* ran a headline accusing Nigerian refugees of organising a plot to falsely claim they were tortured. The fact that the Nigerian military regime hung people like Ken Saro Wiwo was not even mentioned.

These lies about refugees help to create an atmosphere which leads to physical assaults. Once it happens, the Independent Group will wash its hands and condemn violence — a little like the antics of Ian Paisley in the North.

The owner of the Independent Group is Tony O'Reilly, the richest man Ireland. He successfully lobbied politicians to reduce Capital Gains tax from 40 per cent to 20 per cent.

In recent months it has been revealed that his companies gave several large political donations to Fianna Fail and then wrote them off for tax purposes under the 'Pick Me Up' scheme.

No wonder this billionaire wants the growing anger in Irish society turned on persecuted refugees.

JOHN O'DONOGHUE and the press have whipped up an hysteria about refugees after a few score Romanians arrived in Wexford.

Ever since he took office, O'Donoghue has set out to scapegoat refugees. Without a shred of evidence he claimed that 90% of asylum seekers were bogus. And now he wants to insult refugees by fingerprinting them.

Yet the former Fianna Fail leader, Charles Haughey, once

lobbied the US government for visas for the illegal Irish emigrants.

If it was O.K. for an estimated 100,000 Irish illegals to find work in America during the eighties, then why cannot a few thousand refugees be allowed to work in Ireland?

The reason is that the political establishment are whipping up racism because they want to blame refugees for the housing crisis and the poverty that they have created.

They blame refugees for causing an accommodation crisis in Dublin's inner city. But the reality is that Dublin Corporation built less than 200 local authority houses last year, compared to over a thousand ten years ago.

The real spongers in Irish society are the wealthy business elite who refuse to pay their taxes and bribe politicians to look after their interests. We should turn our anger on them — and not the refugees who have been forced to come here.