

Socialist Worker

inside

SPENCER DOCK DEVELOPMENT PAGES 6-7

RANK & FILE REBELLION IN THE TEAMSTERS

page 8

Fighting for the right to choose

page 5

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

Holiday freebie from a business 'friend' while cutting 10,000 jobs



YOU ARE A HYPOCRITE HARNEY

HARNEY'S BUSINESS BACKERS

—PAGE 3

FIGHT AGAINST SCHEME JOBS CUTS

—PAGE 2

George Mitchell flies high on lobbying profits

THE BRITISH government has done an "extraordinarily murky" deal, according to the Airline Cargo Association, to offer lucrative airport rights to an American airline linked to the chairman of the Northern Ireland talks, George Mitchell.

to operate from the United States.

This privilege will net Fed Express a fortune and is unavailable to any other airline.

Senator Mitchell who is a director of FedEx, took time out of the northern talks to meet British Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott

who decided to give the deal to FedEx.

Mitchell is a multi millionaire who made his money in the States lobbying politicians for big business.

It now seems he is continuing his profitable work persuading politicians to listen to clear proposals.

Deal

The deal will allow Federal Express to deliver cargo from Prestwick airport in Ayrshire to a third country without any reciprocal rights for British companies hoping

CLUSTER CRITIC

A NOBEL Prize winner has laid into NATO for its use of cluster bombs in the war against Serbia.

Rae McGrath is the founder of the Mines Advisory Group, set up to get landmines banned worldwide because of the damage they do to civilians. In a recent article for *Newsweek* magazine he says that cluster bombs which do not explode on impact become in effect anti-personnel mines.

But instead of banning cluster bombs at the much heralded anti-mines conference last year, the big powers had mines reclassified by what their designers said they were for, rather than what they did.

This loophole allowed Nato to use cluster bombs against Serbia without going against the ban.

McGrath says in *Newsweek*, "Kosovo was a classic example of the refusal by authorities to accept evidence, readily available on past battlefields, and the willingness of arms manufacturers to play down the unreliability of their products."

Attacks on CE schemes

Putting manners on Mary Harney

THE BATTLE against Mary Harney's plan to cut 10,000 places from CE schemes got off to a flying start with the "Put Manners on Mary" March.

Over a thousand scheme workers marched to the Department of Trade and Employment on Kildare Street in one of the angriest and most enthusiastic working class marches seen on the streets of Dublin in a number of years.

Affiliated

The march was organised by the Scheme Workers Alliance, a rank and file group affiliated to the ATGWU and was supported by a host of community, voluntary organisations and trade unions.

Many organisations brought their own banners and there was loud and spirited chanting of slogans such as "We have jobs and we have dreams, Don't let Harney touch our schemes" all along the route of the march.

Socialist Worker spoke to a number of scheme workers on



Marching against Harney the march.

George Hernon, a drama worker in Ballyfermot, said that he had come on the March to "stop the fat cats getting fatter from working off our backs."

"It is the employers who need to be taken on not the weak and the vulnerable that Harney is attacking.

Gun dealing cops caught out

THE DEBATE about gun control in the US has taken a new twist with several major cities suing gun manufacturers for the damage caused by guns.

These class action suits are similar to the cases taken against the big tobacco companies over deaths caused by smoking. But maybe these cities should be suing their own police forces as well?

The police have carried out many of the fatal shootings that have taken place in recent years in the US.

But it seems the cops are also ultimately responsible for many "civilian" shootings as well. Police departments all over the US are selling off used weapons-includ-

ing handguns, assault rifles and grenade launchers to gun dealers.

Detroit police have disposed of 14 tons of weapons this way. In several murder cases - including shootings of cops - the killer bought the weapon from a "reputable" gun dealer who had been supplied by the city police forces.

Four of the five police forces investigating the Littleton, Colorado school massacre had sold off guns to dealers in the past year.

This madness comes from having to spend a certain budget on new weapons every year. So many of the guns being sold off are only a year or two in use.

And guns cannot simply be scrapped because that would be a waste of taxpayers' money!

THE SCHEME WORKERS ALLIANCE HAS CALLED ANOTHER DEMONSTRATION FOR SATURDAY 4TH

SEPT, AT 3PM BEGINNING AT THE GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE, PARNELL SQUARE.

Waterford politician arrested

TOM CUNNINGHAM, a former Fine Gael Lord Mayor of Waterford, was arrested in August and held in a police station for a number of hours.

His wife was also arrested with him. Investigations are proceeding into money that has allegedly gone missing in the bank where she worked.

Released

Within a few hours the couple were released without charge and a file on the incident has been sent to the DPP.

These simple facts have

been known to all of the press for the past few weeks. Many of them ran headlines stating that a 'prominent politician' in Waterford had been arrested. But none of them decided to reveal his name.

It was a very different story when Cian O'Tighearnaigh, the chief executive of the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was arrested. He was released without charge but most of the press still decided to print his name.

Yet when it comes to politicians, the media shows the utmost deference and respect.

Socialist Worker, while casting no aspersion on anyone who has been arrested, sees no reason to abide by the unspoken rules that dominate the Irish media.

Planning ahead

THE BUILDING bosses have threatened to use the courts to stop the new Planning Bill.

They are objecting to a proposal to allow local authorities to buy up to 20 percent of a development to build "affordable housing" in exchange for planning permission for private housing on the remainder.

Overall the developers should be happy. The Bill has introduced a fast track for the planning process, which will mean developments will go through quicker.

Nobody objecting to a development will in future have a right of appeal to An Bord Pleanála unless they had first made a written submission to a local authority. In addition, they will be required to pay a fee of £20 to have their views taken into account.

There is a restriction on third party rights including a provision

that would prohibit any objector seeking a judicial review by the High Court of any planning decision unless they could show a "substantial interest". Which in reality means a "property owner".

The Bill also makes it easier for sites to be offered without planning permission to multinationals.

So much for FF's commitment to solving the housing crisis.

HOUSING ACTION CAMPAIGN
March to the Dail
Saturday, Oct 16th,
3pm
Assemble Garden of
Remebrance Parnell
Street.
Tel: 0868416454

Layabouts who lunch while we foot the bill

IRISH TAXPAYERS have forked out £135,000 for feeding warmongers like Bill Clinton and Tony Blair.

Bill Clinton's lunch for 200 guests who dined on smoked salmon and lamb cutlets cost a whopping £30,177.73. Tony Blair's dinner for 250 guests was slightly better value at just under £30,000.

In the last nine months the government has hosted eight major banquets on our behalf, five of which cost more than £15,000 each.

But if you are expecting your invite any day now, I'd think again unless of course you are a politician or one of their advisers, a journalist, or the Papal Nuncio.

The Pope's ambassador to Ireland, Luciano Storero is listed as a guest at no fewer than five of the big eight 'do's'.

Prominent Irish businessmen such as Richard Burrowes of Irish Distillers, Michael Smurfit and ex-IDA chief Pdraig White are all regular attenders.

Regular

John Dunne of the bosses organisation IBEC is also a regular recipient of the little white invitation card.

However it seems that your best chance is to be a senior trade union official.

They even beat the employers hands down, with 12 of the most senior officials receiving regular invitations.

Supervisor

Jacqueline Ross is a supervisor in the Family Resource Centre in Ballymun. "These cuts will have greatest effect on lone parents who can't afford to take work other than CE schemes", she said.

"My own scheme has helped out a lot of women who were previously isolated and suffering from depression due to their situation".

Esther Corcoran from Bawnogue said that "the government should stop these cuts right now and use their £5 billion budget surplus to look after the disadvantaged and meet people's basic human rights in areas like healthcare and housing".

what we think

Hypocrite Harney's business backers

AS CLOSE to a thousand people marched through the streets of Dublin protesting at Mary Harney plans to slash 10,000 CE Scheme places, Harney was holidaying in a South of France villa courtesy of her millionaire friend Ulick McEvaddy.

Joining Harney was the Minister for Finance Charlie McCreery and former Labour MEP Bernie Malone.

Bertie Ahern has said he is completely "unconcerned" about the fact that two government ministers got a free holiday from a man who wants to persuade the government to take a number of key decisions about the privatisation of state companies that will make millions for McEvaddy on our backs.

Concern

Ahern's only concern seems to be the fact that he missed out on the free holiday himself. "Well if you got an invitation for a few days in a very nice villa in a nice location, I suppose we would probably all take it". Maybe we would, but unlike Mary Harney, Charlie McCreery and co. we wouldn't get such an invitation.

McEvaddy is seeking permission to build a privately owned terminal at Dublin Airport. He has also

sought backing to oppose new EU rules on aircraft noise levels. These rules would impose limits on noise allowed and would have cost McEvaddy's airline, Omega Air, which uses very noisy DC8 aircraft, millions.

Harney has insisted that she was holidaying with 'a family friend' and that they never discussed politics. But it seems she can hold her own with the worst of Fianna Fail

While she denied that she discussed the Air Noise Bill with the villa tycoon, she has had to admit that she had a meeting last April where she discussed the new regulations on air noise pollution.

Several weeks later Harney took part in the European Council of Ministers vote which deterred the introduction of regulations saving McEvaddy millions in revenue.

Harney and McCreery are not the only politicians to receive McEvaddy's 'generosity'. In August last year, McEvaddy flew the Fine Gael leader, John Bruton to the Omagh Bomb Memorial service. Former government minister Nora Owen and TD Jim Mitchell have also stayed at McEvaddy's villa.

As if we need any reminding, these latest revelations prove that the Golden Circle that operates in Irish politics is very much alive and kicking.

Who is McEvaddy?

MARY HARNEY has claimed that McEvaddy is just a family friend. Well she has friends in very high places.

Multi-millionaire Ulick McEvaddy and his brother Des are two of the most powerful men in Ireland.

At the heart of their empire is their aviation company Omega Air. In the 1980's they were the largest owners and operators of Boeing 707 jets in the world. They boast customers that include the US military and various African and Middle Eastern governments.

The McEvaddy brother also have dealings in the arms trade. They supplied the US Military with Boeing 707's to be used as part of very sophisticated radar, surveillance and target attack systems.

These systems include AWACS and Joint Surveillance Target Radar Systems, ie the so-called 'smart bombs' that missed 70 percent of their targets in the Gulf War. These systems were also used in the recent Balkan War and are at the cutting edge of NATO's technology. Ulick is a member of the British Royal United Service Institute which is involved in international security.

Most recently Omega Air was



Ulick McEvaddy

named among the seven international aerospace firms which have signalled an interest in supplying and operating flight refuelling aircraft to the RAF, a contract worth £7 billion. They are also involved in transforming jet airliners into military refuelling crafts for the US military.

The McEvaddys are shareholders in Omega Pacific which bought a 800-acre arms dump in North Wales from the British government.

The company had planned to build a re-engineering operation there but they faced massive opposition from local people when they announced plans to build a nuclear waste dump there.

The McEvaddy's are not afraid to use their politician friends to improve their profits.

It has been alleged that

Vote that worries Indonesia's rulers



Pro-Government militia members attacker supporters of East Timorese independence

A REFERENDUM to settle the fate of East Timor, which has been occupied and annexed by the Indonesian military for a quarter of a century, is due as *Socialist Worker* goes to press.

If East Timorese voters reject the Indonesian government's plan for autonomy within the state, they will be voting for independence. The Indonesian parliament will then have to ratify the separation when it meets in October.

The Indonesian armed forces and the right wing anti-independence militia they arm are prepared to launch a wave of bloodshed if the vote goes against them. There are 15,000 Indonesian troops in East

Timor, over 6,000 police, and hundreds in anti-independence death squads. Indonesian forces have killed dozens of independence activists in East Timor over the last few months.

General Suharto, the Indonesian dictator, ordered East Timor to be invaded on 7 December 1975 to prevent the formation of a left wing government.

US president Gerald Ford and his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had visited Suharto just hours before the invasion. Over the next two decades Indonesian forces butchered over 200,000 East Timorese people out of a total population of about 650,000.

Indonesia's occupation forces massacred 300 protesters in the East Timorese capital, Dili, in 1991.

Western governments remained

supporters of Suharto up to his overthrow in May 1997. Since then Suharto's former second in command, President B J Habibie, has struggled to prevent the mass movement which swept Suharto away from winning change for most of the country's 210 million people.

Habibie has ordered a crackdown against separatists in the Indonesian province of Aceh.

The US and its allies have felt forced to say that East Timor should become independent if people vote for it. But the rulers who backed the murderous occupation of East Timor do not suddenly care about its victims.

There are significant mineral resources in the area. They are determined to ensure profit flows from East Timor no matter what its political status.



join the socialists

If you would like to join the SWP then fill in this slip and return it to a *Socialist Worker* seller or send to PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

- I would like to join the SWP
 I would like more information
 I would like to take _ copies of *Socialist Worker* to sell

Name:.....

..

Address:.....

....

McEvaddy lobbied Irish politicians on NATO membership for Ireland.

NATO is a key McEvaddy customer, and Harney has played an important role in pushing Ireland's membership of NATO's Partnership for Peace.

Neither are the McEvaddys adverse to giving political donations. They were major donors to Fine Gael and Jim and Gay Mitchell have admitted receiving donations from them.

It has also emerged that Ulick McEvaddy tried to persuade a key witness for the *McCracken Tribunal* not to testify against Michael Lowry.

Fine Gael TD Paul McGrath said he had been approached by McEvaddy before it even became public knowledge that he was to testify.

In his tribunal evidence McGrath said that Lowry believed that anyone who gave large sums of money to the party should be treated favourably in return.



news of the world

Turkey

Over 40,000 dead in Turkish earthquake...

Buried by greed and corruption

"IT'S heartbreaking. People are just having to sit and watch their relatives die slowly under the rubble. Everywhere you go collapsed blocks stand next to completely undamaged ones.

"I live in an area of Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey, where the houses and flats are well built. When the earthquake hit, the only thing that happened was ornaments fell off our shelves. The poorest district in Istanbul, Avclar, is devastated".

That was how a socialist in Turkey described last week's terrible earthquake. In just 45 seconds over 40,000 people lay dead or dying.

People in Turkey know the government and construction companies are responsible for the carnage. Ahmet Mete, the head of the Earthquake Research Centre at Bosphorus University, said, "Earthquakes don't

kill. Buildings kill."

The Architects Chamber of Turkey says over half of all buildings in Turkey are built in violation of construction regulations and are prone to collapse in an earthquake.

Resistant

"We know how to build earthquake resistant houses," says Oktay Ekinci, the chairman of the chamber. "This is the first thing they teach us at university. Yet Turkey is full of Kacak buildings." Kacak means buildings that do not comply with building regulations.

Turkish workers have been campaigning for safer housing for years. The inhabitants of one building in Eskisehir recently protested that their flats were structurally unsafe. The contractor added just one more column to the building. The

local borough council approved it. The seven storey block was the only building to collapse in the town, killing most of the inhabitants.

Bribery is officially encouraged in Turkey. The socialist in Istanbul says, "Building contractors submit plans which satisfy government safety requirements. But then only half the steel or concrete needed is used.

"There are bribes for turning a blind eye. Most money goes into officials' pockets. Some is actually used by the councils to provide services as no central funds are available."

A major earthquake hits Turkey every 18 months. For the last two years scientists have predicted that a major earthquake would hit the region. But the authorities did nothing. Most of those who died were poor.

Even when it comes to

getting rescued the poor are treated like second class citizens. About 300 buildings collapsed in the town of Golcuk near Izmit, the epicentre of the earthquake, including a navy education centre.

The armed forces were devoted to digging out the centre (two admirals were buried under the rubble) and nothing whatsoever was done for the people of Golcuk for 36 hours. The injured military and their relatives were flown to Istanbul by helicopter. Civilian injured went by road.

Treatment

It took the government 36 hours to instruct private hospitals to give free treatment to the injured.

Another Turkish eyewitness said, "In the town of Golcuk there are 300 col-



The poor were the main victims of the earthquake

lapsed buildings, mostly four or five storey blocks each containing up to 20 flats.

"Ordinary people have carried out 98 percent of rescues with their bare hands. There is just one earth mover in the town."

The earthquake killed the poor irrespective of their ethnic background. Turks

and Kurds were buried in the same collapsed apartment blocks.

It was only weeks ago that Turkey's rulers whipped up a wave of anti-Kurdish chauvinism and encouraged Turkish workers to great the death sentence on Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan with cries of, "Murderer!"

Turkey's main liberal newspaper, *Hurriyet*, ran the front page headline "Murderers" the day after the earthquake.

This time it referred to the corrupt construction companies and the politicians they bribed - the people who are truly responsible for mass slaughter in the country.

Man made disaster

THE EARTHQUAKE in Turkey is one of a long line of recent "natural disasters". Major earthquakes have hit Columbia and Afghanistan in the last two years alone. Last

year a hurricane devastated Nicaragua and floods destroyed parts of China and Bangladesh.

The 1999 World Disaster Report said last year's "natural disasters" were the worst on

record and caused more damage than ever before - creating 58 percent of the world's refugees.

These disasters are striking more and more people and their impact is far from natural. Peasants and the poor throughout the developing world are moving

to cities in search of jobs. One billion people now live in shanty towns and 40 of the 50 fastest growing cities are located in earthquake zones. One million people lived in Istanbul the last time it was hit by a major quake in 1960. Now there are 14 million.

Tens of millions of people worldwide live under the constant threat of floods. The poor are forced to live in the most dangerous parts of these cities. Many poor people in Bangladesh live on flood plains of rivers. Poor quality slum buildings are found all over the world.

Ancient

The Irish press said it was a miracle that ancient buildings in Istanbul like the Blue Mosque, built in the 17th century, or the Saint Sophia Cathedral, which is 1,400 years old, survived. These buildings were left standing because they were built out of strong building materials and designed to hold up under quakes.

Developers in rich countries - Japan, New Zealand and the US -

build single storey wooden houses that can withstand terrifying forces.

Injuries

A quake measuring 5.2 on the Richter Scale hit San Francisco barely 24 hours after the Turkish disaster. But there were no reported deaths or injuries. The British Geological Survey has said, "Reinforced steel-framed buildings can withstand almost any earthquake." But they, of course, cost money.

While the number of earthquakes each year remains roughly the same, there has been an increase in the number of floods and hurricanes. Many scientists believe that global warming is responsible.

The biggest single contributor to global warming is the rising emissions of certain gases, above all carbon dioxide. These are produced by gas, oil, coal and petrol. First World countries like the US or Europe are the biggest polluters. Yet our rulers refuse to slash the output of these gases.

CHIEF CROOK

AN earthquake hit the town of Erzincan in Turkey in 1992. The state hospital collapsed like a pack of cards.

The civil engineer responsible for its construction was Suleyman Demirel. He is now president of Turkey.

Many of the unsafe buildings were thrown up in the early 1980s after the NATO backed military coup in Turkey. The same construction companies that have built these death traps are now bidding for contracts to make good the damage caused by the earthquake.

They're the murderers

THE TURKISH Earthquake Centre says that one year of the government's arms expenditure could make every home in Turkey earthquake proof.

A quarter of the country's entire budget is spent on arms - £4.5 billion.

Turkey is a NATO member and favoured ally of the US. The International Monetary Fund recently pushed the Turkish government towards further deregulation of the economy which will suck more money from the poor and give more power to business.

The present Turkish government is an alliance between the Democratic Left Party (the Turkish equivalent of the Labour Party in

Britain), the National Action Party (a fascist party) and The Motherland Party (the equivalent of the Tory party in Britain).

The government is backing the army's dirty war against the Kurdish population of south east Turkey. The war has claimed over 30,000 people in the last 15 years. Turkey's military chiefs are determined to execute Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan.

Despite the size of the Turkish army it was unbelievably ineffective in dealing with the earthquake. None of the army's own earth moving equipment was used in the first three days after the disaster.

The Turkish government has found billions to buy weapons and oppress the Kurds. It has refused to build safe homes. It has blood on its hands.

Eamonn McCann

Fighting for choice

THE BROADER and more open the debate about abortion in the North becomes, the more support will emerge for a woman's right to choose.

Flushed with getting a result against the Ulster Pregnancy Advisory Association, the Precious Life crowd have lost the run of themselves, targetting the Brook Advisory Clinic as an abortion referral facility, which it is not, and, ludicrously, accusing Mo Mowlam of manoeuvring to extend the UK 1967 Abortion Act to the North.

True, this was Mowlam's position when she was in Opposition. But in office, she has been punctilious in following the line of her Tory predecessors and steering clear of the issue.

Now that it is edging out into the open, however, that stance may become increasingly untenable. There are two reasons for this: one to do broadly with the changing nature of Northern society, the other with narrower considerations of law.

One of the most profound changes in the South over the past 25 years has lain in the steady and continuing secularisation of society. Over the same period, a parallel process has been under way in the North, too, even if somewhat obscured by the smoke and sulphur of the Troubles.

The role of religion in regulating personal behaviour has substantially diminished in Derry, as in Dublin. There is no reason to believe that the attitudes to abortion of, say, under-25s in the North differs significantly from attitudes elsewhere in the western world.

In the end, this will prove decisive in forcing change — assuming, that is, that these attitudes are mobilised and given clear political expression.

At the moment, confusion reigns about abortion law in the North. In the "K" case in 1993 - involving a suicidal, pregnant 14-year-old who was in the care of the State - the courts ruled that the abortion which she wanted would be legal and in the girl's own best interests.

Organised

Despite this, no doctor could found to carry out the termination. State agencies had to organise her travel and accompany her to Liverpool.

At the same time, abortions which are almost certainly illegal — for reasons of foetal handicap, for example — are regularly carried out in Northern hospitals.

In a paper prepared for the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights five years ago, Queen's University Law Professor Simon Lee suggested that the law is "chronically uncertain to the point where the European Court of Human Rights would strike it down".

One reason the issue hasn't yet been taken to Europe is that campaigners have believed that only an individual woman actually seeking an abortion would be given a hearing. There were good, obvious reasons for hesitation about going down that road - to do with time constraints and with the unfairness of making any individual woman such a clear target for the "pro-life" crazies.

It now seems, however, that a case can be brought on the general ground of women in the North being denied rights available to women elsewhere in the same jurisdiction. Preparatory work on the case is under way.

In view of this, ducking the issue may not long remain the easy option for Mowlam — or for the Assembly when, if ever, it's established.

Of course, looking to the European Courts isn't the preferred option for socialists. The significance of court action is that it would push the issue further into the mainstream and provide a focus for grassroots campaigners.

At the same time, it would make it more difficult for liberals and self-proclaimed "leftists", in the trade unions, for example, to justify their silence with claims that abortion is a marginal issue which there's no need to prioritise at the moment.

The need is self-evident for a clear voice arguing against the obscurantism of the Churches and for confronting the bigotry which led to the firebombing of the UPAA offices last month.

Only socialist organisation can provide that voice and give coherence and direction to the struggle for a woman's right to choose.

Nobel prize for the arms trade

NORTHERN IRELAND'S two Nobel Peace Prize winners have just brought one of the world's biggest arms producers to Derry.

John Hume and David Trimble clearly forgot the need to take weapons out of circulation in Northern Ireland when they welcomed missiles and war planes manufacturer Raytheon Systems Limited into the city.

System

RSL in Derry will produce the software for Britain's very own Star Wars system called ASTOR, or Airborne Standoff Radar, while Shorts in Belfast is manufacturing the hardware.

ASTOR was ordered by the Ministry of Defence in June, with the final bill expected to top £700 million.

RSL's parent company, Raytheon Company, produces Tomahawk and Patriot missiles for the United States war machine. Its plant in Fife, Scotland, supplies key components for the Tomahawk.

Intriguingly, SDLP leader John Hume told people in Derry for weeks that the Raytheon plant in the city would not be involved in any military projects, only in civil aviation systems.

Yet the company knew as early as June that it had won the bid to produce ASTOR in Belfast and Derry - and said so in press releases. John Hume clearly hadn't read RSL's publicity.

ASTOR is portrayed as a defensive radar system, but in reality it supports war planes on bombing missions. Raytheon itself says that ASTOR provides



Trimble: Looking for the money for the peace prize or for more arms dealers?

"24-hour, all-weather ground surveillance and target detection for the UK... it facilitates the targeting of precision weapons such as missiles and ground attack aircraft ... the ASTOR system will give a significant advantage to UK forces in all conflict scenarios."

Now the company is bidding to supply the missile system for the Eurofighter, which may very well be produced in Northern Ireland too.

Hypocrisy

It's sheer hypocrisy for John Hume and David Trimble to harp on about decommissioning while rolling out the red carpet for Raytheon.

It shows that our rulers only have a problem with weapons as long as they're not their own.

Of course both the UUP and the SDLP are actively promoting Northern Ireland as a low-cost location for foreign invest-

ment - that is as a place where US companies can keep trade unions out of their plants and where wage levels are lower than in the rest of Europe.

Raytheon has already sacked thousands of workers across its plants in the US.

Yet chief executive Daniel Burnham earned \$23.7 million (around £14 million) for six months' work from July to December 1998!

Sinn Fein also sees more foreign investment as the key to progress in Northern Ireland, especially from the US where the party is hob-nobbing with rich Irish Americans. It's no surprise that Sinn Fein has kept quiet about the arrival of Raytheon in Derry.

Obviously, many people in Derry, where unemployment still stands at around 15 per cent, are welcoming 150 extra jobs.

But Raytheon is pocketing £700 million in government cash which could have created

150 far more useful and badly-needed jobs in education, or in hospitals like Dungannon which New Labour is trying to close down.

Meanwhile, Trimble, Hume and Adams have shown that there is no sectarian divide where business is concerned. They're united in selling Northern Ireland abroad as a low-wage investment location.

Economy

All three want to cut corporation tax here in order to compete with the Southern economy. The money to subsidise big multinationals will come out of workers' pockets.

All the assembly parties share economic policies that put profits before people's needs. Workers should be equally united in fighting for decent wages and against greedy bosses - whether Protestant, Catholic or American.

Why is this bigot still the Home Secretary?

BRITISH HOME Secretary Jack Straw is a filthy bigot out to scapegoat anyone who does not conform to New Labour's vision of society.

On a BBC West Midlands radio show he said there was "too much toleration of travellers, and we want to see the police and local authorities cracking down" on those "living on the margins of society".

Straw spewed out myths against travellers more suited to a saloon bar bore than a Labour Home Secretary.

He said, "Many of these so called travellers seem to think that it's perfectly OK for them to



cause mayhem in an area, to go burgling, thieving, breaking into vehicles, causing all kinds of other troubles including defecating in the doorways of firms and so on, and getting away with it."

On Monday Straw said he regretted "not one word" and that he had got "a lot of support". Where exactly did Straw get his support? Tory shadow Home Secretary Ann

Widdecombe said she would "not quarrel with his remarks".

The Sun, fresh from bashing asylum seekers, said, "His views are likely to strike a chord with millions of law abiding citizens." The Daily Telegraph praised Straw's "courage".

Straw and his cronies claim they are not talking about "real Gypsies".

This is an old trick, formerly used by the Tories to hide their attacks on ALL travelling communities.

Difference

What is the difference between Straw and Tory MP Bowen Wells who in the 1992 general election issued a leaflet headed "Conservatives Against

Gypsies - Are you fed up with the filth and abuse brought by so called Gypsies?"

And Malcolm Imrie, in a letter to the Guardian, also pointed out that "in 1936 (in Nazi Germany) Robert Ritter, director of the 'Racial and Genetic Research Office', claimed that many so called Gypsies were 'half breeds' and should be distinguished from 'racially pure Gypsies'."

"It was not clear who belonged to the latter category, but the former, having 'inferior genes' were 'highly unstable, unprincipled, unpredictable, lethargic or restless and irritable, workshy and anti-social'."

As Imrie pointed out, "The distinction between real and fake Gypsies

made little difference in the concentration camps, where many thousands were murdered indiscriminately."

Straw's onslaught will mean more pub door signs banning travellers.

It will see poverty stricken travelling communities forcibly moved on.

Local councils, who have an obligation to provide the bare minimum for caravan sites, will think they can now ditch their responsibilities. And it will lead to attacks on Gypsies by bigoted mobs.

Far from being "tolerated" and "above the law", travelling people have faced discrimination for a long time.

Straw is doing his best to continue it.

Boutros-Ghali book reveals

UN - a tool of the US

CAN THE United Nations be a force for good, independent of the great powers?

by **SAM ASHMAN**

Not if you believe the memoirs of Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and he should know. Boutros-Ghali was Secretary General of the UN from 1991 to 1996.

His new book reveals just how much the great powers dictate to the UN's actions.

Boutros-Ghali is no radical. He is a member of the international ruling class, a wealthy Egyptian and former foreign minister.

Scheming

Yet the story he tells reveals the dominance of the UN by the United States. The degree of scheming, manipulation and hypocrisy was too much even for him.

Soon after Boutros-Ghali was appointed, Clinton came to office in the US. He appointed Madeleine Albright US ambassador to the UN.

Boutros-Ghali says Albright "seemed to assume that her mere assertion of a US policy would be sufficient to achieve the support of other nations".

A string of disagreements were to follow, about which socialists could support neither side.

Boutros-Ghali wanted an interventionist UN, acting globally.

The US only wanted intervention across the world on its terms.

When it came to Bosnia, Boutros-Ghali was in favour of accepting the UN/EC peace plan devised by Cyrus Vance and David Owen.

The plan was not good. It created separate Serb, Croat and Bosnian Muslim areas, with the city of Sarajevo being governed by all three.

The Serbs would have been granted 43 percent of the territory.

The US was not concerned that the deal would cement divisions.

Boutros-Ghali says, "As any truce or peace agreement would leave the United States with no alternative but to contribute troops, the Americans seemed most uncooperative whenever progress towards peace seemed possible."

Plan

So the plan was blown out of the water by the US — even though after two and half more years of fighting, the US brokered Dayton agreement gave the Serbs 49 percent of territory.

It was a similar story in Somalia.

Boutros-Ghali wanted the UN to send a big force to Somalia to disarm the warring factions that were said to be preventing food

aid from reaching the people.

It would have amounted to an army of occupation.

The US was not concerned about the interests of ordinary Somalis, however.

Clinton's predecessor George Bush had committed US troops. But Clinton and Albright were worried domestic political opinion would be against US intervention.

Albright told Boutros-Ghali the US was too involved and wanted to withdraw. Then the US acted unilaterally.

Without any consultation with the UN, US forces staged a disastrous raid against top Somali leaders during which two US helicopters were shot down. In response US forces killed 1,000 Somalis.

Clinton blamed the blunder on the UN!

During the recent bombing of Serbia, the US and British governments repeatedly used the word genocide to describe the attacks on Kosovan Albanians.

But Boutros-Ghali shows that throughout the killing in Rwanda, US officials deliberately refused to use the word "genocide" in case it could be used to intensify calls for US intervention.

There was a radio station in Kigali, the Rwandan capital, inciting the massacre of Tutsis. Boutros-Ghali "asked the United States to jam these inflammatory broadcasts".

He was told that "it would be too expensive".

Throughout all this the US owed the UN nearly £1 billion in unpaid subs.

Aware

At one lunch with US Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Madeleine Albright, Boutros-Ghali said, "I am deeply aware that the US is the major actor on the world scene. I know that I must have support if I am to succeed."

"I will always try to deserve that support, but please allow me from time to time to differ publicly from US policy."

"It would help dispel the image among many member states that the UN is just the tool of the US."

Boutros-Ghali thought he was being eminently reasonable. But "Christopher and Albright looked at each other as though the fish I had served was rotten. They didn't speak."

Boutros-Ghali became the only secretary general of the UN not to be re-elected for a second term.

The US campaigned, bribed, blackmailed and bullied to ensure he failed in his efforts to be re-elected.

Boutros-Ghali's book shows that the UN is utterly subject to the whims and interests of the Great Powers.

If this is how they treat their own heaven help the rest of us.

Spencer Dock Development

THATCHER

IN A rerun of the Canary Wharf madness of Thatcher's Britain, developers are being allowed to build what they want where they want. The largest of the schemes to destroy Dublin's Docklands is the Spencer Dock Development.

According to the Spencer Dock developer's PR "Dublin is a world city and should strive for greatness. We are entitled to it. Let us dare to move forward and seize this moment. I believe this landmark development, because of its context and quality, will be timeless".

Reality

The reality is very different.

The development is a £1.2 billion project, to be built on the Liffeside frontage of a 51-acre CIE-owned site at Spencer Dock, where the Royal Canal enters the river.

Apart from a conference centre, the scheme includes 3,012 apartments in 11 blocks, ranging in height from nine to 17 storeys; nine office blocks of six to 22 storeys in height which would contain more than two million square feet of space; and two hotels with a total of 371 bedrooms.

Everything that's been built in Canary Wharf, including Europe's tallest building, is less than what's been proposed for Spencer Dock.

Canary Wharf consists of 5.6 million sq ft of space, while 6 million sq ft of space is planned for Spencer Dock, of which corporate offices would account for 2.2 million sq ft.

Apart from the conference centre, which rises to the height of Liberty Hall the tallest office block, a glazed curtain-walled tower, would rise to 128.3 metres - more than twice the height of Liberty Hall. The Corporation have allowed the first part of the development through with a few minor changes.

Scary

Even the Dublin Docklands Authority, who have pushed forward much of the developments of the Docks, described the Spencer Dock as 'scary stuff'.

Traffic is also a huge issue. The implications of providing more than 7,300 car-parking spaces on-site means more traffic chaos, and increased levels of asthma for children.

The spaces between the buildings will be in shadow. Wind turbulence will create "unpleasant conditions" at ground level. Overshadowing will extend to the Royal Canal and to Ringsend.

The developers have admitted that they cannot commit to building even the minimum 15% social hous-



FOR DOCK

The Irish Fi

ing. The Spencer Dock Development is the latest in a long line of 'urban renewals' which have simply meant office blocks, apartments and hotels purely to make money for the developers.

Residents groups from East Wall, North Wall, City Quay, Pearse Street, Ringsend and South Lotts have issued a joint statement opposing "the developer-led high-rise schemes which are plaguing our area".

After a march by 600 residents to An Bord Pleanála protesting against a high rise in Thorncastle Street, Ringsend, the scheme was halted.

Protest can stop the developers and start to turn the docks into an area for the people who live there rather than a feeding ground for the rich.

AT THE heart of the dockland development is the Irish Financial Service Centre. There is probably £500 billion in the IFSC. Nobody is exactly sure because the centre is designed to help business move money around.

Half of the world's top 50 banks have operations in the IFSC and total declared assets of these grew 80 per cent last year to approximately £68

GRABBING ALL THEY CAN GET

TREASURY Holdings is one of the biggest property developers in Dublin, and is jointly

owned by John Ronan and Richard Barrett.

They own two-thirds of the shareholding in Spencer Dock Development Co Ltd, the other third being owned by Harry Crosbie, owner of the Point Depot and a shareholder in the Clarence Hotel.

On the Late, Late Show

when Crosbie was asked about objections from local working class people, he replied, "Sure they eat their young down there".

Ronan from Treasury Holdings gives cash to politicians.

He gave Ruairi Quinn £10,000 and gave £1,000 to David Andrews last year.

billion. According to financial centre I a tax haven". C pay 10 percent to receive number With offshore register compa avoid altogether

Irish company themselves making the ider distance structure determine

ers. Some compar reinsure, which mately compa ulated

Office applicati-sses not

Money but any invest are 13 c in the I

Branch market is Future privately well c doing

MERITE PLAN

by SIMON
BASKETTER

Rich and poor in the Docks

SOME OF those who work in the IFSC make incredible salaries. There are 4,016 people in Ireland who 'earn' more than £250,000 in salary. 376 of them 'work' in the IFSC.

According to the Ernst & Young the average wage rise last year for executives on more than £100,000 was 14 percent, though some managed an incredible 98 percent wage rise.

All of these received extra bonuses, worth up to 70 percent of basic salary.

There are over 5,000 people employed in the IFSC. But not all of them are on enormous salaries. Many accountants, IT workers and receptionists only make about £13,000 a year.

The IFSC is a monument to wealth in a sea of poverty. In the rest of the Docks people are being forced out by developers and poverty.

The working class population of Docklands is ageing as people leave the area. The highest percentage of persons over 65 in Dublin live in the Docklands area. Only 8 per cent of people who are working, work in the area.

According to the Combat Poverty Agency. One in 7 of the population of the Docklands area earn 40 percent of the average income; compared to 1 in 10 for the country as a whole. Over a quarter are living below half the average income and over a third are living on 60 percent of average income.

Eighteen Percent of the people who live in the Docklands area live in what is described as persistent poverty.

DOCKLANDS

Irish Financial Scam Centre

the dockland
the Irish
entre. There
million in the
exactly sure
is designed
move money

p 50 banks have
FSC and total
ese grew 80 per
proximately £68

was asked
ns from local
people, he
they eat their
here".
n Treasury
es cash to

Quinn
gave £1,000 to
s last year.

ing to the German Central Bank the
entre has "acquired a reputation as
". Companies in the IFSC only
cent tax on their profits. They also
umber of other benefits.
ffshore companies, investors can
company in a matter of hours and
altogether.

Identity

company law also allows investors to
emselves from the actual company
making it virtually impossible to
the identity of the beneficial own-

companies are believed to operate
s, which, while carried out legiti-
companies at the IFSC, is not reg-

list their activities in Companies
lications as "general trading".
ses through Dublin for tax purpos-
s not stay in the country or go
y investment.

re 13 Cayman Ireland Banks with
n the IFSC. The entire US Cotton
rket is run from the development.
vately wealthy people are also
well out of the IFSC. In the past

year alone, private investors bought seven
buildings in the docklands for a total of £73
million.

Some of these reduced their tax liability by
a significant amount by availing of 100 per
cent capital allowances on their newly
acquired buildings. The investments ranged
in value from £3.15 million for 2/3 Exchange
Place to £24 million for 5 George's Dock.

An investor buying a £10 million property
in the IFSC has been able to claim 54 per cent

(or £5.4 million) in capital allowances against
the cost in the first year. This equates to an
initial tax saving of £2,592,000 for a taxpay-
er on the 48 per cent rate.

A further 4 per cent in capital allowances
(i.e. £400,000) can be claimed annually over
the subsequent 12 1/2 years. This represents
another annual tax saving of £192,000. The
extent of the savings for the rich are such that
companies are paying up to £10 and £11 mil-
lion an acre for sites in the IFSC extension.

★ **THE MAN** who set up the
IFSC was Dermot
Desmond. In an RTE inter-
view in 1991, Charlie Haughey
said Desmond was "a man for
whom I have a great admiration"
and credited him with the "bril-
liant" idea of the IFSC.
Desmond was the man behind NCB
Stockbrokers. NCB acted as consul-
tants to Bord na Móna, ESB and
Telecom Éireann and played central
roles in the Greencore and Irish Life
flotations.

In 1991 Desmond was the key fig-
ure in the sale of land to Telecom
Éireann for an inflated price.

Desmond once wrote to the head
of Pernod Ricard to explain his influ-
ence: "We orchestrated entirely the
successful campaign to get a posi-
tive tax opinion from the Revenue
Commissioners, which involved
using personal contacts at the high-
est level."

"We used up a large proportion of
the favours we can call upon from
our political contacts - and no doubt
we will pay a price on the other side."

Desmond is one of the richest men
in Ireland and makes significant prof-
its on the currency markets through
his company, International
Investments and Underwriting, which
operates from the IFSC.

Ideas and revolutions

Arms spending and the boom

THE EARLY years of this century were marked by war and revolutionary crises. The high point was the Russian Revolution of 1917. The lowest were two world wars that cost the lives of millions of people.

At the end of the Second World War it made sense to presume that the depth of the capitalist crisis would continue. But in fact the period from 1948 to 1970 was one of continued expansion and boom for most of the system.

Capitalism expanded at a rate previously unheard of while at the same time the standard of living of the working class in both cold war camps rose dramatically.

This required socialists to rethink what was happening to the system. Tony Cliff and the International Socialists — forerunners of the SWP — had developed the theory of state capitalism.

They argued that Russia was no longer a workers state and was in fact run along capitalist lines with the bureaucracy acting as a ruling class.

As Tony Cliff put it: "The theory of State Capitalism identified military competition between Russia and the Western Capitalist countries as the chief mechanism enforcing the dynamic of capital accumulation in Russia."

"Armaments production in Russia also explains why it did not suffer from the cycle of boom and slump. The converse was also true — on the other side of the Iron Curtain arms spending remained at a high level even though the Second World War had finished."

This high level of arms spending provided a temporary cure to the problems of capitalist crisis.

Capitalism is cursed by a cycle of booms and slumps because production grows faster than workers capacity for consumption. The intense competition of this society drives firms to produce more and more goods in an attempt to capture a larger share of the market.

But there is a finite capacity for workers to consume these goods. Inevitably, more is produced than can be sold. Think of the mountains of food stockpiled — despite the fact that millions are starving.

This madness produces a crisis of overproduction. Prices fall, firms go bankrupt and booms turn to slumps.

After the end of the Second World War a new consumer had been found for the goods of capitalism — the military machine of the state. This consumer had deep pockets and an insatiable appetite.

Slump

As more and more production was geared towards the military, sections of the economy were removed from the boom slump cycle. The development of this permanent arms economy helped the boom period of the system last longer.

But it did so at the expense of the civilian economy, as diverting wealth from productive investment gave a tendency towards stagnation. Because large amount of wealth was taken out of the system and wasted on arms, money was not spent on improving production.

This was most pronounced in Russia and the Eastern Block, where the economies were smaller and weaker than the west. By the 1980s this had led to the complete stagnation of their economies.

But the heart of the system was affected as well. The price of the permanent arms economy was that those economies which didn't spend on arms, Germany and Japan, for instance could catch up with those that did. While the US invested in arms, others invested in industry.

Arms spending could only sustain the boom as long as there was just one overwhelmingly dominant economy such as the US. The expansion of Germany and Japan meant intense international competition was dominant in the system again, which in turn brought back the crisis of overproduction.

The other consequence of the permanent arms economy was to make the world a far more dangerous place. The threat of nuclear war still hangs over the planet. More arms are now produced than ever before.

Now instead of providing a partial way out of the crisis, arms spending offers the prospect of yet more barbarism in a world that is more crisis ridden than ever.

A new consumer had been found for the goods of capitalism — the military machine of the state.

This consumer had deep pockets and an insatiable appetite.

1934 Teamsters strike ...

ALMOST HALF the Irish workforce is unionised today. Most people join unions where they can because it is the best way of fighting for proper rates of pay and conditions.

But many Irish workers in multi-nationals or companies such as Ryanair still have to fight for the right to organise themselves in unions.

Some of the most courageous and inspirational struggles that workers have waged have been for this basic right. One of the most dramatic of these was the 1934 strikes in Minneapolis led by the Teamsters union.

Farrell Dobbs' account of these strikes in his book *Teamster Rebellion* is hugely relevant for trade unionists today. He highlights the tactics that were used and he examines the role of the union bureaucracy and the state.

As a worker who became a socialist as the result of his experiences in the Teamsters, he brings out the importance of socialist politics in leading the strikes to victory. In fact, the initiative for the unionisation drive came from the Communist League of America - the Trotskyist party which Dobbs was later to join.

The 1930's were black years economically when the Great Depression was creating huge levels of unemployment and poverty. Thousands of workers right across America were becoming radicalised and joining unions to fight for better conditions.

At the same time the unions were dominated by 'business unionists' who struck cosy deals with employers and worked hard to avoid any militant action.

The Communist League began the campaign in the coal yards of Minneapolis, with a clear analysis of the favourable objective conditions they were working in and also the many obstacles that would crop up along the way.

They had a strategy right from the beginning that it would be necessary to operate on two fronts - both within and outside the union.

Members of the party joined the Teamsters and began to win over key members of the union executive to their militant strategy. They also set up a voluntary organising committee with other militants in the coal yards to start to agitate among ordinary workers about the need to join a union to fight for higher wages and shorter working hours.

By February 1934 the campaign had reached a level where real action was needed to prove the worth of the union and so the first in a series of strikes was launched.

Throughout the struggles of that year a double edged strategy of relying on rank and file organisation while pushing the union leaders to tow the line was the reason for its eventual success.

Dobbs explained how it was necessary to keep the official labour leaders onside to give legitimacy to the actions of the rank and file, while at the same time, keeping the rank and file in the driving seat of every struggle.

He explains how the contradictory role of the union leaders made this possible: "In their fundamental outlook they were oriented towards



Teamsters defending the picket line

REBELLION OF THE RANK AND FILE

collaboration with the capitalists, but they were of no value to the ruling class unless they had a base from which to operate within the unions. To maintain such a base they had to deliver something for the workers."

In the course of the struggle this assessment proved completely accurate. When faced with the organised strength of the rank and file the union leaders were forced to get more gains for their members than they would have previously.

The Mayor of Minneapolis, Olsen, a representative of the Farmer-Labour Party, was also reluctant to bow to the pressure of the businessmen to break the strikes, because he was unwilling to come out openly against the people whose votes he relied on.

The fact that these people were fundamentally on the side of the ruling class was also revealed when the mayor eventually declared martial

law and two strikers died at the hands of the police. The top union executive indulged in vicious re-baiting of the strike leaders as the movement grew beyond his control.

It was the independent rank and file organisation which Dobbs and the other leaders of the strikes promoted that proved to be the best safeguard against the treachery of the 'official' leaders of the working class.

It allowed for the best tactics and most innovative strategies to win the strike to be developed, because it was the people with the most at stake if the strike was defeated that were actually running the show.

During the 1934 strikes in Minneapolis workers showed amazing resourcefulness and the initiatives they took still stand as the model for workers today.

A strike committee was elected with a strict division of labour so

that everything could be co-ordinated efficiently. Mass meetings were held daily to involve the maximum number of strikers and discuss the conduct of the strike. Every manoeuvre and trick by the union officials or the bosses was immediately reported to the strikers.

They set up a strike headquarters with their own hospital to look after wounded workers.

Flying pickets were used to completely dominate the city and disorientate the bosses.

Strikers who were patrolling the streets would send for back-up to stop the scabs anytime a truck moved in the city that wasn't sanctioned by the union.

If the strikers were well organised the bosses were not to be outdone. They were organised into a group called the Citizens Alliance which made every effort to break the union. They established volunteer corps of thugs to back up the police. They used the media to

attack the strikers and weaken their public support.

Realizing the importance of information and mis-information in maintaining the strike, the teamsters published the first ever daily strike paper. This served to refute the slanders of the bosses and keep the workers informed about the progress of the strike.

At the height of the struggle 10,000 copies of *The Organiser* were sold daily in newsagents, pubs and even barber shops.

Building solidarity from people beyond those directly involved in the strike was emphasised from the beginning. Because the leaders of the strikes were socialists they understood that working class unity was the only power that could defeat the hardnosed capitalists.

Teams of workers were sent out on tours within Minneapolis and to neighbouring cities to visit workplaces. As well as raising money and building huge public rallies for support, these speaking tours allowed the strikers to give a true account of what they were doing and give inspiration to other workers to do the same.

Organisations of the unemployed were also involved in the strike even when it was only in the planning stage.

The union worked with the Minneapolis Central Council of Workers which was an organisation set up to fight for jobless workers and its members were given the same duties and responsibilities as workers who were officially on strike. This co-operation prevented the bosses from using the unemployed to scab on strikes.

The progressive politics of the leaders of the strike was also evidenced by the central involvement of women in the strike from the outset.

The Women's Auxilliary was formed by Marvel Scholl (who later also joined the Communist League) and it organised the wives and relatives of the strikers. This was opposed by some workers at first but, through the experience of fighting together, any sexist ideas were soon dispelled.

The Womens Auxilliary served to overcome the family pressures that strikers often face during a strike, because rather than just being passive victims of the harsh conditions the women fought bravely alongside the men in every aspect of the struggle.

Through mass unity and determination the teamster strikes ended in a resounding victory.

The slogan 'make Minneapolis a union town' became a reality with official recognition for the unions forced upon the employers, and increased rates of pay were won.

After more than 60 years the teamster strikes still stand as an inspiration to trade unionists and socialists and shows the potential and the power of the working class. In the face of vicious repression by the bosses, backed up by the powers of the state, workers were able to stick together and win.

Dobbs' *Teamster Rebellion* gives an invaluable insight into the hidden history of the American working class and equips workers with important lessons for winning an all out victory in the future.

by GRACE LALLY

Only the rich on the ditch

SEPTEMBER MARKS the high point in the GAA calendar. This year it follows a summer of huge excitement as attendances at hurling and football matches around the country hit record levels. It seems Gaelic games are more popular than ever.

In the past All-Ireland semi-finals were lucky to attract crowds of 30,000, now they regularly sell out. In Cork, Kilkenny and Meath people are scrambling to get

their hands on those elusive All-Ireland tickets.

Last year almost 1.3 million people attended championship matches. Both Gaelic football and hurling have a huge following among working class people.

Some of the biggest hurling clubs in Cork, for example, are based around large local authority areas in the city, while in Dublin, football is played across the city.

Once derided for representing the worst elements of "Gaelic Ireland", the GAA seems to have gained a certain amount of credibility amongst the Dublin 4 crowd in recent years. It's even reflected in RTE's coverage of the events.

Lyrical

Gone are the days when big match previews were the preserve of Liam O'Murchu and Sean Ban Breathnach. Pat Kenny and Gerry Ryan are now more likely to be the ones allocated time to wax lyrical about the wonders of hurling.

Now on All-Ireland day the ever growing number of corporate boxes and premium seats will be filled with people who would generally be more at home in Landsdowne Road.

Many well known Irish companies wine and dine their clients and directors in the salubrious surroundings of the new bars and dining areas that the GAA has kindly constructed at the back of the New Stand.

Meanwhile out on Hill 16 the more modest punter can treat themselves to chips out of the back of some fairly dodgy looking vans.

Corporatism and big sponsorship deals have become the bread and butter of the GAA. Guinness sponsors the hurling championship while Bank of Ireland has backed the football.

Every county team now bears the logo of a sponsor on its jersey.

Now the players, who often find it difficult just to recoup their expenses from the county boards, are being asked to provide advertisement for a variety of businesses.

Yet none of this huge new source of revenue for the GAA has benefited the hundreds of clubs around the country who spend much of their time fundraising in order to do basic things like tog out their teams.

Not so long ago the GAA

"If a couple with two kids go to the match it will cost £80, not to mention travel and food and so on. I fear we may be losing some grassroots supporters if tickets continue to rise like this"

was the beneficiary of a £20 million grant from the government.

Again rather than reaching those on the ground and developing facilities for the thousands upon thousands of children who play the games in both rural and urban areas, this money is going primarily into the redevelopment of the major stadia, particularly Croke Park.

But little of this redevelopment is benefiting ordinary people.

Last March, 28 corporate boxes in the Hogan Stand, and a large number of premium seats, went on sale to companies, while the Canal End terrace was made all seater and the ticket prices for the All-Irelands increased to £20.

Pat Henderson, a former All Star hurler and member of the Kilkenny County Board, described the effect this would have on ordinary supporters. "If a couple with two kids go to the match it will cost £80, not to mention travel and food and so on. I fear we may be losing some of our grass-roots supporters if tickets continue to rise like this".

Cynical

It would be a great pity if the GAA was allowed to get away with all this. At a time when sport is becoming more cynical and scandal ridden, amateur games, played with great passion and fervour, become an even greater joy to behold.

This month Croke Park will be alive to the clash of the ash, and the hopes and dreams of thousands will rest on the puck of a sliothar or the kick of a ball.

And reflecting the increasingly multicultural Ireland, Cork's Sean Og O'hAilpin may become the first Fijian to win an All-Ireland medal, or two!

DEIRDRE CRONIN

Mob sings a new tune



Tony Soprano and family

SOPRANOS IS one of the best new series to be seen on Television in several years. On the surface The Sopranos is just another gangster series.

It is about a modern day gangster, Tony Soprano, who runs New Jersey for the Mafia.

He appears to have everything - wealth, power and a loving family. When asked what business he is in,

he replies, "I'm a waste management consultant." But things are not as they seem.

What makes this programme different and original is how it explores US society through Tony's crumbling relationship with his family and friends.

The world Tony has grown up to cherish is falling apart. All the old values he lives by are fast disappearing.

If *The Godfather* was about the death of the American dream and *Goodfellas* was an attack on 1980's corporate greed. *The Sopranos* examines the crumbling self-confidence of the US in the 1990's.

Government surveillance teams are piling on the pressure, a crisis is growing between the different Mafia families and the old ways of extorting money are becoming less and less profitable.

"Gangsters today have no honour," Tony complains. "The best is over. Many Americans feel

that way."

But what makes this programme different and original is how it explores US society through Tony's crumbling relationship with his family and friends.

Tony's wife has turned religious. His kids are suffering from the usual adolescence problems.

His ageing mother is going senile and setting fire to everything and hates him because he wants to put her into an old people's home and his uncle wants to "feed Tony to the fishes".

The only thing of any real beauty and

significance in his life is the family of ducks that lives in his swimming pool.

The scenes of him looking after the ducks briefly show a different side to the gangster - a caring human being - but it soon reverts back to business as usual.

When the ducks fly away Tony starts suffering from blackouts.

Prozac

Doctors can find no medical explanation for his blackouts and Tony finds solace in a psychiatrist and becomes a gangster on Prozac.

The conversations with his psychiatrist are a clever device to explore the issues raised.

The Sopranos does not glamorise the racist and violent world of organised crime. It brilliantly shows Tony's contempt for ordinary working people.

The only people more nasty than the gangsters in *The Sopranos* are the police. They are corrupt, violent thugs.

In one scene, a police officer is seen beating up the psychiatrist's boyfriend. It echoes the infamous beating Rodney King got at the hands of the Los Angeles police force.

The Sopranos is *The Godfather*, *Goodfellas* and *Pulp Fiction* all rolled into one.

The Sopranos, Thursdays, 10 pm, Channel 4.

book

WHEN ELIA Kazan received a lifetime achievement award at the Oscar ceremony this year it quiet rightly provoked a protest.

He had been responsible for grassing on many activists during the vicious McCarthy witch hunts in the US in the 1950s.

Philip Roth's novel *I Married a Communist* gives you a deeper understanding into just how virulent those attacks were.

It begins in the 1940's. The two main characters then meet up forty years later and talk through events which have impacted on their lives.

Ghettos

Their stories are vivid, telling of working class life in the Italian and Jewish ghettos of Newark - all humour and tragedy is there.

Ira Ringold, a working

WED TO A RED

by SARAH BYRNE

class Jew who starts out as a ditch digger and winds up as a radio actor, is central to their tale. He is a brother to one of them and friend to the other, in the middle of the witch-hunts.

The novel shows how the US ruling class was intent on rooting out and form of rebellion whether you were a Communist,

active trade unionist or even just a friend of one!

People were blacklisted from their jobs, vilified in the press and broken.

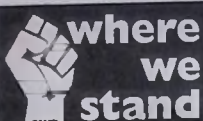
The book does not attempt to give an historical explanation, but you really sense the climate of hysteria and also get a flavour of the response.

The role of the Communist Party is highlighted in its stand against racism and oppression. But its failure to break from Stalinism undermined many members.

The book exposes the viciousness of the system and the weakness of the Communist Party in fighting back.

It is an absorbing book but sadly it ends with great pessimism. This is in sharp contrast to the struggles of US workers now and in the past, and how individuals have made a difference in shaping those battles.

I married a Communist by Philip Roth £8.99



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.

SWP Branch meetings

ATHLONE:

Contact 01- 872 2682 for detail

BRAY:

Meets every Wednesday at the Mayfare Hotel at 8.30pm

BELFAST CENTRAL:

Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in the Garrick Bar, Chichester St.

Sept. 7th: The hidden history of the working class. Sept 14th: Revolutionary ideas of Trotsky

BELFAST SOUTH:

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Queens Students Union

CORK:

Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Dennehy's Pub, Cornmarket

DERRY:

Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Badgers Bar upstairs, Orchard St.

DUNDALK:

Contact 01 - 872 2682 for details

DUN LAOGHAIRE:

Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in the Christian Institute

DUBLIN ARTANE / COOLOCK:

Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Artane / Beaumont Recreational Centre opp. Artane Castle

Sept 7th: Rosa Luxembourg. Sept 14th: The Trade Union Bureaucracy

DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL:

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Conways, Parnell St

DUBLIN NORTH WEST:

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in the Vietnamese Centre, Hardwicke St (off Parnell Square).

Sept 8th: Do all revolutions end in Tyranny? Sept 15th: Is human nature a barrier to socialism?

DUBLIN RANELAGH:

Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Tom Kelly Flats' Community Centre, Charlemont St.

Sept 9th: The Russian Revolution.

Sept 16th: Is Human Nature a Barrier to Socialism?

DUBLIN RIALTO:

Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Andrews Community Centre, SCR, Rialto

Sept 16th: Is Human Nature a Barrier to Socialism?

DUBLIN RATHMINES:

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in O'Connell's Pub, Sth. Richmond St.

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:

Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Trinity Inn, Pearse St

DUBLIN TALLAGHT:

Meets every Monday at 8.30pm in Jobstown Community Centre

ENNISKILLEN:

Meets fortnightly on Saturdays at 4pm. Phone 01 - 872 2682 for details of venue

GALWAY:

Meets every Thursday in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square (beside Cuba) 8.30pm

LIMERICK:

Meets fortnightly on Thursdays at 8pm. Phone 01 - 872 2682 for details of venue.

TRALEE:

Meets fortnightly on Mondays at 5.50pm in Hartys Bar, Tralee:

WATERFORD:

Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in the ATGWU Hall, Keizer St.

Sept...25 Sept...25 Sept...25 Sept...25

The alternative to partnership

The Alternative to Social Partnership Conference takes place in Dublin on 25 September. The conference is organised by the Rank and File Solidarity Network which has emerged as the major campaign group against another partnership deal.

Over 130 shop stewards from around the country have sponsored the conference, which has already got a huge response.

More and more workers are becoming fed up with being denied a fair share of the wealth they have created

in the Celtic Tiger.

There are many workplaces and union branches who have traditionally voted against partnership deals, especially where a few shop stewards have stood up to the bureaucrats' propaganda.

But the union officials who want to stitch us into another partnership deal have tricks up their sleeves.

They are hoping to sell Share Option deals in the private sector and "gain shar-

ing" in the public service to take the steam out of our wage demands.

But such deals will only result in workers upping productivity in the hope of some clawback in the future—in effect we would be exploiting ourselves.

The Alternative to Partnership Conference can be the starting point for mobilising a vote that can sink any new deal and put some fight back into the trade unions.

Rank and file conference

THE ALTERNATIVE TO SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP

Saturday September 25th, Teachers Club, Parnell Square, Dublin

Ticket £5 from the Rank & File Solidarity Network, 105 O'Hogan Road, Dublin 10, Tel: 8788170 for details.

Socialist Worker spoke to some shop stewards about why they are going to this conference.

★ LIAM GRIFFIN, is the Shop Steward in the Dublin Electronics and Engineering Branch of SIPTU:

"The reality under Partnership 2000 is that it's harder to make ends meet. Overtime is being cut back where I work.

"But with a basic of £200 to £255 a week people rely on overtime and feel the pinch when it's cut back.

"In the Electronics and Engineering Branch we voted 60 percent against Partnership 2000. The members think the union officials

live in cloud cuckoo land".

★ SEAN DONEGAN, is a SIPTU Shop Steward, at Dairygold, Mitchelstown.

"We are totally and utterly disgusted with the representation the unions are giving. They have become part of management, going into meetings as gentlemen and selling our rights.

"The union officials won't come down to see us. Des Geraghty came looking for votes and promised to give us "a full day" to sort out our problems but I haven't seen him since.

"We are working seven consecutive days at a time

here.

"The Labour Relations Commission say we have 'one day off a week' but we still end up doing seven consecutive days.

"We have voted against past deals here.

"If people have any sense they will vote No this time as well. Partnership is destroying our unions."

★ ROISIN CRONIN, is the Branch Secretary in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Council, IMPACT:

"People where I work don't feel that they've got anything under partnership.

The Clerical Officer grade in the local authorities starts at £9,000 and rises to £18,000 after twenty years.

"We have a new higher grade in the council and there is talk of 'flattening the structure' but only the people at the top benefit.

"A Section Head now gets up to £35,000 a year, a Head of Department gets £40,000 and the County Manager is on £60,000.

"They have advertised for a Partnership Facilitator to run the Partnership Forum. But people are cynical about the new structures.

"The Partnership Facilitator will be a manager and people are handpicked for the Forum instead of being elected. Union representation is minimal."

★ PAT CAHILL, of the Standing Committee, ASTI:

"Teachers have contributed to the Celtic Tiger but have got nothing out of it. Our union has capitulated.

"Union General Secretaries have an 'if you can't beat them join them' attitude along with their expenses and big cars.

"They are isolated from the teacher at the chalk face or the nurse in the hospital—the officials are a breed apart.

"Partnership was designed to keep wages down and make Ireland more inviting for the multinationals.

"We now have privatisation which only results in top managers making a mint. The gap between rich and poor is widening all the time.

"Teachers are very militant at the moment. ASTI members voted against Partnership 2000 even though the union leaders recommended the deal.

Follow these pay rises

WHILE WAGES have been kept down under Partnership 2000, some groups of workers have broken through the limits of the deal.

For example, nurses got 17 percent because they threatened strike action.

Marion Gibbons, a PNA member who is attending the Alternative to Partnership Conference told *Socialist Worker*, "It shows what can be done when you are prepared to go outside the agreement".

Rank and file militancy, coupled with labour and skill short-

ages, have forced some employers to concede increases which go far beyond what is allowed under P2000.

ISPC, State and Related Agencies Branch:

Dog wardens have won an increase of 7 percent from 1 January, 1999 and a further 6 percent from 1 January, 2000, both rises being over and above P2000. The wardens have also won parity with local authority workers, so they will be getting long service increments.

Europlex, Docks, Marine and Transport Branch:

Substantial increases over and above P2000 were secured, including an increase in the start rate of £15 per week, plus an £8 rise followed by a further £7 for General Operatives.

Rye Valley Foods, Drogheda Branch:

A £12 increase in basic wages was secured above P2000 and management has agreed to a further £10 per week rise from the end of Partnership 2000 for 12 months—the equivalent of a 5.2 percent increase.

All Halls College, Drumcondra, Irish Women Workers Branch:

The hourly rate for SIPTU

members rose from £4.11 to £4.75 from 1 March, 1999 and to £5 with effect from 1 September, 1999.

Staff with over ten years service will now receive £5.50 an hour.

These increases amount to more than 20 percent for all members and more than 30 percent in some cases.

SIPTU leaders are under pressure from their members to negotiate such pay rises but are also trying to maintain their commitment to pay restraint.

As Liam Griffin, a SIPTU engineering shop steward told *Socialist Worker*, "SIPTU keeps quiet until the increases are won and then announce it as a victory."

However, in some workplaces wage increases are being replaced by share deals based on the Telecom ESOP.

No doubt the employers and union leaders will try to use any new partnership deal to stitch us into these phoney deals instead of giving us decent pay rises.

That is why it is important to fight for an end to partnership deals as part of a strategy to rebuild strong unions based on rank and file struggle.

news/reports/politics/industry/unions (01)8722682; fax (01) 8723838;
email: swp@clubi.ie web: www.clubi.ie/swp

Dublin Bus

HUGE VOTE TO STRIKE FOR 20% PAY RISE

MEMBERS OF the NRBU voted overwhelmingly for strike action. Members voted by more than seven to one for strike action in pursuit of a 20 percent pay claim.

Workers were given two options. One option involved an all-out strike, while the second involved having a rolling strike - one day stoppage the first week, a two day stoppage the second week etc.

Workers voted for the rolling strike but the ballot was extremely close with almost 50 percent calling for an all-out strike.

Bus drivers want a basic rate of pay of £330 per week. At the moment new drivers are so badly paid that many workers with families are entitled to family income supplement. Even drivers who have been with the company for 10

or 20 years have to work overtime and Sundays just to bring home a decent wage.

Management at Dublin Bus say they haven't enough drivers but drivers are leaving Dublin Bus every day to get better pay in the private sector.

Socialist Worker spoke to one of the drivers in Dublin Bus who voted for all out strike action.

"It's about time we put in a claim for a decent wage. If TD's can ask for an extra £200 a week why can't we?"

"We provide an important social service and despite the governments threats they cannot hope to provide a proper public transport system without us. The entire city is crying out for more buses. Everyone knows that private companies cannot operate on a scale even close to Dublin Bus."

"Management can't be trusted. They are threatening us with the introduction of private contractors to do our work. They used private hackers at the Slane

concert on August 28th.

"Yet they promised us that if we accepted the viability plan hackers would not be used for any services other than schools. Now only eight months later they want to bring them in to do our work."

"This country is awash with money at the moment but public transport gets little or nothing."

Funded

Dublin Bus is the least funded public transport system in Europe. The government subsidy for Dublin Bus in 1997 was just 4.4 percent. Compare that with Athens which got a 50 percent government subsidy or Rome where the subsidy is 74.5 percent. Even the British government gives a 14.5 percent subsidy.

"What they're really trying to do is run Dublin Bus as a private company", said another bus worker.

"Every time some Minister talks about improving Dublin Bus all you hear about is bus lanes and new buses. I'm not against these but the first priority has to be paying the drivers who provide the service a decent wage. That's why we're all determined to fight for this pay increase."

DART

DART DRIVERS are a threatening to go in strike over the introduction of trainee to the service and its extension to Greystones.

DART drivers have been awarded £8,000 each by the Labour court as part of a compensation package for changes in the service.

However 35 train drivers at Connolly Station received £11,000 each last January for agreeing to forego their right to move onto the DART system.

The 47 drivers on the DART are demanding equal treatment.

Montcongreve Estate

Fight for recognition

WORKERS AT the Montcongreve Estate in Co. Waterford have been out on strike since the 12th of July.

For the past two years workers there have faced intimidation from the estate managers after 20 of them joined SIPTU.

Management refused to recognise the union and started hassling and intimidating any worker they suspected of being in the union.

The conditions on the estate are terrible. Over 30 workers at the estate have been sacked.

One of the workers involved in the dispute Paul spoke of how he was "black-listed" for simply been in the union and eventually sacked.

He had worked on the estate for over ten years and there had never been any complaints about his work.

Workers put up pickets calling for Paul's reinstatement, improvement in their working conditions and union recognition.

Paul described to *Socialist Worker* the conditions that workers on the estate have to endure.

"We are paid little or nothing for the work we do. Our basic rate is only £158.

"The conditions are

appalling. They treat the animals better than the workers. In the winter the cattle are brought in out of the cold while we are left outside with no protective clothing.

"There is no canteen. We have to eat in tiny damp 5ft square huts that are full of dangerous chemicals or under the trees. There is no where even to wash our hands. It was only recently that we got a toilet - one toilet for sixty men."

Refuse

Management are continuing to refuse to recognise the union.

"It doesn't matter if we have to stay out for two years, we're not going back until we win," Paul said. "All the lads feel the same, we are determined we won't be beaten."

They are due to have a meeting with the LRC about union recognition on the 23rd September. "We don't know if they'll even negotiate then", said Paul, "but they'll

have to eventually because we are not giving in".

The workers in the estate are living on about £90 and are in need of solidarity. To send messages of support and donations contact 01-8722682.

ESB

TWENTY DAY workers at the ESB plant in Ferbane put up unofficial pickets when rigging work that was normally done by a day worker was allocated to someone else when he failed to turn up.

Day workers have been concerned that other grades are encroaching on their work.

The dispute quickly escalated into unofficial action and workers in other plants threatened to come out in support.

While the strike forced some concessions from management, the issues are the heart of the strike remain unresolved.

Fulflex

FOR ALMOST two months workers at the Fulflex plant in Limerick have been locked out by management.

The workers were suspended for not complying with new regulations that the company were trying to impose upon them.

Extend

Management tried to extend the use swipe cards in the factory.

Previously workers had only been required to use the cards for clocking in and out. But the manage-

ment tried to introduce a system where workers would be force to use the card whenever they left their station.

Management completely by-passed the unions and refused to negotiate use of the cards with them.

The strike involves workers from SIPTU, TEEU and MSF and pickets on the plant have been sanctioned by the ICTU.

The Labour Relations Commissions was brought in to negotiate but management have refused to even talk to the unions or the LCR.

"The pickets are continuing 24 hours a day" one worker told *Socialist Worker*, "and we are determined to stick it out".

Building workers

BUILDING WORKERS are continuing their pickets of McNamara sites at Dublin Airport and the Dail (Clare St.). They are demanding the right to direct PAYE employment.

The building workers on the site were initially told that they had to work the sub-contract system.

This saves McNamara's money as they do not have to pay proper PRSI stamps, holiday pay or wet time pay.

The bricklayers demanded direct employment and mounted pickets on the sites when McNamara's refused.

Forced

For more than a year building workers across Dublin have been fighting against sub-contracting on sites. They have forced most of the major contractors in Dublin to engage in direct PAYE employment.

McNamara is one of the last major contractors left and the workers are

determined he'll be stopped too.

On the Clare St. site workers initially brought the site to a standstill but senior Gardai are now escorting cement trucks onto the sites in the mornings. They are also chaperoning scabs into the sites, preventing the workers from arguing with them to support the picket.

But building workers across Dublin have rallied to support them. Between 70 and 80 building workers turned up for a mass picket recently. Despite the fact that the site was surrounded by gardai many of who were senior figures, the pickets succeeded in closing the site that day.

The following day the Garda Commissioner, Pat Byrne himself was at the Dublin Airport site to make sure work went ahead.

Despite McNamara's use of police intimidation the strikers are determined to win.

One of the workers involved Ken spoke to *Socialist Worker*. "It obvious who side the cops are on," he said. "They arrest building workers for wanting to pay tax and do nothing about the rich tax dodgers".

Issues for the labour movement

Why the union leaders want partnership

A RECENT document from Irish Congress of Trade Unions called Challenges Facing the Unions argues that social partnership must be made permanent.

Instead of a clenched fist, there needs to be an open hand of friendship to the employers. In line with this approach the union leaders want to abolish terms like shop steward and even 'trade union movement'.

"Apart from its medical or musical connotation", the ICTU document asks "what is a movement? . . . Is it not the most abstract and general word in the English language."

When a simple word like 'movement' with all its connotations of solidarity and struggle, has become 'abstract', this tells

you everything about the mind set of the union leaders. But many still ask, why do they behave like this? Could they not be replaced with better and more sincere left wingers?

The reality about Irish trade union officials is that most of them have come from the left. Des Geraghty was a member of the Workers Party for many years while Shay Cody of IMPACT used to be a member of the Socialist Labour Party in the eighties.

Forces

Many of these officials got a hard time from the of right-wing forces that ran the unions. Yet when they got the top positions they behaved little differently.

It has been the same story in Britain. The two most left wing officials in the 1970s were Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones. They were also the two who pushed

through a 'social contract' which limited workers rights.

All union officials, whether left wing or right wing, have different material interests to their members.

For one thing they earn a higher salary. The top officials in SIPTU earn over £60,000 because they relate themselves to top managers. The local officials try to pitch their salary at the same level as a local personnel manager.

Union officials are removed from the shop floor with all its harassment and stress. They develop a perspective where they see themselves as 'professionals' who have a relationship with their fellow professionals in management.

As one SIPTU official has admitted the main purpose is "to get them to realise it is just business". No matter what is negotiated there is no direct consequence for the officials.

If a plant is closed, the union

officials do not loose their jobs. If a productivity deal is demanded in return for a pay rise the officials do not have to work harder.

Put simply, they do not have any direct experience of what lies behind the benign jargon about 'flexibility' and so they see militancy as a problem.

The most important thing for officials is to keep their negotiating relationship with management. For this they have to establish trust and that means making sure the members stick to agreements.

Instead of developing the confidence and strength of the rank and file, the officials see their negotiating skills as the key to improvements.

In 1911 an unofficial miners committee in Wales summed up the relationship between the officials and the rank and file as one "where the sum of their initiative, their responsibility, their self respect becomes his."

None of this however means

that officials are the same as the employers. Their status depend on the existence of a union machine. If they push collaboration with the bosses too far, they will run down the union itself.

Instead they seek to balance between employers and workers. They will sometimes talk left but try to hold back any real struggle.

Power

Ultimately, the power of union officials arise from the limited role that unions accept under capitalism.

By negotiating only over wages rather than the system of wage labour itself, unions make a distinction between politics and economics.

This creates a division of labour where a layer of bureaucrats emerge to negotiate with the system.

The solution to this situation is not simply to get new and bet-

ter officials — although it is important to stand for election in the unions. The key is to return power to the shop floor and develop politics which challenge capitalism.

Instead of having full time officials negotiating, socialists argue for shop steward power.

The shop stewards work beside the members and do experience the conditions they negotiate about. Shop stewards should be encouraged to report back regularly to their members who mandate them.

Beyond the individual workplace, there needs to be links at a rank and file level so that workers can take action that is independent of the officials where necessary.

Crucially all this needs a political backbone. It is only when the workers' movement organises on the basis that there can be an alternative to capitalism where the scourge of bureaucracy can be removed.

Socialist Worker

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

inside:

**Turkish Earthquake:
THE ARMY STOOD BY
AS 1,000's DIED —PAGE 4**

**Northern Ireland's
Arms Trade** page 5

**Elections
in East
Timor** page 3

DEFEND THE PREGNANCY ADVICE CENTRES

Extend the Abortion Act Now!

AT LEAST 40 women from the North have abortions in England each week — about 2,000 each year.

But instead of getting them early on the NHS as happens in Britain, women in the North have abortions considerably later.

Money

The reason for this is money: living on low pay or benefits makes getting the £400-£500 needed to travel and pay for a termination almost impossible.

On return from England, many don't even get a post-operative check-up.

Others endanger their health using knitting needles and coat hangers to try to cause an abortion.

But many women are still forced to continue unwanted pregnancies.

It has been Labour Party policy since 1987 to extend the 1967 Act to the North.

But since in government, they have gone along with the view that 'everyone in Northern Ireland, whether Catholic or Protestant, is opposed to abortion'.

Yet, since 1967, tens of thousands of women from the North, have had abortions in England.

Proportionately this is equally true for Catholics and Protestants.

When you include their partners and friends who helped raise the money needed, hundreds of thousands of people here have shown their support for a woman's right to choose.

Different

In fact, the question of abortion is one which divides people in a different way.

It divides us into those who

want to end the discrimination against working class women inherent in the present situation and those whose aim is to maintain that discrimination.

It divides us between those who welcome the sexual freedom which young people today enjoy and those who want to curtail and repress sexuality.

And between those who want a more open, tolerant Northern Ireland where hypocrisy is at an end and those who want to maintain a narrow, bigoted, mean-minded cesspit.

THE CLOSURE of the Ulster Pregnancy Advisory Association following a campaign of harassment and intimidation by anti-abortion bigots puts the abortion issue top of the political agenda in the North for the first time in years.

The challenge for socialists and women's rights' campaigners is to ensure that the bigots' victory is quickly turned against them.

Like the anti-abortion groups in the US with which it has links, Precious Life, the Northern affiliate of Youth Defence, denies their intimidation leads to violence.

They are even bringing leading American anti-abortionist, Joseph Seidler to Belfast and Dublin in September. Seidler, the director of the Pro Life Action League, has been successfully sued by abortion clinics under anti-racketeering laws in the States. He faces fines of \$250,000 for running a criminal enterprise that uses threats and extortion to keep women from obtaining abortions.

Like Precious Life, he claims he is against bombing and arson attacks on abortion clinics. But like them, he keeps spouting the lies about abortion that encourages other 'pro-lifers' to violence.

**DEFEND
PREGNANCY
ADVICE CENTRES
EXTEND 1967
ABORTION ACT**

**Demonstrate
Sat. Sept. 11th, 2pm
Dept. of Health, Castle Court**

Protest called by:
Alliance for Choice (Belfast and Derry), Derry Women's Centre, Socialist Workers Party, Women's News and others.