

Socialist Worker

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March against low pay

Saturday 2pm March 11
Assemble Parnell Square, Dublin.
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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p Solidarity price £1

Millionaire TD's want a 30% pay rise

NO MORE

WAGE

RESTRAINT



BERTIE AHERN has attacked busworkers and teachers for demanding decent pay increases. But while Ahern was attacking workers, his own TDs were putting in a special claim for a 30 per cent pay rise.

The hypocrites in the Dail are already earning £38,000 a year - and that is before they open their large expense accounts.

A special survey in Ireland on Sunday has shown that one in eight TDs are millionaires. Many of them own large properties which they rent out. So it is no wonder that they opposed any proposals for rent control.

The bosses and the union leaders are again trying to peg down wage rises for workers to a mere 5.5 percent next year.

But even though workers created the boom through their increased productivity, they have never been rewarded properly. Instead the rich have creamed off super-profits.

Now is the time to end wage restraint by voting NO to the new partnership deal.

As labour shortages grow in the boom, workers have far more power than ever before.

We should be free to put in wage claims whenever we want. That is the only way we will gain from the Celtic Tiger - for as long as it lasts.

Vote NO to Partnership

Civil Liberties under attack

MINISTER FOR Justice John O'Donoghue has recently announced more draconian measures to curb the right to silence, increase garda powers of arrest and lengthen detention periods.

He is also proposing to re-classify saliva from an intimate sample along with blood, semen and urine, to a non-intimate sample, which could be used in DNA testing.

The proposals will also allow warrants to be issued on the word of a senior garda.

Several civil liberty groups and activists have condemned the new measures.

Abuses

The Irish Council for Civil Liberties said the proposals would increase the likelihood of abuses of person's in custody and of oppressive techniques being used to extract confessions.

They also warned that the proposal to curb a suspect's right to silence was in violation of Human Rights Conventions.

Michael Finucane, a specialist in criminal law, said the proposals to allow gardai to issue

warrants "flew in the face of the concept that one could not be judge and executioner in one's own case".

He also said that it would grant the Gardai powers that no other police force in the world possess.

Cement Roadstone organised tax dodging for the rich:

Take the assets off the crooks

THE CRIMINAL Assets Bureau should be sent in to seize the assets of Cement Roadstone, the company at the centre of the Ansbacher scam by the Irish rich.

The former chairman of CRH, Des Traynor, acted as a bagman to Charles Haughey and operated the Ansbacher accounts from the headquarters of CRH.

The board of CRH have argued that they knew nothing about the Ansbacher accounts. But eight of the 15 board members of CRH in 1987 held money in the dodgy accounts.

Some of the current

board had Ansbacher accounts. They include:

★ **Tony Barry**, the current chairman of CRH has already owned up to having an offshore account. He is a former fundraiser of the Fine Gael party and director of IBEC.

★ **Jim Culleton** is another former chairman, of CRH. In 1991 Culleton was appointed by the FF/Labour Government to develop an industrial strategy for the State for the 1990s and called for more "support" for Irish business. He is also a former chairman of the Allied Irish Banks where nothing was done about bogus non resident accounts.

★ **Michael Dargan**, was a chief executive of Aer Lingus and the Bank of Ireland. He has already admitted making a contribution to Haughey's family.

CRH bought the Glen Ding woods, in Wicklow, in 1992 for £1.25 million, without anybody else being allowed to bid.

The company also gave £18,000 in consultancy fees to GEO Engineering, a firm run by Haughey's offspring.

Cement Roadstone Holdings is Ireland's largest industrial company which recently reported a pre-tax profit of £124 million in the six months to June last.

That money should be taken into public hands and used to fund schools

work contracts and a uniform pay scale.

The five — Niall Andrews, Brian Cowley, Jim Fitzsimons, Liam Hyland and Pat the Cope Gallagher are the only Irish MEP's not to employ assistants.

It is alleged that some of the FF MEP's have availed of students seeking work experience. The MEPs have refused point blank to answer any questions as to whether they availed of the expenses and, if so, how they spent the money.

Every MEP is entitled to receive over £90,000 to meet the cost of research and secretarial support in Brussels and in their home country.

However the system has come under severe attack recently after MEP assistants began demanding proper

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GLEN PROTESTERS JAILED BUT... BRIBE TAKING MINISTER STILL FREE

Thirteen environmental activists have been jailed for trying to save the Glen of the Downs.

But as the singer Mary Coughlin pointed out it is the people who jailed them who should be behind bars.

The Glen protesters were jailed as revelations about payments to the former FF Minister for Communications, Ray Burke, mounted. The donors included:

★ Paul Power owned a stake in Radio 2000, which broadcasts today as 98FM. Power along with Robin Rennicks handed

Burke a cheque for £30,000 on behalf of Fitzwilton, owned by Tony O'Reilly.

★ Liam Conroy, the former chief executive of the JMSE group, was also chairman of Capital Radio Productions (now 104fm). JMSE gave £30,000 to Burke.

★ Oliver Barry, who was chairman of Century Communications. He gave Burke £30,000.

In return, Century were well looked after by the Minister responsible for radio licences.

Century won the contest for the first

national independent radio licence in January 1989.

In March 1989 Burke intervened in a dispute between RTÉ and Century over transmission fees and forced RTÉ to reduce its demand for fees by one-third, saving Century about £200,000.

Meanwhile Ray Burke is still walking about as a respectable member of society, protected by the people who jailed the Glen protesters.

ATTACK ON REFUGEES

JUSTICE Minister O'Donoghue has launched a new attack on the rights of asylum seekers.

They will now only have 14 days to appeal an order to deport them. Up to now they had six months.

Peter Finlay, a barrister, says this appeal procedure cannot work because 14 days is not long enough to prepare a case for judicial review.

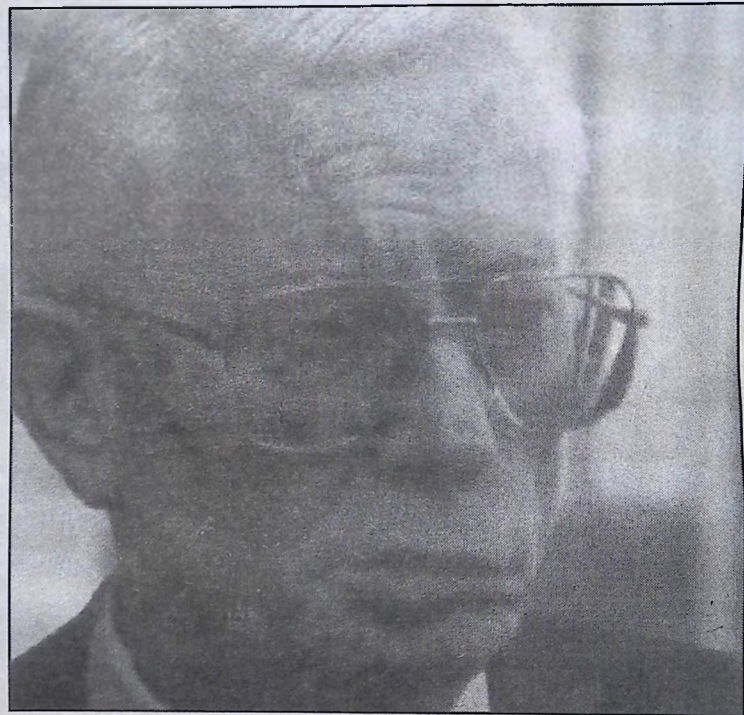
Amnesty International has also argued that O'Donoghue's move is against international human rights laws.

But Fianna Fail are determined to press ahead with their racist attacks.

★ **OVER 1 million children have already died this year due to the crippling effects of debt in the third world.**

Every day world leaders delay cancelling debt another 19,000 children will die unnecessarily.

World leaders are already failing to reach the limited targets they set for debt relief last year. "It was delay for delay's sake" admitted the head of the World Bank, John Wolfensohn.



Tony Barry Chairman of CRH

O'Reilly mystery

MYSTERY surrounds Ardback Management, a private investment company which links Ireland's richest tax exile Tony O'Reilly, and the deceased former Fine Gael Minister Hugh Coveney.

Socialist Worker was the first to reveal that Hugh Coveney was an Ansbacher depositor. Coveney died in March 1998, when he fell from a cliff top in unexplained circumstances, after he was questioned by the Tribunals.

O'Reilly and Coveney were both directors of Ardback Management. The company was a holding company for diverting profits into shares to avoid tax.

No mention was made of the firm when Coveney's legal representative gave evidence to the Moriarty Tribunal this month.

O'Reilly was also involved with Coveney in Atlantic Resources, an oil exploration company set up

in the 1980s. Atlantic borrowed money from Guinness and Mahon and Ansbacher to finance its operations.

While O'Reilly's newspapers lecture workers on wage restraint, he lives in the Bahamas to avoid paying tax.

He should be asked to account for his tax affairs, his links with Fianna Fail and his association with a TD who died in mysterious circumstances.

Decommissioning?

THE BRITISH Ministry of Defence has destroyed two rifles that were key evidence for the inquiry into the deaths of 14 people on Bloody Sunday 1972.

Gregory McCarthy, solicitor for one of those shot dead by the British Paratroopers said "This could not have happened accidentally."

"This can only happen as a deliberate attempt by the ministry to frustrate the inquiry and stop the truth coming out."

LOW PAY CONSCRIPTS

Evidence is growing that thousands of people are being forced into low paying jobs because of the Government's employment action plan.

Every Social Welfare recipient under 25 is being called in for an interview where they are offered the choice of a which ever low paid job FAS has available. If the "offer" is refused payment is stopped.

Many of those who lose their claims are being cheated by the state. Very few people

appeal decisions but during the first six months of 1999 there were 1,774 people reinstated because their dole was cut off unfairly.

Nobody has gone to jail for tax fraud but six people were sent to jail for dole fraud last year. None of them where the employers who defrauded PAYE or PRSI payments.

Yet more than £11 million in PAYE and PRSI arrears was recovered from employers last year and almost 7,261 employers are under investigation for fraud over PRSI payments.

We're Fianna Fail — we don't tell

Five Fianna Fail MEP's have refused to account for their use of an annual tax-free allowance of over £90,000 a year, which they get from the European parliament.

Every MEP is entitled to receive over £90,000 to meet the cost of research and secretarial support in Brussels and in their home country.

However the system has come under severe attack recently after MEP assistants began demanding proper

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★ MUMIA MUST LIVE ★★★★★★

Human rights group Amnesty International has released a damning report into the case of Mumia Abu Jamal.

The report called for a retrial of the Black Panther who is on death row in the US.

JOIN THE PROTEST TO FREE MUMIA

Sat. 4 March, 2.30pm

Assemble the Garden of Remembrance, Parnell Square, Dublin

what we think

Will the Celtic Tiger go bust?

NOT A chance, if you believe the stockbroker economists. The latest Economic Report from Davy Stockbrokers claims the boom could continue "for 20 or 30 years time".

But stockbrokers have a vested interest in talking up the boom. They have helped the rich to establish off-shore accounts and have shown little concern with the welfare of the majority.

Several key foreign economic commentators have warned that the Celtic Tiger is skidding off track. They include the European Central Bank and the European Commissioner for Economic Affairs.

The reason for their warnings are not hard to see.

Shortages

Every capitalist boom runs into shortages and bottlenecks because there are no plans made beforehand to allocate extra resources for expansion. The result is that prices rise, and at some point topple individual firms into bankruptcy. These bankruptcies affect other firms that seem healthy and so a ripple effect spreads through the economy.

The signs of this 'over-heating' is already visible in the Celtic Tiger. Inflation has suddenly jumped from 1 percent

last year to 4.4 percent, the highest in Europe.

Personal debt is also soaring. According to William Slattery, the former deputy head of banking supervision at the Central Bank, people have borrowed 30 percent more this year than last and this level of credit could lead to a house price collapse.

On top of all that the Celtic Tiger is very dependent on the US. It has a higher level of US investment as a proportion of its economy than any other country in the world.

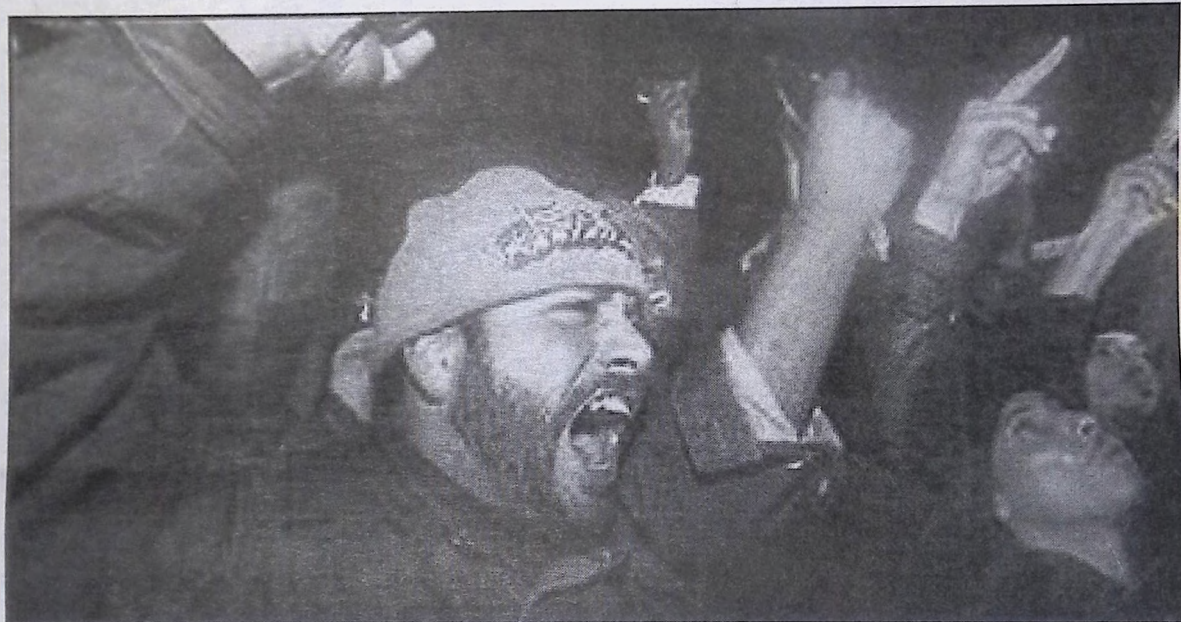
As the US boomed, so too did the Celtic Tiger. But the US boom has been fuelled by a huge level of stock market speculation and private debt. Once it crashes, the effects on the Celtic Tiger will be devastating.

The uncertainty about the Celtic Tiger shows why we should vote No to a new partnership deal.

The union leaders say that if workers demand decent wage rises, inflation will grow and so put the boom in danger.

But inflation has risen anyway even though workers have accepted huge wage restraint. And even if we all agreed to accept bread and water for the next three years, this would not guarantee the boom would continue.

Instead of grovelling before the rich and their stockbroker economists, workers should now have a free hand to put in wages claim, when and where they decide.



Protesting at the release of the New York cops who killed Amadou Diallo

How cheap is a black life in the US?

Thirty years after Martin Luther King launched the Civil Rights movement, black people still face discrimination and brutality in the US.

Last year the New York police pumped nineteen bullets into Amadou Diallo, an innocent unarmed flower seller.

The four police officers who killed Amadou claimed they could not get

a fair hearing in New York. They were tried in Albany, an exclusive all white area where few blacks were on the jury. Not surprisingly, they were acquitted.

That verdict sent out a clear message — there is no justice for black people when confronted by a racist police force.

Consider by contrast, the case of a black man, Mumia Abu Jamal who has spent seventeen years on Death Row, locked up for 22 hours a day in a prison he labelled a 'human storage' container.

When he was charged with the murder of a white police officer, he was not allowed to point out that the Judge Sabo, who presided over the trial, was a member of the

Fraternal Order of the Police and had sent 31 people, all but two of whom were black, to Death Row.

There was no possibility of a trial before an exclusively black jury in Philadelphia. Instead Mumia was not allowed to attend his own trial as his dreadlocks and behaviour caused offence to a mainly white jury.

The murder of Amadou Diallo and the frame up of the former Black Panther, Mumia Abu Jamal, shows there is no justice for black people in the US. And when there is no justice, there will be no peace.

SINN FEIN GOES BACK ON THE STREETS

GERRY ADAMS' announcement that Sinn Fein are going back to street politics is good news.

Street politics means mobilising the power of the people to enforce change from below.

That is why our ruling class hate it. Big business uses the silent power of money to blackmail politicians but they insist that working people play by the rules of a parliamentary game they have drawn up.

It is better that Sinn Fein are organising protests rather than sitting in government presiding over cuts in hospitals in Protestant areas, as Bairbre de Brun did when she closed down the maternity unit of the Jubilee hospital in Belfast.

Sinn Fein have been taken for a ride by the Blair government. They signed up to an agreement to

demilitarise the North by May 2000. But the Northern Secretary, Peter Mandelson, then backed deadlines laid down by Trimble for January — even though nothing had been done to dismantle the huge security presence.

What, however, is the purpose of Sinn Fein's protests?

If they only want to apply some pressure so they can go back into cabinet with the same right wing Unionist politicians who threw them out, then many will ask, what is the point?

But if the protests were part of a radical movement to challenge the corrupt right wing establishment in both parts of Ireland, then that would start to make a lot of sense.

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Zimbabwe: Mugabe in crisis

THE REGIME of President Mugabe in Zimbabwe, southern Africa, is in crisis after it lost the vote on a proposed new constitution.

The constitution was rejected by 55 percent to 45 percent, despite the No campaign facing massive intimidation and no access to the state-run media.

Mugabe had hoped to gain new powers. These included the right to declare war and dissolve parliament, the right for him to stand for ten more years as president, fewer rights for women and gays, increased press censorship, and the power to ban strikes and demonstrations.

At the last moment, fearing defeat, Mugabe included a clause which gave the state the right to take over white-owned land without compensation.

But this cynical move failed. Even in the rural areas where the vast majority traditionally votes for Mugabe's Zanu-PF party, a large section of people voted no.

The vote was a reflection of deep bitterness among ordinary people at the poverty and inequality in Zimbabwe.

In 1980 the racist white regime of Ian Smith was toppled. Black people voted for the first time and elected Robert Mugabe as president.

He had been the leader of the most militant liberation fighters. But Mugabe has always been committed to working with big business.

Mass opposition to Mugabe has grown steadily during the last four years. Last year anti-Mugabe activists came together to found the Movement for

Democratic Change (MDC). The MDC is based on the trade union leaders.

Its president is Morgan Tsvangirai, general secretary of the Zimbabwe Confederation of Trade Unions (ZCTU). The MDC's vice-president is Gibson Sibanda, president of the ZCTU.

It has recruited among workers, peasants, students and women's rights activists, and claims one million members.

The MDC leaders' rhetoric is often militant. At its founding conference in January, Tsvangirai said,

"We fought for our liberation and the victory of 1980 has been stolen from us. We are yet to enjoy our liberation."

A member of Socialist Worker's sister organisation in Zimbabwe says, "There was great enthusiasm for the MDC when it was formed. Workers saw it as a chance to carry forward their struggles.

"Many people hoped this was going to be a workers' party. It was a step forward, which we welcomed.

"We wanted to push the movement leftwards and make it a forum for left wing ideas.

"But there are now very serious questions being asked about what the MDC offers.

"It has worked to attract the support of those capitalists who have not prospered under Mugabe, and has recruited sections of the wealthy white population."

The MDC leaders say they will "negotiate" with the bankers who are demanding debt repayment but they also say they will "distribute unused land to subsistence farmers".



Which way for Zimbabwe's working class?

ANY SERIOUS change requires as a minimum the seizure of land from the big farmers (mostly whites), heavy taxation of the rich, refusal to repay debts which Mugabe has run up, and nationalisation of key industries.

But the MDC proposes nothing like this. The MDC would be nothing without the courage of the workers and peasants. But it is not leading them towards real liberation.

It also risks demoralising its own supporters. They cannot be expected to stand up to a brutal state in order to win the right for a new elite to make money rather than the old elite.

"We are central to the fight

against Mugabe and we take part fully in the MDC.

"But we are also trying to put forward an independent position," says a Zimbabwean socialist. Elsewhere in Africa, in Angola and Mozambique, mass movements fought against the old colonialists and then against right wing rebel movements which were backed by Western governments.

But then in government they buckled, implemented pro-business policies and abandoned left wing rhetoric. This shift can occur even before movements take over in government. In Brazil the Workers Party emerged from the heroic mass struggles of the 1970s.

But slowly the Workers Party has accommodated to the idea of

working in partnership with business and agencies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The Workers Party has won office nationally. But there have been no moves to confront business and challenge capitalist priorities.

The Zimbabwean referendum result suggests that the MDC will win many seats in the parliamentary elections scheduled for 9 April.

But if the MDC comes to office it will have to choose between taking on capital or squeezing Zimbabwe's workers and peasants.

That is why as well as fighting Mugabe it is necessary to fight for socialism.

Iran

Reform vote deepens splits

VOTERS IN Iran have overwhelmingly chosen candidates who stood for reform of the present system.

Parliamentary elections held last week saw reform candidates win in all the major cities and many smaller towns. There was an 80 percent turnout among the 39 million eligible voters.

In 1997 Mohammed Khatami was elected president. He had pledged to bring more freedom within the Islamic system. Students took to the streets last year backing Khatami's reforms and urging faster change, although Khatami then disowned his supporters.

Unfortunately the reformers and independents who won are a mixed bunch. Some conservatives stood as reformers to save their own skins. More fundamentally, there is a split inside the Khatami camp. Some of his supporters argue that reform means support for Western free market ideology.



Students protesting last year

They say they will push for privatisation, and relax the rules on foreign investment. But such people are not at all representative of the general mood. The millions who voted for reform are for deep social change—more rights for women, greater freedom of the press and more workers' rights.

"We want to determine our own destinies and to have a society

which serves all the people," a woman voter told journalists.

The recent vote could open up new splits between those who want to use the pressure from below to make more profits and those who want ordinary people's interests to come first. The hope is that there will be more demonstrations and protests.

Kosovo

NATO fosters ethnic violence

A YEAR on from NATO's bloody war in the Balkans, Kosovo is in chaos. The NATO troops in the Kosovan town of Mitrovica have created a spiral of rising ethnic violence in the war decimated town.

Some 50,000 Albanians marched on the town to demand the removal of the Serbs who live there.

At one point, British, Canadian and French troops used tear gas against several hundred protesters who were attempting to storm the Ibar Bridge into the mainly Serb-inhabited north of the

town.

Mitrovica is one of the few remaining towns in Kosovo with a substantial Serb population.

Since KFOR troops entered Kosovo last June, the UN estimates that 250,000 Serbs and other non-Albanians have fled and up to 400 have been killed.

While KFOR troops prevented the demonstrators crossing over the bridge, NATO spokesmen indicated to the crowd that they supported their demands.

The local KFOR commander said it was "a magnificent demonstration."

Last month saw a series of attacks on Serbs in the region. A rocket attack on a UN-escorted bus southwest of Mitrovica killed two Serbs.

Days later, grenade attacks on two Serbian cafes injured

21 people. An elderly couple of ethnic-Turkish origin were gunned down in their home.

Local members of the NATO-backed Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) police the area.

The KPC, established by NATO, is supposed to have a quota of 10 percent non-Albanian minorities, but does not include a single Serbian or Roma recruit.

On February 20 KFOR carried out raids on homes and buildings in northern Mitrovica.

The raids, involving more than 2,000 soldiers, allegedly conducted to recover weapons -- less than 15 weapons were found.

US KFOR troops sealed off the northern section of the town using barbed wire and armoured personnel carriers. Nearly 2,000 Serbs gath-

ered in protest. Several protestors were injured, including two who were smashed in the face with rifle butts.

Ordinary ethnic Albanians too are increasingly feeling the brunt of the NATO occupation forces that were sent into Kosovo to protect them.

The reported rape and murder of an 11-year old Albanian girl by a US soldier last month has sent shock waves throughout the Albanian population.

Only a few months before they greeted the American troops as saviours.

The soldier, Staff Sergeant Frank J. Ronghi, is alleged to have told a private who helped him bury the girl's body that it was "easy to get away with something like this in a Third World country".

Eamonn McCann

Labour's rank problem

NEW LABOUR succeeded in stitching up the London mayoral race so as to stop Ken Livingstone standing - but they didn't manage to make their own man electable.

Frank Dobson already had the hang-dog look of a man who knew that he lacked all credibility when he addressed a "victory" press conference.

His main announcement was that his campaign wouldn't be run by Labour Party HQ. He'd be his own man. And, taking note of what had just happened in Wales, he pledged to "fight" Blair's Government to win resources for the capital.

What an eloquent commentary on the way Londoners really feel about New Labour.

Meanwhile, the Conservative candidate, Stephen Norris, came out for liberalisation of the law on cannabis precisely so as to distance himself from Tory HQ and William Hague.

There will be no candidate seeking the support of London voters in May on the basis of defending New Labour's record in government or of extolling the Tories' performance in Opposition.

And it's not just in London. A week before the result of the stitch-up was announced, Blair stumbled into chaos and farce in the Commons when he lavished praise on Welsh Assembly leader Alun Michael - only to be informed by jeering Tories that Michael had resigned in ignominy a few minutes ago.

Blair had manoeuvred Michael into the position last year against the strong preference of Welsh party members for rumpiled middle-of-the-road man, Rhodri Morgan. Welsh anger against the imposition of Michael resulted in Plaid Cymru and the Liberal Democrats polling unexpectedly well, leaving Labour short of a majority in the new Welsh Assembly.

When Michael then failed to win more resources for Wales, he had to go. And Labour had nobody credible to turn to but - the aforementioned Rhodri Morgan. You couldn't make it up.

And then there's Scottish First Minister Donald Dewar, permanently in panic in the parliament in Edinburgh, reeling from the resignation of scandal-hit advisers and backing off from a commitment to abolish the homophobic charter, Section 28. Having polled much more poorly than predicted, in Scotland, too, New Labour needs Lib-Dem support to survive.

What's common to London, Wales and Scotland is that where voters see a credible non-Tory alternative to New Labour, they go for it. Just two and a half years after Blair was hailed in Ireland as enthusiastically as anywhere - as an electoral magician who had mapped out a new "Third Way" forward, his own candidates are trying desperately to distance themselves from him.

Reputation

In the midst of this mess, the reputation of the Blairites as political fixers has been ruined. The clearest example is to be found in the other area where constitutional reform has been under way - Northern Ireland.

Peter Mandelson was touted as the epitome and perfect exemplar of New Labour. A can-do modern politician, un beholden to dinosaur institutions like the unions, weighed down with none of Old Labour's ideological baggage.

Now, it doesn't do to idealise Old Labour. Corrupt machine politicians, forelock-tuggers to royalty, abject supporters of the Western Alliance. But the wholesale abandonment of even the pretence of commitment to class politics has meant that New Labour lacks even the outline of a vision of how Northern Ireland might be organised differently from the grinding sectarian deadlock of old. In the North, as in London, Wales and Scotland, Blairism turns out to have nothing relevant or distinctive to say.

Thus, on the record so far, Mandelson's forte isn't fixing but floundering. History may record his main achievements as the construction of the Millennium Dome and the demolition of the Irish Peace Process.

It is commonly observed that the North is in crisis because of the failure of the local political parties. But it's also an element in the deeper, wider failure of Tony Blair and the New Labour project.

Why don't they scrap North's military machine?

THE MEDIA has blamed the republicans for the collapse of the Executive because they refused to decommission at the behest of David Trimble.

But the only British arms to be decommissioned are the rifles used by the Paras in the murders of fourteen unarmed civil rights marchers in Derry on Bloody Sunday.

Refusal

The refusal of the British army to even contemplate demilitarisation in Northern Ireland is rarely mentioned in all the media coverage of the peace process.

Yet, few will deny that the British army and the RUC are part of the problem and so must be part of the solution.

Just as the IRA had reached stalemate, so had the security forces.

Neither side was able to defeat the other, neither was defeated itself.

So why is decommissioning asked of one side alone?

Answer

The answer is, of course, that successive British governments have been more concerned at propping up David Trimble than in securing the peace.

Now Peter Mandelson has accepted the lie that the IRA was to blame for the conflict and steadfastly refuses to face up to the reality of the British army record in the North.

RUC — ARMED AND DANGEROUS

ALONGSIDE the British Army, there are still 12,692 RUC members who are armed and dangerous.

Despite killing 15 people — eight of them children — plastic bullet guns have not been decommissioned.

Indeed, the RUC been given the green light for continued use by the Patten Commission.

Even though it is five and a half years since the first IRA ceasefire, the RUC are still expanding their bases.

The Lisburn Road Barracks



Why are you still here?

It's like an armed camp

15,000 British troops remain in the North, according to official British sources. In many parts of North & West Belfast, Derry City, South Armagh, South Derry, Tyrone and Fermanagh, the British army continues to patrol and mount roadblocks just as it did before the cease-fires.

They still patrol in full war gear, machine guns at the ready, as if IRA gunmen were around every corner.

In some parts of the North, they've even built up their fortifications. They operate a wall of surveillance towers

and bunkers in areas like South Armagh.

Environmental pressure groups in South Armagh are concerned at the continued use by the British army of Lynx helicopters.

Component failure has been officially established as the cause of a Lynx crash which killed three people in Bosnia 14 months ago.

Travel

Yet the huge volume of helicopter travel over the North generally, but especially in South Armagh, continues.

The British army admit that

the component in question is being replaced in all Lynx helicopters over the next two years.

Yet it claims there is no danger in continuing to fly them in the meantime.

According to Queen's University lecturer, Mike Tomilson, there is one British army or RUC member for every 3.7 Catholic males between the ages of 16 and 44.

In Derry, the new spy mast on the city walls overlooking the Bogside has so many cameras and so much hearing equipment that people joke about the Brits knowing who's sleeping with whom before the local gossips.

But it is not only Catholic areas that suffer from this level of militarisation.

Towns like Lisburn and Bessbrook have also been turned into virtual armed camps.

An *Irish News* editorial pointed out that Bessbrook is "the busiest heliport in Europe, with a huge number of flights in the region every day" and "that there is entirely legitimate public concern over the issue".

Overall, the Army has 64 fixed military installations across the North.

Increasingly, these look like relatively innocent mobile phone masts — until you spot the camera following you.

Extension

Grosvenor Road Barracks has undergone renovation, extension, and additional fortification in the last two years, as well as an extra spy mast being built.

Some security barriers, like the one on Strand Road in Derry, have been removed because of pressure from business interests.

But according to the Northern Ireland Office itself,

such barriers are retained in a total of 20 towns across the North.

The RUC has painted some of its grey landrovers a very 'normal' police white.

Apart from that, they still fire plastic bullets into crowds of young people as they did in North Belfast recently.

So the next time Peter Mandelson wants deadlines, maybe we could have some dates when this huge police-military machine will be dismantled.

Education

YES to 30 percent NO to performance related pay

FIANNA FAIL's attempt to Thatcherise Ireland is extending into the education system. Industrial action by teachers looks set to begin shortly if their 30 per cent pay-claim is not satisfied.

But the discontent is about more than money. Education is just one more branch of the public service that has been consistently run down by successive governments.

It is obvious to any parent, teacher, or indeed student who has passed through the education system that a chronic lack of resources is taking its toll on the quality of education provided.

Buildings are dilapidated, most schools simply have no books whatsoever in their libraries, and most seriously of all, the numbers of pupils per teacher is at such a level that each student can expect to receive less than one minute of individual attention per class.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that teachers are not keen to see performance related pay imposed on them.

System

Performance related pay is an attempt to change the education system and other public services into businesses.

It fits perfectly in with the right-wing thinking of a government whose main agenda is to consistently lower public spending at a time when business is making a record level of profit on which next to no tax is paid.

Teachers have good cause to be worried. They only have to look to Britain, where performance-related pay takes the form of school league tables and where schools are ranked according to the performance of their students in CSE, and A Level exams. This shows no consideration for the social background of the school, the amount of resources allocated or the individual problems of the pupils.

The result is that it is no longer in the interest of teachers to devote attention to the weakest students, when they can push

by PAUL
McCARTHY

the more academic to top grades.

This creates a stigma against schools that come down the table and makes the situation even more difficult.

It also encourages competition between children, made worse by the fact that the amount of As Bs and Cs handed out in any one year is pre-set by the Department of Education.

Helen, a teacher in an Irish secondary school told *Socialist Worker*:

"I have 32 pupils in my Junior Cert. English class. Some of them can read Shakespeare, some can barely read at all. There is no remedial teacher in our school, so I have to divide my time between teaching half the class Romeo and Juliet, and half the class how to spell simple words."

Most schools have little or no facilities for remedial education or counselling services for pupils.

How then can it possibly be reasonable to assess the performance of teachers by the results achieved by their students?

How can a class of ten students from wealthy backgrounds in a fee-paying school be compared to a class of 30-40 working class children in an inner city state school?

Teachers face constant attack in the press about their "lack of accountability." This will be used against them in their pay negotiations. Most teachers have no problem discussing how they could improve their teaching or the standards in a school.

But to tie this in their pay to a fake standard is a disgraceful attempt by a hypocritical government to attack workers' rights while pretending to care about quality of education.

Teachers in Britain are now beginning to organise against performance related pay, with a demonstration planned for March 18.

In taking on the government for a pay increase, Irish teachers should stand absolutely firm on the issue of school performance.

SHUT DOWN SELLAFIELD...SHU

SAFETY DATA AT SELLAFIELD

A DAMMING report by the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate has exposed some of the truth about Britain's nuclear industry.

They catalogued a series of lies and cover-ups concerning safety at the Sellafield nuclear plant in Cumbria.

Part of the plant has been shut down as a result.

The Sellafield scandal arose from lies about shipments of nuclear fuel pellets. British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. (BNFL) sent a shipment to Japan last year and claimed the consignment had undergone the full range of safety checks.

But a key part of the safety test had not been done and instead the results were simply invented.

Incident

At first it was claimed this was just an isolated incident. But the final report by the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate found that the lying was systematic.

Records involving 88,000 nuclear fuel pellets had been "deliberately falsified" since 1986.

BNFL has tried to blame individual workers.

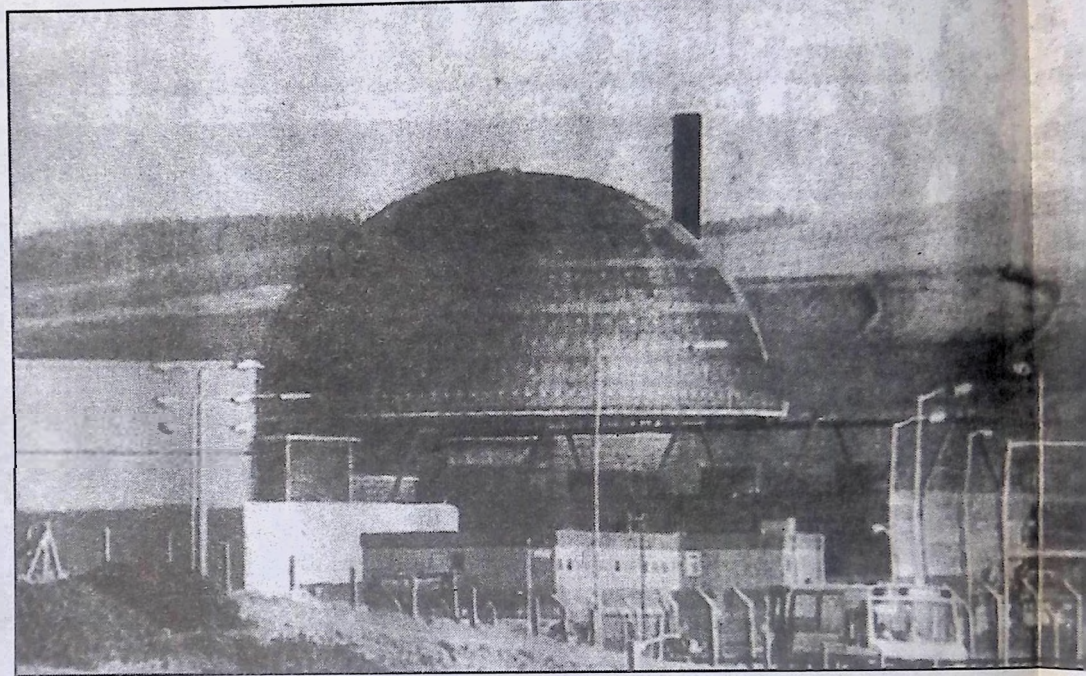
Yet, as the inspectors' report argues, "Management in the plant allowed this to happen."

They had been driving through a huge 25 percent cost cutting exercise at Sellafield to prepare it for privatisation.

The company made £228 million profit last year.

But the financiers who were being wooed as potential buyers by British government ministers wanted even more.

The result was that the workforce was slashed so that even the nuclear inspectors' report pointed out, "The



Sellafield

reduction in staff numbers had gone too far."

The idea that private business, driven by the market and profit, should be in charge of nuclear safety is terrifying, particularly in an

industry where safety lapses could spell disaster for millions. The disaster last year at the Tokaimura nuclear plant in Japan was the result of cost-cutting by the plant's private business owners.

After a series of safety lapses, similar to those at Sellafield, a nuclear explosion killed several people and spread radiation across a densely populated urban area.

A history of disasters

ONE OF the world's first nuclear accidents took place at Sellafield a year after it was opened.

In 1957 a huge fire at the plant, which was then called Windscale, spewed radioactive material across the Irish Sea.

But the full truth was hushed up and n official statement said "There was not a large amount of radiation released. The amount was not hazardous and in fact it was carried out to sea by the wind."

Thirty years later it was admitted that a large quantity of hazardous radiation was blown south east, across most of England and parts of Ireland.

The truth only came out after a number of studies had shown a high incidence of birth deformities in parts of the east coast of Ireland that appeared to be associated with the accident.

In 1981, after further accidents, the name of the plant was changed to Sellafield - presumably in the hope that the public would

quickly forget all about Windscale.

But in the years since, the world has seen even more lethal nuclear disasters. Among the worst are:

Meltdown

Three Mile Island. In 1979 the US nuclear reactor at Three Mile Island went into "meltdown", the most appalling possible incident at a reactor.

A full scale nuclear explosion was only narrowly avoided.

Chernobyl. In 1986 the nuclear reactor at Chernobyl in the Ukraine exploded. Over 50 people died immediately and a huge radioactive cloud spewed across Europe. A huge area around the plant is still deadly today.

Poi

THE PRO long term, s age of nucle still unsolv growing m year by year

Earlier atte nuclear industry their waste by di sea were stoppe of environmental and trades union

Sellafield is ar grown up in an New buildings between old, se doned buildings.

Some areas a sealed off and pol tivity, causing se the nearby Irish S

Waste from ot around Britain Sellafield. Ships to the plant from Japan.

The major pro long-term storag waste.

This waste is and so any storage made secure and period of thousan

Despite all this ly expanding its activities.

It also wants t plant to reprocess

...SHUT DOWN SELLAFIELD..

ATA FAKED FIELD

**Nuclear power =
Nuclear weapons**

WHEN NUCLEAR power was introduced into Britain in the 1950s its supporters said it was safe and would "produce electricity too cheap to meter".

An early newsreel in the 1950s described how it would produce cheap, clean, energy for everyone. This was completely untrue.

The growth in nuclear power was linked to the use of atomic weapons during the Cold War.

Atomic

The first nuclear power stations were built to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons. Any electricity was seen as a by-product that was used primarily to power the rest of the site.

The development of the British atomic bomb was seen as a matter of urgency during the Cold War years of the 1950s and 1960s. Dealing with the mess caused by the production, operating and even testing of nuclear weapons was something to be worried about later, if at all. This lack of thought for the future spilled over to the

nuclear power industry.

As the military and then the civil nuclear industries expanded worldwide, it was thought that uranium was a rare mineral and would soon be in very short supply.

Rather than simply burn up the uranium in the power stations, it was decided to reprocess the used fuel in order to extract various usable elements from it.

These elements included plutonium which was essential for making atomic bombs.

Soon reprocessing was widely used to produce the plutonium needed for nuclear weapons.

The whole process was always a risky and dangerous business but when accidents occurred they were often covered up.

In 1973 there was an accident at Sellafield involving a steam explosion and escape of radioactive gas.

One plant had to be permanently closed down but in 1977 the new Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP) was proposed which produces very large quantities of dangerous waste.

what we think

SOCIALISTS ARE not against modern forms of technology. But we are opposed to nuclear power because it is an irrational way to produce energy that is linked to the needs of the military establishment.

Arthur Scargill once pointed out that if coal was subsidised on the same scale as nuclear power, it could be given out for free and there would still be a surplus left over.

The billions poured into nuclear power could instead be used to produce the kind of things people really need. In a decent society, that would include a programme to insulate houses properly so that ener-

gy is not squandered.

Today there is a new attempt to justify nuclear power. It is claimed that it can cut down on burning fossil fuels like coal and gas, which produce the greenhouse gases behind global warming.

We do need to cut carbon emissions but nuclear power is not the solution.

It brings with it the risk of both short term disaster in the event of an accident, and long term environmental disaster from the build-up of deadly waste products.

Instead, the money pumped by governments into nuclear power could go towards developing clean, safe alternatives such as wind, wave, tidal and solar power.

what do socialists say? Can consumer boycotts work?

WHY SHOULD we give our money over to line the pockets of vicious multinationals? Surely we should boycott these firms to stop their destruction and naked exploitation of both the environment and their workers?

That is a view being put by lots of people opposed to the destruction caused by global capitalism. Consumer boycotts and the campaigns that often go with them have undoubtedly scored successes.

Pepsi pulled out of Burma as a result of a college boycott and campaign about the country's regime. Multinational Shell wanted to dump its Brent Spar oil rig at sea because it was cheaper than dismantling it on land. Greenpeace's campaign forced Shell to change its mind.

Thousands demonstrated at petrol stations. In Germany Shell reported a drop in sales of between 20 and 50 percent. "The worst we have ever experienced," said the head of Shell in Germany.

Workers

Across student campuses in the US there is a "No Sweats" boycott of companies like Nike and Reebok because of how they treat workers in the Third World.

Nike pays its workers in China just 13 pence an hour. In this country people in colleges and workplaces have organised to ban Nescafe coffee from their canteens and offices because Nescafe is owned by the giant multinational Nestlé. Nestlé is responsible for selling deadly baby milk to women in the Third World.

Socialists are part of any such campaign. These campaigns recognise

that people need to act to challenge these corporations. Individuals do make a difference. Otherwise why bother to be a socialist and to argue and organise?

These campaigns can also be important in developing political consciousness.

People, boycotted South African goods in the 1980s, because they were tainted with the racist apartheid regime.

Such activity can lead to wider involvement in movements against the system.

Those attracted to consumer boycotts hate the system they see all around them. Many don't see it as just an individual thing.

They recognise that people need to act collectively against the system. There are, however, more powerful weapons of protest.

Numbers are our greatest strength as a movement. Demonstrations, pickets, protests, occupations, strikes - these are all more powerful than a boycott.

Protest

That is why the most successful campaigns have not been limited to consumer boycotts alone, but have combined them with other forms of protest.

So multinationals like Monsanto were worried about the campaign against genetically modified food which involved a consumer boycott and the destruction of various crop trials.

There are some examples, however, of when consumer boycotts are suggested as a deliberate DISTRACTION from the best way to fight.

For example the SIPTU leaders involved in a battle to win union recognition Ryanair preferred to argue for a consumer boycott of company rather than call solidarity action by other workers.

That was because solidarity action would have meant

breaking the law. It was left up to rank and file shop stewards to bring the whole airport to a standstill - but even then the union leaders sabotaged the action by arguing that it might 'alienate public opinion'.

However for the most part those attracted to consumer boycotts are not union leaders, but ordinary people disgusted by capitalism.

The key question is, how do we get rid of capitalism and stop the destruction it causes once and for all?

Consumer boycotts can be effective campaigning tools, and can raise people's awareness.

They will not bring down the system. In fact it is impossible to boycott the system as a whole-how can you feed and clothe yourself without coming into contact with capitalism?

If we want to build a movement that can bring down capitalism we need to look to the working class. Organised workers have tremendous power concentrated in their hands.

This was shown when workers in Dunnes Stores went on strike after management tried to force them to handle South African goods during the apartheid era.

It is workers who have the potential power to take over the factories and to transform what is produced, and how.

That power applies to workers in China and the Third World as well as those in Dublin or Detroit.

To secure a better world we need to build a movement that is oriented on the power of the workplaces because, as the German socialist Rosa Luxemburg said, "Where the chains are forged, there can they be broken."

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Poison waste

THE PROBLEMS of long term, secure storage of nuclear waste is still unsolved and is growing more acute year by year.

Earlier attempts by the nuclear industry to get rid of their waste by dumping it in the sea were stopped by a mixture of environmental direct action and trades union protests.

Sellafield is an old site and has grown up in an unplanned way. New buildings are fitted in between old, sometimes abandoned buildings.

Some areas and buildings are sealed off and polluted by radioactivity, causing severe pollution of the nearby Irish Sea.

Waste from other nuclear plants around Britain is stored at Sellafield. Ships also carry waste to the plant from Germany and Japan.

The major problem is with the long-term storage of high-level waste.

This waste is very dangerous and so any storage facility has to be made secure and safe over a long period of thousands of years.

Despite all this BNFL is actually expanding its waste-producing activities.

It also wants to build a further plant to reprocess spent MOX fuel

— the fuel which was at the centre of the recent scandal.

MOX fuel is even more deadly than plutonium, remaining dangerous for over 250,000 years.

MOX can be burnt in certain types of nuclear power stations but it is more expensive than straight-forward uranium fuel and the British nuclear power station operators have already said that they see no reason to spend money to convert their power stations to burn it.

BNFL having already built a MOX manufacturing plant, are now looking round for overseas customers for their new product.

In fact they have staked their future profits on MOX, hoping to make up to £1 billion a year from its MOX business.

But the MOX safety tests are now revealed as lies.

The pellets were supposed to be measured. But key stages were missed out and readings falsified.

If the pellets were even a small amount different to the planned size they could be dangerous when being shipped.

A nuclear reaction could start,

by SINEAD KENNEDY

AUSTRIAN ANTI-FASCISTS ON THE STREETS

How to stop Haider

SOME 300,000 people took to the streets of Vienna to protest against the far right Freedom Party last month.

Jörg Haider's shocking breakthrough has generated the most incredible resistance.

It has led the pent-up frustrations of millions of ordinary Austrians into anger, hope and demands for change.

The Tory-led coalition government, containing six far right ministers, is paralysed.

In the week before the main march 10,000 school students walked out of classes and marched.

Güluy Aslanoglu, aged 14, told *Socialist Worker*, "This is the first time I have been on strike."

It is fantastic. We will never be the same again. I am from an immigrant family and I know what happened to the Jews in the Second World War.

There should be a new government. But it must be without any racism or prejudice at all. We want to topple the government."

School students chanted, "Strike in the schools. Strike in the workplace." Art students hung a banner 20 feet deep by 50 feet wide. It read, "The art of the hour is resistance."

Heide Weiler, a 72 year old pensioner, said, "These young people are Austria. Haider is not Austria."

They face attacks from the new government. So do we pensioners. I know what Haider would like to achieve. I say, 'No Pasaran' ['They shall not pass']."

WHAT IS FASCISM?

FASCISTS ARE more than simply nasty right wing politicians who scapegoat minorities and preach nationalism.

Fascists aim to destroy all forms of working class organisation.

They kill or lock up, not only revolutionaries, but also anyone who has been a shop steward or argued for rights at work or backed a campaign against racism or injustice.

Fascism can suddenly develop as a mass movement in periods of economic and social turmoil.

Fascists seek to draw support from across society. However, the base of mass fascist parties has always been the middle class.

Workers can fall back on trade union organisation as some kind of defence in an economic crisis. The capitalists have control of big business, the banks and the state, which offers them some protection.

The middle class—small businessmen, managers, doctors, lawyers and others—have neither the collective power of workers nor the economic power of bosses.

They can become bewildered and enraged when they feel society is falling apart.

They can turn to a movement which promises to "stand up for the little man" against labour and business.

This contradictory message is held together with racist scapegoating or an appeal to a mythical national past in which the middle layers in society supposedly ruled.

Fascism can appeal to the least organised workers, especially the unemployed, who can be encouraged to blame immigrants for unemployment and to identify with a "strong leader".

But the core of Hitler's Nazi Party came from the equivalent of today's small businessmen and non-unionised professional occupationalists.



HOW DOES FASCISM COME TO POWER?

A PARAMILITARY movement of uniformed thugs is at the heart of how fascism takes power.

They try to terrorise opposition off the streets. In a deep economic crisis bosses can find that their "normal" methods of attacking workers' living standards do not work.

Bosses can then throw their weight behind fascist leaders whose massed street fighters are capable of shattering working class organisation.

That allows the capitalists to squeeze profit out of workers by turning society into a barracks under military discipline.

Fascists have only ever come to power through the backing of the bulk of the capitalist class. They have never been voted into power by a majority of the population.

IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FASCISM AND NAZISM?

THE WORD fascism comes from Italy. Mussolini was the first Fascist and he took power in the early 1920s.

Hitler built the Nazi Party in Germany and tried to copy what Mussolini had done.

The two movements shared the same overall methods and aims. But fascism always reflects the circumstances in which it grows.

The economic crisis, and the bitterness it produced, was even deeper in the early 1930s than in 1920-1 when Mussolini's fascists grew.

Hitler's consolidation of power was correspondingly swifter and more brutal. Anti-Semitism was central to the Nazis' ideology, whereas, at first, Mussolini stressed violent Italian nationalism and attacked the left.

Fascist movements may be different

but one is not "better" than others. There is a brutal logic of repression and scapegoating which drives fascists to ever more barbaric methods.

WHAT ABOUT FASCIST MOVEMENTS TODAY?

MODERN FASCISTS who want to build mass support try to present themselves as respectable politicians to win votes.

Fascists hope to gain from the crisis shaking most of Europe's Tory parties, which have either suffered big electoral defeats or are shaken by corruption scandals.

Hitler had 400,000 Stormtroopers when he seized power. Today's Nazis would like to have tens of thousands of street fighters.

They have not yet achieved this aim but already their election advances encourage racist thugs to attack black people, Jews and trade unionists.

IS HAIDER A FASCIST?

YES. HE has identified with open Nazis. He praises Hitler's SS and echoes his propaganda.

He would not do this throughout a political career lasting three decades if he were not a fascist.

His Freedom Party has gone from 5 percent to 27 percent of the vote over the last 15 years.

That success masks its weakness. It is a coalition of different groups—from Nazis through Thatcherite businessmen to those who are simply disillusioned by the two main parties.

The Freedom Party has its roots in the Nazi administration in Austria during the Second World War.

It has swung between being a fascist party seeking votes and being a free market Austrian nationalist party.

The Freedom Party can go in a num-

ber of directions. It can become a full-blown fascist movement, go towards a right wing Tory movement or split between its Tory and hardline fascist wings. The outcome depends above all on whether it faces mass opposition.

HAS FASCISM COME TO POWER IN AUSTRIA?

NO. THE Freedom Party has six ministers in the coalition government led by the People's Party.

That is a huge step forward for Jörg Haider.

Hitler's Nazis were only a minority in a coalition government when he became Chancellor of Germany in January 1933.

He used that position to give legal cover for his Stormtroopers to break up the powerful socialist parties and trade unions within a matter of three months.

Haider is a long way from achieving that. It would require him to transform his party into a harder fascist movement.

That would take time and would generate opposition which could crack open all sorts of tensions in the ruling coalition and in the Freedom Party.

But the Freedom Party becomes a more accepted feature of Austrian politics with every day it remains in office.

Far right, anti-worker governments paved the way for fascist takeovers in the 1930s.

HOW CAN HAIDER BE STOPPED?

Three in four Austrians want the Freedom Party out

of government, according to the latest poll.

Some 43 percent of people believe there will be more strikes. There is a rising feeling that resistance can topple the government.

The Freedom Party's standing in the opinion polls is less than it was before the government was formed and the protests started.

Mass opposition has already forced the government to hold back from announcing its full cuts and privatisation programme.

The marches in Vienna showed the potential to kick the far right out of government within weeks.

But for that to happen more is needed than the weekly demonstrations proposed by the mainstream leaders of the opposition.

It requires mass strikes and the kind of protests that can make Austria ungovernable.

In France Anti-Nazis began confronting Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front in the mid-1990s.

Mass public sector strikes in December 1995 shattered the Tory government and dented Le Pen's support so much that his movement split.

Many of those workers were taken in by some of the anti-immigrant slogans but they were forced to strike and march alongside immigrants to defend themselves against attacks from the right.

The same process can take place in Austria. The trade unions were the backbone of the Vienna demonstration. The potential to get Haider out is clear.

But Fascism will retain the potential to grow for as long as capitalism exists, wrecking the mass of people's lives and destroying their hopes.

The movement against Haider can also be the start of a movement against the system that produced him

Rosary rebel

THE NEW film *The End of the Affair* is a reworking of Graham Greene's novel. The story centres on the brief passionate love affair between Sarah Miles, the wife of a high ranking government official, and a successful novelist, Maurice Bendix. His love for Sarah turned to hatred when she unaccountably broke off the relationship.

The pain and hurt of two people who are tied to one another but whose lives move apart because one of them experiences a fundamental change in belief, is the theme which goes through Greene's work.

Sarah gives Bendix up once and for all as a consequence of a bargain she makes with God to save his life. She promised that if he made a miraculous escape after a bomb blast, the affair would end. Her decision betrays both Bendix and her own right to happiness.

Distinguished

George Orwell once remarked that Greene, "appears to share the idea... that there is something rather distinguished in being damned. Hell is a sort of high-class nightclub, entry to which is reserved for Catholics only."

But Greene's Catholicism was very far removed from that sanctioned by the Church.

He was more interested in the sinner than the saint. What orthodox Catholic belief condemned as "evil", he believed could reveal something profoundly important about what it meant to be human.

Greene became a novelist at the beginning of the 1930s when the Wall Street crash ruined people's lives. Radical alternatives to the system, in the form of both communism and fascism, competed for people's loyalties.

Greene never quite belonged to anything. His background and education made him part of the upper class. But as a Catholic he was outside the mainstream of British establishment life.

Stamboul Train (1932) features a rail journey through Balkan countries in the grip of civil war. The victims engage his interest and sympathy.

A later novel of the 1930s, *The Confidential Agent*, is a tightly plotted thriller, which features a Spanish Republican on a failed diplomatic mission to London.

Although his sympathies were to the left, Greene's Catholicism stopped him from committing himself to the communism.

Brighton Rock (1938) sides with a vicious teenage gangster, damned because of his Catholicism, rather than the woman who pursues him in the name of earthly justice.

The strongly religious element in Greene's writing began to fade during the 1950s.

His later novels reflected the fate of those crushed by imperialism. *The Quiet American* (1956) is a condemnation of the beginnings of US involvement in Vietnam, seen through the eyes of a cynical journalist.

Our Man in Havana (1958) sends up the work of the British secret services in pre-revolutionary Cuba.

The Comedians (1966) is a comic novel about a deeply serious subject — corruption and terror in "Papa Doc" Duvalier's Haiti. In these novels Greene is on the side of the resistance.

Guerrilla

This is particularly true of *The Honorary Consul* (1973), which features a guerrilla group, led by an ex-priest, who conduct a kidnapping.

When it goes tragically wrong they are blamed - but the novel clearly shows where the real blame lies.

His novel on the church in Mexico the *Power and the Glory* was denounced by the Vatican.

Although Greene always declared himself to be apolitical he kept a mixed bag political company.

The extent of his involvement in the British Secret Service has become a matter of intense, if dull, speculation. Sensibly enough, he despised Ronald Regan, but his approach to Central American politics was more confused.

On one hand he was friends with Fidel Castro and but on the other hand he also associated with the corrupt tyrant Manuel Noriega. His friendship with Panamanian dictator General Omar Torrijos led him to write *Getting to Know the General*.

Whatever his friendships, or personality, Greene's books transcend his own prejudices.

His characters are failures. They betray others and themselves but their failures and betrayals are all too human.

The real evil is the horrible world they find themselves struggling to survive in, and one Greene never stopped accusing.

Working class hero?

THE RECENT news that John Lennon might have contributed some money to the IRA in the nineteen seventies was intended to be a shocking revelation.

by RICHARD BOYD BARRETT

How could the pop hero, who'd sung "All you need is Love" with the Beatles and "Give peace a chance" as a solo artist, have given money to the gun totting terrorists of the IRA?

This question assumes that there is no possible reason why someone in favour of world peace could have any sympathy with the IRA.

In fact, in the 1970's it was often quite the opposite. Many people radicalised by the US war in Vietnam concluded that the main source of violence in the world was a brutal imperialist system.

The best of them understood that if they were to end war and violence, they should support oppressed people who were fighting back against the system.

John Lennon was certainly one of the many who made this journey of radicalisation at the end of the nineteen sixties.

The song *Revolution* written in 1969, for example, demonstrates a clear sympathy with the idea of radical change but at the same time distances itself from the idealisation of Mao's China which many on the left looked to as a model of socialism.

"You say you want a revolution. Well you know we all want change the world/ But if you go carrying pictures of chairman Mao/ You ain't gonna make it with any-one anyhow"

Lennon's political development was to continue to take him further to the left.

In the early seventies he actively participated in the anti-war marches, organising a few high profile protests of his own and producing a number of brilliant anti-war songs, most famously - Give Peace A Chance and *Power to the People*.

Lennon was also associated with the far left publication *Black Dwarf*, writing a number of articles for it.

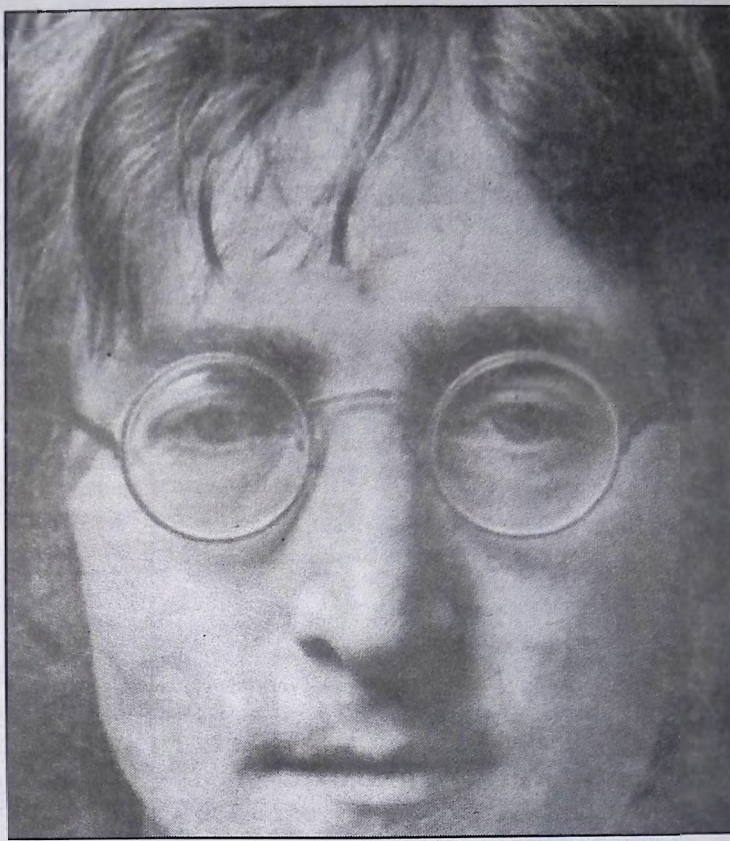
In his music Lennon best expressed a desire for radical change in society that was felt by millions in those years. And he did better than many of the self-proclaimed revolutionaries at the time.

The song *Working class Hero* for example was a brilliant and savage indictment of society racked by class division and prejudice.

"There is room at the top they are telling you still / But first you must learn to smile as you kill / If you want to be like the folks on the Hill"

Imagine, probably Lennon's most famous song, which has once again hit the top of the charts in recent weeks, is overtly a song about socialism and a society free from those same brutalities, divisions and prejudices that continue to grip our society as they did when Lennon wrote the song.

"Imagine no posse-



John Lennon

sions / I wonder if you can / Nothing to live or die for / A brotherhood of

man. Lennon wasn't Lenin but he was a socialist

and most importantly he was a brilliant musician and songwriter.

Ten more years

TEN YEARS ago, *The Simpsons* began as a short sketch on the Tracy Ullmann Show. It quickly outstripped its parent, becoming America's funniest and most popular satire. It's not hard to see why.

Centred on an average blue collar family, it shows the trials of life in small town America with a sharp political bite, and a bizarre sense of humour.

No subject is too weighty or too ridiculous to feature, from the cost of health insurance, to what happens if George Bush moves in next door. Actually, Bush has 'featured' regularly in *The Simpsons*, despite his best efforts.

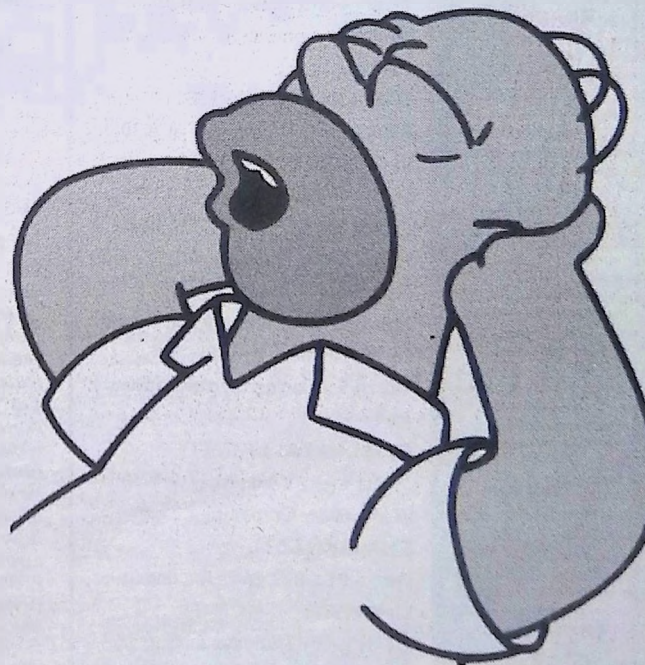
After they satirised the Republicans' right-wing agenda, Bush publicly attacked the show, saying "We need families that are more like the Walltons and less like the Simpsons."

Of course, what Bush, Clinton and all the other politicians fail to understand is that there is an army of Homer Simpsons out there, seething with frustration at a society they feel powerless to change.

This is part of the appeal of the show. It is only in a cartoon that someone like Homer Simpson could get to tell an ex-president exactly what he thinks of his foreign policy on US television.

The Simpsons has proved such an effective satire that it has earned the wrath of the Catholic Church, for showing a priest in a sports car with three women.

Fox, the network that airs the show bowed to pressure and edited the scene, though it was shown



on this side of the Atlantic.

This enraged producer Matt Groening: "People can say hurtful things to each other about their race, their weight or sexual preference and all seems up for grabs. But make a joke about religion and people get very nervous."

Everyone who watches it has a favourite episode and personally, I think seeing Homer taking over the union and leading a strike to victory at the power plant is unbeatable

After ten years the show is as funny as ever.

The problem is that it takes six months to make each episode.

As it is shown at least three times a day on different channels, watching it is like being stuck in an endless loop.

Of course, you watch it anyway.

—PAUL MCCARTHY

where we stand

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

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be reformed out of existence. Parliament cannot be used to end the system.

The courts, army and police are there to defend the interests of the capitalist class not to give society a new twist.

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 gay and lesbian; an end to racism and anti-racialist 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 leadership 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 Mayfaro Hotel at 8.30pm

BELFAST CENTRAL:

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

BELFAST SOUTH:

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30 pm in Queens Students Union

CORK:

Meets every Wednesday at 8 pm in O'Donoghue's Bar, Emmett Place.

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

DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL:

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm

in Conways, Parnell St

DUBLIN NORTH WEST:

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm O'Mahony's pub, Phibsboro (near Crossguns bridge)

March 8th: International Women's Day: The fight for women's liberation today.

March 15th: Building the revolutionary party

DUBLIN RIALTO:

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

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

March 2: Cevommising and the crisis in Northern Ireland

March 9: Building the revolutionary party

DUBLIN TALLAGHT:

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Jobstown Community Centre

ENNISKILLEN:

Phone 01-872 2682 for details

GALWAY:

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

LIMERICK:

Phone 01-872 2682 for details

TRALEE:

Phone 01-8722682 for details

WATERFORD:

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

MAYNOOTH:

Meets every Wednesday, Classhall B

Partnership

We can defeat wage restraint

A WAVE of opposition has emerged amongst rank and file workers to the new partnership deal.

As news that Irish inflation had hit 4.4 percent, many workers realized that the Partnership for Prosperity and Fairness proposals gives them very little.

"Workers are being offered £12 a week but if inflation is running at 4.4 percent, that means that you are really only getting £2.20 a week. Are our union leaders telling us that this is all we deserve from the Celtic Tiger?" one shop steward in Tullamore Hospital asked.

Leaflets

SIPTU members across the midlands have gone into full-scale opposition. A special 22 person No committee has been formed in Tullamore Hospital and 3,000 leaflets have been printed.

"One of the big issues is relativity and analogue payments. At the moment a hospital attendant gets paid £25.60 every two weeks because of the analogue payments craft workers have won.

"But under this new benchmarking system this can all be lost. We are calling on workers to hold onto what they have," the shop steward said.

SIPTU is the key union that will decide the fate of the agreement. The union leadership has organised a series of briefing meetings in branches but insisted on giving only their side of the story.

In the Civil Aviation, Dublin branch of SIPTU a request to hear a speaker from the Campaign against Partnership was turned down and representatives were told they were getting four officials out to "put the line". Despite this, hundreds of anti-partnership leaflets have appeared across Dublin airport.

In a number of SIPTU branches the leadership has got a roasting.

Many fire fighters are now adamantly opposed to the deal because of the way it is interfering with relativities.

"The feeling is so strong that many are questioning their allegiance to SIPTU. Many of our members are asking who these leaders on £60,000 a year really represent" a Galway firefighter told Socialist Worker.

But opposition is not confined to individual groups.

"There was only a small turn-out at our branch in Bray

UNIONS LINE UP TO OPPOSE DEAL

An unprecedented number of unions are opposing the deal or are refusing to recommend it. They include:

- ★ ATGWU: Opposed because it has no mechanism to cover a rise in inflation.
- ★ BATU: Bricklayers see few signs of partnership with the building bosses.
- ★ MANDATE: Says it has nothing for the low paid.
- ★ ASTI: Teachers union has even pulled out of ICTU to put in special claim.
- ★ CPSU: No recommendation. Many of the union's executive wanted a NO recommendation.
- ★ INO: Nurses feel outstanding issues from strike will not be dealt with under 'benchmarking' body.
- ★ TUI: No recommendation but head office is trying to put a spin for the deal.

but there was hardly anyone speaking in support of the deal" a Corporation shop steward said.

"The more workers read the fine print of the deal, the more they are becoming concerned", the Tullamore shop steward said.

"Workers in the private

sector should look carefully at the inability to pay clause. It gives the employers a let out if there are exchange rate difficulties.

"This was put in deliberately because the agreement will cover the period the Euro is being introduced. It gives them an open door to refuse to pay.

"This agreement is also laying the basis for binding arbitration. The Labour Court chairman has said that the court will have new powers to arbitrate if there are charges that the agreement is breached. They are tying the unions down completely. It is time to call a halt".

Teachers push for special pay claims

ONE OF the largest centres of opposition to the partnership deal is coming from teachers.

A meeting to launch Teachers Campaign Against Partnership was attended by 150 teachers.

Crea Ryder, an INTO member who chaired the meeting

said, "The mood was fantastic. There are a lot of young teachers to want to change the way our unions operate.

Anger

"Anger is rising among the teachers and many feel the best decision they made so far has been to pull out of the ICTU.

"The media claims there are division between the three teachers unions but the biggest division"

A special conference of the secondary teachers union ASTI has decided to stop co-operating with the pilot project of Whole School Evaluation until their claims for a 30 percent pay rise is settled.

"Some journalists ran a story that the ASTI was opposed to the emphasis on policies to combat social exclusion.

"It's not true because teachers know all about social deprivation.

"We just do not think the ICTU is fighting for its members," an ASTI Executive member told Socialist Worker.

The union has appointed a special committee to draw up a strategy for industrial action.

Controversy has also broken out in TUI as anger grows with the deal.

"Our conference mandated the head office to present both sides of the argument but they produced a bulletin stating the agreement gave teachers a 29 percent increase.

"That is nonsense and many members that. Branches in Mayo, west Dublin and Kildare are organising special meetings where they want a speaker from Teachers against Partnership.

"We can certainly defeat this deal," said Eddie Conlon, a TUI Executive member.

Colleges

Fire in their belly

OVER 120 people attended the World in Crisis conference in Trinity at the end of February.

The event brought students from Dublin, Cork and Galway together to discuss questions such as Is The UN a Force For Change? Which Way Forward to Save The Environment?, and The Fight for Women's Equality Today.

The foremost student societies in actively taking up these issues, the One World, Socialist Worker and Environmental Societies were

all well represented.

Komene Famaa from Ogoni Voice Ireland who spoke at the final rally was part of the newly-founded One World Society in UCD.

The anti-WTO demonstrations in Seattle last year was the inspiration for many of the activists there and anti-capitalism was undoubtedly the main theme of the weekend.

Forward

Discussion mainly centred on the strategy and tactics required to take that move-

ment forward.

Most people went away, as Rory Hearne from Trinity described it, with "fire in their belly" and a determination to start organising mass action among the growing number of radicalised students in their own colleges.

Many people also left the conference convinced that the resolution to the world's problems will involve a revolutionary overthrow of the entire system.

At least four people decided to join the Socialist Workers Party.

Tel: (01)8722682; fax (01) 8723838; email: swp@clubi.ie web: www.clubi.ie/swp

Buses

20% now

Busworkers have entered negotiations following their one day strike on Tuesday 15 February.

They are demanding a 20 percent pay rise.

Busworkers have been enduring attacks on their pay and conditions for over ten years.

They now have to make contributions to their "medical benefits" and their seven sick days have extra restrictions imposed upon them. Training payments for new employees have all but disappeared.

Rates

As well as a 20 percent pay rise busworkers are demanding the scrapping of new rates for newly recruited drivers, a year and a half leop sum and the right to retire at 55.

The one-day strike was supposed to be part of a rolling strike that was due to build up to an all-out in the fifth week.

However the NBRU leaders agreed to postpone the strike and enter into negotiations over period of four weeks following an

agreement with management after intervention from Mary O'Rourke.

The one-day strike has already forced a number of concessions from Dublin Bus. The company was forced to take 2 years off the new scales and grant £ 15 rise for the next four weeks.

The NBRU have said that the companies wish list will not form the basis of any talks, and that they will walk away from these talks if the company looks for more productivity.

"The issue is not about how much harder we can work, its about

government subsidies" said one worker.

Dublin Bus gets the lowest government public transport subsidy in Europe

"The ICTU were desperate to get the strike called off as they are trying to sell the national pay deal with a wage rise of just 5.5 percent.

"They are scared that our fight for 20 percent would set an example to other workers to look for more.

"That is why they want talks to last four weeks, in the hope they can push this lousy deal through" another worker told *Socialist Worker*.

Roches Stores

Spreading pickets wins

Thirty-three workers from Roches Stores in Strand Street in Dublin have won a spectacular victory in their four week long strike for better pay.

The workers won a 26 percent pay increase. This will amount to a £3,000 a year increase on average for each of the workers. The workers were also given two days paid holiday before having to return to work.

The workers who were employed in the accounts payable section of the firm had taken strike action because they were worst paid in the industry for the job they did. They were looking for parity with

workers doing the same job in other department stores.

The Labour Court had found in favour of the Roches workers claim but the company refused to pay.

On the advice of Mandate officials the workers had restricted the picketing to the Strand St office which was located in a back lane informing them that it would be illegal to move pickets to the main store in Henry St.

Frustrated with the lack of progress in the strike the workers defied this advice and began picketing Henry St. This was decisive. Within a few days and with the threat of a mass picket - management caved in.

The victory is a lesson on how to fight low pay. It contrasts sharply with the miserable 5.5 percent increase on offer in the new national agreement which also includes the deferment of the £5 per hour minimum wage until 2002.

The thirty three workers also won because they had a strong strike committee that was willing to act independently of union officials who were running scared of the law.

Our union leaders should start to take a lead from workers like those in Roches Stores, instead of trying to sell us rotten partnership deals, wage restraint and preaching respect for draconian laws like the industrial relations act.

Aermotive

Workers locked out

CRAFT WORKERS at Airmotive have been locked out and presented with an ultimatum by their management.

The dispute began as a direct result of the growing labour shortages in the Celtic Tiger. Many craft workers have left Airmotive and have gone to work in computer companies where the wage rates are much higher.

But instead of dealing with the situation and raising wages, Lufthansa - the German company which owns the plant - tried to increase pressure on their remaining workforce. They insisted that they work nights to cover the orders that were coming in.

When workers refused to do this, the company started to take in contract staff - without any consultation or negotiation with the unions.

After the first of these contract staff appeared a number of union

members occupied the canteen in protest.

Management then went ballistic and locked out their workforce. They told them they would have to stay out until everyone signed an agreement that they would be willing to work nights.

These bully-boy tactics show the reality that lies behind the so-called partnership approach with the employers.

Lufthansa has been held up by some union leaders as example of a modern employer who wants genuine partnership with their workforce.

But the story looks very different today from the hundred strong picket line that has been mounted at the gates of the company.

SIPTU and the other union involved should be told to make this strike official. Collections and solidarity also should be organised across Dublin to support these workers.

Stop attacking the left

One of the key militants in Dublin Bus NBRU Shop Stewart Joe Fallon is facing a serious attack on his civil liberties.

Disgracefully this attack is not coming from management at Dublin Bus but from his own union the NBRU. He has been charged with "conduct unbecoming a shop steward."

Joe is being charged because he is a member of the rank and file group Busworker Action Group and a member of the Socialist Workers Party.

He is charged with "associating the union with the BUSWORKER newsletter" and with having a copy of Socialist Worker on the picket.

This is an outrageous attack on the right to free speech. Members of the NBRU voted for Joe Fallon knowing he was a member of both Busworkers Action Group and *Socialist Worker*.

Instead of attacking good shop stewards who stood on the picket line throughout the whole strike, Peter Bunting and the NBRU leaders should be turning their fire on management and Mary O'Rourke.

Dun Laoghaire

**No service charges
No to privatisation**

DUN LAOGHAIRE Rathdown council last week issued bills for a £150 charge for refuse collection.

Donal McCarry of the Campaign Against the Service Charges said, "We are calling for the non-payment of these bills."

"This attempt at double taxation is a disgrace and is part of a wider agenda of privatising local services."

"This is the socialist attempt

by local authorities to introduce service charges. We beat the council when they tried to bring in water charges - we can do it again.

"This year Bray residents and council workers showed that these plans can be stopped in their tracks."

A number of years ago Bray UDC and Wicklow CC imposed service charges.

This was followed up in the last year by an attempt to privatise the service.

If privatised we lose all democratic control over services leaving the charging policy in the hands of profiteers.

We only have to look to Britain to see the chaos privatisation brings.

A campaign and strike by Bray refuse workers stopped the privatisation plan.

Industry

The key to defeating the charges is to organise a mass non payment campaign to stop the council intimidating individual householders.

Protests and public meetings should be organised in every area to establish phone trees and campaign co-ordinating committees.

Resolutions of support should be passed in Trade Unions, residents committees and community groups.

More information on the Campaign against Service Charges Tel: 087 683 8746.

ATGWU

JIMMY KELLY, the convenor of the Waterford Crystal plant, has topped the poll in the ATGWU election.

Jimmy stood openly as a revolutionary socialist and a member of the Socialist Workers Party.

The election was conducted on an all-Ireland basis and he will now sit on the General Executive Council which represents workers in both Britain and Ireland.

In his election campaign, Jimmy supported the traditional union policy of opposing partnership deals but he called for the left rhetoric to be translated into action.

"There are thousands of unorganised workers in this country," said Jimmy Kelly. "Some of the major unions are not conducting a recruitment campaign at American multi-nationals because they want a sweet heart arrangement with the government and not rock the boat. The ATGWU should be outside the factories recruiting these workers."

AROUND THE country opposition is growing to the government's strategy of burning waste.

Burning waste means toxic chemicals get into the atmosphere. The dioxins that these incinerators emit are particularly poisonous.

According to the American Environmental Protection Agency, "Exposure to dioxins, even at minute levels, poses cancer risks, and health concerns, including possible damage to the immune and reproductive system".

For instance, people living within five miles of a waste incinerator in Texas were found to be twice as likely to have respiratory diseases as those living away from an incinerator.

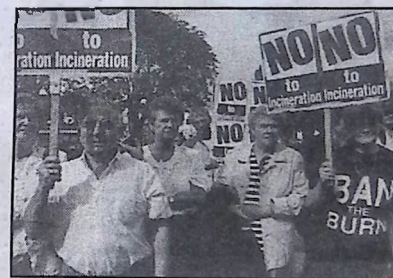
A British study found a "marked concentration of larynx cancer cases among adults within 2 kilometres of a waste incinerator."

Fianna Fail see the incinerators as a way of privatising waste disposal.

The Department of Environment say that they have to incinerate waste, but there is no need.

Currently 90 percent of waste in Ireland is dumped, and only 5 percent of waste is recycled.

Yet the government's own figures say it is possible to recycle 90 percent



cent of all waste. 42.2 million tonnes of waste is produced in Ireland each year.

Only 1.85 million tonnes of that comes from household waste. 31 million tonnes comes from agricultural waste and over 8.61 million comes from industrial waste.

The factory owners who pay the lowest rate of tax on profits produce the most harmful waste. If they were forced to pay for cutting down on waste there would be no "waste management crisis".

Opposition

One of the areas where opposition to incineration has grown is Ringsend in Dublin.

People in Ringsend are furious that they were excluded from the Dublin Corporation consultations over the plan to build an incinerator.

Only a 120 people were allowed into a meeting organised by

the Corporation. Representatives of the Combined Residents Against Incineration (CRAI) said the local authority was staging a closed meeting by selectively inviting groups, when the meeting should have been open to all.

RTE personality Mike Murphy, who has substantial property interests in the city, acting as "independent chairman" of the meeting. Murphy's is involved in a leisure development at Park West in Ballyfermot, next to one of the sites considered and rejected for the incinerator.

Sheila Fanning of CRAI said residents were dismayed at the proposals to locate the £65 million facility adjacent to a Natural Heritage area and so many sports and recreation grounds serving the south-east inner city.

Local councillors have agreed to put a motion to the Corporation to scrap the plan and a protest is being called to

Securicor

SIX HUNDRED workers employed by the security firm Securicor were set for one day strike action on Friday 3 March as *Socialist Worker* went to press.

Workers represented by SIPTU are also expected to serve strike notice for another one or two day stoppage the following week.

The strike is over low pay. Workers are calling for a £2.50 an hour increase that would bring their wages into line with those of bus drivers.

The average rate at the moment is just £5.25 an hour and they have not received a pay increase in 15 years.