

Socialist Worker

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The myth of social partnership
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THE PAY

REVOLT

TORTURE BY THE BRITISH ARMY

THE INQUIRY has restarted into the murder of 14 unarmed civil rights protesters by the British army in Derry, Northern Ireland, in 1972.

The Bloody Sunday inquiry is hearing evidence of the scale of the

brutality the British state was prepared to inflict on Catholics. It heard tapes from the Victoria barracks of senior army officers talking on the phone on 30 January 1972.

One expressed satisfaction that paratroopers had killed so many protesters. The inquiry was also read a

transcript of a paratrooper, identified only as Soldier 027 — army personnel have been granted anonymity for the inquiry.

It said that paratroopers used "dum-dum" bullets, which are banned by international conventions.

It described a brutal assault on a Catholic man in Belfast by paratroopers one month after Bloody

Sunday.

Paratroopers beat him up, and then revived him and threw him into the back of an armoured personnel carrier "where he was electrocuted in some way, castrated, sliced in the face with a knife, and kicked and beaten". Soldiers then dumped him in the Loyalist Shankill Road "to await his fate".

Just do it: protest

NIKE EMPLOYEES in Thailand staged an angry protest against the world's top golfer, Tiger Woods, whose contract with Nike nets him almost \$100 million a year.

"It would take the workers here 72,000 years of work for Nike on their wages here to

make that money," said Thai Labour Committee official Lek Junya Yumprasert

Nike, which employs roughly 70,000 Thais, has frequently been accused of ill-treating its Asian employees.

It is charged with subjecting them to inadequate pay and poor working conditions, as well as banning union membership.

US Elections

Amongst the coverage of the US elections you might have missed a great reform achieved in Alabama. Citizens voted to repeal a state law which outlaws marriage between black and white people. Nobody could accuse the state government of rushing things, could they?

Don't drink the water

ONE in eight people are at risk from drinking sub-standard water, a damning OECD report reveals.

It also highlights a serious risk of contamination of drinking supplies by deadly pathogens in areas where slurry is spread on farms.

The study says as many as 400,000 people are at risk.

Contamination by e-coli in the form of faecal coliforms is "widespread", affecting 34pc of groundwater.

Some 200,000 people, mainly in rural areas, were affected by e-coli contamination.

Sub-standard

But overall 400,000 people, whether or not they are served by group supplies, may receive sub-standard water quality, the report says.

It also highlights risks with rural, mainly private owned, group water supplies and 12,500 private wells, warning of deadly dangers from slurry.

Ireland has the worst health damaging air pollution per capita in the OECD.

There is 62 percent more sulphur dioxide in the Irish air than the European average. Life expectancy at middle age is lower than in most EU countries.

Outrageously, The Minister for the environment Noel Dempsey has jumped on the report as an argument for further service charges. In fact, there should be an eco tax but it should be on the big farmers and factory owners who are the cause of pollution in the first place

Fighting racism

Stop deportations

LOCAL PEOPLE in Tramore have organised a campaign to stop the deportation of a local Nigerian woman Ebi Ojoh after her application for asylum was refused.

Ebi has been living in Tramore with two of her children, a boy aged 15 and a girl aged eight, since June.

Her children have settled well in the local school and the whole family are beginning to feel very much part of the community.

Danger

Ebi has said her life would be in danger if she were forced to return home.

★ A recent report on Racism by sociologist Philip Curry says that racism towards refugees is at an all time high. The report was published at same time as three medial students from Pakistan were attacked after having a drink in a local pub close to where they work in Nenagh.

★ ONE minor, but cheering result of the teachers strike Celtic Tiger cubs of the exclusive Blackrock College Ruby team were left standing in a field as their underpaid and over worked teacher was on the picket line.

She was a member of the Ijaw tribe, which was being oppressed by other tribes.

Two of her brothers had been killed and she had decided to leave when her partner and elder son were taken from their home.

She claimed that while the Nigerian government stated everything was normal, fighting had "gone underground" which made things worse and more dangerous than before.

Around 30 people attended a meeting in Tramore recently to fight Ebi's deportation. At the meeting Ebi spoke about how she came to Ireland because she was left with no choice.

She was relatively

comfortable in Nigeria because she owned a shop.

In order to escape she had to sell it and a lot of her possessions in order to escape.

She had paid someone to get her out of the country and did not know she was coming to Dublin until she got on the plane.

She is a lot less well off now living in Ireland as an asylum seeker but she is happy that at least herself and her children are safe.

A protest has been organised for Saturday 25th at 2.45pm.

Assemble at the Car park of the Majestic Hotel and march to Tramore Church car park

O'Donoghue's growing hypocrisy over racism

LAUNCHING THE Anti-Racist Workplace Campaign, Minister for Justice and hypocrite John O'Donoghue, said one of the fundamental principles of equality was right to work in an atmosphere, which was free

Come fly with me

TAXPAYERS are to fork out thousands of pounds to cover the cost of an Aer Rianta jaunt to sunny Santiago in Chile.

Four senior executives travelled almost 7,000 miles in business class to attend the frightfully important 10th ACI World and Latin America/Caribbean Annual Assemblies, Conference and Exhibition.

Arduous

The four executives spent about a week enjoying the delights of Santiago, after their arduous business class flight.

The conference was held

from harassment and discrimination.

O'Donoghue is probably the most racist minister in the government.

In his most cynical move yet O'Donoghue has ban the media from reporting the names of asylum seek-

ers, like Ebi Ojah, in any reports. The move has already been condemned by the Refugee Council and the National Union of Journalists.

Socialist Worker promises break this ban.

O'Donoghue is trying to stop people knowing the real sto-

Air travel is bad for health...

A NEW book by Andrew Weir on the airline industry argues that air travel is by far the most dangerous.

Currently air fatalities are calculated on the basis of kilometers travelled.

But, Weir argues, because aircrafts travel huge distances it is far more accurate to calculate accidents on the basis of the number of journey made.

By this standard air transport fares the worst: 55 deaths per 100 mil-

lion, against 4.5 for cars and 2.7 for trains.

The reason, Weir argues is that airlines are cutting back on safety in the pursuit of ever high-

...and for workers

er profits. "Unnecessary costs are the enemy of profits and safety measures increase cost without increasing revenue."

RYANAIR ENGINER Kevin Cahill was sacked after he reported the National Aviation Authority following a safety inspection.

Kevin complained to the company about a cracked lens in one of the aircraft but grew suspicious after the company claimed they had lost the

O'Donoghue claims that 90 percent of refugees are 'bogus' and are here to 'sponge' off the social welfare system.

He is planning to up the number of deportations over the following months, forcing hundreds of asylum seekers to return to a life of fear and intimidation.

Kevin Cahill was sacked after he reported the National Aviation Authority following a safety inspection.

Kevin complained to the company about a cracked lens in one of the aircraft but grew suspicious after the company claimed they had lost the

Meanwhile Ryanair boss Tony 'anti-union' Ryan gave his two spoiled sons £7 million worth of Ryanair shares each.



what we think

Join the pay revolt

A MAJOR pay revolt has broken out across the unions. From transport to the teachers, workers are fighting to catch up with the inequalities of the Celtic Tiger. But the government is desperate to keep wages down.

According to Charlie McCreevey, "The Government, under the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness is committed to ensuring that all sections of society receive a fair share of our increasing national prosperity and that the necessary resources will be applied to improving priority public services which will enhance the quality of life and living standards for all."

Reality

But in reality, partnership has been shown to be a sham as inflation has rocketed to 7 percent.

And that headline figure disguises some astounding price rises. The cost of mortgages has risen by an astounding 48.3 percent over the last year. The price of home heating oil has risen by 61 per cent since last October. Transport costs are up by 8.1 percent.

But not everybody is doing badly. In the last six months the Bank of Ireland made £446 million in profit. The two leading banks are now making over £2 million profit a day.

Denis O'Brien, the telecoms tycoon "earned" £184m cash. Dermot Desmond, who lives in Gibralt

ar to avoid tax, had £59million in his paypacket.

And Michael Smurfit got £12.5m. All of these amounts are just what they get paid and does not include their actual wealth - houses, horses and off shore accounts. So much for pay restraint.

Claim

Yet the government are still trying to claim that there is not enough money in the economy for real pay rises, yet they have paid almost £450 million in grants to the 15 largest multinational IT firms. And these firms still only pay a tax on their profits of 10 percent.

Meanwhile they are attempting to hold off the pay revolt with promises of tax cuts in the Budget.

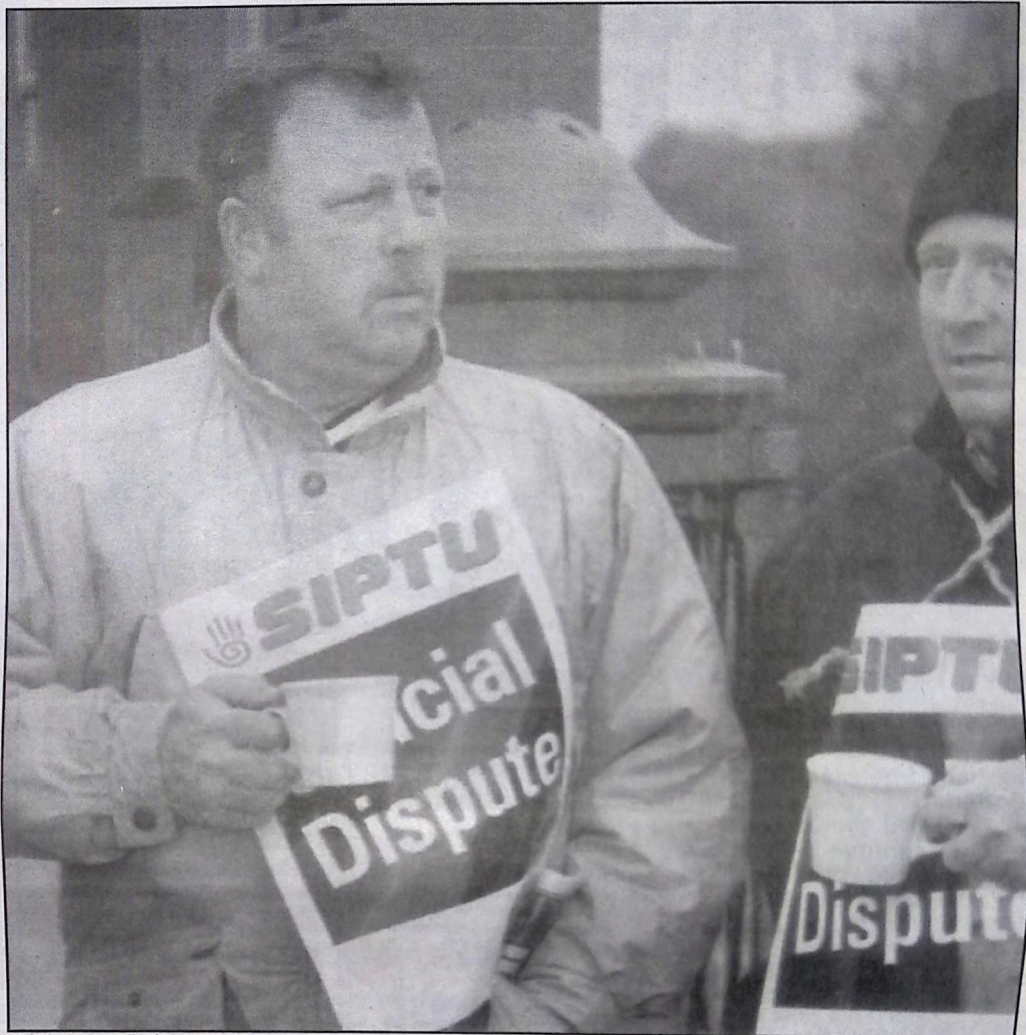
But Social Partnership is collapsing under pressure from organised workers.

The airport has been hit by a number of disputes from the cabin crew to the caterers. And significantly pilots are fighting back against the anti union airline Ryanair over working hours.

The nature of the revival is shown in the signal workers dispute. And solidarity is spreading across the unions. When signalers struck in Galway bus workers and train drivers joined them on the picket lines.

The action of the teachers in the ASTI in pursuit of a 30 percent claim is pushing the leaders of the other unions to join in the fight for a decent wage.

Up until now the union leaders have been tied to a review of PPF



Signal workers closed down the rail network

but pressure from below is forcing them out of the deal.

For instance, the Technical Engineering and Electrical Union (TEEU) has already mandated its members to lodge local claims on employers if the PPF review fails.

The CPSU leader Blair Horan, who has been a strong supporter of Partnership has been pushed into

putting in a 15 percent pay claim on the basis that the review will fail.

The rank and file of the unions are starting to force through the restraint of ten years of Partnership.

The depth of the anger in the union movement means that we can force our Union leaders to represent our interests.

Every worker should immediately put in a pay claim. In every job we should build solidarity for other groups of workers already fighting for better pay.

That way we can build a movement across the unions to end the wage restraint of Partnership and start to reclaim some of the wealth of the Celtic Tiger.

A year since Seattle: Globalised revolt grows

THE LAST 12 months have been dominated by a wave of protest and struggle that began in Seattle against the WTO last year on 30 November.

The new movement has encompassed general strikes, mass demonstrations and challenges to the very heart of the system.

The year 2000 is marking a turning point in global resistance to neo-liberal policies and their effects.

The scale of resistance is astonishing.

In Serbia the dictator Milosevic

was overthrown by popular protest and there is the birth of a new Intifada in the Middle East. Some 250,000 people mobilized in Vienna in January to oppose the entry to the Austrian government of Haider's Nazis. And there have been political general and mass strikes and enormous demonstrations in Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Paraguay, Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia and Malawi.

As the movement grows, it is of critical importance that a full-scale debate takes place about the way forward.

Socialists argue for placing the

working class at the centre of strategy because it is the only force capable of bringing capitalism to its knees.

This will entail encouraging and supporting labour struggles wherever they occur.

For instance, the labour movement is central to the next major anti capitalist protests in Nice (for details see page 4).

We need a strong revolutionary party to be involved in the struggle wherever it erupts and to promote the idea of socialism as the rational alternative to neo-liberalism and its anti-human values and policies.

Anti capitalist conference great success

OVER 450 people attended a major anti-capitalist conference in Dublin.

The opening rally was addressed by Kevin Danaher, from Global Exchange — an organisation that has campaigned against sweatshop labour conditions in Nike and other multi-nationals.

"We are like mosquitoes that are biting the ass of capitalism. And the bites are spreading across its body and hurting" Danaher told a packed audience.

Over 30 meetings occurred over the weekend ranging from discussions on Freud to GM foods.

Eamonn McCann addressed a 150 strong meeting on republicanism on Saturday night. He charted how the former radicals who backed armed struggle now presided over a budget, which raised rents of local authority tenants.

The final rally heard a Nigerian refugee explain how she was facing deportation and appealed for support to be let stay here.

Twenty-five people joined the Socialist Workers Party after the event.

"The conference was electric. It gave me the confidence to organise to change the world" one new member said.

EURO-CAPITALIST SUMMIT

Support protests in Nice on 6 Dec

NICE, IN the south of France, is set for one of the biggest mobilisations yet against globalisation and its associated "neo-liberal" free market policies. Trade unionists, protesters against Third World debt, the unemployed and young people disgusted by global capitalism will all be protesting in the town on 6 and 7 December.

French trade union leaders expect at least 60,000 people from France to join the demonstration. Trade unions across Europe, including Britain's TUC, are backing the protest too, and

calling for official delegations to it.

Major delegations of workers are already planned from countries such as Italy and Spain.

The ATTAC organisation, which campaigns against globalisation and has 27,000 members in France, is also urging its members to get to Nice.

Appeal

Many of the organisations which backed the 26 September Prague protests against global capitalism, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are also backing the protest.

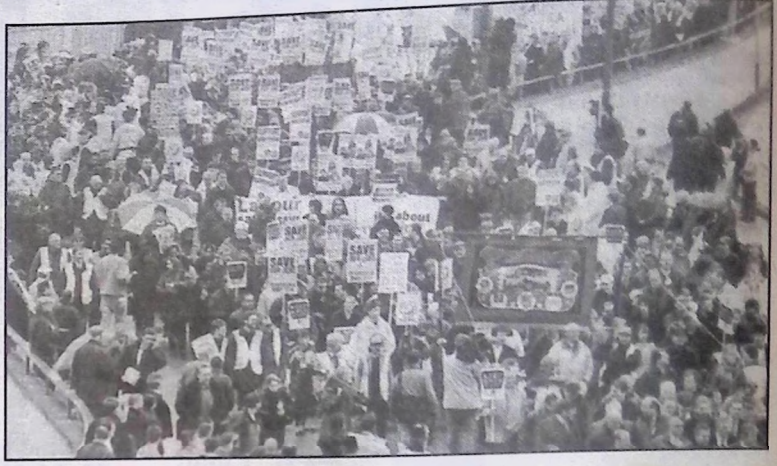
European Union leaders are meeting in Nice on 7 and 8 December to discuss two key matters.

One is a series of technical-sounding changes to EU institutions and treaties in the run-up to the planned entry of European countries into the union. The second is to agree a European Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Behind both lies a drive to push more attacks on welfare and workers' rights, and to ram through privatisation.

ATTAC vice-president Susan George has issued an appeal calling on people to get to Nice.

If the European Union leaders get away with their plans, she argues, "the gains of the past 100 years at least, including our social rights, our public services, healthcare and education systems, are all at risk. We must mobilise."



Trade unionists from across Europe will descend on Nice

Business heart of EU

Some people see the European Union as a benign force which can be looked to to improve conditions in Ireland.

But it is a profoundly mistaken view of what the EU is.

The French organization ATTAC rightly points out that the EU is one of the key institutions of global capitalism: "The engines of neo-liberal globalisation are not only the transnational firms, the financial markets and institutions like the IMF, World Bank, OECD and World Trade Organisation.

Offensive

"They are also the governments of the major industrialised countries and the European Commission. The commission has systematically pursued its offensive against public services, and for privatisation of education and health in

particular."

ATTAC points out that business is preparing for a new privatisation drive. The European Services Forum, the main European industry lobby group pushing for ser-

vices liberalisation, hosts a major event this month: "The conference has the official support of the European Commission and the World Trade Organisation."

NICE 2000
Defend the rights of workers and refugees
PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT
Protest at the European Union Office, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2 Thrusday Dec. 7th @5pm
 more details ring Grace on 086 4099186. email s26ireland@yahoo.com

Workers of Europe unite

THE NICE protests promise to mark a new stage in the growing world movement against capitalism, where all the movement's diverse currents join up with the organised working class.

France's trade union federations are seriously mobilising for the protest.

The CGT is the country's most important trade union federation. It has issued a call for people to mobilise for Nice.

It cuts through the technical reforms to EU institutions to insist they are in reality a way of smuggling through an intensified drive to the privatisation of public services.

"Since the Treaty of Rome in 1957 the European Commission has put neo-liberal principles first. It has shown a constant desire to deregulate and to privatise,"

says the CGT.

"This year it is again attacking the railways, the post, telecoms, gas and electricity. Powerful mobilisations" will be needed, it says, "to beat back these attacks. The 6 December protest will be a strong response to neo-liberal politics."

It also notes that the Charter of Fundamental Rights being proposed by European Union leaders enshrines business principles.

It has no mention of the right to work or the right to strike. Instead it talks of the "freedom to conduct a business".

The CGT calls for:

- ★ The right of asylum.
- ★ The right to a home.
- ★ The right to strike.
- ★ The right to social protection against exclusion and poverty.
- ★ The right to a decent pension.
- ★ The right to work.
- ★ The right to a living wage.
- ★ The right to decently funded public services.

The CGT has booked

trains, buses and planes from across France.

It has issued one million leaflets and plans to issue 10,000 CGT union flags on the day.

A "United Collective" is backed by the ATTAC group, which has become a key force fighting against pro-market neo-liberal policies in France.

Protest

The Peasants Confederation, led by José Bové, is also backing the Nice protest.

It organised the great carnival of protest in Millau in France last summer.

The important SUD trade union federation is also backing the United Collective.

The collective is demanding that the French government lays on free trains for the unemployed, low paid and young people to travel to Nice.

And if the government does not comply, it is planning to implement an "oper-

ation free transport" protest at Paris rail stations to win the demand.

There will also be major contingents in Nice from Italy and Spain.

In Italy the important COBAS union organisations and the Social Centres which organise many young people are mobilising.

So too is the important CGIL union federation in the northern Italian industrial centres of Turin and Milan.

The mobilisation from Spain looks set to be especially impressive.

Josep Gargante from Socialist Worker's Spanish sister organisation, Izquierda Revolucionaria, explains, "The most important trade unions, the Workers' Commissions and the UGT really want to mobilise."

"They are talking of sending 20,000 workers to Nice from Spain, and they are laying on free coaches for union members and non-members who want to go."

Eamonn McCann

There's no fair cop

THE IMPASSE over policing marks the biggest immediate obstacle to the consolidation of the Belfast Agreement. Nationalists rightly accuse Peter Mandleson of watering down the Patten Report to satisfy David Trimble.

If he doesn't change tack and implement Patten fully, they say, neither the SDLP nor Sinn Fein will back the new force — in which case the entire Agreement might well collapse.

The RUC was one of the key structures of the sectarian Orange State. Any serious move to end State sectarianism means ending the RUC. But it doesn't follow that the necessary changes consist of making the police less Orange and more Green.

The most important issues have nothing fundamentally to do with Orange-Green politics.

In his *Guardian* article (November 13th) which sharpened the debate, the Canadian academic and member of the Patten Commission Clifford Shearing listed the main areas in which Mandleson had "gutted" Patten. He didn't emphasise the name, the badge or the flying of flags, but the proposals for putting the police under a degree of civilian control.

Operation

Patten wanted a "policing board" with power to demand a report from the chief constable as to how and why any particular operation had been carried out.

However, Mandleson's Bill would allow the chief constable to refer every such request to the Secretary of State "if it appears" to him that such a report "would, or would be likely to, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime or apprehension or prosecution of offenders". In other words, for any reason at all.

On this basis, the Secretary of State would then be able to overrule the board. The Secretary of State would also be able to quash any independent inquiry initiated by the board on the same grounds.

In other words, the chief constable and his political master, rather than an independent body, would still have the last word.

The district policing partnership boards, designed to provide an element of local control, and the police ombudsman, have likewise had their functions comprehensively diluted in Mandleson's Bill.

But complaints about the unaccountability of the police aren't specific to the North. Both the Gardai and the British police are effectively answerable to no one.

The Garda complaints body is an unfunny joke. RTE's "Primetime" recently reported on lawyers advising clients against making complaints, because all that usually happens is that the complainant suffers further garda harassment. The whitewash of the John Carthy killing in Abbeylara makes the point clearly.

In Britain, complaints against the police are "investigated" by neighbouring forces. In the last 10 years, 22 people have died in dubious circumstances in British police stations. Not one police officer has been brought to book. Last year, Harry Stanley, walking quietly home, was shot dead by police in Stoke Newington in London. Despite vigorous campaigning by his family, there has not been, and won't be, any independent inquiry.

No police force in a class-divided society will ever represent the mass of the people. The core function of the police is to defend the existing institutions of society.

They stand against any upsurge from below challenging the existing set-up. This is the reason ruling classes are generally against police powers being subject to democratic scrutiny. It is also the reason no amount of "reform" will lead socialists to urge working class people to support the police.

Patten urged limited changes to make the police answerable because of the particular role the police played in the North's Troubles. But the effect of the proposed changes wouldn't be only, or mainly, to redress the balance between the Northern State and Nationalists, but to give ordinary citizens some redress against police violence and repression.

A campaign on this basis for the full implementation of Patten — as a small installment on the transformation which is needed — would have a potential to draw support from Protestant workers — huge numbers of whom have no love for the RUC either.

Unfortunately, this is not the way Nationalists approach the issue. Hence the practical need for socialist intervention.

Assembly PFI fees scandal

MARTIN McGuinness's Education Department paid out more than more than \$600,000 in consultancy fees during the awarding of a Private Finance Initiative to build a school in West Belfast.

St Genevieve's high school in Andersonstown is being built with a \$14 million private finance initiative (PFI) contract last September.

It emerged last week that \$623,963 was paid to private consultants even before the work began on the school.

In September, Martin McGuinness expressed 'delight' at announcing the contract for St Genevieve's, saying PFI "provided value for money for the taxpayer."

Support

But it is not only Sinn Fein that support PFI, Trimble's unionists are also big supporters. PFI is a policy of the former Tory government, which means private companies building schools and hospitals and then leasing them back to the public sector for periods of up to 30 years. It usually means that the private contractors are paid more than five times the original cost of the building. In Britain the Blair government has recently announced plans to extend the PFI across the NHS.



David Trimble agrees with Martin McGuinness on one thing: privatisation

McGuinness described PFI as "an innovative procurement method, which can complement conventional public sector capital investment".

and announced that the education department "has plans for the extended future use of PFI."

PFI contracts worth around \$50 million have

already been signed to build new schools at Wellington College, Balmoral high school, and Drumglass high school in Dungannon.

New Labour are pushing to extend PFI across the NHS but workers in UNISON have pledged to fight any attempt to sell off the NHS.

For sale: low wage economy

THE PROMOTION of Northern Ireland as a location willing to take any kind of jobs, paying any kind of wages and with any

kind of anti-union conditions continues.

Few are quicker to promote the low-wage, low standards economy than the Business editors of the North's newspapers.

Gerry Murray of the *Derry Journal* dismisses anti-Raytheon campaigners objecting to the arrival of the arms trade, as "ne'er do wells and malcontents". Complaints about anti-trade union employers like Seagate are similarly rejected.

Now, John Simpson of the *Belfast Telegraph* is suggesting that the Belfast region must not endanger its attraction as a "low cost location" by refusing to allow more huge car parks to be built.

Belfast's low wages and relatively cheap office space has led to an influx of some 3,000 call centre jobs over recent months.

Simpson reports that rental rates for office space has increased and is now more in line with rates in Britain.

But, he assures potential investors, Belfast is still a cheap location because office rent is "the

equivalent of nearly a fifth of remuneration costs".

Property speculators are doing well but wages remain low.

All that Simpson wants to see now is an end the Planning Service's view that "central areas will be served by public transport" and ensure that the car parks go up.

Misfortune

Anyone who has the misfortune to drive in Belfast's rush hour will know that the last thing it needs is more cars in the city centre.

Lead and carbon monoxide levels in Belfast city are already among the highest in these islands.

Unfortunately, all of the political parties in the Stormont Executive support giving the multinationals whatever they want.

Expect the pollution and gridlock to get worse.

Flanagan's flannel

RUC CHIEF Constable Ronnie Flanagan has announced that the Rosemount Watchtower in Derry is not to be removed "due to the security situation" and has to remain to "protect" the local population.

This is nonsense and he knows it. The spy tower, which looks down on the Bogside and over much of the Creggan protects no one.

Indeed, a young woman was recently attacked on Creggan Hill, just a few hundred yards from the watchtower.

She received no protection from being so close to it but those who live nearby have to keep their curtains closed even

during the day to keep prying eyes from watching their every move.

Meanwhile, parents who live nearby are concerned at the health implications for their children, from the magnoelectric and microwaves from the spying equipment.

Average

The number of devices on the mast make the average mobile phone mast look very low-tech.

Six years since the ceasefires and even longer since the war ended in Derry, the security forces continue to spy on the intimate lives of people in nationalist areas.

It's time all the bases came down.

Abortion

Action needed for legislation

THE RECENT publication of the all-party report on abortion promises months of debate.

The report offers three options, from the 'lets pretend it doesn't exist' option of Fine Gael, to the 'whatever the anti-abortionists want' option supported by Fianna Fail.

The third option favoured by the Labour Party calls for legislation in line with the X and C cases.

In moves reminiscent of 1983, anti-abortionists, supported by the four independent, have been lobbying government parties since the last election to hold a referendum.

It is bizarre to think that a prime-minister of a supposedly developed democracy should attempt to cling onto power by further attacking women's rights; but yet that is what we have been left with, as there is no other reasonable explanation why the decision taken by the electorate in the last referendum, cannot be swiftly converted into legislation which would allow for free and universal access to abortion here.

'Amendment' is the weapon which the anti-abortion campaign seem to pull out whenever the opportunity arises, in order to pull the reins back for Irish women by a few decades.

Despite the overwhelming pro-choice result in the referendum which followed the X case, they want us to vote again.

Keep on voting, until you vote the way we want you too. Keep on reshuffling the wording.

Foresight

Anyone in this government, who accused Slobodan Milosovic, of being in denial over an election result, should count the abortion referenda here, and die of shame.

Irish doctors are in a very humble position when it comes to offering medical opinion on abortion. They have been very carefully isolated from the issue, both on a political level by the sheer brutality of the threats against doctors by the anti-abortion campaign, and from the patient care, by the taboo.

The law, against any relationship between the doctor and the abortion patient, has deprived them of training and experience in abortion care.

The average GP has four patients per year who are going for abortions.

Many doctors feel that they have nothing to offer these patients in terms of proper medical care, because they all have to get on a plane and go to a private clinic in another country.

Tragically, the Ulster Pregnancy Advice service in Belfast recently had to close down following an arson attack, because staff were having their families and children's safety threatened, by small numbers of Anti-abortion campaigners called 'Precious Life'.

The fact that abortion is

by Dr JULIET BRESSAN

only available to Irish women at great expense and in the private sector means that there are vulnerable groups of women who are excluded from availability — traveller women, women who are homeless, drug addicted or prostitutes.

Ireland is not unique in this injustice, as abortion is exclusive to the private sector in most other countries.

Class issue

Socialists have always recognised that abortion rights are a class issue. In Germany the safer abortion pill has recently been taken off the market, because the abortion clinics can make a much larger profit out of surgery.

Capitalism will always put profit before health.

However, during the eight years since the X case, despite government cowardice and religious bigotry, there has been a shift in the mood and tone of the pro-choice side.

Many journalists, legal and medical people are now willing to openly declare themselves pro-choice, and the debate has shifted from arguments about the meaning of life, worrying about how to convince the middle ground that a foetus is not the same as a citizen, and claiming isolated cases such as X and C to illustrate the harshness of the total ban on abortion; the arguments which pro-choice groups are now declaring is that abortion should be universally available, free, and on demand.

The Irish Family Planning Association now holds Abortion counselling as part of its Family Planning Course for doctors and nurses — and has met with absolutely no opposition. GPs, obstetricians, psychiatrists, public health nurses, and midwives, who have been isolated for long enough from being allowed to care for their own patients, are now demanding the right to offer a proper medical service to abortion patients.

Legislation lies in the hand of a weak and corrupt government, crippled by the power of the church.

The All Party Committee is a disgraceful farce, when one considers the injustice which is unnecessarily caused to 6000 Irish women each year.

It is becoming increasingly clear that direct action is the only mechanism for change.

Hot air at climate summit...

Capitalism cost us the

BIG BUSINESS is wrecking the planet in its pursuit of profit. And world leaders in hock to the giant corporations are blocking any real action to stop it.

That is the stark reality behind the recent climate change conference in The Hague in Holland.

The US and the global corporations are the worst culprits in the growing threat of climate disaster.

Ireland's worst floods in decades brought the reality of global warming to hundreds of thousands across the country.

Across the world the impact has been even more severe, with devastating and deadly floods from Bangladesh to Vietnam in the last month.

Occurring

All this is happening as the world's top climate scientists warn that global warming is occurring much faster than they had previously thought.

But there is one certain fact about the Hague conference. The US, which is responsible for a quarter of all global carbon diox-

ide emissions, will block any real action.

In 1992 at the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit the US promised to hold its carbon dioxide emissions to the 1990 level by the year 2000.

Instead it increased its emissions by 12 percent over the decade.

At the 1997 Kyoto climate change conference the US said it would try to cut emissions to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012.

This proved too much for the fossil fuel corporations, the giant oil, car and rubber multinationals.

They depend on people burning fossil fuels, or buying products like cars and tyres, which depend on such fuels.

So they exert enormous pressure on politicians to make sure that nothing should be done to hit their profits.

The result was that the US Senate voted in 1997 by 95 to zero to enshrine in law a refusal to ratify any climate change treaties at all.

The politicians who proposed this astonishing act, Senators Byrd and Hagel, pocketed over \$150,000 each from the fossil fuel corporations.

And since Kyoto US carbon dioxide emissions increased by over 1 percent a year on average, and last year hit a new high of a



Are the floods in November just the start?

1.3 percent increase.

European leaders claim they are more committed to tackling global warming than the US.

Yet a report last week showed the EU rapidly increasing its carbon dioxide emissions.

The EU agreed at Kyoto that its member states would cut emissions by 8 percent from 1990 levels by 2010.

Instead, says the report by the Dutch Ecofys and German Fraunhofer climate research institutes, EU emissions will actually increase by around 8 percent.

Increase

Irish figures released by the Environmental Protection Agency for 1998 show an increase of 17 percent. With the sort of economic growth achieved since then, it is hard to see how current figures can be any less than a 20 percent increase.

Official government projections predict an increase of 30 percent. Transport sector emissions for 2010 are projected to increase by between 150 and 180 percent and industry by 13 percent. These massive increases show how the government has little or no interest in taking action to reduce the use of fossil fuels.

Greenhouse world

GLOBAL WARMING is a result of the growing quantity of "greenhouse gases" in the atmosphere. The main such gas is carbon dioxide. It traps the sun's heat, like the glass in a greenhouse.

Burning fossil fuels, such as oil, coal and gas, is the main source of carbon dioxide.

Over half the contribution to global warming is from power stations, and car and lorry exhausts.

Even the Government's much heralded National Climate Change Strategy will do little to reduce toxic emissions.

Despite calling for a reduction of 13.1 million tonnes in carbon dioxide emissions, the plan offers no strategy to achieve this.

Reductions are to be negotiated on a voluntary basis with industry.

Tackling

If the government were serious about tackling the greenhouse effect, they would tax industry who are responsible for the bulk of toxic emissions.

Emissions from the transport sector are expected to increase by over 180 percent in the next ten years.

Car sales for the first nine months of this year have

already broken all records and are expected to increase a further 17 percent next year.

Any serious fight against global warming demands massive investment in public transport.

That could give people now forced to use cars the chance to use alternatives.

It could also push freight off the roads and onto rail.

Instead, the government's transport plan contains a billion pound road building programme.

A radical shift is also needed in energy production. Numerous environmental reports have argued that Ireland could generate all its electricity from clean wind and wave power.

Sm will the earth



Start the start?
A report last week showed that global warming is rapidly increasing its carbon dioxide emissions. The EU agreed at Kyoto that member states would cut emissions by 8 percent from the 1990 level by 2010. The report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) says the world's major industrialised nations must cut emissions by 50 percent by 2050. The report also says that if emissions continue to rise, the world will experience a 1.5 degree Celsius increase in temperature by 2100. This would mean a 10 percent increase in the number of days each year when the temperature is above 10 degrees Celsius. The report also says that the world's major industrialised nations must cut emissions by 50 percent by 2050. This would mean a 10 percent increase in the number of days each year when the temperature is above 10 degrees Celsius.

FOSSIL FUEL FAT CATS

THE PEOPLE most responsible for global warming are those at the head of the fossil fuel corporations.

These companies spent years denying that global warming was a threat and spent millions ensuring politicians bent to their will. Shell, Ford, BP, Texaco, General Motors and

Daimler Chrysler were all part of the misnamed Global Climate Coalition.

In the run-up to the 1997 Kyoto conference this body gave \$50 million each to the Democratic and Republican parties in the US to ensure whoever was in the White House blocked action on global warming.

When the coalition was accused of

doing more than anyone else to prevent serious action on climate change, its spokesman, John Grasser of the US National Mining Association, said, "We regard this as an honour."

Since Kyoto growing public awareness of global warming has pressed some of these corporations to undergo a "green" makeover. Many have quit the Global Climate Coalition and instead joined the Business Environmental Leadership Council, including Boeing, BP, DuPont and Enron.

They and other companies like Shell, Alcan and Pechiney have launched the Partnership for Climate Action. The company which has gone furthest in creating a new "green" image for itself is oil giant BP.

Now, it says, BP stands for "Beyond Petroleum." and the new company logo is a green-fringed sunburst. In fact BP has recently become the world's single biggest seller of petrol.

BP spent \$7 million creating its new image and has set aside \$100 million a year to develop it.

Roy Gueterbock of Greenpeace is right to argue that "BP stands less for Beyond Petroleum and more for Burning the Planet."

could see citrus groves in Wexford and sun-drenched beaches in Donegal.

This is misguided nonsense, as the floods should have underlined.

The earth's climate is a complex system in which small changes can lead to rapid and unpredictable large scale effects.

So one possible impact of global warming, for example, could be that Ireland gets much colder if the warm Gulf Stream ocean current which now flows past our shores suddenly switches course due to the melting of Greenland's massive ice cover, plunging Ireland into near Arctic conditions

Extreme effects

GLOBAL WARMING means more extreme weather.

This is because higher temperatures mean more water evaporates from the oceans, and so there is more rain.

Higher overall temperatures also increase temperature differences between areas. This increases the pressure differences between those places, and so drives stronger winds.

Some people suggest that the effect of global warming could mean Ireland slowly warms up, bringing a more pleasant climate here, with some arguing that we

what do socialists say?

Who is to blame for ruining the world?

THE HUGE problems and disasters that humanity and our planet are facing at the beginning of the 21st century have led many people to question the way society is organised.

People across Africa, Asia and Latin America live with disease, famine and poverty.

Massive floods, caused by global warming due to pollution, have swept across parts of Asia, Africa and Europe.

We need radical solutions to these problems to ensure that the world and human beings continue to survive.

Sometimes the search for radical solutions leads activists in the anti-capitalist movement to argue that the people to blame for these problems are those who live in the richer part of the world.

warming, of power stations and road transport. The reason it isn't used is because it would hit the profits of the car, oil and gas companies that have so much power within the system.

If people changed their own individual consumption it would have little effect upon the lives of the poor in the South.

Even if Northern workers cut back on their consumption of food and other resources our rulers would not pass on the small benefits to the world's poor.

The radical solution we need is a collective one. It can unite the workers and the poor across the globe.

Throughout Northern countries millions of people live in poverty and unemployment where lack of consumption is the problem.

Even in the US, the richest country in the world, hunger hits a significant proportion of the population.

Second Harvest, a hunger relief organisation in the US, feeds almost 26 million people nationally-10.4 percent of the population. Over 13.5 million children under the age of 12 go hungry or are at risk of hunger in the US.

In many of the inner city ghettos in the US child mortality rates are the same as in some African and Asian countries.

The same poverty characterises other Northern countries, where the standard of living is higher than in the South but people have to struggle to survive.

The reason poverty and environmental destruction stalk the globe is because a small elite controls all the wealth and resources under capitalism.

Because the driving force behind capitalism is the need to make profit, countries and people who cannot pay for food and products do not get them. So areas such as Asia and Africa, which were plundered and colonised by the first capitalist countries in the 19th and 20th centuries, are still in poverty because they have been kept indebted to Northern banks.

The wonderful demonstrations in Seattle, Melbourne and Prague against capitalist institutions like the WTO and the IMF that have occurred over the last year have shown the alternative to the present system.

There have also been revolts against the free market and poverty in the South. General strikes in Bolivia, Argentina and Nigeria among others have shown the potential power of the world's working class.

It is this power which can both halt capitalism and transform the nature of society.

Impact

Some activists argue that while every human has an impact on the planet, some have a bigger impact than others.

They say some people leave "bigger footprints" than others. They see a distinction between the citizens of the North of the world who live in European and North American countries, and the South, which includes the continents, Africa, Asia and Latin America.

So those in the North of the world are consuming too much, leaving very little resources for people in the South and destroying the planet in the process.

But this can obscure who the real villains are. It is obvious that the largest footprints come from the multinationals.

In terms of the ecological damage they cause, a worker in Asia could leave a footprint the size of a baby's shoe.

A worker in Ireland would have a footprint as large as a size ten shoe. A company boss's footprint would cover an area as big as a lorry, a medium sized corporation the size of a housing estate, a multinational the size of a big city.

The capitalists' control of resources affects everything. There is enough food in the world to feed everybody quite adequately. Food production has outstripped the rise in population in the last 40 years by 16 percent. But the distribution is wrong, and people who can't afford to buy food are left to starve even when plenty is available.

The technology exists to drastically slash the greenhouse gas emissions, which cause global

by MATTHEW CLARKSON



THE IMF, GLOBALISATION AND RESISTANCE

A Socialist Worker pamphlet by Chris Harman

Price £1 from Socialist Worker sellers or Po Box 1648, Dublin 6.

OUT NOW

New book by Kieran Allen exposes...

The myth of social partnership

A drop in technology shares at the beginning of November produced panic in the financial pages of Irish newspapers. Suddenly one of big lies of the Celtic Tiger was questioned.

Politicians, commentators and even Trade Union leaders have all argued that the boom in the economy was created by industrial peace and social partnership. In fact, the basis of economic growth in Ireland has been the growth in American economy and a dependence on hi tech multi nationals.

In a timely new book, *The Celtic Tiger and the myth of Social Partnership*. Kieran Allen cuts through the hype about the Celtic Tiger to reveal what is really going on in Ireland.

Mary Harney recently suggested that Ireland is "closer to Boston than to Brussels" in one way she is right. Despite all the talk of partnership with the employers, Ireland is closer to the US model of neo-liberalism than any other European country.

The right wing American think tank the Heritage Foundation ranks Ireland third in a list of the most deregulated economies in the world.

The Celtic Tiger started because of a surge of US investment that needed to get inside the EU single market. US computer companies needed a base inside the EU to out-sell their Japanese rivals. They choose Ireland for a variety of factors — it offered a low tax haven, an educated English-speaking workforce, and cheap labour. Today Ireland has a higher rate of US investment per GDP than any other country in the world.

The US multinationals claim they are making a 25 percent rate of

return on their investment in Ireland. This is more than double the rate for Portugal, three times Spain and five times Britain. The figures are exaggerated because they fiddle their books to claim more profit in Ireland but it gives you some idea of the scale of the greed.

Allen shows that a remarkable of transfer of wealth took place during 1990s. As a Newsweek headline put it, "A rising tide lifts all yachts." Instead of a trickle down effect, there has been a steady flood upwards to the rich.

In 1987 when partnership began, tax on profits stood at 50% but is set to drop to 12.5 percent. At the same time, Ireland has the second highest proportion of its population below the poverty line of all the industrialised countries.

In 1987, the share of the national economy going to profits, interest dividends and rent was 31 percent. Yet, today this has jumped to 41 percent. The share of the economy going to working people in the form of wages, pension and social security has declined from 69 percent to 50 percent.

Or more simply, rich got richer while the poor got poorer.

Despite the huge level of profits, the employers are not investing in plant and equipment to guarantee workers a future.

The remarkable feature of the Irish boom is that investment actually fell between 1980 and 1994. One writer has even described the Celtic Tiger as an 'investmentless boom'. The huge wealth is going in two main directions.

First, there has been a huge flow of funds out of Ireland £3,700 for every man, woman and child left Ireland last year.

The other area where the money

went was speculation. The rich complain that 'greedy workers' are looking for wage increases that will destroy the economy. But there has been an orgy of greed on the Dublin Stock Exchange for the past ten years.

Instead of creating more jobs, the rich have traded shares as if they were gambling on a casino.

In 1997, for example, the value of shares increased by £14 billion. Of course, these were only paper values — but if you had the paper and sold in time, you made a fortune from doing absolutely nothing.

Allen shows how the direct consequence of this is not just the obscene amount of wealth going to the rich but the run down of public services.

The cost of the Atlantic tax haven is the destruction of public services. While the roads are grid-locked, Public transport has been cut down to the bone. The attack on public transport began with the Haughey government in 1987. Although Haughey lived like a king, he insisted on huge public spending cuts.

The subvention from the government to Dublin Bus was cut from £16.4 million to 9 million in the mid nineties — 1,300 jobs were slashed.

The railway system also suffered drastically from the run down in public funding.

A recent report commissioned by Iarnród Eireann showed that nearly half the network was composed of old jointed tracks that rest on timber sleepers. Much of the rail was fifty years old and built by companies that were established under the British Empire.

As speculators profited the housing crises has left 150,000 people in need of adequate accommodation. The cost of a house is now beyond the reach of most workers. Mortgage payments have increased by 46 percent in the last year alone.



The Nurses strike was just the start of a wage revolt against the Celtic Tiger

The tragedy is that throughout this period our trade union leaders have been tied to Partnership deals with the employers.

The main effect of which was to con workers out of decent pay rises. Workers have not been compensated for the huge increases in productivity. In the ten years between 1987 and 1997, the net output of each employee increased by £97,000. But wages have only increased by a few pounds.

Social partnership cut the link between pay and profits, and between pay and productivity. Social partnership has produced a dog eat dog form of capitalism where the rich grow richer.

Instead of providing security, many workers are on part time contract jobs where they are deprived of their rights. As a result, 16 percent of the Irish workforce are now part time.

This is why workers have to go all out to get everything they can today — because when the Celtic Tiger crashes we will need every ounce of union strength to resist the demands for even more sacrifices.

As Kieran Allen concludes the book, "The employers rarely fight alone but increasingly bring the power of the state to bear on work-

ers who defy their rule. All of this implies a need to move from economic struggles to a revolutionary challenge to the system as a whole.

"What is required is a political movement that starts from the struggles of today but links them to a strategy for overall change. Ironically, the Celtic Tiger has laid a new basis for this politics to emerge.

"The constant talk of economic advance has whetted workers appetite for more and has helped to restore their economic strength. After the Irish rich have so blatantly vandalised the public services to avoid taxes, the legitimacy that was once accorded to the traditional political institutions has declined. In this situation the prospects for the socialist movement are very good."

The Celtic Tiger and the myth of Social Partnership, £14.00 (Manchester University Press).

Available from Sw Books, PoBox1648, Dublin 8.



Socialist Worker public meetings

THE CELTIC TIGER, PARTNERSHIP AND THE PAY REVOLT

Speaker:

KIERAN ALLEN

(Author of *The Celtic Tiger — The myth of Social Partnership*) and local trade unionists

TALLAGHT:

Thurs Nov 23rd 8pm Abbeyley Court Hotel

BALLYFERMOT:

Tues Nov 28th 8pm Ruby Finnegan Lwr Ballyfermot

DUBLIN CITY CENTRE:

Thurs 30th 7.30pm ATGWU Hall Middle Abbey St

SWORDS:

Mon 4th Dec Phone 872 2682 for details

GALWAY:

Tues 5th Dec 8.30pm Currans Hotel Eyre Square

CORK:

Weds 6th Dec 8pm Imperial Hotel

WATERFORD:

Thurs 7th Dec ATGWU Hall Keyser St

in my view

This isn't what democracy looks like

"IT SOUNDS like the now happily bygone days of some tin pot Latin American regime from the 1970s," said the *Financial Times* about the US election.

The "greatest democracy in world" descended into farce as the candidate who got the least votes looked like winning. And at the time of writing the result was to be declared before all the votes were counted.

When Slobodan Milosevic tried this there was a revolt that overthrew him, unfortunately in America the farce turned to tragedy as the likely winner George Bush proceeded to execute his 150th victim — a man with the mental age of a six year old — as he waited to take over the White House.

That 19,000 votes had gone astray was bad enough, but worse than that, in Palm Beach County due to a dodgy ballot paper Jewish votes went to Pat Buchanan — a man who once said "Hitler was an individual of great courage"

Not surprisingly, millions of ordinary people have begun to question the whole US electoral system.

Students occupied Florida's state building. Thousands of black people attended angry rallies after police road blocks had intimidated people away from polling stations.

A lack of democracy have always been central to American elections, but the issue came to a head because Republican George W Bush and Democrat Al Gore were neck and neck.

As governor of Texas Bush has presided over the execution of more than 150 people since 1994. He runs a prison system in Texas which has 147,000 inmates — that is more than France, Germany and Italy combined.

Texas has the highest rates of child poverty and malnutrition in the US. Texas has the worst record for air pollution of any state in the US. Bush used the state's budget surplus to give a \$1.7 billion tax break to the rich. He tried to hand over the state's welfare system to arms manufacturer Lockheed-Martin. And he backed a bill denying abortions to 17 year old women unless they have parental consent.

Reason

From some strange reason the idea still persists that Gore is a better choice than Bush. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Eight years of Democrats in the White House has left working people and the poor worse off than they were under Republicans Reagan and Bush. The Democrats have demolished welfare and thrown millions into poverty. They abandoned their promises to introduce healthcare reform. The number of people without healthcare increased by ten million to 44 million under the Democrats.

It is now twice as hard to get an abortion in the US than when Clinton took office. One study found that women in some 86 percent of US counties today have no access to abortion services.

In Tennessee in the 1970s Al Gore campaigned against handgun registration, for the foetus's 'right to life', and against homosexuality, which he called 'abnormal sexual behaviour'.

The election was all about big business. Some 775 millionaires provided 90 percent of George Bush's campaign funds. And the allegedly environmentally friendly Al Gore received a fortune in funds from Occidental Oil.

The contempt of the politicians for the people who vote for them was perhaps summed up by Republican James Baker who said, "F--- the Jews, they don't vote for us anyway".

As David Letterman put it "Al Gore isn't President, George Bush isn't President — lets keep it that way."

The reality of America is shown in Florida itself. According to the U.N. report, more children are immunized in Jamaica than in Florida, and a baby has a better chance of living to see it's first birthday if it is born in Cuba than in Miami.

But there was one sign in the election of genuine democracy. Ralph Nader, the Green Party candidate in the election won 3 percent of the poll, some 2.6 million votes, including nearly 100,000 in Florida.

In ten states Nader won 5 percent or more, and in Alaska he won 10 percent of the vote.

Nader brought a breath of fresh air to the US elections that inspired millions. Nader's campaign signified a huge step forward which has laid the basis for future left challenges, and for a break-up of the two-party system.

The campaign put the anti-capitalist spirit of Seattle on the agenda. And it is through the spirit of Seattle not the Florida courts that democracy will come to America.

by SIMON BASKETTER

music

Stand up or shut up?

EMINEM — the Catholic church believes he is the devil and George Bush hasn't heard of him. For those who don't know, Eminem is a rap superstar.

by MARTIN SMITH

His album, *The Slim Shady LP*, is the biggest selling record of the year so far, and his single "My Name Is" was the hit of last summer.

Eminem's exploits with guns and feuds with other pop stars have kept the tabloids busy for months. And he is just as popular with white kids as he is with black.

He hangs out with the original "gangsta rapper" Dr Dre. Dr Dre was the leader of the rap outfit Niggaz With Attitude (NWA).

Twelve years ago NWA sent the White House into a frenzy with its song "Fuck the Police". But Eminem is no black kid from the ghetto—he is in fact white. So far there have been few white rappers who have crossed over to black audiences.

Social

The Beastie Boys are one of the few exceptions to the rule. Since its beginnings in the late 1970s, rap music has been a social commentary on life in the ghetto. At its best it has campaigned against poverty and police racism.

Very few people would deny that Public Enemy, Mos Def and Dead Prez have created some of the most exciting and political music of the last two decades. But there is a contradiction within rap. Much of the music also glorifies the negative aspects of life in US inner cities—gang violence, sexism and anti-gay bigotry.

However, it is worth remembering that even those most closely associated with gangsta rap, NWA and the Notorious Big, wrote tracks which condemned racism and the police.

Eminem is no middle class kid. He describes himself in the press as "white trailer trash". He spent his entire childhood living in a caravan park. Today in the US hundreds of thousands of people have been dumped on the edges of cities and

towns and are forced to live in caravan parks. They may not suffer from racism, but their lives are just as devoid of hope as any black person living in an inner city ghetto.

But Eminem is not fighting back. On the contrary, he has been broken by the system.

His lyrics are offensive and sexist. His rhymes do not portray life for poor people in a sympathetic way. Instead he sees them as scum of the earth—people to hate, mock and laugh at.

He reinforces every single stereotype about poor people. Eminem offers no hope. The result is that he ends up blaming the victims.

Oscar Wilde once said, "We are all in the gutter but some of us are looking at the stars."

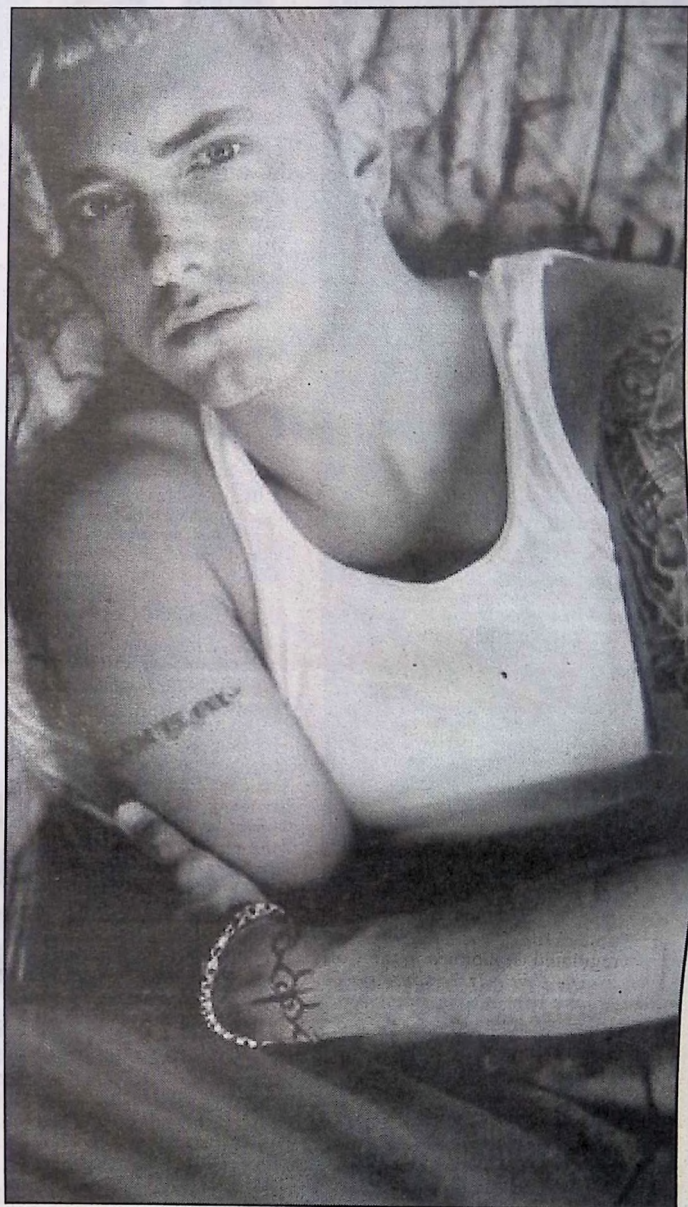
Unfortunately Eminem has never got out of the gutter. Church leaders and right wing politicians are calling for him to be banned.

I hate what he stands for, but no socialist should support state censorship.

After all, his pathetic rants are nothing compared to the violence, poverty and squalor created by our rulers.

Eminem is a product of Bush and Gore's world.

I for one just wish the real Slim Shady would shut up.



Selling out from the gutter?

film

Remembrance of things past

IMAGINE, EVERY time you wake up, not knowing what has happened only hours, even minutes before. The only way to make any sense of the world is to keep some form of record.

But can you trust your own notes? Can you trust the people who claim to have known you in the recent past?

Especially if you are struggling with an underlying sense of anger and guilt.

A revenge thriller, *Memento*, is written and directed by

Christopher Nolan and centers on a character who has a rare mental illness known as Anterograde Amnesia.

The person suffering from it cannot remember events in the short term.

Memento is made in a very unorthodox way. Instead of a storyline we have scenes all out of sequence and sometimes repeated.

This is very daring and yet it works well, as you struggle along with Leonard (Guy Pearce) to create understanding and

purpose from the encounters he engages in.

Leonard is a deeply sympathetic character, even though he may have been involved in terrible actions.

The reason why is that all of us make judgements of people we encounter and make decisions about them based on experience, instinct, body language and so on.

For Leonard the difficulties of being able to identify friend from foe are raised to an almost impossible degree.

This is not a political film, but it is a radical departure from other thrillers in the way in which the story unfolds.

Although there are funny moments, Leonard's condition, in the context of a violent criminal underworld, means that the film is bleak.

After all, if you cannot remember what you have done, you cannot judge yourself.

— CONOR OSTICK



where we stand

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

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

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

The courts army and police are there to defend the interests of the capitalist class not to run society in a neutral fashion.

To destroy capitalism, workers need to smash the state and create a workers' state based on workers' councils.

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST

The SWP welcomed the break-up of the USSR and the end of the East European dictatorships. These states were not socialist but were run by a state-capitalist class.

We are against the domination of the globe by imperialist powers and we oppose their wars. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women.

We stand for: free contraception and free, legalised abortion and the right to divorce; the complete separation of church and state, an end to church control over schools and hospitals; an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians; an end to racism and anti-traveller bigotry.

We argue for working class unity in the fight against oppression.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

Northern Ireland is a sectarian state, propped up by the British Army.

Catholic workers are systematically discriminated against by the state. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers weakens the whole working class.

Workers' unity can only be won and maintained in a fight to smash both the Northern and Southern states.

We stand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. Violence will only end when workers unite in the fight for a workers' republic.

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Trade unions exist to defend workers' interests. But the union leaders' role is to negotiate with capitalism—not to end it. We support the leaders when they fight but oppose them when they betray workers. We stand for independent rank and file action.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party. This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system. The SWP aims to build such a party here.

news & reports/politics/industry/the unions (01) 8722682 /fax (01) 872 3838 e-mail swp@clubi.ie



PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS



Teachers

Support the ASTI

THE government is adopting hard line methods to break the strike by the Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland.

They are cutting the pay of teachers who have refused to do supervisory yard duty recently. In the run up to Christmas this is putting huge pressure on teachers.

Supervision of yard duty is entirely voluntary. It means teachers leaving their own lunch break to ensure that teenagers are looked after at break times.

Spirit

The government hope to get away with this move long enough to break the spirit of teachers.

But it may not work. "Members are feeling very determined after the first day of action. People are even leaving other unions to join the ASTI because they see us as the most determined fighters for higher pay" said one activist.

Support among the

general public is holding up despite a major propaganda offensive against teachers.

At the start of the strike an opinion poll showed 46 percent of people supporting the ASTI in their demand for a 30 percent pay rise.

This has only dipped slightly despite a huge propaganda campaign against teachers.

A victory for teachers is vital to preserving the education system. The number of students doing a H Dip — the training programme for entry to teaching — has fallen dramatically.

Last year 7 percent of schools had to drop subjects because they could find no one to teach them while in another 12 percent of schools, subjects had to be taught by teachers who had no qualifications.

It takes a teacher 27 years to reach the top of their scale and many are leaving to get better paid jobs.

A victory for the ASTI will be the best way to preserve the quality of the education system.



All out on December 5th

The ASTI will win if the rank and file of the other two unions get behind them. And the pressure is already building on the leaders of TUI and the INTO to back the ASTI.

However the leaders of these unions are working behind the scenes with the government to protect the partnership programme.

The TUI leaders have called a special ballot to bring the benchmarking process forward.

The INTO leaders

have called regional meetings to endorse a similar strategy.

The tactic is to talk tough but to suck the whole process back into bench marking.

These union leaders also know that the ASTI General Secretary Charlie Lennon wants to go down this road.

The best way to break these manoeuvres is for rank and file teachers to join the ASTI on a national demonstration outside the Dail on December 5th the eve of the budget.

INTO and TUI members should try to get their branch banners and join the contingent from the rank and file group, Teachers United.

★ **THE people appointed to the benchmarking**

body to evaluate pay are not neutral. They include:

★ Billy Atlee: He sat on the board of Eircom which rewarded Alfie Kane with £1 million in super salary. But he will not stick up for teachers.

★ Phil Flynn: This former union official is on the board of the ACC Bank and issued a report on the Ryanair baggage handler dispute. Today there is no union among this grade.

★ John Dunne: Previously the leader of the bosses' organisation which opposes extra pay.

★ Paddy Mullarkey: was the secretary general of the Department of Finance which tried to cut the public sector pay bill.

★ Jim O'Leary is a stockbroker economist who predicted that inflation this year would not rise above 3%.

BENCHMARKING IS A CON

THE GOVERNMENT says that benchmarking offers teachers a way of handling their problems within the framework of the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness.

But the majority of teachers have voted against the partnership programme.

Benchmarking is a con designed to hoodwink teachers.

★ It is not due to make any rewards until 2003.

The government is manoeuvring with the leaders of the other unions to bring the date forward.

But they will not pay out the 30 percent claim.

★ Benchmarking is designed to introduce

pay methods from the private sector into the public sector.

For teachers this will mean performance related pay.

★ Benchmarking was set up to break relationships between workers and reduce the public sector wage bill.

SWP branch meetings

- **ATHLONE:** Contact 01-872 2682 for details
- **BRAY:** Meets every Wednesday at the Mayfair Hotel at 8.30pm
- **BELFAST CENTRAL:** Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Kitchen Bar, 16 Victoria Square, near Commarket
- **BELFAST SOUTH:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Queens Students Union
- **BELFAST WEST:** West Belfast Branch meets Dail flats Community Centre Falls Road, Monday 7.30pm.
- **CORK:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in O'Donoghue's Pub, Dromedary St.
- **DERRY:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Badgers Bar, Jordanstown, Carrick St.
- **DUNDALK:** Contact 01-872 2682 for details
- **DUN LAOGHAIRE:** Meets every Thursday 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 Cornways Pub, Parrell St.
- **DUBLIN KILLBARRACK:** Phone 087 6235071
- **DUBLIN CABRA:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in

- Aughrim St Parish Hall, Prussia St
- **DUBLIN BALLYMUN:** Phone Kevin at 8622209
- **DUBLIN DUNDRUM:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Dundrum Family Recreation Centre
- **DUBLIN RIALTO:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm St. Andrews Community Centre, SCR
- **DUBLIN RATHMINES:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Tom Kelly flats community centre, Charlemont Street.
- **DUBLIN HAROLDS X:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Innon the Park Harolds Cross
- **DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:** Phone Simon 087 6561455
- **DUBLIN TALLAGHT:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Jobstown Community Centre
- **ENNISKILLEN:** Phone 01-872 2682 for details
- **GALWAY:** Meets every Wednesday in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square (beside Cuba) 8.30pm
- **LIMERICK:** Phone 01-872 2682 for details
- **SLIGO:** Meets fortnightly on Saturdays, phone 087 6329511 for details
- **TRALEE:** Phone 087 6329511 for details
- **WATERFORD:** Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the ATGWU Hall, Keizer St.

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CIE

Signal workers show red light

SOME 136 signal operators in Irish Rail began a battle for a decent pay increase with a one-day strike on Tuesday 14th November. The workers closed the rail network and received magnificent support from their colleagues in CIE.

In Galway, seven signalmen in Galway who operate from Athenry to Galway City closed down the regions transport system.

In a magnificent act of solidarity, 25 Iarnrod Eireann workers refused to cross the picket lines. As the CIE bus services in Galway ground to a halt some of these workers helped man the picket lines.

The action will be followed by a two-day strike on 22nd and 23rd November. "We are fed up with the same script from Irish Rail

management. - they can't afford to pay us, we have to give more productivity," one of the strikers told *Socialist Worker*. "But no problem for the Chairman of CIE to get an increase of £89,000 last year and they've lost £25 million of taxpayers money on a new signalling system. They don't know where it has gone."

The basic pay of a signal operator is £12,000 per year. The rest is earned on overtime. But now Irish Rail want to do away with all overtime and increase the basic to £24,000. That would mean an effective pay cut for most of the signal operatives who for years have subsidised their earnings by working a huge amount of overtime.

"If Irish Rail were happy to use us on overtime for years, then are going to have to compensate us now that they want to make the changes. We are being told to work on a 48 hour week

for a lousy basic but they can't have it all their own way."

This is how the majority of workers in Irish Rail are responding to the company's viability plan, which paves the way for privatisation.

There are many other groups of workers waiting in line to strike against Irish Rail over pay including the shunters, guards, checkers, inspectors and depot men.

"Irish Rail are attempting a divide and conquer strategy. This way they think

they can beat us. But management have really made a mess of this situation by telling us to keep our pay down and rewarding themselves with thousands for doing nothing. "If they get their own way we'll end up with a railway service like Britain, dirty, dangerous and very expensive." Another worker told *Socialist Worker*.

This dispute offers the chance to start a pay revolt in CIE and lay the basis for stopping privatisation.

Aer Lingus

Over 400 Aer Lingus catering staff struck at the Airport.

The staff have rejected a Labour Court award which leaves them with significantly lower pay increases than clerical staff.

Caterers picketed the main approaches to the airport in force and caused considerable delays to traffic.

Many Dublin Bus drivers and drivers of vehicles bringing supplies to the airport refused to pass pickets, but most taxi drivers brought passengers to the terminal.

Cleaners, loaders and clerical staff supported the

pickets.

A lively two-hour march by caterers through the airport complex caused considerable disruption.

The vast majority of Aer Lingus catering staff started at £220 per week and must wait 22 years to reach the top of the scale at £320. One worker told *Socialist Worker*, "I been on the same grade, and the same pay for over 8 years. We have been making sacrifices since the Cahill plan. It's payback time."

Meanwhile the growth of militancy at the airport has spread to Craft workers across seven unions at FLS Aerospace who have put in a claim for a 30 percent pay rise.

Refuse charges

Bin the Bin tax

DUBLIN Corporation's new wheelie bin system is to be followed by the introduction of refuse charges for every household at the start of next year.

This has been confirmed by the Dublin city manager and agreed by a majority of city councillors.

It is not yet clear whether it will be a flat annual charge or a pay per bag scheme.

But it is clear that the charge will amount to around £150 per year.

When Fianna Fail abolished domestic rates they promised that local services would be paid for from central government.

The government now has a record budget surplus of £4 billion.

Big business and large-scale agriculture produce 90 percent of the waste in this country.

According to Richard Boyd Barrett of the Campaign against Service Charges, "We have already paid for refuse collection through our taxes. If the

sort out the waste management crisis they should tax the real wasters not ordinary people.

The key to defeating this unjust tax is mass non-payment and huge protests. This was how water charges were defeated in the past."

Campaigns against bin charges are already underway in Dun Laoghaire, Drogheda, Limerick and Cork. Dublin must now get organised to defeat the charges.

Meetings

The campaign against Service charges are organizing a series of public meetings around Dublin: **Stoneybatter:** Wednesday, December 6th, Aughrim St Sports Centre 8pm

Rathmines: Thursday December 7th La Touche, Harcourt Street 8pm
Drimnagh: 8:00pm, 4th Dec., The Long Miler Inn, Long Mile Rd., Drimnagh,
Dolphins Barn: 8:00pm, 11th Dec., Lowes Pub, Dolphin's Barn.

Pearse Street/ Ringsend: St Andrews Community Centre, Wednesday 29th

CIE

Action to escalate

OVER 1,500 clerical and administrative staff in the Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) initiated a series of rolling strikes recently because new recruits are being given better pay and conditions than existing staff.

The ERHA replaced the Eastern Health Board as the main healthcare employer earlier this year and staff who formally worked of EHB find themselves discriminated against by the ERHA who are refusing to pay former EHB workers higher wages but will to new recruits.

New recruits are getting packages worth between £800 and £7,300 a year more than experienced staff, who are doing the same work. For a clerical officer to start at the basic rate and gain the top rate at which some of the new employees are being paid could take 13 years.

Evidence

IMPACT says it has evidence of such contacts being offered as recently as October.

This is also because management have continued to ignore national agreements covering starting pay and recognition for previous experience

Socialist Worker spoke to one worker ERHA who said "We all know there is a problem with staff shortages across the health service. But this is because everybody knows how bad the pay is and they don't want to work for peanuts."

"So now management have decided to keep paying workers who are dedicated to the jobs and who care about the health service, peanuts."

"Why should we be discriminated against for doing our jobs?"

"If they are so worried about staff shortages they should pay their workers

properly and then they wouldn't have such staff shortages."

Management had made no proposals to deal with the problem.

As *Socialist Worker* went to press workers were planning to escalate the strike.

All ERHA clerical and administration staff are now operating a policy of non co-operation which will mean a refusal to answer phones or to deal with any form of communication with management, including e-mails and letters for an indefinite duration.

Ryanair

Pilots to ground airline

RYANAIR PILOTS are set to hold a 24-hour strike on Friday 24th.

The pilots are members of the Irish Air Line Pilots' Association (IALPA) branch of IMPACT. About 80 of them are based in Ireland and another 50 at Stansted.

The dispute was over Ryanair's attempt to unilaterally impose increased working hours on pilots.

The anti union company is attempting to abolish a 1994 agreement and impose

longer hours.

Under the existing agreement, pilots work an annualised average of 40 hours a week, and a maximum 50-hour week. Ryanair wants to increase the maximum working hours to to 60 hours.

Profits at low-cost airline Ryanair rose 45 per cent to £62.01 million for last six months. The pilots strike offers the prospect of a workers standing up to the Fianna Fail Airline which has stood up against unions since defeating baggage handlers in 1996.

Dart

As *Socialist Worker* went to press, DART driver had agreed to defer their action after late night talks with management.

Workers are set to ballot before the end of November on the proposals agreed between unions SIPTU and the NRBU management.

Management at Iarnrod Eireann had wanted

DART drivers to work a 48 week system similar to mainline drivers.

The package being forced on drivers was similar to the one that saw over 100 ILDA drivers strike against for over 10 weeks during the Summer.

DART drivers have won a number of concessions from management. They will now work a 41 hour week and have won a basic guaranteed pay of £29,500.

Independent

Bad news for O'Reilly

INDEPENDENT Newspapers on Thursday night issued protective notice to its 650 employees following the serving of strike notice by SIPTU on behalf of 135 clerical and administrative staff.

The threatened action by staff is for a 5 percent pay increase above the terms of PPF.

Some 94 percent of journalists at the paper had voted in favour of strike action for a pay rise and pension indexation.

There has not been an industrial stoppage at the company for 30 years.

The company's 220 journalists and other employees were informed that the man-

agement was compelled to issue protective notice as a result of being served with formal seven-day strike notice by SIPTU.

Ability

"The result of this official action may seriously threaten our ability to continue publication of our newspapers," the notice said. Which at least shows management are worried by strike action.

The father of the chapel Kevin Moore said the scale of the vote "was an indication of the strength of feeling among members at management's failure to offer an across-the-board pay increase."

There has been a £60 million investment in the new printing premises at City West but management will not invest in journalists or journalism."

Students

AROUND THE country students are organising protests to double the grant.

A Dublin demonstration echoed to the shouts of a 2,000 students.

The loud and colourful march saw students coming together across Dublin, represented were Tallaght I. T.; Ballyfermot College; U.C.D.; Maynooth; D.I.T. and several others. NCAD students painted billboards on a car which was hauled by rope along the route of the march. Roslyn Park, a college for students with disabilities had a very strong turnout, as did students from TCD.

The assembly point for the different colleges was the Department of Education, where earlier in the week students from Maynooth had staged a sit-in. At the rally ending the march, speakers from USI led chants of "O.C.C.U.P.Y. - what shall we do? Occupy!" and argued that the national union was not going to allow the government to remain inactive on the issue of student financial support.

Following the rally some 50 students occupied the Senior Lecturers office in TCD.

Around the country there have been equally lively marches. Students had demonstrations in Cork,

Galway, and Letterkenny. In Waterford students organised strikes and picketed out there colleges.

The mood for occupation is clearly there unfortunately the leadership of USI are refusing to push for

occupations of the colleges they even refused to support the Trinity occupation.

Students' should push for escalation and force USI to turn their rhetoric into a campaign of occupations round the country.

Tara Mines

Workers are picketing Tara Mines after management refused to adhere to a rationalisation agreement that was decided between workers and Outokumpu, the Finnish based miner owner last February.

Under the terms of the February agreement "Under the terms of agreement management agreed to train up 47 unskilled existing staff. However only nine have completed their training and instead management have opted bring in non-union contract workers from Norway

Under the February agreement workers in the mine had agreed to the use of contract labour from Canada and Australia to supplement the labour shortage until new staff could be trained. The deadline for the withdrawal of contract

labour was September the 30th but management simply ignored the deadline and hired further contract workers from Norway, where the company is based.

Workers at Tara Mines had agreed to extend the time scale to allow management to fulfil their obligation of retrain worker.

However management then began to insist on a get out clause that would effectively destroy the value of any such agreement.

In response to the pickets by workers management have placed all six hundred workers under protective notice but workers said they have good support, including support from the non-union contract staff who are refusing to pass the pickets, and are pledging to continue their action.

Socialist Worker

inside

New book reveals:
The myth of social partnership

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STOP

THE 11+

NOVEMBER SAW almost 18,000 primary school children put through the ritual misery of the 11+ exam.

Yet another generation of children will be split into "winners and losers". All the evidence points to this selective system as being divisive, educationally harmful and unnecessary.

The trauma and sense of failure will remain with a lot of these children for most of their lives.

Such is the feeling against the 11+ that even some of its long term supporters are calling for it to go.

Yet children are still being forced to sit the exam.

The Government's own research into the test, the Gallagher report, destroys any argument for its retention.

It catalogues the harmful effects of the exam and the division it creates amongst teachers. It conclusively connects the chances of going to a Grammar School with which class you come from. Yet still the 11+ has not been abolished.

The Assembly has pushed for us a Review Body to oversee a series of 'debates' and submissions. And after that the whole debate will be kicked

around Stormont for a few months. This is far from what the Education Minister, Martin McGuinness, promised when he took office.

The delay can only give supporters of selection time to organise and prevent meaningful change. Both the Grammar lobby and the organisation that runs Catholic schools — CCMS — are pushing for a new form of selection.

But no matter what mechanism is used to divide children — all the problems exposed by the 11+ will emerge in the new system.

The only real alternative to consider is Comprehensive Education. A system where children go to their nearest well funded post-primary school.

That means for instance children in the Village area of Belfast going to the nearest school to them — Methodist College, instead of being bussed to further away schools.

McGuinness should commit himself to Comprehensive Education and at a stroke lift the confidence of thousands of working class children and families.

By ending selection completely he will have helped to undermine that other form of division rife in Northern Ireland — sectarian division.