

Socialist Worker

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

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Solidarity price €2.00

- Stock market chaos wreck lives
- Bush threatens more war

**THEIR
SYSTEM
IS
OUT OF
CONTROL**

AROUND THE world stockmarkets are in chaos. Disgraced corporation WorldCom became the biggest company failure in US history, filing for bankruptcy with debts of over \$40 billion. Not a day goes by without another corporation admitting to "irregularities" in its accounts.

US president George W Bush is trying to reassure people. He says the chaos is a "hangover" from the "economic binge" of the 1990s. Alan Greenspan, chairman of the US Federal Reserve central bank, talks of the "infectious greed" of the decade.

The neo-liberal agenda championed by the bosses celebrates that very "infectious greed".

Replacing

Their strategy depends on replacing social provision with what the market profiteers provide. If that market is seen to fail their whole political project could be shattered.

Tumbles in the stockmarket hit ordinary people. They mean pensions wiped out, mortgages that can never be paid off and people thrown out of work.

Vicious

It is the excuse used by Fianna Fail to introduce vicious cutbacks in the public sector. In the Third World they mean lives pushed beyond the limits of endurance.

The latest UNDP Human Development report shows the depth of inequality in the world. It also shows that Irish society is one of the most unequal in the Western world.

The richest 5 per cent of the world's people have incomes 114 times those of the poorest 5 per cent. A newborn in Afghanistan has a one-in-four chance of dying before the age of five.

Every day more than 30,000 children around the world die of preventable diseases, and nearly 14,000 people are infected with HIV/AIDS. One billion people will catch tuberculosis by 2020.

Left to the crooks at the top capitalism means misery for millions, we have to build an alternative to it now.

Socialist Worker reveals attacks on our health service

FF said they won't cut health They lied ...

THE GOVERNMENT has launched a fierce round of cut backs in the health service just one month after they fought an election on the basis of improving the health service for ordinary people.

● Charges for visiting an accident and emergency unit without a letter from your GP are set to rise by 26% to €40

● The threshold for the drugs refund scheme is going to be increased by 22%. This means that patients will have to spend €65 per month of their own income on prescribed medication before they will be entitled to a refund

● The 1.5 million subscribers to the VHI face an 18% government sanctioned increase in their premiums from September 1. This means for example that people on Plan B will pay an extra €65 for their annual subscription

● The government will not fill 800 extra health jobs this year "as a corrective measure" to keep spending down.

This is a serious attack on our health services when concern about the inability of the system to meet the population's health needs is already at an all time high. Many of these cuts will hurt the most vulnerable — those who are just above the income limit for a medical card, low paid workers and some social welfare recipients.

Waiting lists

DESPITE THE government hype before the election that waiting lists for hospitals would be eliminated in two years, the problem remains as serious as ever.

While in the year to March, hospital waiting lists declined by 5%, there have been significant increases in waiting times for some areas.

The figures show that the number of children waiting for surgery for longer than six months increased from 51.7% in 2001 to 68.32% in 2002.

In the Mater Hospital in Dublin, waiting lists in

ear, nose and throat have increased 14.36%, in dermatology by 50% and in gastro-enterology by 31%. The official figure of over 25,000 on waiting lists nationally does not include over 100,000 out patients who are waiting for treatment.

Western Health Board figures show that out patients are waiting for anything up to 10 years for treatment for dermatological complaints while some people wait for five years for orthopaedic treatment.

In the waiting game medical card holders fare the worst. According to the Central Statistics Office 75% of public patients get inpatient hospital treatment within six

Running down the Public Health System for privatisation

The National Health Strategy, published last November, promised a great deal for the health service.

However since then deadlines for implementation have not been met and the Minister for finance, Charlie McCreevy has said that "no prudent Minister for Finance can justify giving more money to health".

Interestingly, one part of the strategy that is being quickly implemented is the National Treatment Purchase fund which pays for treatment for public patients in private hospitals in Britain and Ireland. €30 million was allocated to it in this years budget.

The fund is targeting adults who have spent more than one year on waiting lists, and children who have been on them more than six months. However its impli-

cations for our public system are very serious.

The question must be raised as to why this money is not being spent on investing in public hospitals in the Republic and guaranteeing access to decent public health care for the future.

Downgraded

Instead Monaghan General Hospital is being downgraded and the local population fears that all acute services will soon be transferred to an already overburdened Cavan hospital while Dublin's major teaching hospitals are facing bed closures and possible cuts in services because of shortages in funding.

The only outcome of the government's strategy can be an increased reliance on private health care facilities. This agenda needs to be stopped in its tracks now.

Monaghan General Hospital

IN THE middle of July staff and patients from Monaghan General Hospital occupied the Department of Health in Dublin for an afternoon.

They were drawing attention to the plight of their hospital which they feel is being deliberately rundown by the local health board and the government.

In June all operations were halted due to a lack of anaesthetists. The Royal College of Anaesthetists say that lack of facilities make it unsuitable as a training ground.

Even though talks have been opened and assurances are given from all quarters staff fear that the hospital will no longer be fully functional.

Patients are currently being treated for all major illnesses and operations in Cavan hospital. Cavan has only four intensive care unit beds to serve a population of 60,000 people in Cavan and Monaghan.

The hospital is already running at breaking point. The people of Monaghan fear that their hospital will remain open but will no longer provide surgical procedures and will function as no more than a day centre

Make your mind up

"IRISH NICE vote is the last obstacle to EU enlargement"
EU Commission President, Romano Prodi July 2002

"legally ratification [of the Treaty] for enlargement is with-

out any problem up to 20 members, and those beyond 20 have only to put in an accession agreement some notes of change, some clause' EU Commission President, Romano Prodi March 2001

SIR GEORGE Bain, vice-chancellor of Queen's University in Belfast, is also chair of the British government's Low Pay Commission. He has just had a new Mercedes car delivered. That

could fund 11,000 hours of work at the minimum wage of £4.50 an hour. The government has failed to reach its own target of £11,000 minimum a year for workers on low pay in universities.

Mad-Dog McDowell's war on refugees

MICHAEL MCDOWELL has declared war on asylum seekers. He has sent the Gardai on a series of dawn raids to arrest hundreds of refugees.

It isn't about sorting out immigration. It is racism plain and simple. McDowell trying to create a climate of fear among immigrants.

Banging

Gardai banging on doors early in the morning demanding to see papers and then carting people off to Garda stations, is exactly the sort of repression many asylum seekers have fled from.

The Irish Refugee Council accused



McDowell, of a "dramatic hardening of asylum practice. We now have a very hardline stance."

According to NASC, the Irish Immigrant Support Group, Many asylum-seekers had been waiting for up to three years for their papers and had dropped out of the system because they needed to find work to support themselves.

McDowell even said the immigration

issue being 'sorted' is related to getting Nice passed, somehow implying it is asylum seekers fault that the Irish people rejected the treaty!

He is currently making moves to help form the Irish branch of the EU border police.

In fact there are fewer refugees coming into the EU. In 1992 there were 675,000 applications for asylum across the EU but by 2001 it had

fallen to 384,000. And in the first four months this year it was down again, at 83,000.

McDowell claims 80% of reguges are "bogus", what he really means is he turns down 80% of applications.

Not satisfied with creating a climate of racism McDowell is on the rampage with Gardai doing his dirty work for him.

McDowell is attacking Travellers with the new Trespass Act

"NO ONE thought they would actually implement this disgraceful law - they thought it was just an election stunt to draw votes on a racist ticket," commented one Traveller.

But last month the guards arrested Traveller men and took away their homes, the trailers, and left their families and their children homeless.

Arrested

Some slept in cars. Another family, with nine children, was accommodated in a local community centre.

The Act gives powers to the Guards to arrest and charge people with trespass, to fine them up to €3,800 and/or send them to jail for one month, and to confiscate their caravans.

Local authorities have a legal requirement to provide accommodation. The 1995 Task Force identified the need to pro-



vide 3,100 new units of accommodation. Since 1995, only 886 have been provided.

"The reality of this situation is that there are at least 1,017 Traveller families living in unofficial camps without access to water, toilets or refuse collection, who face eviction and have nowhere to go," said Martin Collins, Human Rights Commissioner and a founding member of Pavee Point Travellers Centre. "They have no legal place to camp".

"The arrest of the four families in Ennis, the movement of a family in Lucan and the forced eviction of a family parked on public land for nearly a year by the gardai in Cork, only weeks after signing into effect this Act, show how this act will be

implemented and the real intentions behind it".

"The act is a direct, blatant attack on Traveller culture. It is the criminalisation of Traveller identity".

"It is deliberately designed to eradicate the culture of nomadism and to enshrine the property 'rights' of those who have property, over and above the rights of Travellers to have a home and enjoy their nomadic way of life.

Worse, the Act protects, and even encourages anti-Traveller, racist attitudes amongst local authorities.

These authorities have failed to implement the legislation requiring them to provide Traveller accommodation within their areas."

editorial

Fight the FF offensive

THE GOVERNMENT is on the attack against ordinary people, while Michael McDowell attacks refugees and travellers, Ahern and McCreevey are attacking workers.

The government says the economy is in trouble -- they are right. If you take out of the growth figures the scams the multinationals use to avoid tax by declaring production here, then Ireland is in recession.

The government say that means they have to curb wages and cut public spending. They could not be more wrong.

Highest

Ireland is a rich country. Ireland has a per-capita GDP of \$29,866 in 2000, that is the fourth highest in the world. But we see none of this wealth.

The richest 20 per cent of the population received more than 40 per cent of budget giveaways over the last five years compared to under 5 per cent for the poorest 20 per cent. It means that someone on 60,000 got 170 extra disposable income from the last FF government while someone on social welfare received 9.

If the Ansbacher gang paid their taxes, there would be no problem paying public workers the wages they deserve.

Vicious

The government is introducing vicious cutbacks in public spending. That means running down health and education even more.

The Department of the Environment has cut the already paltry number houses they are planning to build this year. Though Fianna Fail have found 22 million to build a car park for the Dail.

Workers can't afford not to get decent pay rises:

*The ESB's is going up 15 per cent, this is on top of last year's increase of 9 per cent.

*Third level fees have gone up 70 per cent

*We live in the most expensive economy in Europe but come 14th in

Europe for standard of hourly pay. *Inflation is set for 4.7 percent double that of most other European countries.

*The average cost of a sample range of 25 everyday essentials has spiralled by 15 percent over the six months since the introduction of the euro.

Fianna Fail are using the economic chaos on the stock markets to say that a new partnership deal will have to restrain wages.

Promised

They are even saying that they can't afford the pittance promised (with strings) in the Benchmarking report.

Productivity levels of workers already increased a record 5.2 percent a year under partnership. Now they want more productivity for already agreed increases.

We need to reject benchmarking and partnership and put in decent pay claims. There was nothing but restraint during the boom. We don't need restraint now the boom is over rather we need to start fight back against the Government and bosses offensive.



PEACE PROCESS FUELLING SECTARIANISM

THE HYPOCRISY at the heart of the Peace Process is fuelling sectarian violence. Three days after the UDA murdered Gerard Lawlor in North

Belfast, Tony Blair warned Sinn Fein they could be expelled from the Executive if the IRA are involved in violence or preparations for violence.

This statement was designed to help Trimble and undermine Paisley and, by extension, the UDA. But Blair's insistence that the violence comes equally from 'paramilitaries on both sides' serves only to fuel the murderous activities of loyalist paramilitaries across the North.

Trimble, predictably, said that Blair hadn't gone far enough.

Donaldson and Paisley, equally predictably, called for Trimble to collapse the Executive.

One of Blair's accusations against Sinn Fein is that they sent people to Colombia to train FARC rebels.

Attack

This is the man who is preparing to attack Iraq alongside Bush, and who sells arms to the Israeli military. But in the North, this is not supposed to matter. A headline in the Belfast Telegraph after Blair's statement read 'Bush backs Blair on peace!'

Just five months ago, the UDA were on the defensive after the massive trade union-led opposition to the killing of postal worker Daniel McCollgan.

They have been helped to recover by mainstream Unionist politicians who constantly amplify their claims that the peace process is all about concessions to republicans.

The Agreement fails to acknowledge the role of the Northern or British states in causing and prolonging the Troubles.

Division

Instead it places sectarian division centre-stage. Anything 'won' by one side, must be a 'loss' for the other.

This was always a recipe for increased sectarianism. The bigots who could not accept equality for Catholics, could turn any problem into a new crisis by blaming the other side.

At best, the Agreement was designed to keep violence at bay, while Northern Ireland took its place in the new global economy, attracting low-wage call centres and privatising the public sector.

The crisis of global capitalism is now dashing even that faint hope. With Assembly elections looming, sectarian politicians will increasingly reinforce communal resentment.

What is needed in the North is political organisation that rejects communalism and its poverty and low pay, that takes the spirit of working class unity, seen in trade union rallies against sectarianism and the public sector strikes, and allies it with opposition to global capitalism and militarism.

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news of the world

European Social Forum

The road to Florence

PREPARATIONS ARE gathering pace for the European Social Forum (ESF) in Florence, Italy, from 7 to 10 November. The ESF is modelled on the World

Social Forum that met in Porto Alegre, Brazil, this year and last. It will be a focus for those resisting capitalist globalisation everywhere in Europe.

About 300 activists took part in a preparatory meeting for the ESF in Thessaloniki, Greece, last month. They included delegates from most of the main anti-capitalist networks in Europe, including the Italian Social Forum movement, ATTAC in France, Globalise Resistance, the Genoa 2001 campaign and International Action in Greece.

mass mobilisation, recently strengthened their position.

But delegates at Thessaloniki were much more open to the argument that the ESF should be a focus for activists to prepare for future mobilisations.

The meeting recommended that the ESF should include a demonstration against neo-liberalism, racism and war.

It was agreed that there should be major sessions at Florence devoted to the Palestinian struggle, to the strategy of the movement, and to building for protests against the next G8 summit in France next year.

The Thessaloniki meeting also marked a shift on the issue of political parties. The World Social Forum formally excludes political parties and has been insisting that the ESF should follow its example.

But the existence within the movement of a variety of distinct political currents is a reality that cannot be ignored. Moreover, the ban has not prevented reformist parties — for example, the Brazilian Workers Party-



from using the World Social Forum.

The reformist Left Democrats, who control Florence, may try to do the same to the ESF.

At Thessaloniki it was agreed that not only can parties attend the ESF as

members of national anti-capitalist coalitions, but they can organise workshops as part of the official programme.

These decisions reflect the fact that, under the impact of the anti-war movement, and the strikes

and protests in Italy and Spain, anti-capitalist radicalisation is growing in Europe.

The chances are that the European Social Forum will both reflect and contribute to this radicalisation.

THE IRISH Mobilising Group for the ESF has so far been supported by the following groups and individuals:

Michael D Higgins TD, Mike Allen Gen Sec (Labour Party), John Gormley TD, Deirdre de Burca (Green Party), Joe Higgins TD (Socialist Party), Socialist Workers Party, Joe Moore (Cork Council of Trade Unions), Des Derwin (candidate for

Gen Sec of SIPTU), Mick Martin (President Insurance Finance Branch SIPTU), Eamonn McCann (NUJ), Globalise Resistance, AFRI, The Irish Anti-War Movement, Khalid Ibrahim (One World Society TCD), Frances O'Donohue (Community activist, North Strand, Dublin), **Contact the Irish Mobilising Group for the ESF: ESF Mobilisation Ireland, c/o 61 West Road, Dublin 3.**

Growing

Trade union support for the forum is growing. A representative of the European TUC attended the Thessaloniki meeting. In Austria the railway union has booked a special train from Vienna to Florence.

Despite the growing support for the ESF, there are major political divisions within the movement.

The right wing inside ATTAC, who want to build up the nation-state as a counterweight to global capitalism and are wary of

Germany

A glimpse of a new spirit

POWERFUL groups of German workers have taken on their employers and won in the last few months. The strikes have a special importance as there is a general election on 22 September. STEFFANIE HAENISCH and CHRISTINE BUCHHOLZ from Socialist Worker's sister organisation Linksruck write about the importance of what is happening.

IN RECENT months metal workers, postal workers, print workers, construction workers, bank workers, telecoms workers and others have been on strike. It is amazing that these strikes are happening just months before a general election, with an SPD (Labour-type) government in office and the Tories ahead in the polls.

This has never happened before. Other big strikes in recent history have been with the Tories in power. The background to the latest strikes is the deep disillusion with Schroeder's SPD government that was elected in 1998. Schroeder promised that if workers accepted wage curbs, cuts in business taxes and weaker pension rights then unemployment would fall from four million to 3.5 million or

less.

All the attacks on workers have gone through-but unemployment is still four million. So one popular slogan is "It's still four million!" The strikes are not directly against the government. But they rest on the sense of disappointment with the SPD. The bosses have also launched a new wave of attacks. They want to cut a third from the basic pay of bank workers for example.

Pushed

The combination of these factors has pushed people to resist. The leader of the construction workers' union is an SPD MP. But he could not stand apart from the struggle. The union leaders tried to avoid strikes, but were forced from below to offer a fight.

The SPD has stopped talking about the "Neue Mitte" (new centre) which was Schroeder's version of Tony Blair's Third Way. Some people put the argument that the Tories will gain from the strikes and we will just get the right winger Stoiber as prime minister. But the reason some workers

feel they will vote Tory, or will not vote at all, is that they are angry with Schroeder and resentful of all politicians. Strikes are a positive response to the SPD's betrayals. They will actually help the left vote. All the strikes are marked by a new energy and a craving for unity.

A striker was quoted in the German press saying, "This is not about a few percent on our wages. It is about social justice." That's a common feeling. One of the exciting developments is the way that people from one dispute are supporting others who are fighting. In Frankfurt when the construction workers went on strike other workers came to support them.

The construction workers then went off to support the bank workers' picket lines. This was not organised by the official levels of the union. It was a spontaneous feeling from below.

In Berlin the construction workers' strike was even more interesting. Four years ago there was a strike by construction workers which was broken when the employers brought in scab labour from Poland. The union leaders made no attempt to explain what was happening to the Polish workers so they crossed picket lines. The strikers were left in an aggressive, racist mood towards Polish people.

This time the bosses tried a similar trick. They brought in Portuguese workers. But, because of the mood that is about in society, the strikers were ready. They talked to the Portuguese workers and chanted "Portugal, Portugal" on the picket line.

The two groups came together

in a joint picket. The scabbing failed. Berlin construction workers then joined a rally of striking kindergarten workers and the kindergarten workers came to the construction picket lines. A construction worker visited a student occupation. He brought two gifts.

The first was a tube of special building glue to help them do their occupation better next time! The second was a flag for the demonstration which is coming on 14 September.

Demonstrations

This has been called jointly by the ATTAC anti-globalisation group and the youth of the union. It is for social justice. It could be brilliant. During the recent demonstrations against US president Bush's visits to Germany we saw the anti-capitalist movement on the streets in large numbers for the first time.

There had been protests against the war in Afghanistan, but the anti-Bush ones were much younger and livelier. Many people had come on their own or in small groups with their own placards. These developments among anti-capitalists are happening at the same time as the strikes.

Of course one should not overstate what is happening. Total generalisation of the struggle is confined to individuals at the moment. But what has already taken place gives a glimpse of the potential and of the much wider mood for different strands of the battle to come together.

Nigeria

HUNDREDS OF unarmed women have been holding Chevron Texaco workers hostage inside refineries in the Niger Delta. The women have been campaigning for jobs for the men of their villages, and for local development projects to create employment and economic opportunities.

Threatened

The people of the Niger Delta are among the poorest in the population, despite living in such an oil-rich area.

In Escravos, women threatened to remove their clothes in a powerful shaming gesture if their demands were not met.

"Our weapon is our nakedness," said Helen Odeworitse, a representative for the protestors.

The protest shut down a facility that accounts for the bulk of the company's Nigeria production, with an estimated half-million barrels a day.

Committed

A memorandum of understanding was eventually signed between the communities and Chevron, in which the company committed to providing regular jobs and creating vital infrastructure in the area.

Just as Chevron negotiated the exit of the 200 women at Escravos, four more flow stations were shut down as terminals were taken over.

Chevron, Nigeria's third largest oil producer, accounts for about 450,000 barrels per day of oil.

References: www.afp.com

Council workers strike for a decent wage

Unity, solidarity and defiance

ON JULY 17th, thousands of workers all over the North manned picket lines as housing offices, cleansing departments, leisure centres, parks and libraries closed in the first UK wide council strike since the 1979 "winter of discontent".

Union members were balloted after the government offered a miserly 3% pay rise. A large majority of GMB, Unison, Nipsa and TGWU members voted to reject

the offer and take strike action. Workers are demanding a pay rise of 6%.

Some council workers earn as little as £4.75 an hour, a far cry from the recommended European decency threshold of £8.50.

Recommended

Over two thirds of all council employees earn under £13,000. Figures show that proportionately the wages of council workers are less than they were in '79.

It is also a far cry from the average expense claims of £36,000 each for the 108 NI Assembly members. In

fact including expenses, Assembly members take home over £75,000 a year.

Hardly surprising then that in the days leading up to the strike not one politician or political party issued any public statements supporting the right of council workers in Northern Ireland to be paid a decent wage.

The 17th was the first of a series of one-day strikes that as one worker put it "hope to show the government that in fact the workers who are treated so disgracefully by them are absolutely essential to the running of society".

The next stoppage will take place in August.



is no significant difference in the extent to which unemployment declined in TSN wards and non-TSN wards". In Belfast "unemployment has fallen less in TSN wards than elsewhere."

As for those in work: "There was a big gap between top and bottom earners 10 years ago. Now the gap is even wider: gross weekly pay of £553.34 for the top 10th of employees and a mere £94.20 for those at the bottom."

People in work from the poorest areas are doing worse now than a decade ago compared with their counterparts in better-off areas.

The figures don't include the self-employed---12 percent of the working population---or the real rich---owners and directors of companies, top executives, large shareholders, "property consultants" and the like.

Here we have the destination of the extra wealth which never reached the people who need it most. It can be seen in luxury apartment buildings and soft-topped Saabs. Or it can't be seen, in the coffers of multinationals and in off-shore accounts.

The report shows that the feeling of many in both loyalist and nationalist ghettos that they have been dumped at the bottom of the pile is not a delusion but a fact of life, and that the remedy endorsed by the communally-based parties has proven a total failure.

The report is a vindication of the socialist view that the real remedy lies in mobilising across the divide on the basis of class.

Socialist Worker visited a number of picket lines in Belfast and Derry to offer support on the day and get the reaction of council workers on the ground

THERE ARE Councillors in City Hall who earn more in expenses than we take home in a full year. Today's action is just a warm up. We'll be out again in August. We'll keep coming out until we win

● **John, City Hall Unison**

WE HAVE so much support for today's action from ordinary people. People have been coming up to the picket line congratulating us on taking a stand. That is the first time I have ever seen that.

● **Ricky, NIPSA, Housing Executive**

AGENCY WORKERS fear losing their jobs, so they have been coming in the back door. They were also advised by the managers to come in early before the picket line was up. Most of the people working here are women and we are being chronically underpaid. You only take strike action as a last resort. I really hope we win

● **Eimer, NIPSA, Belfast Education and Library Board**

IT'S GREAT for the politicians arguing over who gets to be Lord Mayor of Belfast at £40,000 a year. Maybe I should try for it myself next year. The politicians are all a

disgrace. Not one MLA has said one word of support for us. But they should remember ordinary people like ourselves voted them in and we can vote them right back out again.

● **SIPTU Shop Steward, Dunbar Street Cleansing Department**

LOOK AT the opulence of this building. It's a disgrace that they can afford money for fancy buildings yet can't pay us a decent wage. Today's action is just what's needed.

● **Unison member, Cecil Ward Council Building**

WE ARE 100% solid here. Even our agency boys have stayed out. If we don't get the 6% then we should escalate the action. If we were all out it would be more effective.

● **Ken, GMB Shop Steward, Dunbar Street Cleansing Department**

I FULLY support today's action. Workers shouldn't have to go cap in hand in order to have a decent standard of living. It shows the government that people are sick and tired of living on low wages.

● **Chris, a sacked airport worker who came down to show solidarity - Rally at Transport House**

ANYBODY PUZZLED by the fact that "both sides" in the North feel hard done by should read the report just published by the NI Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) on Targeting Social Need.

Targeting Social Need (TSN), set up in 1991, is the main programme for combatting high levels of deprivation in particular areas of the North. The conclusion of the NICVA report is stark and unequivocal: "For people suffering disadvantage and social exclusion, TSN has been so much

paper and so many words, but no results. It is impossible to identify any group which has benefited or any area in which inequalities have diminished."

TSN is not a spending programme. It doesn't dole out grants. The idea is, rather, to marshal existing resources across departments and in local government and statutory agencies and systematically to direct these resources towards disadvantaged areas. The areas are defined by electoral ward.

In 1998, the Belfast Agreement endorsed TSN and promised "A new, more focused" approach to implementing it.

The NICVA report makes the point that over the 10 years of TSN, North-

ern Ireland, on the face of it, has been doing well economically. "(It) has had the fastest improving regional economy in the UK...Manufacturing output far outstripped the rest of the UK, expanding by 26.2 percent compared with only 2.8 percent."

Generated

Over the decade, then, the amount of wealth being generated within the North rose significantly faster than across the water. But, "Workers might wonder where this extra wealth has gone because it hasn't gone into their pockets."

NICVA analysed movements in unemployment in each of the North's 566 wards and found that "There

— From page 12

FOR THE last two months the catholic enclave of Short Strand has been under sustained attack. Danny, who lives in the area, explained the situation, "Simply, we're under siege. No one can go shopping or go to the doctors or do anything without getting abuse or physically attacked".

"Some people here are calling on a new post office for our areas because we can't risk getting our benefits cashed on the Albert bridge road in case we are attacked."

In loyalist areas across East Belfast posters and graffiti put up by members of the UDA proclaim: "No Short Strand Residents or Republicans allowed in lower East Belfast."

"Every night there is something

thrown over the 'peace' walls. People aren't repairing the damage caused for a simple reason, if it's repaired then it will only be damaged within the next day, so there is no bother getting it fixed."

As a result of the increase in vio-

lence many people are fleeing north Belfast, according to the housing executive, this is leading to an even worse housing situation than before. Although most want to leave these 'interface' areas the reality is that hardly anyone has the choice but to stay.

How we defeat the bigots

WITH ANOTHER murder the loyalist murder gangs of the past are gaining confidence to return to full war. This needs to be counteracted immediately.

Following the murder of postal worker Daniel McColgan hundreds of his colleagues staged walkouts across Northern Ireland and in Scotland in protest over the mindless killing. Postal workers in Northern Ireland refused to return to work until the

death threats were lifted on all of them and catholic teachers.

This united action put the bigots on the run for the first time since the resurgence in sectarian violence.

The unions and the workers who are part of those unions are the key to smashing the bigotry and hatred of the UDA that is destroying the lives of both catholic and protestant people.

Workers in North Belfast need to unite over issues that affect everyone, ranging from privatisation of our health service and education system to the problems surrounding housing.

Palestine

Israel is the terrorist

Ryan Mc Kinney is a shop steward with NIPSA has just returned from Palestine here he recounts his experience

IT IS portrayed as a conflict between two equal sides, both sides suffering to the same degree.

The media only reports the deaths and the threat of the suicide bombers. When Israeli warplanes massacre Palestinians it is reported as a mistake or in retaliation for Palestinian "terrorism". However the truth is much different. I have just returned from the occupied West Bank. I didn't see Palestinians planning assaults on Israeli targets. Instead I seen them trying to plan how they would survive curfews which stop them from earning money for food, curfews which prevent them from going to school or from walking in the street.

When we got to Ramallah it had been under curfew for four days. 150,000 people imprisoned in their homes, it was silent and the streets were empty. The only sound came from Israeli tanks and APC's, the tools of oppression.

Soldiers toured the city and routinely entered houses by force, dynamiting doors, destroying everything inside. We went to a block of apartments, Israeli soldiers had just left, the homes, which belonged to Palestinian Christians, now contained nothing of use, even the food from the fridge was smeared across the walls.

On the first afternoon that the curfew was lifted some Palestinian students had organised a protest. They aimed to encourage others to defy the curfew and demonstrate their anger at the occupation. Half an hour later the tanks and APC's arrived. Activists with the International Solidarity Movement whom we had travelled over to link up with, had decided to stall the Israeli army for as long as possible allowing the hundred or so Palestinians to get home.

The soldiers opened fire immediately, the sound of stun grenades echoed through the streets and the tanks drove at us until we had to lie down to block them.

This is how the curfew is imposed and the threat is real. Any illusions we may have had about the tanks not being used were shattered later that evening when a US supplied Merkava tank fired a shell into Al-Amari refugee camp in Ramallah. A 7 year old boy and 17 year old teenager died instantly, another man died the next day from his injuries.

Their "crime" was daring to sit on their doorsteps during the curfew. However the soldier who fired the shell could not possibly have seen them in the middle of the cramped UN run camp, he didn't care who he killed, just like the F-16 pilot who dropped the bomb on an apartment block in Gaza slaughtering 15 Palestinians. They aim not just to kill but to terrorise.

The terrorism carried out by the Israeli state takes many forms, many of which we witnessed and some of which we prevented by our presence. Checkpoints are strategically placed to prevent students from continuing their education. The checkpoint at Sudra on the outskirts of Ramallah is used for this.

The Qulindya checkpoint on the road to Jerusalem regularly has hundreds of Palestinians queuing at it daily. We witnessed women with new born babies in their arms standing in the searing heat for hours at this checkpoint.

Young Palestinian men are constantly harassed for their ID, the soldiers make them kneel for hours without water. We witnessed this outside the Muquatta, Arafats bombed-out compound, eventually our presence secured their release. Beside our hostel we witnessed Israeli troops throw teargas at children playing football in the evening during the curfew.

The next evening we joined them for a game. In one example of overkill we watched a 70 tonne tank aim it's barrel at two tiny children who dared to stand on the street outside their home.

This and much worse is real life for 3.5 million Palestinians on the West Bank. Even the ambulances and their crews which supposedly have protection under international law are terrorised as they try to carry out life saving tasks.

One young Palestinian woman who was having a miscarriage died, along with her baby, when the ambulance she was travelling to hospital in was blocked for 2 hours at an Israeli army checkpoint.

The tanks, warplanes, helicopter gunships and guns supplied to Israel by the US and Britain are used to carry out this oppression and terrorism. The humiliation and desperation it creates in the refugee camps of Ramallah, Jenin and Nablus is manifested in the suicide bombings. The time I spent in Palestine made it obvious to me who is terrorising who.

Former World Bank man slams 'globalisation'

ONE SINNER come to repentance is worth 99 righteous men, says the Bible. One economist who used to be at the centre of running the supposedly "free" market system can provide criticisms of its functioning even more damning than those who have never trusted it.

In the 1990s Joseph Stiglitz was chair of US president Bill Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers, and a member of the US cabinet. He then went on to be chief economist and vice-president of the World Bank. Now he has produced a sharp attack on the present version of "globalisation" (often called the "Washington Consensus") and the institutions that oversee it—the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and even the World Bank, in which he was a key figure.

Plunges

"A growing divide between the haves and the have-nots has left increasing numbers in the Third World in dire poverty living on less than \$1 a day. Africa plunges deeper into misery, as incomes fall and standards of living decline.

The hard won improvements in life expectancy gained in the past few decades have begun to reverse.

If globalisation has not succeeded in reducing poverty, neither has it succeeded in ensuring stability. Crises in Asia and in Latin America have threatened the economies and the stability of all developing countries.

The introduction of a market economy has not produced the promised results in Russia.

Unprecedented

Instead, it brought unprecedented poverty in many respects, for most of the people, the market economy proved even worse than their Communist leaders had predicted."

If this message is the opposite to what we hear every day from media commentators and New Labour politicians like Clare Short, so too is his response to the chain of protests that began at Seattle:

"International bureaucrats, the faceless symbols of the world eco-

nomie order, are under attack everywhere.

The protests at the Seattle meeting of the World Trade Organisation in 1999 were a shock.

Since then the movement has grown stronger and the fury has spread. For decades, people in the developing world have rioted when the austerity programmes imposed on their countries proved to be too harsh, but their protests were largely unheard in the West.

Developed

What is new is the wave of protests in the developed countries. When there is no alternative way to press for change, people riot."

Stiglitz's harshest attacks are centred on the way the International Monetary Fund has reacted to the economic crises besetting the Third World and the former Communist countries over the last decade.

He tells how the IMF creates the conditions which inevitably lead to repeated crisis by insisting that countries "liberalise" capital movements, so giant companies and the rich can easily move their wealth from country to country.

This leads to flows of wealth into countries and so raises the exchange rates of their currencies.

Banks encourage what is for them a profitable orgy of borrowing, and luxury imports surge. But exports are hit as the higher exchange rates make them expensive for people elsewhere in the world to buy, and many workers lose their jobs.

Reverse

Suddenly everything goes into reverse. The excess of imports over exports creates a panic.

Giant firms and the rich begin moving their wealth abroad. The currency begins to lose its value, and the government, unable to pay its bills, turns to the IMF.

The IMF has a simple response which it gives to each and every request—we will lend you money providing you use it to stop the value of your currency falling, raise interest rates, make it even easier for wealth to flow in and out of your country, privatise industries and cut welfare benefits.

These policies, Stiglitz points out, have three effects. They enable the rich and big companies to take their money out of the country without suffering from a falling exchange rate.

They devastate the conditions of the mass of people. And they reduce even further the demand for goods, causing a crisis which

tends to spread to hit other countries:

"The IMF money...enabled the countries to provide dollars to the firms that had borrowed from Western bankers to repay the loans.

Bailout

It was thus, in part, a bailout to the international banks. And rich people inside the country took advantage of the opportunity to convert their money into dollars at the favourable exchange rate and whisk it abroad."

This happened in Mexico in 1994-5, in several Asian countries in 1997 and, most spectacularly, with the IMF loan to Russia in 1998. Today it is the turn of Turkey and, most painfully, Argentina to bear the consequences of such policies.

Workers and poor suffer to pay bankers

STIGLITZ is just as scathing about the World Trade Organisation, which is presented by people like Gordon Brown and Clare Short as a friend to Third World countries:

"In the most recent Uruguay round of trade negotiations markets opened mainly for the services exported by the advanced countries—but not for the developing countries.

The United States bragged about the benefits it received. But one World Bank calculation showed that sub-Saharan Africa, the poorest region in the world, saw its income decline by more than 2 percent as a result of the trade agreement."

Why do these things happen? In part Stiglitz attributes them to the ideology of neo-liberalism, which over the last quarter of a century has displaced the old "Keynesian" view that governments had to intervene to deal



with the "mistakes" of the market.

But he also sees powerful forces backing the neo-liberal ideology. These are the "interests" of "the financial community"—in other words, the great banks. Stiglitz is not a "conspiracy theorist", he insists.

But he argues that the "mandate" of the IMF has changed "from serving global economic interests to the interests of global finance. Capital market liberalisation may not have contributed to global economic stability, but it did open up vast new markets for Wall Street."

Disastrous

It is such interests that Stiglitz sees as behind an ideology that has brought about such a disastrous form of Globalisation:

"The workers who are thrown out of jobs as a result of the IMF programmes have no seat at the table, while the bankers, who insist on getting repaid, are well represented through the finance ministers and central bank governors."

This does not mean that Stiglitz has become a revolution-

ary, or even a socialist.

His attacks on the IMF, the World Bank, the WTO and international finance do not extend to the capitalist system as a whole. He believes it can be reformed and made to work if only people like himself can weaken the grip of the financiers.

Extol

This leads him to extol certain governments for ignoring the IMF approach—the Malaysian government, the Chinese government, even though two of these are dictatorial and the third has run into a deepening economic crisis since Stiglitz's book was written.

With unemployment now running at 20 percent in Poland, even the Financial Times business paper was forced to admit last week, "Many Poles are wondering what happened to the promised benefits of the market economy. Popular resentment is rising." Privatisation, "liberalisation" and globalisation are acceptable to Stiglitz, providing they are carried out more slowly



and with more concern for people's wellbeing than at present.

Centrally, he nowhere recognises that the great non-financial corporations—Monsanto, News International, Boeing, General Motors, Chiquita—are just as ruthless and just as damaging to humanity as the banks and the

IMF. There is no point in challenging one lot without challenging the others. And you cannot successfully challenge either without taking much more forceful, revolutionary action than Stiglitz contemplates.

For all that, his book is a fascinating account from the inside

of the rottenness and destructiveness of the system.

● **Globalization and its Discontents** by Joseph Stiglitz is published in paperback by Penguin for £16.99

WHATS SOCIALISTS SAY

Argentina isn't as far as way as you think

THE PEOPLE who are hit hardest in a capitalist crisis are not the capitalists themselves, but workers, the poor and even sections of the middle classes.

Look at Argentina today. Big capitalists and their immediate hangers-on largely managed to get their money out of the country before the economic collapse at the end of last year. The rest of society has been devastated.

Unemployment is rocketing. The fall in the value of the currency means that even those in work cannot afford to buy basic goods. Unemployed workers who were used to eating beef daily are now reduced to meagre amounts of bread without butter or cheese.

Refuse

The number of child deaths is increasing. Middle class people with savings find the banks refuse to let them withdraw money. Private property is supposed to be sacred under capitalism. Every day in Argentina there are queues of middle class people outside banks demanding their money back.

The crisis in the US and Europe is not as deep as in Argentina, but stockmarkets have fallen and some big companies have collapsed over the last few months. Many big investors managed to sell their shares before the slide. Those who have really lost out have been smaller investors who have been conned into gambling on the stock exchange.

Workers suffer too. Bankrupt companies such as WorldCom are slashing jobs. Tens of millions of people face misery in retirement as pension funds lose billions of pounds on the financial markets.

Starvation

In the poorest countries economic crisis has pushed hundreds of millions of people in the poorest parts into starvation. So socialists don't relish economic crisis. But nor do we fall for the idea that the crisis can be eased if workers make sacrifices in order to shore up capitalism, for two reasons.

First, it means greater suffering for the majority of the population, who are in no way responsible for the crisis. Economics commentators are warning that an explosion of credit could destabilise the economy.

That's not the fault of "greedy workers".

Capitalism depends on there being a market for the goods it produces. If, for example, steel workers are sacked they cannot afford to buy cars and goods containing steel.

Employers have forced people to turn to credit by curbing pay rises. Secondly, job losses, pay cuts, higher repayments on loans and other sacrifices by working people make a recession deeper.

Capitalism depends on there being a market for the goods it produces. If, for example, steel workers are sacked they cannot afford to buy cars and goods containing steel.

Deepening

That reduces the demand for steel, so deepening the crisis in the steel industry. Wage cuts and pay freezes have the same effect in industries across the whole of the economy.

Of course the capitalists could make up the gap by investing. Increased investment in railways, factories, new technology and the like would soak up output.

But in a recession goods go unsold and prices fall. That hits profits. And capitalists will not invest unless they are guaranteed a profit. The huge accounting frauds in the US have revealed that the actual profits of large companies are far lower than they have claimed over the last few years. Lower profits are leading capitalists to cut investments. It's this that is driving the economy towards recession, not supposedly "uncompetitive" workers.

Demands from our rulers for belt-tightening by workers are only one side of what happens in an economic crisis. The other is huge numbers of people who had previously had some faith in capitalism suddenly become immensely bitter with the whole system. People who had hoped for nothing more than a stable income, secure housing and a modest pension find all of that is under threat.

Those who felt they had a small stake in the system can become the bitterest of all. A crisis also produces deep rifts among our rulers. Capitalists try to shift part of the burden onto one another and fall out over how to force workers to pay for the bulk of it.

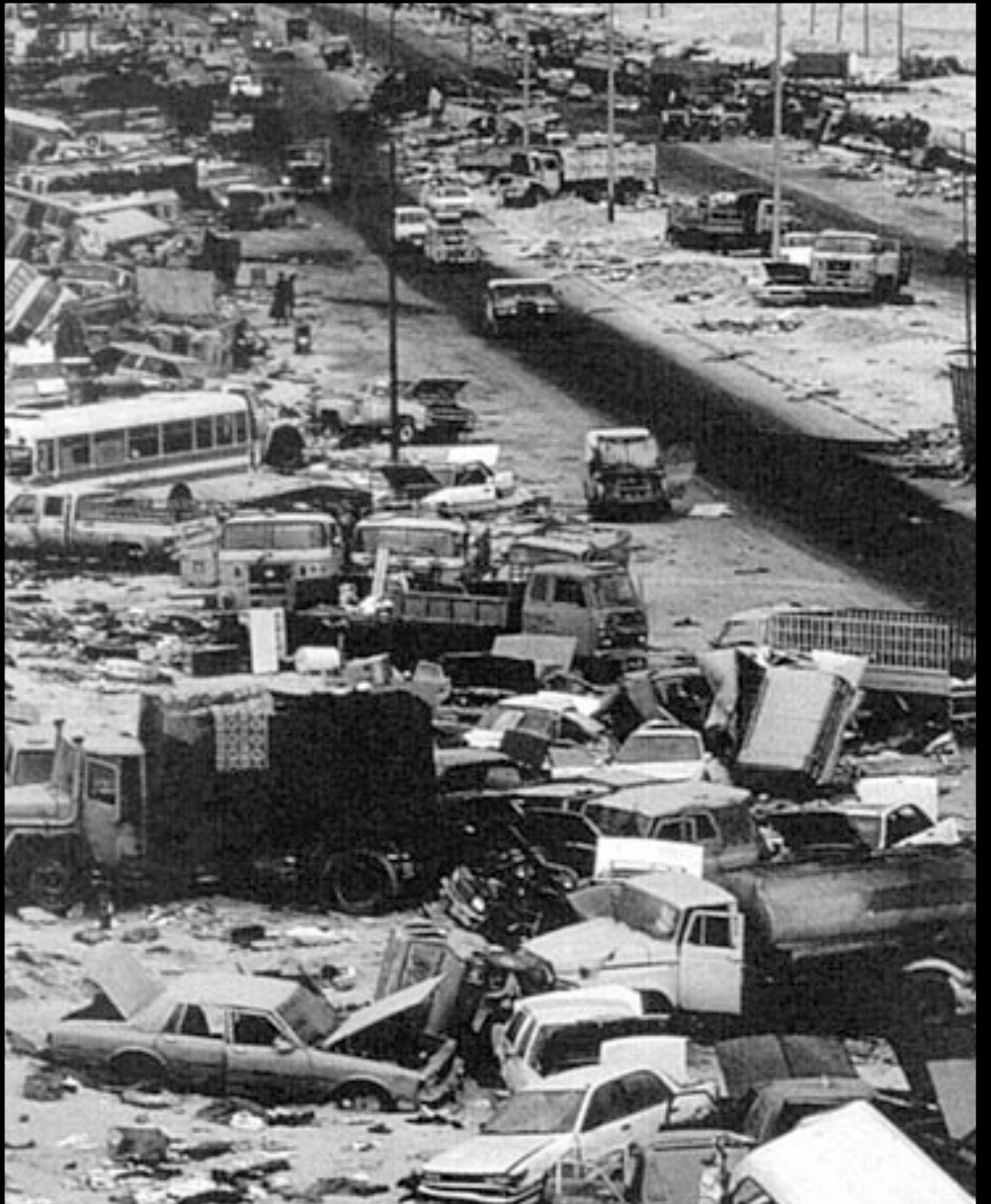
Bitterness among the majority of the population and divisions at the top can go in many directions. One of them is towards mass struggles which are against the effects of the crisis and which begin to challenge capitalism itself. Building and organising those struggles are socialists' answer to capitalist crisis.

Recurring crisis is built into the capitalist system. Overthrowing capitalism depends on how its victims organise against it.

— by SIMON BASKETTER

SCOTT RITTER, FORMER UN ARMS INSPECTOR IN IRAQ, SPEAKS OUT

'The time to stop the war on Iraq is now'



OVER 100,000 people were massacred on the Basra Road in the last Gulf war in 1991.

SCOTT RITTER is not someone Socialist Worker would normally have much time for. He is a member of President George W Bush's Republican Party and was at the centre of US operations against Iraq during the 1990s. Yet Ritter has demolished the justification for the new war that Bush is planning against Iraq. This is an extract of a speech he gave last month.

IN AMERICA we say, "Don't let friends drive drunk." There is a drunk at the wheel of American foreign policy. Friends of America must stand up and stop the madness, and take away the key driving the American machine towards war.

I am a card-carrying Republican who voted for George W Bush for president. I am not here as a friend of the Iraqi people. I was a weapons inspector in Iraq from 1991-8. I was not there to be friendly but to disarm Iraq. I am here as an American citizen concerned about the state of my country which is heading down a path that will lead to death and destruction. It will be a war the like of which you have never seen.

The United States of America has the best trained, the best led,

the best equipped military forces the world has ever seen. We are the most efficient killing machine in the history of mankind. Iraq will be destroyed with a vengeance. I am a 12-year marine veteran. I fought in the first war against Iraq. When we talk about war, be clear that war means death and destruction.

Vengeance

When the bullets fly there is no movie music in the background. You kill people. You get killed. That's what war is about. There is no such thing as a good war. There can be a just war. If Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction today I will be the first to sign up to wage war. For then Saddam Hussein is a pariah leader at the head of a rogue state.

If Iraq has weapons of mass destruction then I'm with you, Tony Blair and George W Bush. But back it up with evidence. I'll tell you what I know. I know that since December 1998 there have not been weapons inspectors in Iraq, and that without weapons inspectors we cannot know what

has happened on the ground.

But, as of December 1998, the weapons inspectors had destroyed the factories that could be used to produce chemical, biological or nuclear weapons. They are gone.

WE BACKED it up with monitoring and the most stringent controls in history to ensure that Iraq wasn't reconstituting that ability.

We could not account for everything. But we do know that the factory where, for example, they made liquid bulk anthrax ceased production. We blew it up in 1996. Liquid bulk anthrax cannot survive for more than three years even under ideal storage conditions. So even if Iraq did hide some from us it is no longer viable.

As of December 1998 we came close to zero level in terms of Iraq's ability to produce or maintain weapons of mass destruction. Biological and chemical weapons must be produced in industrial facilities possessing the highest level of technology. Iraq would have had to procure much of this from abroad to reconstitute facilities.

I know that sanctions are a sieve. But I worked with the best intelligence agencies in the world. If Iraq were to attempt to acquire this equipment they would be detected. Even if they got it and attempted to reconsti-

tute a biological, chemical or nuclear factory, it is detectable.

When you have the prime minister of Great Britain or president of the United States speak of a dossier, demand this dossier. The Bush administration has such a hunger for war with Iraq. They are desperate for any evidence to justify war with Iraq. If the US had any credible information it would be on the front page of every American newspaper tomorrow.

We are told we're going to war with Iraq because Iraq represents a threat to our national security. We are told they possess weapons of mass destruction and are linked with Al Qaida and terrorism. One-there are no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Destruction

Two-you cannot link Saddam Hussein to the terrorism of 11 September or anti-Western terror groups. Three-there is no record of Saddam Hussein providing anybody with weapons of mass destruction.

If this is not a national security issue, why are we doing it? It is about American domestic politics. We have in Washington DC an administration that has a visceral hatred of everything the Clinton administration stood for, including his unwillingness to decisively confront Iraq.

THEY SPENT time developing an ideology that espouses regime change in Iraq, and

unilateralism in foreign policy-we don't need the rest of the world, the United Nations or international law.

We will do this, they say, because we are America-we are the sole remaining superpower, and we can get away with it.

This has become policy-a part of the neo-conservatives' ideology. I have been accused of being unpatriotic, an enemy of the state. I'm a decorated 12-year marine veteran who has put my life on the line for my country. I am exercising my constitutional duty to hold my elected representatives accountable for what they do in my name.

I F WE go to war against Iraq we are only reinforcing the case put forward by Osama Bin Laden and his associates. They said 11 September was the opening salvo in a clash of civilisations between the West and Islam.

Most of Islam rejected this. They said, "No way, Osama. You don't speak for us." If we replaced Saddam Hussein, what will follow?

I don't believe that the US has the stomach to occupy Iraq for any length of time. When the US withdraws from Iraq our appointed government will col-

lapse, and what will replace it will be Islamic fundamentalist. Many states in the region also have regimes whose populations are becoming more and more restive. You could see a domino effect-Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Turkey, Egypt-and Osama Bin Laden will have won.

An invasion of Iraq is the quickest way to give legitimacy to the men who attacked the US on 11 September. There is a momentum developing for war on Iraq. In California 20,000 marines are training for taking part in a major ground operation in Iraq as early as October this year.

Accelerating

Boeing is accelerating delivery of smart bombs so we can be in a position to wage war as early as October. Once you start deploying troops, committing economic, military and political capital to war with Iraq, then war becomes inevitable. The time to stop war with Iraq is now.

If you in Britain are able to create a shift in the policy of the Blair government you will have achieved a victory of tremendous proportions which will motivate people in America.

Many Americans feel powerless to stop this war. They need an example. I appeal to the British to lead by example. Stop this war.

● This is an extract from Scott Ritter's speech, edited for reasons of space.

Eamonn**McCann**

Communal chorus

NEW LABOUR Chancellor Gordon Brown had hardly sat down in the Commons after spelling out details of his Comprehensive Spending Review before the main Stormont parties were issuing statements about how the North's share of the new money should be spent.

Brown's July 15th announcement of a three-year £61 billion increase in UK public expenditure was widely hailed as boost to education and health. And, indeed, all four Executive parties seemed agreed that schools and hospitals should have first call on whatever extra resources became available for the North. As in Britain, however, nobody seemed certain, even after close scrutiny of the figures, how much extra was in prospect. At Stormont, moreover, there was a couple of additional complications.

In the first place, Northern Ireland Secretary John Reid took a slice of the money off the top for security—control of which has been retained by the NIO. £300 million of the increase is to go towards policing, including severance pay to members of the RUC who have decided not to transfer to the PSNI, as well as on programmes to cut crime and on funding the Bloody Sunday Inquiry. This represented a sharp change in usual practice. At the height of the Troubles it was never suggested that security costs should come from general Northern expenditure.

What's more, Reid's money-grab represented an arrogant reversal of the often repeated promise of a "peace dividend" to be spent on social and economic projects once the paramilitary groups called ceasefires.

Denounced

The most remarkable aspect of this matter was that none of the Stormont parties made a fuss. Neither the SDLP nor Sinn Fein, much less either of the main Unionist parties, denounced Reid for robbing the coffers to pay off cops opting for early retirement and clean up the murderous mess left in Derry by the Paras. All four parties put their energies instead into demands for a change in the "Barnett Formula".

The Barnett Formula may be unknown to most people outside Stormont. But there are people inside Stormont who think about nothing else.

The device dates from the late 1970s. Named after Joel Barnett, Chief Secretary to the Treasury in the Labour Government of James Callaghan, it was drawn up in anticipation of devolution and was designed to equalise per capita public spending across the regions of the UK on the basis of convergence with England.

The key principle is that allocation is based on population size rather than economic need. But the North, by every index of disadvantage, has higher levels of need than England. The result is that the North loses out when extra resources are disbursed on a pound-for-pound person-for-person basis. This is what Mitchel McLaughlin, Nigel Dodds, Mark Durkan etc. are referring to when they talk of the "Barnett Squeeze" and the need to get rid of it.

What's significant here is that unanimity at Stormont on the harmful effects of the Barnett Squeeze ruled out real debate on whether Brown's new money, however calculated, could come close to meeting the needs of the cash-starved services and disadvantaged areas of the North. The case for radical change was left in abeyance as all parties chorused the need for the North to be treated more generously in the budgetary divvy-up.

There was sharper argument between Blairites and Labour back-benchers at Westminster than within or between the parties at Stormont.

And this despite the fact that the North lags further behind Britain in terms of working-class living standards than it did a decade ago, and, internally, is more unequally divided than a decade ago.

Thus, even as relations between the Stormont parties reach a new low as far as communal issues are concerned, the consensus on class issues becomes even stronger.

None of them has a perspective of lifting up the working class as a whole. None offers a way out of class exploitation: as a result, none has a way out of communal conflict either.

film

A thriller for the majority

by VIREN SWAMI

THE NEW film *Minority Report* is a provocative thriller about the authorities overstepping their boundaries to prosecute people simply for thinking about a crime. It is based on a short story by science fiction writer Philip K Dick and directed by Steven Spielberg.

It presents a vivid yet troubling depiction of a futuristic society where lawlessness has become an obsession. Tom Cruise stars as John Anderton, a detective operating out of Washington DC in the year 2054.

Apprehend

Anderton is the chief of the so called Precrime Department. His information on future murders comes from a trio of psychics known as precognitives, or precogs. With the help of the precogs Anderson and his team are able to apprehend potential killers seconds

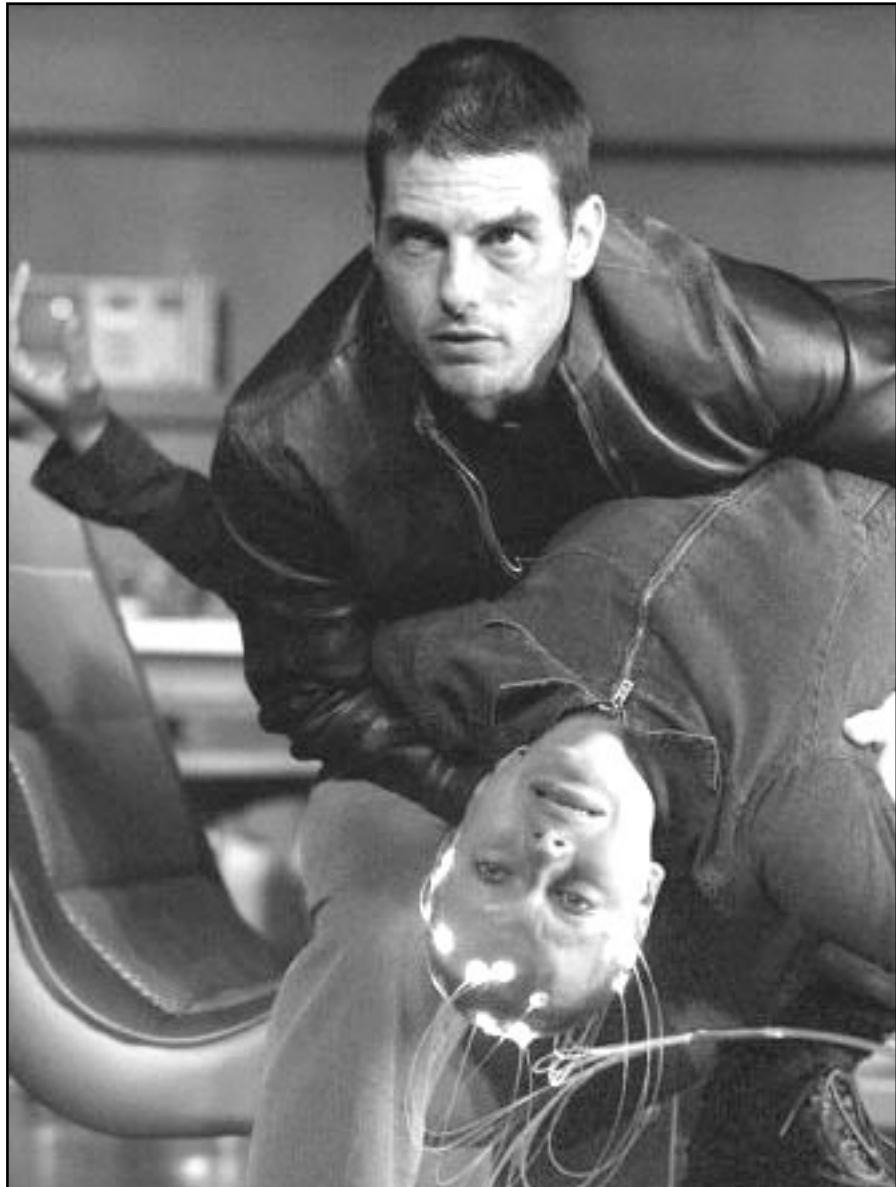
before they commit their crime. The police have been able to eliminate almost all murders.

This ignores the dubious practice of incarcerating people who have merely thought about a crime without having actually committed it. The possibility of someone being unfairly targeted is ignored—that is, until the precogs accuse Anderton of pre-murder. And so ensues the classic Hollywood chase—the innocent man on the run from the law attempting to prove his innocence.

As he searches for answers, Anderton discovers something known as the minority report, the name given to those cases where there is some dissent among the three precogs. Anderton needs access to this information, and swirling around his quest is Spielberg's future.

Billboard advertisements make direct personal contact with customers, cereal boxes come with moving images, and people's eyes are constantly being scanned. Unfortunately the viewer is bombarded with a relentless roll call of multinationals—from Pepsi to Gap.

Once you get past this blemish, *Minority Report* is an unrelenting movie about the cruel uncertainty of both life and the future.



book

See Naples and die

THE CAMORRA is to Naples what the Mafia is to Sicily. In *See Naples and Die* Tom Behan provides a fascinating study into the rise of organised crime in the Italian south, and he consistently argues that it can only be understood by recognising its continuing roots in social conditions of mass poverty and mass unemployment.

Organised crime is so deeply rooted in the development of southern post fascist capitalism and politics that its eradication requires socialist revolution.

According to one ex-Camorristi: "Can't you see the state Naples is in? If you don't change this social reality, if you don't get at its roots, how do you think you're going to beat the Camorra?"

By the late 1980s the

Camorra was just as deadly and just as wealthy as the Mafia. But the Camorra is different from the Mafia in important aspects. The Mafia is highly centralised with a hierarchy based on family membership. The Camorra is decentralised, with its estimated 100 plus gangs acting independently, often dissolving and quickly reconstituting as a result of bloody gang warfare. This makes it much more difficult to destabilise simply by removing its leaders.

While the Camorra probably had its origins in the early 19th century, it was in the post Mussolini period that organised crime became the ubiquitous and powerful force of today. Unlike in the Italian north, fascism in the south was not overthrown by a popular insurrection. Instead the occupying US forces were faced with a political vacuum and a disintegrating local state. Their response was to turn to organised crime to provide order and stability.

Consequently the pro-

American Christian Democrats, who quickly came to dominate southern politics, were from the start shaped by the existence of a strong and politically embedded Mafia and willing to run a local state with criminal foundations.

Smuggling

Behan presents a picture of Camorra development and growth since the 1970s as it has moved from smuggling to building business empires, and during the 1980s, when it penetrated politics at the highest level.

The Camorra got its biggest lift in the aftermath of the 1980 earthquake. 'Of the \$40 billion spent on earthquake reconstruction, an estimated \$20 billion went to create an entirely new social class of millionaires in the region, \$6.4 billion went straight into the pockets of the Camorra and \$4 billion went to politicians in bribes.' Since this period it has been in the area of public sector con-

tracts that the Camorra have found the richest pickings which meant gaining an ever increasing hold over the political process.

Who can stop the Camorra? Behan shows that all levels of the Italian state, including the judiciary are in hock to the Camorra as to make all reformist solutions bankrupt.

Behan points to the periodic mass protests in the south, such as in 1982-83, as the beginnings of a real challenge to the pervasiveness of crime, the fear it brings, and the misery and desperation of poverty on which it feeds.

The book is a fascinating alternative to the romanticisation of organised crime in the corporate media, which has, despite the differences, much to say about the nature of corruption in capitalism.

See *Naples and Die* by Tom Behan

— By Simon Basketter



**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 / www.swp.ie

PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS

Housing crisis:

Local housing action groups make their mark

Housing

THE DUN Laoghaire Housing Action Campaign was established recently at a public meeting in the Kingston Hotel. There is a housing crisis in Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown.

Over 2,000 people are on the housing list in the council area. This crisis is direct result of a drastic reduction in the amount of council housing that has been built in recent years.

Emergency

The group has called for an emergency programme to build public housing. A considerable amount of building and development has gone on in Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown in recent years.

Land has been acquired and planning permission granted for substantial developments of luxury apartments, exclusive private housing developments and offices.

Yet no major public housing development has been undertaken for years.

Purchase

In a submission to Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council the group called for all remaining land for housing development to be purchased by the council, if necessary, by compulsory purchase in order, to make it available for public housing.

For example, the present site of Dun Laoghaire Golf Club is to be developed. It should be used for public housing by the council not for a private housing devel-

opment.

The group also came out in opposition to PPPs being used to encourage private developers. Giving over public land for private developers to make huge profits and receiving 20 per cent of it back in the form of social and affordable housing is unacceptable.

In the submission DHAG also called for rent controls for tenants. Landlords are exploiting the housing crisis by hiking rents up to extortionate levels. Huge rent increases in recent years are in no way justified by rises in inflation or the cost of maintenance.

The next meeting of DHAG is on the 14th August in Smyths pub Dun Laoghaire. For more information contact Richard Boyd Barret on 087 632 9511.

Waterford

REPRESENTATIVES OF the Waterford Housing Action Campaign have met with the man ultimately responsible for social housing, Minister for the Environment and Local Government, Martin Cullen.

Waterford currently has, per capita the longest housing list of any constituency in the country.

More than 1,500 people are currently on the list, yet despite this number only 52 social houses were built last year (the lowest figure in the country) and only 560 will be built over the next five years.

Although local authorities take primary responsibility for the construction of public housing, funding comes under the aegis of Cullen's department of the environment.

WHAC wished to discover directly from the Minister if he intends to increase funding for social housing and relieve the hardship that many on the housing list currently experience in Waterford and around the country.

Claimed

According to the minister, the government does not have sufficient resources to cater for people who need public housing in Waterford and around the country.

He claimed that because of a fall in tax revenues

there simply is not the money to build enough houses.

Cullen claimed that two thirds of the people on the housing list are not genuine cases and would "drop dead if they were offered a house".

Arbitrarily cutting the official housing list by 66% is the criteria used by the department when ascertaining the 'real' housing needs in the country.

The Minister said the real list in Waterford amounts to approximately 500 and not the 1,500, which is the official city council figure.

Chairperson of Waterford Housing Action Campaign, Marie Lynagh said after the meeting: "Cullen painted an extremely bleak picture for people on the housing list, both in Waterford and around the coun-

try. He effectively told us that the government cannot fulfill its obligation to provide housing for every person in the country because they don't have the money".

"Obviously we believe this is totally unacceptable and we will continue and step up our campaign for an emergency house building programme to take everyone off the housing list".

"Cullen's admission that there is no money in the kitty because of a fall in tax revenues shows how ordinary people have to suffer to facilitate tax cuts for the rich. Workers did not benefit from the Celtic Tiger, but now we are the ones expected to pay the costs, while the American multi-nationals and businessmen who profited on the back of our labour over the last ten years are to get even more tax cuts".

Tallaght residents

THE CRA (Combined Residents' Association) of West Tallaght are fighting to play their part in how their communities will develop in the future. Declan Poynton, a member of the CRA, spoke to Socialist Worker.

Realising that one resident's association on their own had very little clout, a number of residents' associations joined together to try and ensure that consultation with local people would happen in the planning of the new social housing in the Jobstown/For-tunestown areas.

A survey carried out by locals indicated that South Dublin County Council

ignored many of the outcomes from reports which have been produced by government on the issue of Housing, including the Bacon Report. CRA believe that services such as community centres, shops, sports facilities etc. should be in place before or during the building of houses, or parallel to them being built. This is the key to the success of any new housing schemes. Estates in Tallaght have already suffered because this was not done.

The CRA decided to confront the local council. Initially they held demonstrations until they won the right to participate in a consultation process with the County Council on the issue. They won this right.

To encourage people to get involved locally, the CRA also ran a campaign to get people to register people to vote. In the last General Election the turnout was very low in this area - 19.9 percent. They would like to

organise maximum participation of local people in the planning and organisation of what affects them most. They will continue to do door-to-door campaigns and also lobby the local county councillors and TDs.

They hope to stand candidates in the next council elections and are confident that they could win two seats.

Declan insists that they are fully in favour of the provision of social housing but insists that it must be planned well at the beginning to ensure residents have a good environment in which to bring up their families and not just a roof over their heads.

The current infrastructure in the locality is completely inadequate for existing residents.

The Council cannot cope with the problems already in existence, never mind those that will occur with the arrival of between

two and three thousand more families.

The first main test will come in September this year when the first phase will be

started and the locals will see if the council really listened to what they wanted or just intend to continue on regardless.

Incinerator

DUBLIN CORPORATION has applied for a Compulsory Purchase Order on a site in Ringsend intended as a site for an incinerator.

The site at the old Hammond Lane scrapyards on Pigeonhouse Road is around ten acres in size.

Because it is a CPO and not planning permission that is being applied for at this stage, the views

of residents don't even have to be taken into account. The only person who can object is the owner of the land.

Proposed

Local residents associations have formed a limited company to fight the proposed incinerator and intend to challenge the CPO and any planning permission that may arise, in the courts and on the streets, in the coming weeks.

SWP activists are organised in the following areas

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

PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS

Irish Glass Bottle

SIPTU & TEEU should implement hour long stoppage

"IT'S A great turnout today and an important show of solidarity from the people of Ringsend".

"We want the workers to be given back their dignity and it's a disgrace that in this day and age we have to take to the streets to do it." So said the wife of one worker from Ardagh Glass on the demonstration in support of the workers last month.

Pushed

Jimmy from the strike summed up the general mood of the protest, "It's ironic that 90 years after the Lock Out, trade unionists have to take to the streets for a just settlement.

MANDATE

Mandate workers in Curry's, Waterford are on strike due to the company's refusal to recognise the union.

Workers in the electrical superstore unionised in January of this year, but the company has repeatedly refused to meet with union representatives despite several requests.

The picket was placed on the store following continued attempts by management to defer talks. The general manager of Curry's Waterford, Paul Cahill decided to go on holiday rather than attempt to resolve the dispute.

Workers have placed pickets on the store every Wednesday and Saturday for the last two weeks, and all 21 general workers have

"There is a fundamental issue at stake and that is the end of redundancy payments in Ireland. If the company gets away with this then every other employer can also walk away. ... the LRC and the government have been pushed to one side by an arrogant company who has no responsibility other than to its shareholders."

On the Thursday before the demo, management and the union officials reached an agreement on redundancy.

This came after a week of violent intimidation against the strikers. A company manager along with 5 'heavies' from Business Defense Systems approached the picket at 4am one night pushing the strikers of the property, pushing over one picket in an attempt to close the gate.

They also knocked over

several pallet loads of bottles. One striker told Socialist Worker, "the manager just went beserk".

Then a court injunction was served on 5 picketers to stop blocking transport in and out of the plant.

This was used by the officials to push workers into accepting the deal.

Earning

Basically, the bottles currently in stock and the moulds used to make them are to be sold, earning an estimated - €12million, which will create a trust fund, out of which the workers will earn three weeks redundancy for each year of service.

This is considerably less than the five recommended by the Labour Court originally, but nonetheless a lot more than the half week offered by management - which shows what militancy can get.

But there was an element of blackmail involved in this. Both bottles and moulds lose their value, in fact become redundant in a matter of weeks due to environmental damage, so it was put to the workers that unless they came to a decision quickly, there would be nothing to sell.

Guaranteed

It is still unclear precisely how this fund will work. For one thing, it is not guaranteed that they can raise €12m. Adding to this, the machinery is to be sold in six months time and nothing has been said about where the proceeds of this sale will go.

While the approach of the union bureaucracy to the dispute is not surprising, perhaps unexpected to some was the attitude of Sinn Fein. Local SF representative Daithi Doolan speaking

recognised the strike and refused to pass the picket line. A worker on the picket line told Socialist Worker: "Very few people are passing the picket line, the number of customers in the store is a tiny fraction of what it would normally be".

Recognition

"The strike is entirely about union recognition. The company does not acknowledge the right of the union to negotiate on our behalf.

Over the next few weeks, there will be ballots of workers at other stores around the country on whether or not to take the same action as we have.

We hope that the escalation of this dispute to a national level will force Curry's into finally recognising the union".

promises were made about how the public would benefit. They came to nothing. Instead we got exclusive luxury apartments, shops and a theatre that excludes local community theatre groups.

We should also reject completely talk of putting a luxury hotel and apartments on the Carlisle Pier. This is another step towards restricting access to our pier to all but the very wealthy.

Our Baths and our seafront are part of the local and national heritage. They should be developed as amenities for all the people not for profit and greed.

● Another DAY OF ACTION to SAVE THE PEOPLES' BATHS - SAVE OUR SEAFRONT has been organised for Sunday August 11th. It will assemble at 2pm at the front entrance to the Peoples Park.

and council officials want to privatise the baths under so-called 'public private partnership.'

This must be opposed completely. Big private developers are only interested in profit. If they control the baths there is no telling what they will do with them and the costs of admission will be out of the reach of many.

Afford

The reason the baths are loved by locals is because they were always a 'peoples' baths. The admission costs meant anybody could afford to use them. Under private ownership we will get another exclusive development on our seafront available only to those who can pay top dollar.

As we know from the pavilion development, all sorts of

Dun Laoghaire Baths

LAST SUMMER over 600 people marched in Dun Laoghaire and thousands signed petitions calling for the re-opening of Dun Laoghaire and Blackrock Baths as a public amenities for the people of the area.

Because of that protest and the huge support for the baths the council have been forced to accept that Dun Laoghaire Baths should not be knocked down to build more luxury apartments.

They have also accepted that some sort of sea baths amenity should be maintained on this site.

This shows people power is working! But the fight is not over yet.

Many councillors

SIPTU

Vote Des Derwin for Gen Sec in SIPTU

RANK AND activist Des Derwin is standing for the position of General Secretary of SIPTU. Des Derwin, is President of the Electronics and Engineering Branch, a shop-floor worker and an experienced activist.

He is standing for

renewal and change in SIPTU. For a turn to independence, fighting-form and control from below by the general membership.

Action

As his campaign leaflet puts it, "The Unions should not be in partnership with the rich and powerful. It's time for an end to wage restraint".

Members need be able to lodge substantial claims on their own employers. Our public sector members should be able to reject the Benchmarking report and seek better deals.

The union has got to oppose privatisations with action as well as words. Its time the National Minimum Wage was upped to €8 an hour.

Contact Des' campaign at 0876229686 or dderwin@gofree.indigo.ie

Increased

They managed to sell a deal to the workers before closure that increased workload and allowed Ardagh to use the extra produce to pay off remaining creditors.

The workers resistance has forced a nasty and hostile company to promise to pay a minimum, concerted action could have got a better deal. And action is still required to ensure that the company pays up what they have agreed.

The TEEU speaker at the march promised an hour long national stoppage in support of the IGB, lets hope this is carried out, and SIPTU should follow suit.

As a wife of one of the strikers put it, "At least Dick Turpin had the decency to wear a mask. As far as we are concerned there is no deal. We are entitled to the 5 weeks as the Labour court said and we won't be giving up until we get it".

"You have to question the validity of the Labour court if it can just be ignored like this. The company can't be allowed to get away with it. It's all lies."

DUBLIN DOCKLANDS

Dockland Authority "shafted" residents

DUBLIN DOCKLAND Development Association (DDDA) is made up of Taoiseach Bertie Ahern's cronies riding roughshod over local opinion, according to local residents.

cessful social integration and job creation.

In a letter to the DDDA, the group said the community had been "shafted" in the council reshuffle two months ago, approved by Fianna Fail's Environment Minister Noel Dempsey. Fay said: "We would have

made life hard for them, being too vociferous, speaking out about things in the past like Spencer Docks.

Now a whole sector is being disenfranchised. Whatever decisions they make in there without us, we will have to live with the consequences."

Ousted

The North Wall Community Association (NWCA) believes its chairman Gerry Fay, who served on the DDDA council and was a thorn in its side for five years, was ousted to make way for a softer "political appointee".

Picketing the DDDA's Custom House Quay offices on last month, the residents' group said it feared the DDDA council would cave in to pressure from developers and fail to ensure suc-

Waterford Regional Hospital

SIXTY-TWO junior doctors at Waterford Regional Hospital have voted to begin a work-to-rule in a row over changes to their working rosters.

The non-consultant hospital doctors say they will be forced to take the action next week as the roster changes would effect patient care and put doctors under more pressure.

The doctors voted unanimously yesterday for industrial action up to and including strike action.

The Irish Medical Organisation has warned management that the doctors will escalate their action to a strike if the dispute is not resolved.

Non-emergency surgery and clinics at the hospital will be disrupted if the work-to-rule goes ahead next Wednesday.

Nestle

SOME 70 workers at Nestle Confectionary manufacturing plant took strike action in July. Nestle have sold the factory to a new company, Fruitfield Foods, making 30 workers redundant.

ment bankers, director Michael Carey has already spoken the need to remove a 10 million euro overhead.

The redundancies have already led to some production lines losing 40 % of staff.

Nevertheless, workers in factory are in no mood to take this lying down, and the official strike, involving members of SIPTU, ATGWU and the Fitters

Union, is proving a 100% success.

Workers at the plant told Socialist Worker of their determination to fight the cynical move by the two companies,

"This is Nestle sticking two fingers to the Union, we have to all stick together, I've worked here for 20 years, and this how they show their thanks"

"Saving 10 million

Euros cant be done without attacking our working conditions"

As the economy starts to slow down, other companies will be looking at this drive to cheapen manufacturing by cutting workers standard of living.

It is vital that the unions continue to give a fighting lead to the wonderful determination shown by Nestle workers.

Guaranteed

For the remaining staff, present working conditions are guaranteed only until the end of March.

This means that after that time, pay, conditions, as well as years of service built up in the factory by workers over the years are up for grabs.

As well as that, the contracts of temporary staff are up at the end of December.

Casualise

Under the terms of the deal, Fruitfield will continue to make the Nestle range, but all the signs point to an attempt to casualise the factory.

Fruitfield is a new company, comprising of invest-

Corrib Gas

ACCORDING TO the Mayo News 24th July, the Irish Independent 23rd July and the Irish Times from the same date work on the Corrib gas project have been postponed.

Nevertheless the digging of a trench through the beach in Broad Haven Bay and the work on an access ramp went on regardless.

Enterprise Energy Ireland, who has been bought up by Shell Plc. recently, might rethink the whole project after An Bord Pleanala raised a whole series of concerns about the proposed onshore gas terminal at Belanaboy Bridge.

Enterprise Energy Ireland feels "It is prudent to postpone the laying of the offshore pipe-line until the status of the proposed onshore terminal site is confirmed."

Regardless of the insecurity concerning the site the company continues its work in the Corrib area.

Digging

This means in fact that they will go on digging up an Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) beach.

By digging a trench across the beach, which is refilled by each tide, they have destroyed the structure of the ground to such an extent, that they have created areas of quick-sand along the trench.

As the ramp down to the beach they dug out of a cliff turned out to be too steep, they are now in the process of digging more and more earth up and piling it up along the beach.

If any ordinary person were to leave a bag of rubbish lying around there they would be up in court for littering in an SAC, which should be under European protection.

Enterprise Energy Ireland/ Shell Plc. actually got the go-ahead from Duchas, the Heritage Service responsible for the protection of the Special Areas of Conservation in Ireland.

It is not clear, if or where the gas terminal will be build nor where the pipe-line will go on-shore. But it is clear that the beach is irreversibly destroyed.

Socialist Worker

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After the murder of Gerard Lawlor ...

WORKERS
TOGETHER
CAN BEAT
THE THUGS

"ITS GONE back to the old days", that is how Sean, a council worker described the situation in north Belfast. "Every day when I go to work I really don't know if I'll be coming home again. The fear is real, a lot of people are scared about being shot."

Gunned Down

Just a few days after Sean spoke to *Socialist Worker* another man was gunned down while walking home from the bar.

Gerard Lawlor was only 19 and his only crime was to wear a football strip leaving behind and 18 month old child.

This murder is just another in a long catalogue of sectarian attacks carried out by the ultra sectarian "Ulster Defence Association", and its affiliated organisation the UFF, in the last eighteen months.

Within a mile of the murder scene lie flowers for two other young workers, Daniel McColgan and Gavin Brett, were shot dead while on their way to work.

As he reached the Rathcoole post office to start delivering letters Daniel McColgan was shot dead by a gunman in a car.

A similar fate reached Gavin Brett a year ago, shot dead because he was mistaken to be a catholic.

Joe, who lives in the area described to *Socialist Worker* how he felt, "I've decided to get out of here, it's far to dangerous."

Gauntlet

Every time I walk anywhere I have to continually look over my shoulder, I don't want to live like that."

The UDA/UFF have also been responsible for the terrorising of Catholics in the Larne area and the gauntlet of hatred that was school girls attending the holy cross primary school ran through daily for four months.

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