

Socialist Worker

€1.00/£0.70p

NO. 255 | FEBRUARY 16-MARCH 8 2006

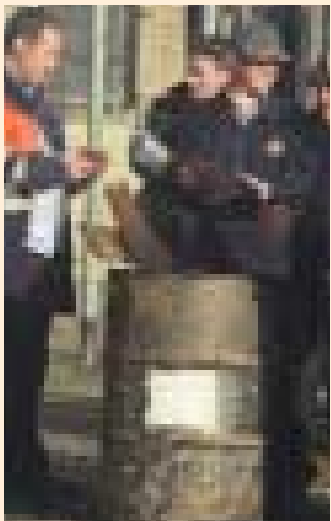
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Ballybrack builder says: No union members need apply



Bricklayers Andrew Clarke, Billy McClurg and Keith Kelly: locked up for standing up for their union rights.

PROTEST AT JAILING OF UNION ACTIVISTS

Bricklayers Billy McClurg, Andrew Clarke and Keith Kelly are the latest campaigners to be locked up for standing up for their union rights.

Like the Rosspoint Five, the Ballybrack Three have been imprisoned for refusing to comply with a court order denying them the right to peaceful protest.

Like the Mayo men, they too are being punished for demanding that their local community have a say in a local development and that basic health and safety standards and social legislation are adhered to.

The three men are part of a group of building workers who have been picketing a local authority housing site on Laurel Avenue in Ballybrack. The picket began after dozens of locals seeking work were told that no locals or trade unionists were wanted.

Builders in Ballybrack have a long tradition of defending their pay and conditions. During the

1970's, after a similar dispute on the original Laurel Avenue site, the local authority agreed that a proportion of the workforce on any public contract would have to come from the locality.

Also, under a legally binding agreement all building contractors are obliged to employ 'appropriate grades of Trade Union Labour'. Site developers Collen Construction are employing sub-contractors to run the site. They claim it is none of their business if the subbies are employing union men.

The sub-contracting system, known as C45, is leading to massive fraud on the building sites. It allows mega-profitable developers to wash their hands of any responsibility for pay and conditions. Sub contracting means 130,000 building workers do not receive basic entitlements.

Subbies can pocket up to half of the hourly rates for each of the men

underneath them. The government agency responsible for ensuring construction companies abide by legislation is, surprise surprise, critically understaffed. It has a backlog of 400 cases and only processes 100 a year.

So the Ballybrack development will have been long finished by the time it comes up for inspection.

This is a typical Catch-22 situation under the cowboy Fianna Fail/PD government. A situation that benefits the rich and powerful.

In this Banana Republic with its madcap ministers obsessed with laws, fines, and prisons, natural justice has been stood on its head.

Those who flout the law are backed by the police and the courts. Those who demand that laws be adhered to are put behind bars.

Speaking from inside Mountjoy, Billy McClurg vowed to fight on saying "Our action is about the fact that Collen's and other employers

are evading their legal responsibilities and discriminating against trade union members.

"We hope our actions will expose the fact that developers like Collen are not complying with their obligations.

"We're determined to carry on until we get justice."

We hope that the working class heroes Billy, Andrew and Keith are the first of many in 2006 to take a stand against the tide of greed, corruption and injustice engulfing Ireland.

We call on all who want basic rights and freedoms protected to unite behind them.

Their cause is just. Their victory will be all of ours.

**BRICKIES JAILED—BUT
COMPANY BREAKS LAW
WITH IMPUNITY**
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BRICKIES JAILED: BUT COMPANY BREAKS LAW WITH IMPUNITY

Collen Construction are one of Ireland's largest and most profitable building companies. They have also been involved in a long running dispute with BATU about the use of sub-contractors on their sites. They have even been granted a general injunction against BATU banning the union from picketing any of their sites.

But Collen itself can break the law – and suffers few consequences.

In June 2001 An Bord Pleanala upheld an appeal by an the artist James Hanley against the demolition of the neo-classical Wiggins Teape factory building in East Wall by Collen Construction. The factory was one of only a few of its kind in Ireland.

Three days after the Bord Pleanala hearing Collen Construction sent in the bulldozers to demolish the factory.

The demolition was widely condemned by architectural societies and heritage enthusiasts, and was described in the Dail by Tony Gregory TD as 'an act of outrageous vandalism'.

Collen Construction suffered no consequence for this illegal and malicious property destruction. Unbelievably they were later granted permission to go ahead with the lucrative construction of an enormous office complex on the site, 1800 square feet of which was reserved for their own luxurious headquarters.

In 2003 Collen Construction was fined sixty thousand euro for breaching health and safety legislation on a site in the Curragh army camp Co Kildare.

Their law breaking and negligence in this case led to the death of one building worker on the site in 2001.

In a speech in the Combat Training college in January 2003 Fianna Fail TD Minister Michael Smith praised Collen Construction for their work on the site.

Needless to say no mention was made of the worker their criminal negligence killed.

It seems that in the case of Collen Construction breaking the law is to be rewarded with praise and profit.

Despite their own criminal record, Collen Construction have never been shy of asking for the law's help.

And the law has never been shy of giving it.

Back in 2002 BATU ran a number of pickets and protests at Collen sites around Dublin as part of their larger, and highly successful, campaign to force the larger construction companies to do away with the C45 system and directly employ building workers.

Fearful of having to pay fair wages and ensure fair working conditions, Collen called in the courts and 17 BATU members were arrested and hauled before the courts in January 2003 for defying an injunction against picketing a site on North Circular Road.

The 17 builders were fined 250 euro each.

BREAKING REGISTERED EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

According to the Registered Employment Agreement for the construction industry signed in late 2005 by the Construction Industry Federation, of which Collen Construction is a member, all building contractors must employ 'the appropriate grade of trade union labour'.

Yet none of the men employed by Collen construction or by their sub contractors Quinn

Construction and AMS are members of a trade union.

Clearly Collen are breaking the agreement by refusing to employ trade union members on the Ballybrack site.

Health and safety legislation is also being breached on the Laurel Avenue Site in the following ways.

■ Many men are not wearing helmets.

■ Contrary to normal planning legislation, site entrances leading onto residential areas are not clearly marked.

■ Heavy vehicles are using these entrances endangering the safety of local residents.

■ Piles of gravel and cement are being left outside the site boundary in the surrounding residential area and not being cleaned up, again

clearly endangering locals, particularly local children.

The Dun-Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council and the Health and Safety Authority should launch a joint investigation into Collen's illegal practices at the Ballybrack site and elsewhere.

Meanwhile the three bricklayers who have highlighted these issues should be released.

A bad case of Injunctivitis

Injunctions are fast becoming the authorities favourite weapon against peaceful protesters.

Any institution targeted by protests can apply to the High Court for an injunction against protesters.

Protesters are then liable for indefinite imprisonment and/or large fines.

In the recent past they have been used against trade unionists, bin tax campaigners, and heritage campaigners opposing the demolition of Carrickmines Castle.

It is part of this government's general strategy of criminalising of protest.

Local authorities have also effectively banned posters advertising demonstrations and political meetings.

Dozens of anti war protesters have been hauled before the courts for opposing George Bush's illegal war.

Trade unionists are banned from sympathy strikes by the 1990 Industrial Relations Act.

The only answer to this criminalisation of protest is more protest.

The Rosspoint Five successfully defied an injunction last year when, after over 90 days in prison, a nationwide protest movement forced the courts to back down and release them.

The corrupt C45 system.

The C45 system is at the root of the dispute in Ballybrack. The C45 is issued to sub-contractors so anyone hired on that basis is considered to be self-employed and therefore not entitled to holiday pay, travel time, subsistence, or any of the other hard-won rights which workers in direct employment can expect.

It is similar to outsourcing in other industries and means that over 50% of Ireland's building workers are not receiving their basic entitlements.

It also leads to enormous tax evasion on building sites as a nod and a wink system ensures that developers do not check if their sub-contractors employees are all registered.

Safety is also compromised by the C45 system. Last year, for example, building site accidents leapt by 40%.

Unions such as BATU and SIPTU are campaigning for direct employment on building sites.

How the Ballybrack campaign has grown



Bricklayers and their supporters protest at the court

On Wednesday 25th of January Bricklayers addressed a meeting of Dun Laoghaire People before Profit alliance, part a new national alliance of campaigners.

They told the meeting of 25 activists that dozens of local men were being denied the right to work at a local authority site on Laurel avenue run by Collen construction, who were refusing to take on locals or trade union members.

The meeting voted unanimously to support their campaign for a proportion of local labour to be employed on the site, and for Collen Construction to abide by the law and employ trade union members.

On Tuesday the 31st of January Richard Boyd Barrett of Dun Laoghaire People before Profit and bricklayer Keith Kelly met with representatives of Collen Construction. Collen

refused to budge.

On Thursday the 2nd of February pickets were placed on the site by bricklayers and Dun Laoghaoire People Before Profit. The site was shut down as workers refused to cross the picket. Deliveries were also stopped.

Collen construction then applied for a High Court injunction against protest. The injunction named seven protesters, though there were

many more involved in the picket.

On Thursday 9th of February Billy McClurg, Andrew Clarke and Keith Kelly were subpoenaed and brought before the high court.

They were given a day to back down from their protest. On Friday the 10th, they refused to do so and were sent to prison.

At the High Court on Friday Richard Boyd Barrett of the

Dun Laoghair People before Profit Alliance, spokesperson for the Ballybrack Three, said:

"Billy, Keith and Andrew are in jail because of the greed of firms like Collen who want to use bogus sub-contractors to undermine union rights and slash wages and conditions for workers.

"This isn't just a fight for local employment this is a fight for jobs with decent pay and conditions for all"

WHAT YOU CAN DO

■ Building workers should start organising to come out in solidarity with their imprisoned colleagues. Pressurise your union to call a national strike in support of the Ballybrack three

A victory for the Ballybrack Three would be a major setback for the sub-contracting system and

would benefit all building workers.

■ Other trade union members should also pressurize for solidarity for the imprisoned builders. Pass motions at local branches and trades councils calling for the release of the Ballybrack Three. Back any actions called.

■ Community campaigners should launch local support groups for the Ballybrack three. Leaflet local building sites and other workplaces with the details of the campaign. Hold public meetings with spokespeople for the campaign.

■ Call Richard at 087 6329511 for speakers.

US planning bombing raids on Iran



Iranian cities are facing US bombing raids

The Sunday Telegraph, which has close connections to Britain's intelligence services, has revealed that Central Command and Strategic Commanders at the Pentagon are drawing up targets for bombing raids on Iran.

They are reporting to the office of Donald Rumsfeld but according to one senior Pentagon advisor who spoke to the paper, 'This is more than just the standard contingency assessment. This has taken on much greater urgency in recent months'.

Bush's war threats against Iran are particularly dangerous because nuclear weapons could be used.

Early in 2002, a secret Pentagon

report to Congress on its "Nuclear Posture Review" named Iran as one of seven countries against which nuclear weapons might be used "in the event of surprising military developments".

Last year, the US delivered 500 'bunker busting bombs' to Israel and these could also be used if Israel becomes the proxy for the attack on Iran.

The new build up the war follows a carefully stage-managed pattern. The US has twisted arms at the UN Security Council to get a resolution through threatening Iran with sanctions if they do not desist from employing nuclear power.

The hypocrisy here is astounding.

Iran has complied with its obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty to allow inspectors to "go anywhere and see anything"—unlike the US and Israel. The latter has not only refused to recognise the NPT, but has between 200 and 500 thermonuclear weapons targeted at Iran and other Middle Eastern states.

In the past, Iran has bent over backwards to co-operate with the US. It supplied the US military with intelligence material during their occupation of Afghanistan. But when the US refused to respond to requests for broader negotiations, it started to look to other options.

The timing of a US attack may be



related to Iran's decision to re-schedule its petrodollars into euros. The effect on the dollar could be significant as the US economy is presently buoyed up by financial injections from countries such as China. Currently, the US has a national debt exceeding 8 trillion dollars and a trade deficit of \$600 billion.

The fact that oil is traded in dollars rather than euros is critical for the ability of the US to maintain a huge military machine while up to its neck in debt.

The Pentagon knows it will not be able to occupy all of Iran because it is bogged down by a resistance movement in Iraq. But it has in its sights a strip of land that runs along the border with Iraq.

This is Khuzestan, home to 90 per cent of Iran's oil. "The first step taken by an invading force," reported Beirut's Daily Star, "would be to occupy Iran's oil-rich Khuzestan Province, securing the sensitive Straits of Hormuz and cutting off the Iranian military's oil supply."

On 28 January the Iranian govern-

ment said that it had evidence of British undercover attacks in Khuzestan, including bombings, over the past year.

The atmosphere for an attack is being carefully choreographed by a ratcheting up in propaganda attacks against 'extreme' Islamic governments and movements. But anti-war activists should not fall for this racist campaign.

Britain and the US have absolutely no right to tell Iran how to behave because for more than half a century they have menaced Iran.

In 1953, the CIA and MI6 overthrew the democratic government of Muhammed Mossadeq, a nationalist leader who believed that Iranian oil belonged to Iran.

They installed the Shah whose position was only secured by the Savak, one of the most vicious secret police forces in the world.

Now once again they are behaving like colonial over-lords.

These new moves to war make the global day of action against war all the more important.

RINGSSEND INFLICT BLOW AGAINST BIN CHARGES



Ringsend locals organise to beat non-collection

By Brid Smith

Thanks to the residents of the New Houses Dublin City Council's plans to implement non-collection was defeated. Three weeks ago Matt Twoomey, the assistant city manager claimed that non-collection was going to be implemented all over Dublin City. But the people of the New Houses in Ringsend have helped stop the council in their plan!

Last Tuesday the City Council tried to use a two and half year old injunction against residents to stop them throwing rubbish in the back of the truck. They called the Gardai to enforce the injunction but the Gardai refused to enforce it because it

doesn't apply to throwing rubbish in the back of trucks.

Mr Hendrix the Council official had to leave the area with his tail between his legs. Each Tuesday for the past two weeks, residents have come out and followed the bin truck and thrown bags of uncollected waste into the truck. Resident's have stuck together and more people are coming out each time to take part.

Last week the computerised trucks rejected a number of bins and had an orange label attached. We removed the plastic bags from those and threw them onto the back of the lorry. Excess bags were thrown in also.

It is six years since the residents of Dublin City were told

that they would have to pay a waste charge or their bins would be left in the streets.

Since then the campaign has withstood debt collectors and the courts, seeing people give up their freedom but also proving that the charges were illegal and anti-environmental.

The campaign is winning the cases in the courts and we should be confident that people power can beat this unjust double tax.

Ringsend has shown how to fight non-collection and will continue to meet every Tuesday morning to respond to the council and make sure that their area is kept clean and safe despite the Council and their bullying management.

Support grows for Joanne Delaney

Joanne Delaney who was sacked from Dunnes Stores in Crumlin for refusing to remove her union badge is receiving tremendous support from the local community in Crumlin and from trade unionists at home and abroad.

On 7th February a campaign was launched in the Village Inn in Crumlin to build widespread support for Joanne's cause.

Over sixty people from left wing groups, trade unions and crucially the local community signed up to support Joanne and to organise a series of protests to highlight her case.

The first protest was supported by over forty people who picketed the Ashleaf Shopping Centre where Joanne had worked for Dunnes Stores.

Joanne told Socialist Worker about the campaign:

"The support has been brilliant. I had high expectations before we set up the campaign but it has been much better than I could have hoped.

"Joan Collins the councillor has been great and local people have turned out twice now to picket the shopping centre.

"The Friday night was organised by Labour Youth with about forty people and Saturday was organised by the support group with about sixty on the picket.

"People were just amazing and brought along their kids and all to support me. The support has definitely strengthened me.

"I will be speaking at a Sinn Fein conference and the Dublin Council of Trade



Joanne Delaney: Union traditions in family

Unions. My union Mandate have been helping with the publicity and printing stickers and leaflets.

"And I am definitely getting out to support the builders from Ballybrack who were jailed.

"My own dad is a union activist and bricklayer in BATU. There's good trade union traditions in my family."

Joanne case is awaiting a hearing in the Employment Appeals Tribunal. Meantime there are plans for further pickets and protests to the Dunnes Stores Management.

Tralee SWP Marxist Forum

Breaking Corporate Power in Ireland

Speaker: Kieran McNulty
Venue: Rubbin's Cafe, Ashe Street.
Thursday, February 23rd., 6.30pm.
All welcome.

HATE SPEECH IS NOT FREE SPEECH

Cartoon caricatures were designed to offend...

Jyllands-Posten, the Danish right wing paper that first published the racist caricatures of the prophet Mohammed, is not so committed to freedom of speech as to hate speech and hypocrisy.

It refused to print a cartoon of the resurrection of Jesus in 2003 because it feared that publication of the cartoon would provoke anger among Christians.

And in 1984 it campaigned against the artist Jens Jørgen Thorsen, who was commissioned by a local art club to paint the wall of a railway station. The work showed a naked Jesus with an erect penis.

The paper has shown no such sensitivity towards Muslims. Last September a news story appeared claiming that the writer Kåre Bluitgen was unable to find an illustrator prepared to work on his children's book about Islam.

Blutigen said that artists feared attacks if they illustrated the book. In fact the third artist asked to illustrate the book had agreed to do so.

On 30 September, Jyllands-Posten published its 12 caricatures, under the headline "The Face Of Mohammed". Accompanying them was an article by Flemming Rose, Jyllands-Posten's culture editor, claiming, "Modern, secular society is rejected by some Muslims.

"They demand a special position, insisting on special consideration of their own religious feelings. It is incompatible with contemporary democracy and freedom of speech."

One cartoon purported to show the prophet Mohammed with a bomb in his turban, another showed him on a cloud, greeting dead suicide bombers with the words: "Stop, stop, we have run out of virgins!"

The racist provocation by Jyllands-Posten is just the latest episode in the paper's right wing history.

When the fascist Benito Mussolini came to power in Italy in 1922, the paper wrote, "The very strong man, that Mussolini absolutely is, is exactly what the misruled Italian people need."

In 1933 the paper argued for dictatorship in Denmark, saying, "We must assume that a majority of the voters wish for dictatorship as the only solution to the administration of the state."

More recently, Jyllands-Posten has lent its support to right wing forces in Danish politics. On 16 March 1992 Henrik Christenson, a leading member of Socialist Worker's sister organisation in Denmark was killed by a bomb planted by Nazis. The right wing press in Denmark initially claimed that Henrik had been making explosives.

In the 2001 election, Jyllands-Posten played a crucial role in support of the victorious right wing Venstre party. It has since supported the governing coalition led by prime minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen – which includes the rabidly anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim Danish People's Party.

A number of its journalists have been employed as "spin doctors" by the government.



Islam is a very diverse culture unlike the racist stereotype promoted in the West

A climate of Islamophobia

The cartoons were published amid a climate of growing anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant racism in Denmark. In September 2004, a new immigration act was passed specifically in order to make it harder for Muslims to enter the country.

Islamophobia runs through the establishment. In April last year, an authorised biography of Queen Margrethe expressed her view that Danish people should oppose Islam.

A few months later Danish member of parliament Louise Frevert, a leading member of the Danish People's Party, claimed that young Muslims believe that it is their right to rape and assault Danes.

A 2004 political pamphlet by Frevert also claimed that Muslims secretly planned to take over Denmark.

The Danish People's Party MEP Mogens Camre recently said of Muslims, "There is a straight line from the most despicable racist to he who circumcises his daughter, forces his wife to wear the headscarf, and to he who in religious fanaticism takes a passenger plane into the World Trade Centre."

According to Jorn Anderson of Internationale Socialister, Socialist Workers' sister organisation in Denmark, "There is a danger of a major racist backlash and further growth of the far right.

"How things develop will depend very much on the response from the left. A united mobilisation by the left and Muslim organisations would provide a focus for those many people whose disgust with increased racism in this country has grown considerably."

Freedom of Expression?

Socialists condemn unequivocally the publication of racist cartoons designed to demean Muslims.

If newspaper had asserted their 'freedom' to print images that compared Jewish people to rats, there would have been an outrage.

Or if images were presented of Nelson Mandela in thick lips and other racist stereotypes there would be equal outrage.

But in a totally spurious assertion of 'liberal values' major newspapers in Europe have re-printed racist cartoons in the name of 'freedom of speech'.

The current hysteria about the Muslim population has nothing to do with free speech. Instead we are witnessing a carefully orchestrated campaign to present Muslims as 'outsiders' from Western society.

There is no absolute right to free speech. No one, for example, defends the right of paedophiles to advocate child abuse. Few people think it is a good idea to deliberately shout 'Fire' in a manner that might cause a stampede among crowds.

The call for 'free speech' was, and is, a legitimate demand to create a space where people can express themselves without fear of sanction from authorities. But it was never about whipping up a hate speech that can only serve to stimulate violent attacks on minority groups.

It fits neatly with the racist agenda that underlies a whole epoch that is characterised by the 'War on Terror'.

Ever since September 11th, the imperialist powers have encouraged islamophobia to cover their new ambitions to expand by conquest. Deprived of an enemy in the communist block, Islam was caricatured and attacked so that it could be turned into a substitute scapegoat to unite populations around Western values.

Part of this construction meant portraying Western society as a haven for liberal discussion and debate – in contrast to the supposed fanaticism of Islam.

This binary opposition was false from the very start. The very same Western liberals who rush so actively to defend free speech are silent when a trade unionist gets sacked for wearing a union badge.

The Independent Group of newspapers which now champions its freedom to insult Muslims, censored one its own reporters when she made critical comments on the Irish Ferries dispute. Freedom for these hypocrites extends only to their supposed right to insult and demean oppressed groups – rather than the right to challenge the right of capitalists to own ideas and modes of expression.

Just as Bush tries to wrap his discredited war in the name of democracy, the liberal imperialists now try to target Muslims in the name of 'free speech'. Liberalism here is supposed to be a badge of intelligence that is contrasted with

unthinking, "fanatical" Muslim masses.

The parading of Christianity or Western civilisation as innately more superior to other societies is disgusting.

The level of freedom in any society is not dictated by particular religious texts – but by histories of struggles and the particular conditions under which they develop. Muslim society in 10th century Spain was much freer than Christian civilisation at the time. But that did not make Islam as a religion superior to Christianity.

Socialists are for the right to subject every idea – including religious ideas – to critical scrutiny. We are for the right to debate the existence or non-existence of God. We defend the idea of a separation of Church and state.

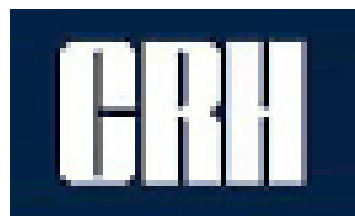
We are opposed to religious fundamentalism and have nothing to do with groups who call for unbelievers to be 'beheaded'. We are against abusing the victims of the Holocaust in 'revenge' cartoons.

But when it comes to a fight between a deadly form of imperialism that masks its racism with talk of free speech, we know where we stand: with the oppressed: against the racists.

Today as the US and its deadly watchdog, prepare for new attacks on Iran, we need to be even clearer on this issue.

CEMENT ROADSTONE HOLDINGS

The Octopus at the heart of Corporate Ireland



Without much fanfare, Cement Roadstone celebrated a big achievement in January when it made over €1 billion in profits. The company has grown to be the fourth largest supplier of cement and building materials in the world. But behind its success is a story of politics and intrigue that blow apart many of the myths of the market.

The company was founded in 1932 by Tom Roche but its growth depended on close links with republican politics – only this time it was the Fianna Fail brand.

In order to encourage native capitalism, Fianna Fail advocated protectionism and state regulation in the 1930s. Licences were deemed necessary to produce cement in Ireland and in 1936 only one company was given the licence – Cement Ltd. It has held that licence until very recently.

In 1969, Cement Ltd was taken over by Roadstone to become Cement Roadstone Holding or CRH. The person who brokered the deal was Des Traynor, Charlie Haughey's financial advisor who also joined the board. The first chairman of the new amalgamated company was Sean Lemass, who had resigned as FF Taoiseach in 1966.

According to the neo-liberals, capitalism is supposed to work by pure market competition. The growth of stock market and cries for 'shareholder value' is supposed to dictate a competitive mentality that encourages a constant drive to efficiency.

However, neo-liberalism is a fanatical dogma which distorts how the system actually works. Real existing capitalism typically operates through the forging of a close alliance of the political and economic elite. The story of CRH shows exactly how it works.

THE WEB OF POWER

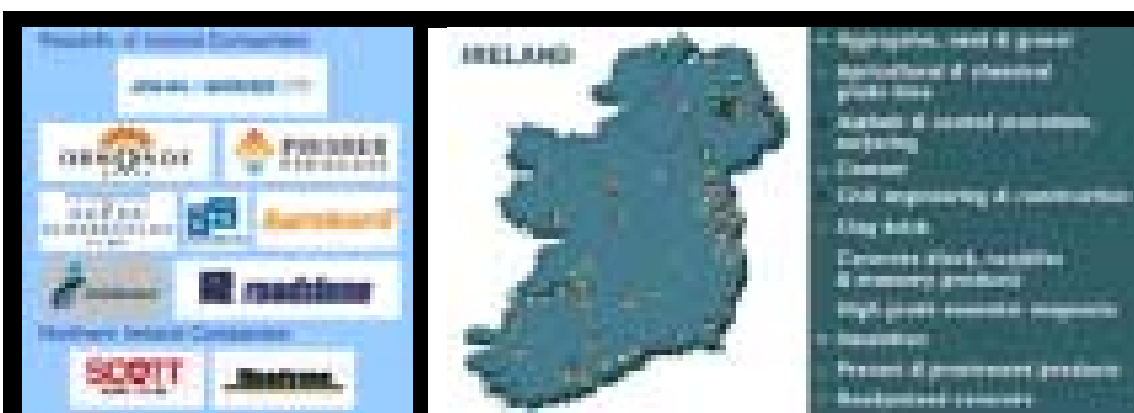
CRH's monopoly over cement supplies and its ties to the FF republican elite allowed it to infiltrate the banks and fuse its interests with their.

Typically, the company set up a system of interlocking directors who floated between different sectors of the economy. Jim Culliton, who was chairman of CRH from 1974 to 1987 was also a director of the Allied Irish Banks from 1984 to 1996. Don Godson, was a director of CRH since 1980 and also sat on the board of the AIB since 1980. Peter Sutherland was director of CRH from 1989 to 1993 – while he was also chair of AIB.

This merging of interests meant that company could mobilise huge financial power to wipe out competitors.

Throughout the country small quarry owners have found themselves squeezed as CRH took them over – often with the help of bank who helped to disguise the ownership web that linked back to CRH.

The growth of economic power fed back into money to buy over key parts of the political system.



Illegally dumped rubbish in County Wicklow

Eight directors of CRH (Tony Barry, Jim Culliton, Michael Dargan, Gerard Hickey, Diramuid Quirke, Des Traynor, Robert Wallies and Richard Wood) were all clients of this illegal tax dodging bank.

In 1987, Des Traynor became chairperson of CRH, and opened up an illegal bank at its company headquarters, which later became known as the Ansbacher bank. The level of state protection CRH enjoyed meant that the whole thing was done openly. Letters which contained cheques to be salted away in illegal tax dodging schemes were simply sent to Traynor at the CRH headquarters.

Eight directors of CRH (Tony Barry, Jim Culliton, Michael Dargan, Gerard Hickey, Diramuid Quirke, Des Traynor, Robert Wallies and Richard Wood) were all clients of this illegal tax dodging bank. Yet despite the fact that this represented a majority of the board of the CRH, the inspectors sent in by Mary Harney to investigate this affair concluded that CRH did not aid or abet Ansbacher.

With this level of economic and political power, CRH has brazenly milked the system for everything it was worth. Its history is riddled with the grossest corruption.

HOW THE STATE LOOKS AFTER CRH

The Irish state has favoured and continues to favour CRH in a variety

of ways.

■ **Glen Ding:** In 1991, CRH acquired Glen Ding from the state, without the sale being put out to public tender. It got it for £1.25 million – even though it contained £70 million worth of gravel and sand reserves.

■ **State Quarries:** Other quarries on land held by the state-owned sugar company such as Barkey Hill quarry and Mount Nugent quarry were also sold off to CRH.

■ **ESB Waste Material:** The ESB produces a special waste material known as PFA – pulverised fuel ash – which can be used as a substitute for up to 35% of cement usage. It has signed an exclusive agreement to supply it to CRH.

■ **Licences for Dolomitic Material:** This is a scheduled mineral that is licenced for use by the state. The licence was operated by CRH.

■ **Pollution Charter:** CRH is one of the biggest culprits responsible for carbon emissions. Yet the Irish government and the EPA have allowed it to maintain its present quota of emissions and even added new quota for plants which are due to be built. The Irish taxpayer has to pick up the bill as the EU fines Ireland €300 million a year for breaches in emission levels laid down by Kyoto treaty.

■ **Cover Up:** When the heat came on CRH during the corruption scandals, elite elements within the state engaged in complicated manoeuvres to cover up their activities. When Frank Corcoran took a case against CRH over illegal dumping, the company's senior counsel was David Byrne. Byrne subsequently went on to become Attorney General and was asked to select a judge for the Payments to Politicians Tribunal. He selected Judge Moriarty, who just happened to have half a million shares in CRH and who made it clear he could not investigate corruption cases involving this company because of a clash of interests.

DIRTY BUSINESS

State support for CRH has allowed it to engage in a host of dirty dealings which has exposed the real nature of Irish capitalism.

The company has been involved in a host of illegal dumps in Wicklow which it then tried to legitimise by seeking a landfill licence on the sites. Only a vigorous local campaign has forced the Environmental Protection Agency to refuse permission.

CRH has also tried to establish dumps and quarrying activities on aquifers that lie close to the Blessington water reservoir. The company has lied about these plans and again only a vigilant campaign has prevented them endangering the water supply for Dublin city itself.

In Drogheda, campaigners have long complained about the pollution from the Premier Periclase plant. This plant uses a special process which means that sulphuric and nitrous oxides billow out of its smoke stacks and discharges vast quantities of effluent. One result was that Drogheda had one of the highest rates of deaths from respiratory illness.

Further afield, CRH is currently a major shareholder in an Israeli cement company that is building an apartheid wall on Palestinian lands. It has been called to account by Amnesty International but so far has ignored all pleas.

In all these issues, it acts with impunity because it is confident of state backing.

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

When companies reach such a level of dominance that they bend the state to their will, they have to be brought to heel.

Either that or they threaten the very limited forms of democracy we live under.

CRH is a massive conglomerate that has been built on the back of corruption, state favouritism and overpricing. Today it is the key player in IBEC, the employers' organisation.

The resources and interests of this vast business empire should not be in the hands of a wealthy few but instead should be publicly owned and worked for the public good. That is why it should be nationalised.

THE NEO-LIBERAL transformation of Iraq is portrayed as a humanitarian venture. Western corporations and occupying governments now talk of the liberation of Iraq from the “tyranny of Saddam’s planned economy”.

On the day that major hostilities were declared over, Tony Blair told the Iraqi people, “Saddam Hussein and his regime plundered your nation’s wealth. While many of you live in poverty, they have the lives of luxury. The money from Iraqi oil will be yours—to be used to build prosperity for you and your families.”

This has turned out to be another shameless lie.

Saddam’s regime was undoubtedly corrupt, in the sense that he established a system of patronage and rewards for the elite that remained closest to him. But the scale and intensity of the corruption and fraud perpetrated by the occupation is unprecedented in modern history.

The largest part of the money spent by the US-British occupation was not US or international donor funds, but oil revenue that belongs to the Iraqi people. During the period of direct rule the US spent, or committed to spend, around £11.3 billion, most of which was disbursed to US corporations.

Of this expenditure, £5 billion is unaccounted for. From the available evidence we know that much of it has vanished into the hands of corporations, corrupt public officials and elite Iraqi deal fixers.

During 14 months of its existence the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA)—the body set up to rule Iraq and headed up by Bush favourite Paul Bremer—issued 100 legal orders by decree.

Those orders, implemented without the consent of Iraqi people, represent a pure form of neo-liberal orthodoxy that has had profound and irreversible consequences for the Iraqi economy.

The explicit aim was to promote fast



Two officials from Custer Battles pose with \$100,000 “cash bricks” of \$100 notes. The \$2 million was hauled off in duffel bags

CORPORATE PLUND

*The looting of Iraq’s oil wealth is unprecedented in the history of corporate crime, writes criminologist **Dave Whyte***

entry into Iraq’s oil rich economy. CPA Order 12, implemented a month after George Bush declared major hostilities over, suspended customs and duty charges on goods entering the country.

Within a few days of the order being passed, mass produced chicken legs were dumped on the Iraqi economy by US companies, forcing the market price of chicken down to 71p a kilogram, below the cheapest price that Iraqi producers could sustain.

Those chicken legs were surplus to the US market because the average American prefers breast meat. Before the invasion, those chicken legs would have most likely been sold as pet food.

Order 39 permitted full foreign ownership of a wide range of state owned assets.

The intention is that over 200 state owned enterprises—including electricity, telecommunications and the pharmaceuticals industry—will be sold off, permitting 100 percent foreign ownership of banks, mines and factories. The decree allowed these firms to move their profits out of the country.

Order 81 created a patent regime to ensure that agriculture would depend on foreign agri-biotech firms. It outlawed the sharing of seeds, forcing farmers to use the protected varieties sold to them by transnational corporations.

There can be no doubt that the occupation has presided over a progressive weakening of Iraq’s industrial and

commercial base.

The biggest scandal involves reconstruction contracts.

In one period between 2003 and 2004, more than 80 percent of prime contracts were given to US firms, with the remainder split between British, Australian, Italian, Israeli, Jordanian and Iraqi firms.

One source estimates the total received by Iraqi firms during the CPA’s rule at around 2 percent.

The CPA managed to concentrate funds in the hands of US firms by issuing non-competitive bids. From records of expenditure we can estimate that around 66 percent of contracts between April 2003 and April 2004 were issued non-competitively to hand-picked favourite companies.

Smash and grab

The restructuring of the Iraqi economy is best characterised as a “smash and grab” operation.

The “smash” involved the imposition of a set of administrative instruments which established US and other western contractors as the prime agents of reconstruction thus marginalising and undermining Iraqi capital.

The appropriation (the “grab”) of Iraq’s oil wealth ensured that the rapid entry of foreign capital was underwritten by Iraqi revenue. It has been executed with a guarantee of immunity.

On the same day that the CPA came into being, Bush signed Executive Order

13303 which exempted the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI)—the agency set up to distribute reconstruction contracts—from all legal proceedings and judicial oversight. The order effectively granted the CPA immunity from prosecution and judicial interference.

The CPA kept no list of companies it issued contracts to, and it had no system for metering the oil that it exported and sold. Officials were authorised to disperse revenue with little or no adequate system of monitoring or accounting.

Very deliberately the US delayed the establishment of auditing bodies and then refused to cooperate with their inquiries.

A full 11 months after the CPA took control of the Iraqi economy, they appointed Stuart Bowden, a close associate of Bush, to audit the authority. Bowden served Bush in the Texas governor’s office in the early 1990s and latterly as a White House official.

Despite the fact that the dice was loaded in favour of the CPA, the US and UN audit reports that eventually appeared still read like a textbook of corporate accounting fraud.

Iraqi oil revenue was flown in to the CPA in \$100 dollar bills, shrink wrapped in \$100,000 (£57,000) bundles of “cash bricks”. One CPA official has described how cash was distributed to contractors from the back of a lorry.

The use of cash payments enabled the CPA to distribute the reconstruction

funds without leaving a paper trail.

One review found that a payment made by the CPA to the Kurdish regional government for £794 million was entered under the budget heading “transfer payments”.

The Kurdish authorities insisted that the money was not spent but could not provide any evidence to support this. It was widely reported that this payment was delivered by Blackhawk helicopters to a courier in the Kurdish city of Erbil who subsequently disappeared.

Apparently no one even bothered to record the courier’s name.

One audit found 37 contracts totalling more than £105 million for which no contracting files could be located. It noted a case where an unauthorised advance of almost £1.7 million was paid out by a CPA senior advisor, and a case in which the CPA appointed head of the ministry of health could not account for £346,000 worth of spending under his direct control.

A total of £5 billion of Development Fund for Iraq funds cannot be properly accounted for.

Iraqi business people report that they had to pay “middle men” substantial bribes even to be allowed to bid for contracts.

The routine kickbacks and bribes demanded by the CPA officials fuelled a culture of corporate corruption.

The lack of basic record keeping and monitoring, and the culture of cash

‘One official described how cash was distributed from the back of a lorry’

Gatekeepers of Baghdad

THE LARGEST part of the billions of dollars in reconstruction funds were disbursed to the US prime contractors.

The prime contractors include Kellogg, Brown and Root (a subsidiary of Halliburton), Parsons Delaware, Fluor Corporation, Washington Group, Bechtel Group, Contrack International, Louis Berger and Perini.

The prime contractors act as "gatekeepers", controlling entry into the Iraqi market.

Almost all of the foreign delegates at the Rebuild Iraq 2005 conference held in Jordan were doing business with US prime contractors rather than with Iraqi firms.

According to the British delegations, not one deal was tied up with an Iraqi business over the four days.

When William Lash, the US undersecretary of state for commerce, finished his presentation to the 2005 conference, he was confronted by Assad al-Khudhairi, the head of the Iraqi Contractors Federation.

Al-Khudhairi castigated the occupation for the damage done to the economy and complained that "product dumping" had forced 25,000 local businesses to the wall.

£4.5bn

The value of contracts awarded to Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg, Brown and Root in Iraq for 2003

£1.4bn

Moeller-Maersk profits for 2004. The Danish company was awarded the contract to run Iraq's major oil terminal. It sacked the local workers and replaced them with foreign labour

£386m

The value of contracts awarded to the Bechtel Group. The contracts will eventually be worth around £56.7 billion, to be paid from Iraqi oil revenues

ER OF IRAQ

handouts that emerged inside the CPA, created fertile conditions for corporate crime to flourish.

Bags of cash

In one of the most reported cases, the private military firm Custer Battles collected £8.5 million to provide security for Iraq's civilian airline.

Custer Battles was one of hundreds of firms that were set up specifically to get a slice of the war spoils. This company was established by Mike Battle and Scott Custer, reputedly a descendant of general George Custer of Little Big Horn fame.

One CPA official giving evidence to a US senate committee, told Custer Battles to "bring a bag" to pick up their cash.

He produced a picture of two company officials smiling to the camera as they loaded up duffel bags with over £1.1 million of Iraqi oil money.

Custer Battles never did the job they were contracted for, but ran off with the cash, using it instead to set up barrack accommodation for cheap imported labourers that they hired out to other Western firms.

Over-charging was routine in reconstruction contracts.

An audit of Kellogg, Brown and Root's (KBR) contract to restore Iraqi oil fields found £61 million in "unresolved costs" (spending that had not been properly accounted for).

In one incident KBR charged the US army more than £15.3 million for transporting £46,500 worth of fuel from Kuwait.

This was merely one in a long line of audits that uncovered millions of dollars worth of discrepancies.

The firm implicated in the Abu Ghraib tortures, CACI International, was accused by the US General Accounting Office of billing for inflated employee hours and falsely upgrading job descriptions to inflate the wage bill.

Ghost armies of employees are everywhere in Iraq and payrolls are inflated as a matter of routine.

Institutionalised corruption in occupied Iraq has been, purely and simply, a technique of neo-liberal domination. The economic occupation has used fraud and corruption to underwrite the economic occupation in precisely the same way that torture and assassination have been used to perpetuate the military occupation.

The invasion of Iraq was a brutal act of criminal violence on the part of Bush and Blair.

This war crime has been sustained by the systematic economic criminality of the occupying governments and their corporations.

Dave Whyte is a lecturer in criminology at the University of Stirling. To read **Cash from Chaos**, Dave Whyte's reports on corporate crime in Iraq, go to www.dass.stir.ac.uk/staff/d-whyte/davewhyte.php

'A total of £5 billion of Development Fund for Iraq funds cannot be accounted for'

NO WARPLANES IN SALTHILL!



British RAF Panavia Tornado F.3 on display

The Galway Alliance Against War (GAAW) campaign to have warplanes excluded from the Salthill Air-Show is growing. A recent showing of film "Fallujah, the Hidden Massacre" brought fifty people to a meeting in NUIG. Later that evening the film was shown to a full audience in the Town Hall theatre, with people being turned away at the door.

Each year the annual air-show is held as a tourist attraction. The €15,000 funding from the city budget for the show was debated at the last Council meeting for 2005.

It provided a perfect opportunity for the council to embrace sentiments of peace and vote down this financial fillip that sees US/UK warplanes scream through Galway skies.

Anti-war activists held a protest outside to lobby all councillors, and each was handed a letter asking them to rescind the funding if warplanes were to be included in the next show. Most letters were politely accepted, the exception being PD Cllr. Lyons.

His response was to aggressively refuse to take the correspondence and threaten the delegation's spokesperson. Nine residents of the South Ward, Lyons' own patch, were at the demonstration but what an outstanding example of people's representation and democracy he gave!

Labour Party Cllr. Cameron put forward a motion conveying the campaign's demands. The three other Labour councillors, SF Cllr. Callanan, and Green Cllr. O'Brolchain, backed this. But the motion was defeated 6 votes to 9.

The right wing councillors were not impressed by the argument that the war show glorifies war and that by funding it Galway City Council are giving approval to the warplanes murderous acts and sanction the wasteful arms industry.

PD Cllr. O'Flaherty didn't think the funding was adequate as the show attracted visitors. Maybe she is not concerned that while 100,000 punters were being titillated at Salthill last June by RAF Tornados and US Blackhawk helicopters, the town of Karbila in western Iraq was deserted.

The inhabitants fled due to the presence in their skies of RAF Tornados and US Blackhawk helicopters. There they were not puffing coloured smoke, they were carrying their normal cargoes of death.

It certainly took our local bookie, FG Cllr. Mulholland to bring the debate down to earth when he described it as a "great money spinner", for the business community of course.

This year there appears to be a tangible amount of disagreement over the inclusion of these warplanes at the show and the financial allocation out of the City's budget. The Galway Trades Council has added its weight and "NUI Galway Students Against the War" has been formed. It has made statements that the funding debases Galway and communicates Irish complicity in United States and British atrocities.

An open invitation was issued to all councillors who voted for the funding to attend a public showing of "Fallujah, the Hidden Massacre" and a call on them to justify their decision to the people of Galway but none of the invited councillors attended. This documentary confirms that US forces illegally used chemical weapons including white phosphorous on non-combatant men, women and children in Fallujah.

Next day on radio GAAW accused these councillors of being pro-war as the local peace group were genuinely attempting to engage with them. It is clear they don't give a damn that F16 fighter jets and the like, to be seen at the Salthill war show - were used over Fallujah.

"We should not be surprised", stated Niall Farrell, GAAW spokesperson, "all these councillors are more or less FF, PD or FG, all 3 parties support the use of Shannon airport in the US government's illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq... these councillors like their parties are pro-war."

Now we have a great opportunity to build a stronger, even more active anti-war movement in Galway with plenty of forthcoming activities in the run up to the March 18th global day of action.

For more information: Contact Jamie Murphy 085 7195388

Corporate Raiders attack Scientific Research

The Science Foundation of Ireland has embarked on a new strategy to 'commercialise' scientific research.

The aim is to tie universities and research centres closer to the needs to large corporations.

It is claimed that this will start a new phase of the Celtic Tiger.

The Irish economy is supposed to move up 'the value chain' and become an epicentre of the 'knowledge economy'.

Most of this, however, is code for giving more concessions to the pharmaceutical industry.

Huge corporations like Pfizer, Wyeth, or Merck want access to cheap, publicly subsidised research and be able to control its direction.

Wyeth has linked up with UCD and even uses the brand 'Wyeth UCD' to lend credibility to its research operations.

Bristol Myers Squibb is now funding a host of positions in DCU's school of life sciences.

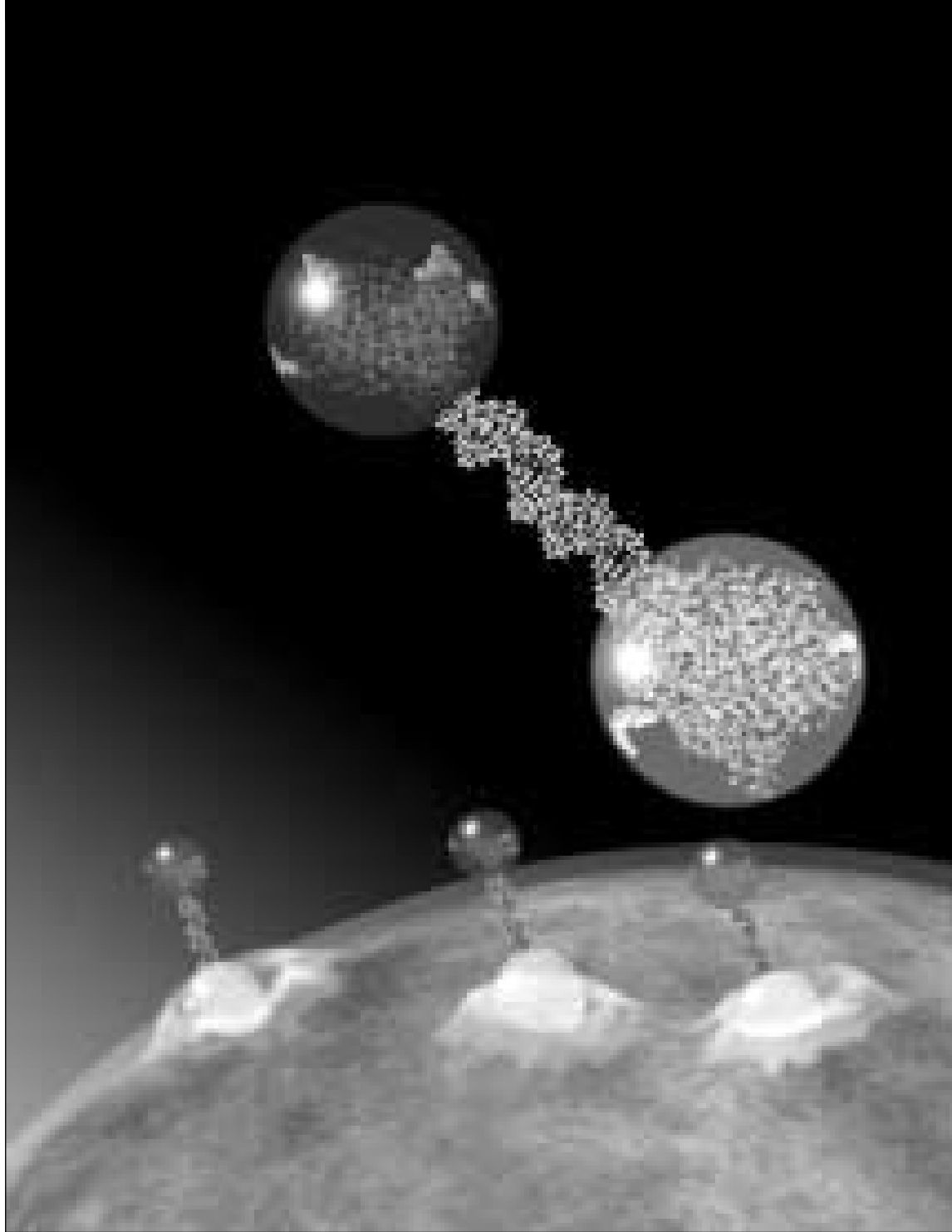
UCC has created a special school of pharmacy to help foster its links with the drug companies.

Typically the drug companies put up money to sponsor research but then demand 'exclusivity agreements' so that they can either hide research which is unfavourable to their interests or get time to patent new discoveries that will make profits.

This form of corporate control cuts across the whole ethos of scientific research which should take place openly in the public domain.

The growing scandal about the administration of anti-depressant drugs to children shows the dangers behind the commercialisation of science.

Between 1994- and 2000 the paediatric supply of anti-depressant drugs grew by 50 percent in the US and today a staggering 2 million children are being prescribed drugs for controversial conditions known as 'Attention Deficit Hyperactivity



Disorder'.

(Its detractors argue that ADHD is a 'fictional disorder' and that there is no evidence that children who apparently suffer from it have a chemical disorder in the brain)

Studies sponsored by the Centre for Science in the Public Interest have revealed huge commercial pressures behind these developments.

In 2004, for example, Thomas Loughner from the Food and Drug Administration in the US looked at 15 drugs used as anti-depressants for children and found that only 3 had any positive effect.

Despite this, the American College of Neuropsychopharmacologists, claimed that the drugs had a positive effect and that there was no connection between the use of these SSRI drugs and suicide.

It turned out, however, that 9 of the ten members of the college's task force had direct commercial ties to the drug companies.

Anti-depressant drug prescription to children has grown because this type of advice eventually finds its way into Clinical Practice Guidelines which doctors use.

So the drug companies have figured that it is important to get greater leverage over academic research to increase their markets. Their lever is, of course, money.

One recent study by the Centre for Science in Public Interest has found that industry funded research is 61% more likely to give a positive endorsement of a drug than non-industry sponsored research.

Sponsorship by drug companies also inhibits research in other more fruitful areas such as nutrition and alternative therapy.

All of which suggests that the Irish public show thrown a more critical eye on what the Science Foundation of Ireland is up to.

Nanotechnology: Holy grail or grey goo?

CRANN is a Trinity College research centre for exploring nano-technology. It has been formed through a link with the corporation Intel and there are concerns about this link. Here, Max Baxendale, a researcher looks at some of the wider issues behind the debate on nano-technology.

Capitalism, forever in search of updated means of production, has seized upon nano-technology as a panacea for its present ills and invested huge amounts in research programmes.

Nano-technology is the control of the properties of matter by defining shape and size at the nanometre scale—billionths of a metre. Nanoscience is the study of physical phenomena at atomic and molecular scales.

The possibilities offered by nano-technology and nanoscience have been hyped to attract investors to such an extent that it is almost guaranteed to be a disappointment. The short term benefits of nano-

technology will be very mundane or frivolous. The biggest private sector investors in nanoparticle research are cosmetics companies.

Nano-technology has also generated serious concerns among anti-capitalist activists, echoing the debates around genetically modified foods. Some of this concern draws on Eric Drexler's 1986 book, *Engines of Creation*, in which he predicted self-reproducing nanoscale machines.

The fear generated by this vision, popularised by Michael Crichton's novel *Prey*, is that a self-reproducing molecular machine could be designed to consume life and reduce us all to "grey goo".

In 2000, one informed commentator, Bill Joy, said that research into nano-technology should stop immediately, as developments in the wrong hands could end life as we know it.

There is debate about whether the grey goo theory is a real possibility. The nanoparticles being researched and used today are not self-reproducing and several hundred years of scientific endeavour have given us little insight into how to achieve self-reproduction.

Self-reproduction is a feature of

biology, for example ribosome synthesises protein molecules according to a specification embedded in an organism's DNA. But nature has had a "research and development" time of several billion years, and the prospect of us out-designing nature is remote.

However, there are pressing concerns about the health implications of nanoparticles in the body. Nanoparticles can pass through biological cell walls so the interaction with our bodies is at a much deeper level than for larger molecules such as asbestos that get trapped in the lungs.

Lobby groups have raised this issue—Greenpeace have called for 10 percent of funding to be dedicated to health studies. Such studies have commenced but there has been no sign of any research funding from New Labour yet.

We should insist on the highest safety standards for those working with free nanoparticles, but we should also do so for by far the greatest producer of carbon nanoparticles, namely the car engine. We should also insist on the highest standards of toxicology for those cosmetics companies already using nanoparticles.

Nano-technology does promise to

bring real benefits—especially in healthcare and the search for renewable energy sources. At the tiny scales nanoscience deals with, the properties of matter differ significantly from those of our familiar everyday world, opening up new possibilities for science and technology.

For example, the gold and silver used in jewellery is inert—it is stable and unreactive. But gold nanoparticles can speed up certain chemical reactions and silver nanoparticles kill bacteria.

Embedding nanoparticles in another material can also drastically alter its properties. For example, rubber can be strengthened by mixing in carbon nanoparticles and dispersed gold nanoparticles give glass a deep red colour.

These changes to the properties of rubber and glass have been known about for some time. What's new is that through nanoscience we are beginning to understand why these changes take place.

New developments, particularly in microscopy, microelectronics and molecular biology, have provided tools for us to explore nature on the nanoscale.

The manufacture of components in microelectronics now takes places

on such a small scale that the "top-down" processes (analogous to carving a statue out of rock) are converging with the "bottom-up" processes (analogous to building a house from individual bricks).

Scientists are now exploring the possibility of self-assembled electronic components using technologies borrowed from molecular biology.

The convergence of different fields of science as old boundaries break down at the nanoscale is an important aspect of nanoscience, and one of the joys of working in this field. Another example of this is the quantum dot—a device developed for telecommunications now used in the body to selectively kill off cancerous cells.

If we are to maximise the benefits of nano-technology, we should not leave control of this field to the "band of warring brothers", as Karl Marx called the capitalist classes of the world.

Social movements, including some of those involved in this work, can be a powerful force arguing that nano-technology should be used to meet social needs.

REVIEWS

Composing musical beauty for an age of revolution

Composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born 250 years ago. **Simon Behrman** looks at his life and work

On the anniversary of the birth of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in Salzburg, Austria, on 28 January 1756 we were regaled with tales of the boy genius who was practically composing masterpieces in his crib.

His music was supposed to have a perfection and beauty matched by no other composer before or since, and much other hype as well.

There is of course some truth to this image. It is incredible that Mozart was able to compose sonatas, symphonies and operas before he hit puberty.

But, truth be told these works are relatively simple and in most cases childish, which is hardly surprising since they were composed by a child.

And while it is true that Mozart had a gift for composing music of great beauty, the idea that it can be objectively presented as more beautiful or poised than, say, the ballets of Tchaikovsky or the piano music of Chopin, let alone music from other genres, is absurd.

To accept this stereotype of Mozart does him a great disservice for it suggests he was simply a wonder of nature, impossible to explain.

In fact, at key moments of his life, he struggled for his art. His development from a child prodigy into the searching and radical composer that he became in the last ten years of his life was a result of artistic bravery and of his engagement with an environment flush with radical ideas in both music and politics.

Mozart came from a musical background. His father, Leopold, was a violinist and author of a textbook on violin playing that was a standard text well into the 19th century.

Both Mozart and his elder sister, Nannerl, were taught the piano and the violin by their father. When the musical gifts both children had was clear to Leopold he took them on a series of tours of the various courts of Europe.

Talent

From the age of six until he was 17 Mozart was essentially a performing monkey for the kings, princes and archbishops of Europe. Once the novelty of his precocious talent wore off, he returned to settle in the provincial town of Salzburg. For musicians of this time, there were really only two options.

They were to either go into service for the church and write music for services week after week, as Johann Sebastian Bach had done, or become a servant of the local aristocratic ruler, as was the case with Joseph Haydn.

Neither option appealed to Mozart. So he made his first attempt at a career as an independent musician, something almost unheard of at the time.

He moved to Paris in 1778. After two years he returned to Salzburg broke and disappointed. He joined his father as servant to the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg.

Mozart refused to accept the restrictions imposed upon him by his conservative and austere employer. On a visit to Vienna with the Archbishop tensions came to a head.

After a blazing row, Mozart was kicked out of the room by the Archbishop's chief chamberlain.

Mozart had finally broken free and would remain an independent musician for the rest of his short life.

He decided to stay in Vienna, which



Mozart's operas are still performed across the world. This poster is from Cincinnati

was the vibrant capital of the Austrian empire. More importantly it was a centre of Enlightenment ideas and action.

The Enlightenment was the movement in the 18th century that promoted scientific reasoning, art as a means of individual expression and a relaxation of autocratic rule.

The year before Mozart arrived in Vienna, a man committed to these ideals became the sole ruler of Austria, Joseph II. The new emperor attacked the privileges of the Catholic church, reformed the legal code and he greatly relaxed censorship in the arts.

It was this environment that allowed Mozart to live independently and to create his masterpieces.

But Mozart was not just a passive beneficiary of the Enlightenment. He actively engaged with it. In Vienna he

joined the freemasons, at the time a society of Enlightenment thinkers.

He promoted these radical ideas in ways obvious and not so obvious in his music. For example, in the piano concertos of his Vienna years, he made the soloist an equal with the orchestra. A soloist had previously been seen as the accompanist to the orchestra. This made the idea of individual expression in music real.

More directly, in three of his greatest operas, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and *The Magic Flute*, he used his art to attack the old order.

Figaro is based on a play banned in Austria and France at the time and tells the story of the servant of the same name. He is about to marry Susannah, a fellow servant. The Count, their master, decides to assert his feudal rights by sleeping with Susannah before the marriage.

We see *Figaro* and the other servants seeking to outmanoeuvre the Count before the wedding. At one point *Figaro* sings an aria of revenge on the Count, *Se Vuol Ballare*.

Mozart adds sarcasm to *Figaro's* anger in this aria by accompanying *Figaro's* words with a minuet—music associated with the elegance of the aristocratic ballroom.

Don Giovanni is based on the Don Juan myth. Though the message in the story is ambiguous, the music displays

a dramatic power not heard before.

The climatic scene where the Don refuses to atone for his sins and is dragged down to hell remains one of the most thrilling moments in opera. This scene also contains musical ideas that were to be still considered radical over 100 years later.

The French Revolution of 1789 was far more radical than the gradual reforms of Joseph's rule. In response the emperor drew back towards reaction shortly before his death in 1790.

Mozart decided to make what was to be his penultimate opera, *The Magic Flute*, into a thinly veiled celebration of the progressive ideals of freemasonry and the Enlightenment.

While revolution was triumphant in Paris, Vienna was slipping fast into reaction. Mozart took sides with revolution over reaction. The tragedy is that within a few months of completing *The Magic Flute* he was dead.

Where he would have gone musically and politically is one of the great what ifs of history.

Mozart was only 35 when he died. At the same age his great contemporaries, Haydn and Beethoven, had still to write most of what are today regarded as their masterpieces.

Yet we still have so many works from Mozart that bring to life, over 200 years later, the excitement and hopes of his revolutionary age.

DISCOGRAPHY

Classics to discover

MOZART'S piano concertos, his greatest being numbers 19-27, are the best introduction to his works.

You can buy all of these on two sets put out by Phillips called *The Great Piano Concertos Vols 1 and 2*. Each set contains two discs and costs £12.

The pianist is Mitsuko Uchida, one of the greatest interpreters of Mozart in the world today.

Some other excellent recordings include Clifford Curzon on Decca conducted by Benjamin Britten, also for around £12. Their recording of the D-minor concerto number 20 in particular is a treat.

The piano was Mozart's instrument and his piano sonatas are filled with the beautiful melodies and relentless invention for which he is famous.

Mitsuko Uchida's recording of the complete sonatas on Phillips is a bargain at around £15.

Some recordings of his greatest operas can be had for under £13.

The *Marriage of Figaro* conducted by Carlo Maria Giulini on EMI and *The Magic Flute* conducted by Ferenc Fricsay on Deutsche Grammophon are highly recommended.

If you want to spend a little more a recent recording of *Figaro* conducted by Rene Jacobs on the Harmonia Mundi label fizzes with fun throughout but is a bit dear at £28.

Likewise, a classic recording of *Don Giovanni* conducted by Karl Bohm in Prague on Deutsche Grammophon is £26 but well worth investing in.

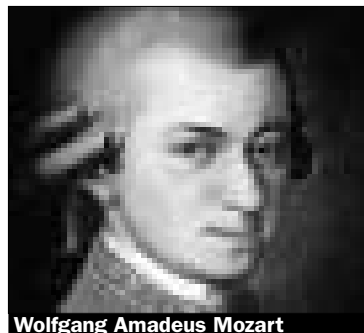
You might want to explore his Requiem Mass, left incomplete at his death. The first half of the piece is by Mozart with the rest being completed by one of his students.

This contains some of the darkest and most dramatic music he ever wrote.

A live recording conducted by Benjamin Britten on BBC Legends is available.

On a lighter note, his two *Sinfonia Concertantes*, one for violin and viola and the other for wind instruments are less well known but absolutely delightful and worth seeking out if you have not heard them.

Try David and Igor Oistrakh on Deutsche Grammophon.



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

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FRIDAY 3rd MARCH					
6.30 - 7.45		Michael Davitt: The socialist who fought landlordism Willy Cumming	Can capitalism return to the welfare state? Kieran Allen		 Opening Rally  The New Left in Europe: Friday 8.00pm
8.00 - 9.30		The New Left in Europe: Martin Smith (Respect), Richard Boyd Barrett, speakers also from Links Partei Germany and Left Block Portugal			
SATURDAY 4th MARCH					
10.00 - 11.15		China: The world's next superpower? Kevin Wingfield	Desperate housewives? Why we need women's liberation Doreen Fitzgerald		 10.00 - 12.00 Saturday night culture event: John Coltrane, Jazz, racism and resistance with Martin Smith
11.45 - 1.00	Historical interpretations of the 1916 rising Lorcan Collins (author The Easter Rising - a guide to Dublin), Conor Kostick (author of Revolution in Ireland 1917-1923)	Bob Geldof and Bono - Can free trade save Africa? Gordon Hewitt	Abortion and the right to choose Sinead Kennedy (Alliance for Choice)	What can we learn from Marx and Lenin? Sean Mitchell (School Students Against Poverty)	
2.00 - 3.15	After Irish Ferries: What sort of unions do we need? Brid Smith, Tom Tully (Chief Shop Steward Irish Ferries), Brendan Ogle (ESB Officer, ATGWU); NIPSA speaker & others	Republicanism: Between radicalism and government? Eoin O Broin (SF) and Donal Mac Fhearraigh (SWP)	A people's history of Iraq Sami Ramadani (Iraqi Democrats against the Occupation)	Why do workers vote for right wing parties? Colman Etchingham (lecturer NUI Maynooth)	
3.45 - 5.00	Eamonn McCann speaks on: Bloody Sunday to torture flights The quiet death of freedom	Bolivia: Revolution in the 21st century - Dave Lordan Muireann DeBarra (journalist recently returned from Bolivia)	Outsourcing and stress management: The new world of work Ritchie Browne (ATGWU education officer)	Dada: When Art Rebelled Tim Stott	
7.00 - 9.00	Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran: Resisting the American Empire Richard Boyd Barrett (chair Irish Anti-War Movement), Sami Ramadani (Iraqi Democrats), Elaheh Povey (Iranian socialist)	The Privatisation of Health Dr Peadar O Grady (author of Why is the Irish Health Service in Crisis),	After Sharon Can there be peace in the Middle East? Raymond Deane (Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign), Dave Lynch (journalist Daily Ireland recently returned from Palestine)	South Africa: From nationalism to neo-liberalism Mark Hewitt	
				From Civil Rights to New Orleans: Race and Class in America Brian Kelly (US historian)	
				Power or Class: Foucaults revolt against Marxism Marnie Holborow (lecturer DCU)	
SUNDAY 5th MARCH					
10.30 - 11.30		JK Rowling to Narnia: Marxism and children's fantasy literature Conor Kostick (best selling children's author)	The life and politics of Leon Trotsky Melisa Halpin		 HIGHLIGHTS  Chavez and Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution: Sunday 2.00pm  From Civil Rights to New Orleans: Race and Class in America Saturday 3.45pm  Desperate housewives? Why we need women's liberation Saturday 10.00am  Michael Davitt: The socialist who fought landlordism: Friday 6.30pm  Iran: Workers, women and the Islamic republic: Sunday 3.30pm
11.45 - 1.00	Corporations on Trial: Shell Oil: Maura Harrington (Shell to Sea Campaign), Big Pharma in Cork: Derry Chambers, CRH and Glen Ding Cllr Tommy Cullan	Workers of the world unite: Immigration and Ireland's new working class Steve Loyal (lecturer UCD Sociology Dept)	From Fenianism to Arthur Griffith: What's radical about republican history? Donal Mac Fhearraigh	Mao: The Greatest Criminal in History? Kevin Wingfield	
2.00 - 3.15	Ireland is not for sale: Communities against privatisation Michael Punch (author of Inequalities in the Irish housing system); Francis Corr (Ringsend anti-incinerator campaign); Richard Boyd Barrett (Dun Laogha Save our Seaford); Dave Connolly (Inner City Community Network)	Chavez and Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution Rory Hearne (delegate to the World Social Forum)	No Logos: Is consumerism destroying the world? Brid Smith	A rebel's guide Can the Good Friday Agreement bring equality? Barbara Muldoon	
3.30 - 4.45	Iran: Workers, women and the Islamic republic Elaheh Povey (Iranian socialist)	The corporate take-over of Northern Ireland - Goretti Horgan	Consultants and Think Tanks: The New Priesthood of Corporate Globalisation Ellis Gaffey	James Connolly and anti-imperialism Dave Lynch	
4.45 - 5.15		Revolutionary strategy in the age of mass movements Kieran Allen			

WHAT THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STANDS FOR

Capitalism is wrecking the lives of millions and endangering the planet.

A new society can only be constructed when the workers take control of the wealth and plan its production and distribution for human need and not profit.

REVOLUTION

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed. The courts, the army and police exist to defend the interests of the wealthy.

To destroy capitalism, we need to remove the present state structures and create a workers' state based on much

greater political and economic democracy.

AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND WAR

War is a constant feature of capitalism today as the imperialist powers try to dominate the earth.

Bush's "War on Terrorism" is a crude device to attack any country which threatens US military, strategic or economic dominance.

END RACISM AND OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression and racism. This divides and weakens the

working class.

We are for full social, economic and political equality for women.

We oppose immigration controls which are always racist.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

We stand for workers unity against the Assembly politicians and Blair government.

Like great socialist James Connolly, we believe that partition has brought about a 'carnival of reaction'

We want to see an Irish workers republic where all

workers gain.

Our flag is neither green nor orange but red!

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.

We call for co-operation between left-wing parties and the formation of a strong socialist bloc.

We stand for fighting trade unions and for independent rank and file action.

Join the Socialists

Fill in the form and send to SWP PO Box 1648 Dublin 8

Name.....

Address.....

Email.....

Phone.....



ROYAL MAIL:

Post strike unites Falls and Shankill

The postal workers strike at Royal Mail led to an unprecedented march of Catholic and Protestant workers up the Shankill and the Falls..

Socialist Worker spoke to posties on the picket line about what it meant..

Liz who works in Tomb Street talked about the march up the Shankill and the Falls.

"I remember as a kid going on civil rights marches with my parents where Protestant and Catholic marched together and this was the first time in 30 years that this has happened. It was fantastic and the support along the route was brilliant.

"But what annoys me is the media coverage. There were loads of cameras there that day but there was hardly anything of it on the news. You can be sure if it was a sectarian standoff it would be covered. But this march was not emphasised."

"Royal Mail perpetrates a policy of divide and conquer but this strike is great. It has cut through all those divisions. In my fourteen years here I have never seen such unity even between the different sections. It's fantastic and will change the whole atmosphere even when we're back at work. Because we share the same grievances and problems even if we come from different sections."

Andrew believes that the strategy of Royal Mail to provoke workers has blown up in their faces.

"When management provoked this situation in the Shankill depot they thought that would be that, the Catholics won't do anything to support that area. But they got it so wrong. We are more united now than ever. Royal Mail is trying to break the union but they won't succeed. We know that's their hidden agenda."

Tony who works on the Shankill knows there is huge support in his area.

"When the march was going up Shankill Road the local radio station blasted out Mr. Postman and there were cheers and salutes and congratulations from the crowd. I think Royal Mail see us as a generation who only



Striking Royal Mail workers on the picket line

PHOTOS: DUNCAN BROWN

care about possessions but we have proved them wrong – we still have our principles."

Solidarity is key

It is vital that solidarity for the strike is spread far and wide, not just in the post office but throughout the trade union and working class movement.

Support for the strikers is growing rapidly each day. **Trades Council** activists and posties took to the streets of Belfast to build up support and col-

lect for the hardship fund last Saturday. The response was brilliant. People in Belfast are very enthusiastic about seeing this strike win. A victory for the posties will raise the confidence and aspirations of all workers.

Civil servants from the **Child Support Agency** collected nearly £200 and visited the Tomb Street picket line to express their support.

Financial support is coming in from other workplaces and from **NIPSA**, the **FBU** and the **Trades Council**.

In every workplace collections should be taken up. Messages of support and delegations should be organised to visit the picket line.

In **Edinburgh, Glasgow** and **Liverpool** postal workers are refusing to touch any mail arriving from Belfast.

This sort of solidarity has to spread. Royal Mail strikers could send delegations to other offices and CWU branches to put across their case and to organise support.

And the CWU nationally needs to

put this dispute at the top of the agenda.

There are constant attacks by management on CWU members across Britain and workers are responding by taking part in one-day and half-day action.

Royal Mail workers will be more than willing to deliver solidarity for Belfast and try to repeat the show of support that we saw for the Irish Ferries workers in the south of Ireland before Christmas.

Management and media lies by Eamonn McCann

Anyone who doubts postal workers' claims that Royal Mail management is characterised by offensive arrogance should ponder the statement issued in relation to the Belfast dispute.

Explaining why letters had been hand-delivered to four representatives of the Communication Workers' Union (CWU) threatening them with legal action, the spokeswoman declared: "Letters were sent... to say... that there is no clear evidence showing a real will to get people back to work and a number of options are being considered, including taking injunctions out against them personally."

Not only were the union representatives being required to dissociate themselves from the strike, the four were being told they'd be held personally responsible for the stoppage and might be pursued through the courts for Royal Mail's losses if they failed to "get people back to work".

The role ascribed to the union was not of representing its members but of policing its members on management's behalf.

Royal Mail didn't actually demand

that CWU officials use whips to herd postal workers in penitential procession through Belfast city centre and back into Tomb Street. But give them time. Why stop now when they've got away with so much?

One BBC presenter, having completed an interview in which the commercial boss of Royal Mail was allowed, unchallenged, to deliver a propaganda barrage against the postal workers, signed off by gratuitously reminding listeners that the strike was "illegal".

But it is not illegal, if we are to give the word its normal meaning. The strikers are not breaking the law.

It is true—presumably the point the BBC presenter was making—that they haven't jumped through the hoops designed by the Thatcher government to neuter the trade union movement and left in place by New Labour and so cannot invoke the protection of the law.

It's understandable that Royal Mail management should take every opportunity to dub the stoppage "illegal".

But journalists ought not to substitute management-speak for

facts.

The startling one-sidedness of coverage derives mainly from the fact that union officials have themselves been advised by lawyers that they mustn't appear to express support for the stoppage lest they leave the union open to legal action.

As a result, news organisations achieve "balance" by giving management free rein and then providing space for a union spokesperson to stress that the union is urging its members to abandon the action to which management objects.

There is no direct expression of the viewpoint of the hundreds of workers who felt they had no option but to walk off the job.

Much was made of a Royal Mail suggestion that the strike was sparked when a worker from the Shankill was discovered noting the personal details, including the car registration number, of a manager.

These reports were set alongside quotes from a letter issued by a representative of a union involved in a battle for members with the CWU. The letter described the stoppage as "deeply sinister".

Taken together, the implication of these reports was that a Royal Mail manager had been targeted for attack and that there had been paramilitary involvement in this targeting.

There is no truth in this. None whatsoever. But the untruthful suggestion has been seriously damaging to the strikers' cause.

Those who reported the suggestion as if it had substance might now feel it appropriate to check the story. The diary is available for inspection.

Royal Mail management isn't alone in Northern Ireland in believing that citizens must abandon all expectation of dignity the minute they walk into work.

Thatcher's spoilt children, adopted and doted on by New Labour, acquire a half ounce of authority and dream of Mussolini.

The tendency is particularly marked in parts of the public sector being pared down and pummelled into shape for flogging off to private interests.

That's what's going on here. Thatcher's attitude to working class people who dared to stand up for themselves was most clearly expressed

in her mobilisation of the propaganda and repressive resources of the state to defeat the miners in 1984-5.

The NUM miners' union was pursued for its assets, nationally and internationally.

But, as far as I remember, the Tory Government never went so far as to deploy people with corkscrew souls under cover of darkness to deliver letters implicitly threatening to seize the possessions of individual union members.

But that happened in Belfast last Thursday evening. What are we coming to? Are people to be left homeless because they refuse to allow themselves and their fellow workers to be treated like dirt?

How strange that this should happen, and scarcely a dicky-bird about it, in an area where political leaders never give over about defending their communities' rights.

You'd think every advocate of reconciliation etc. would be out cheering. But too many would rather have the workers settle down separately than rise up together.

Personally, I take the opposite view.

Socialist **Worker**

OVER 800 POSTAL WORKERS TAKE UNOFFICIAL STRIKE ACTION



PHOTO: DUNCAN BROWN

A FIGHT FOR EVERYONE

For two weeks, the longest and biggest unofficial strike seen for many years, has been waged in Royal Mail in the Belfast area.

The workers have stood up to a sustained culture of bullying and harassment by management and told the bosses "enough is enough".

The incident that sparked the walkout began when a victim of the bullying was actually accused of being the perpetrator.

Hundreds of workers who knew the true version of events walked out in support of their colleague.

The strike began in the Shankill Road and quickly spread to Tomb Street and Mallusk, where there is strong grass roots union organisa-

tion.

There is an institutionalised culture of bullying inside Royal Mail management.

But there is more behind this latest harassment. Royal Mail want to ram through up to 40,000 job cuts across the service and know they need to crush union activists to do this.

They want to undermine the terms and conditions of the workers so they can eventually privatise the service.

This strike is a wonderful example of solidarity and anger. And the demands of the strikers are very simple.

They want an independent review of disciplinary procedures

and employee relations issues that have led to the strike.

As we go to press, talks have resumed at the Labour Relations Agency with management of Royal Mail and some union officials are optimistic of a breakthrough.

But whatever the outcome, the posties have been an inspiration for workers across Northern Ireland.

The solidarity action has united workers in a show of strength and determination not seen in Belfast since the unemployed marches of the 1930's.

Following a mass meeting of workers in the city centre, there was a defiant and historic demonstration of people power.

The fact that Catholic and

Protestant posties marched side by side up the Shankill and down the Falls to resounding cheers of hundreds of local people, shows that an alternative to communal politics can and must be built.

We need politics based on class solidarity where we fight together against those at the top of our society who want to make us pay for our water, privatise our jobs, slash our benefits, underfund our services and pay and humiliate, bully and harass us at work.

All over the North there are plenty of workplaces like Royal Mail where management think they can trample working peoples rights into the dirt.

Call Centres are springing up

with conditions that could be likened to sweat shops. In some workplaces workers have to seek permission to go to the toilet and are timed!

Civil servants got an extra 1p an hour wage rise despite the fact that thousands of them are forced to top up their wages with benefits in order to feed their families.

The postal strike is not just a strike against Royal Mail.

It is a rebellion against the underpaid and harassed conditions that working people across Northern Ireland face.

Turn to page 11 for full report