

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

Inside:

25 years on: Why the troops have not brought peace

Beef Tribunal covers up corruption



Goodman



Reynolds



Spring

What a bunch of crooks!

Public Sector under attack: See page 5

Beef Tribunal lets the rich off scot free... What a whitewash!

THE result of the Beef Tribunal is a whitewash.

Albert Reynolds has been "vindicated" on the grounds that he acted "in the national interest" when he granted huge amounts of export credit insurance to Larry Goodman's beef company.

And Goodman has been granted £10 million costs despite a major tax fiddle at his meat plants in the 1980's.

Taxpayers will foot the estimated £35 million bill for costs awarded to all parties to the Tribunal and the huge legal fees paid to the barristers who took part.

The Tribunal reveals corruption at every level within the Irish ruling class.

Fianna Fail politicians gave favours to Goodman in return for the hundreds of thousands of pounds donated to the party by the Beef Baron.

Meanwhile Goodman was busy fiddling the tax system.

And when it all came to the surface the politicians and businessmen ensured that the biggest legal team ever assembled in the state did their utmost to cover up the scandal.

When Albert Reynolds talks about acting "in the national interest" what he really means is that he acted in the interests of his rich pals.

Workers are fed up with this corruption as they fight to hold onto their jobs and their livelihoods.

And they are sick of the Labour Party blowing the whistle on the rich while in opposition and then keeping quiet about the scandals when they get into office.



Goodman gets away with it

Under the counter

THE Goodman meat company made under the counter payments to its employees to avoid paying income tax.

Bogus invoices were made out to supposed hauliers and suppliers and cheques drawn to meet these "invoices" were cashed and the money used to pay employees.

The tax avoided in this way amounts to an esti-

mated £10 million which the Revenue Commissioners now says it will collect.

But Lucky Larry is not too worried—the £10 million costs awarded to him from the Tribunal should just about cover these liabilities.

Raising the ceiling

WHEN Albert Reynolds was Minister for Industry and Commerce in the 1987-89 Fianna Fail government he gave huge amounts in Export Credit Insurance to Goodman.

The allocations were made under the "national interest" account which covered exports to "high-risk" countries like Iraq.

The ceiling for exports to Iraq was £150 million which was half the total amount allowed under the account. Most of this allocation went to Goodman.

In 1988 Reynolds had the total ceiling raised from £300 to £500 million so that Goodman could be allowed even more insurance cover.

Needless to say this decision was hidden from the Dáil at the time.

The fat cat lawyers

The Beef Tribunal produced a scandal within a scandal when the huge fees paid to barristers at the proceedings were revealed.

Senior Counsel Eoin McGonigal got almost £1 million while four barristers got over £500,000 each.

Harry Whelehan was on the State's legal team before being appointed Attorney General. He was paid

£50,000 before the Tribunal even began and then went off to his new job without taking part in the proceedings.

Three weeks after Albert Reynolds became Taoiseach he appointed John Hogan as a consultant to invent excuses for Reynolds actions in the Goodman affair.

Hogan was paid over £250,000 for his work on the Beef Tribunal. And—surprise, surprise—Hogan

was a Fianna Fail activist in Sligo and worked as a volunteer in the party's head office during the last General Election.

Meanwhile Carr Communications also made a killing "representing all parties" in the Beef Tribunal.

But Carr boss Donal

Creedon is Albert Reynolds speech writer and the firm's contract with FF does not allow them to work for any other political party.

Licensed to bribe

DICK Spring and his Labour cronies have tried to cover their embarrassment over the Beef Tribunal report by hiding behind their proposed Ethics in Public Office Bill.

This is the Labour mantle of morality which supposedly will break all manner of golden circles and ensure that government becomes and remains "clean".

As Albert Reynolds would say, "crap", pure and simple, crap with a capital C.

The beauty of the Ethics Bill for Labour is that it legalises the can of worms currently crawling through the Dáil and state or semi-state bodies.

Under the Ethics Bill TDs, Ministers and public servants will have to declare their interests—their sources of outside income, their share-holdings, their directorships, their land holdings, public contracts, income from political consultancies and gifts.

Loopholes

But the Bill is riddled with convenient loopholes which if anything make bribery, corruption and cover-ups even more likely.

Not alone are shares worth less than £10,000 considered too unimportant to declare, anything higher can easily remain hidden by being registered under the name of daughters, sons, mothers, fathers

and Uncle Tom Cobbleys of TDs and state officials.

Any external income of less than £2,000 can now legally be ignored as can public contracts under £5,000, while the restrictions placed on gifts are so ludicrous that they're laughable.

There is a limit of £500 before such "gifts" have to be declared, but any more generous little presents, provided they're given by a "friend" or relative, need never be declared.

In short, Labour have at best shored up the existing system and at worst made it easier for "friends" like Goodman and Smurfit to do dodgy deals with the rest of the parasites up in Leinster House.

Man of property

ALBERT Reynolds could make another fast buck out of the urban renewal scheme in Longford.

Under the scheme a cinema in which Reynolds has a 25 per cent stake can be refurbished with the owners being allowed a 50 per cent capital allowance.

But Reynolds and his clan were bound to cash in. As a source close to the Taoiseach said:

"It is not possible to designate any street in



Longford town without including property either owned by the Taoiseach himself, his brother, his family or friends."

TENANTS FACE RENTS RISE

TENANTS in Dublin Corporation housing are faced with massive rent increases from this month.

Rents are being hiked up by as much as 80 per cent in some cases. The rise is set to hit low-income groups and single parents in particular.

A widow with three children will have to pay an extra £4.78 a week while a lone parent will have to pay an extra £4.03 a week.

A single parent with three children on £140 a week will have to pay £6.82 extra while a single person with no kids will have to pay £7.92 extra.

But rents are going down for people on higher incomes and Dublin Corporation claims this will make the system fairer.

This argument is false. In fact the Corpo can use the rent changes to divide the tenants so they can introduce water rates and refuse charges without opposition.

All tenants should unite in a rent strike to resist the increases and demand lower rents for all.

2,000 phone jobs under threat

TELECOM Eireann boss Alfie Kane says the company needs to shed 2,000 jobs in the next five years.

One Telecom worker told Socialist Worker:

"We've built up a modern telephone service, agreed to all sorts of changes plus 5,000 jobs have already gone and now Kane is insulting us like this.

"He has a cheek considering that he's on over £100,000 a year and lives in the Conrad Hotel most of the time. He's another hatchet-man just like Bernie Cahill at Aer Lingus—the only difference is that Cahill lives at the Westbury."

Kane has gone around Telecom to "meet the staff" so that he can find out where the cuts can be made.

He says any redundancies will be voluntary but the Telecom worker we spoke to believes that some people will be put under pressure to leave.

Withdrew

"The last time they sent letters to older workers suggesting they take the lump.

They only withdrew it when the union objected

In the Autumn Telecom plans to enter a "strategic alliance" with a multi-national communications

firm: This will amount to part privatisation of Telecom.

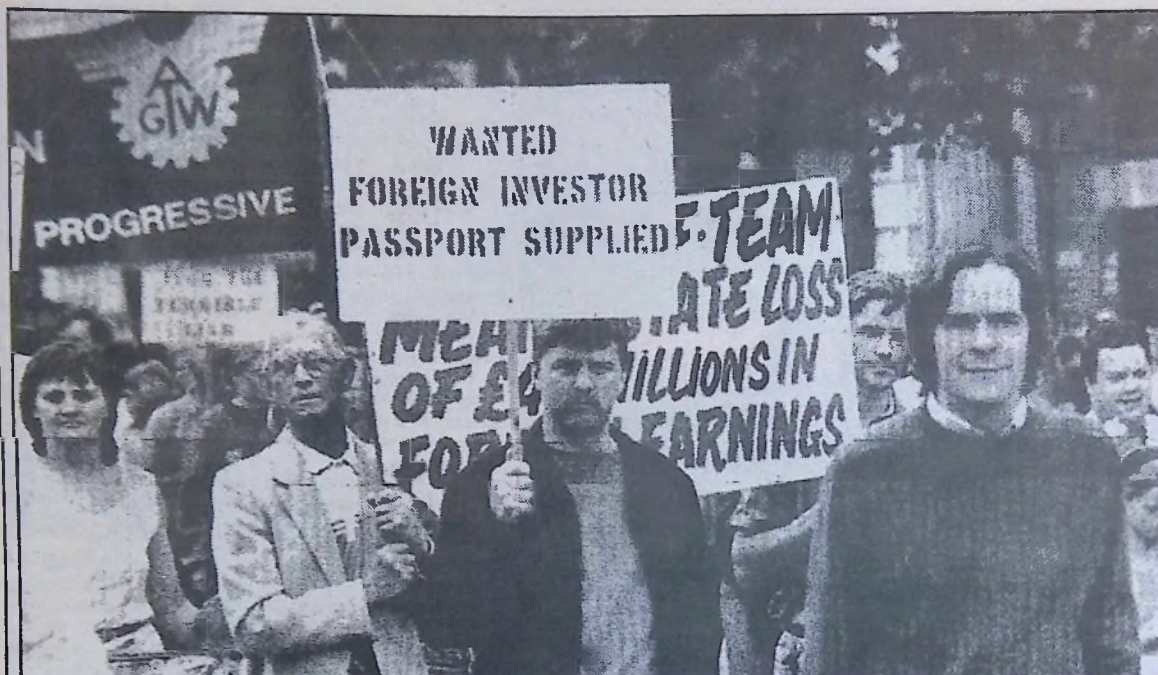
Already profit is being put before the needs of the majority of people. Last year's charge increases were the first step in cutting costs for businesses and passing them on to private customers.

The rich are prepared to step over Telecom workers and ordinary phone users to turn the state communications network into their own private profit machine.

Since the Labour Party seem prepared to let this happen its up to Telecom unions to fight tooth and nail against more redundancies and sell-offs.

We Think

NOW LET'S FIGHT... HANDS OFF THE PUBLIC SECTOR



THE COALITION government is targeting the public sector workers.

They hope that if they beat the TEAM workers this will set an example for Telecom, CIE and ESB.

But they are facing mounting resistance.

Thousands of public sector workers want a way of translating their sympathy with the TEAM workers into action.

The National Bus and Railworkers Union has committed itself to balloting for a three hour stoppage in support.

The pressure is also starting to tell.

A letter from John 'Jelly Bean' Behan, the Director of Human Resources at Aer Lingus, to union officials announced:

"The level of disruption to our customers in Aer Lingus is deteriorating rapidly ... we have faced numerous instances of un-

official action".

What is needed now is a national stoppage throughout the public sector to support TEAM and to oppose the government plans for wider attacks.

Tragedy

The tragedy is that some of the union leaders are working overtime to stop pressure building up for a stoppage.

The SIPTU leaders intimidated the Dublin Council of Trade Unions into dropping a resolution which called for a protest march during working hours.

But the bureaucrats who think that their job is to act as referees between workers and bosses rather than fighters for our class do not own our unions.

TEAM Aer Lingus workers have plenty of support but union leaders have stifled action

Bigots reorganise

IRELAND's bigots who are against divorce and contraception are starting to reorganise.

At a meeting held in Limerick in July, they launched a new party called Solidarity.

Up to now they believed that they could act as a pressure group on FF and FG. But as these parties try to adapt to the changing face of Ireland, the bigots have been forced to act independently.

Solidarity is made up of many of the small crack pot groups of the right. One of their policies is opposition to sex education in the schools. One of their spokesperson described it as the start of 'dictatorship'.

Another group, Parents against Stay Safe, has tried to break up school meetings which alert children to the

danger of child abuse.

But the bigots are not just talking about sex. They are trying to relate to the growing anger in working class areas about unemployment. They argue that this government hates the unemployed because it is a government of liberals.

That sort of a message got a hearing during the divorce referendum in 1987 when Labour was last in power.

It could get a hearing again if socialists do not get out into working class housing estates and start building the real opposition to this government.

And the stakes are high. At the founding meeting of Solidarity, one speaker attacked the fact that a Jewish Minister, Mervyn Taylor, was supposed to be responsible for promoting 'Christian values'.

The Provos and Peace

SINN FEIN's recent conference in Letterkenny was seen by most politicians and the media as a blow against peace in the North.

What they meant was that since Sinn Fein did not fully accept the Downing Street declaration then they are not really concerned about peace.

Yet there is no doubt that Gerry Adams is sincere when he says he wants an end to the conflict.

He is certainly far more sincere than either Albert Reynolds or John Major who supported the mass slaughter of the Gulf War.

The reaction to the conference was based on the idea that the IRA is the main source of violence in the North.

Yet our interview with ex-British soldiers on page 6 of this issue shows that the Troops themselves are the main barrier to peace.

Problem

The real problem with the Sinn Fein conference was the amount of faith Republicans have put in Reynolds and Major.

The conference agreed that the Declaration "marks a further stage in the development of the peace process".

Yet the Downing St Declaration is only a clever form of words and "aspirations" which offered nothing concrete to working class Catholics or Protestants in the North.

Gerry Adams now expects more from Tory politicians in London and Dublin than do



workers who suffer these politicians' attacks on their livelihoods.

Above all Sinn Fein offers no end to the divisions which exist between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland.

The Unionists are seen as one

block and Nationalists as another with no regard for the class divisions that exist in both "communities".

So Adams can call on the unionist leadership to "stand on its own feet" and "to lead its people forward". But working class Protestants have gained nothing from being "led" by bigots like Ian Paisley.

Workers in the North will only gain and peace will only come about when Catholic and Protestant workers stand shoulder to shoulder against the Tories and their sectarian state.

The walkout in June by 2,000 mainly Protestant workers over the shooting of a Catholic was a far more important step on the road to peace than either the Letterkenny conference or the Downing St Declaration.

Red carpet for the rich

WITH one hand this government batters down wages and conditions, with the other it rolls out the red carpet for the multinationals and profiteering businessmen.

A recent KPMG accountants' report puts Ireland in the top league of countries who supply cheap money.

With what is described as a "generous treatment of corporate profits" and a comfortable network of tax relief and grants, Albert and Dick guarantee themselves a warm place in the hearts of the

rich.

The report states: "Due to available tax reliefs, Irish manufacturing companies and some service companies will pay little or no tax on their profits."

There is no withholding tax on dividends in Ireland. Double tax agreements with other states allow profits to be repat-

riated tax-free.

The juiciest incentive of them all—the sickeningly low ten percent corporation tax—is enshrined in law until the year 2010.

The report on Ireland concludes that foreign investors need "have no worries here as "the government knows from experience that it can recoup the cost of these incentives very quickly from payroll taxes and social welfare contributions".

BISHOPS QUICK BUCK

BISHOPS and priests sometimes surprise people with seemingly radical calls for communities to be empowered, but actions always speak louder than words.

Archbishop O'Connell has recently decided that the church coffers look empty and to help fill them up he has placed the Dublin Institute of Adult Education up for sale.

The building in Mountjoy Square is supposed to be worth over half a million pounds.

Over the years thousands of

Dubliners used the Institute to get their first access to higher education.

Hundreds of women and children used the Institute's creche while studying. Low fees allowed the unemployed to participate in pre-college courses and community development programmes.

The Institute also ran one of Ireland's largest literacy schemes aimed at improving the quality of life of people in Dublin's inner city.

Now the church wants to destroy all this for a quick buck.

Clinton's invasion will not bring democracy HANDS OFF HAITI!

THE Clinton administration seems on the verge of an invasion of Haiti.

The invasion is supposed to oust the military junta which overthrew the democratically elected President Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide in September 1991.

But the US has been deeply involved in repression in Haiti.

Haiti was run for decades by the Duvalier dictators who had the backing of the US.

In 1971, US ambassador Clinton Knox personally supervised the change over from Papa Doc to Baby Doc Duvalier.

When Baby Doc was finally ousted in 1986, he was quickly airlifted by a US air force cargo plane which delivered him safely into exile in France.

But getting rid of the Duvalier dictators was no guarantee of democracy.

The sectors who had backed Duvalier, the landowners and the big capitalists—still remained in political power.

The dreaded Tontons Macoute, Duvalier's brutal and feared militia—remained at large.

The US manipulated be-



US destroyer stopping refugees fleeing Haiti

hind the scenes to arrange the election of a new president.

It provided funds of \$36 million to be spent on the campaign and buying votes of its preferred candidate, world bank official Marc Bazin.

Beaten

But the US was beaten. Standing as the people's

candidate, and calling for basic reforms such as land redistribution and a minimum wage, Fr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected in a landslide victory, capturing 67% of the vote.

The people's determination to fight for democracy was shown in the slogan they chanted during Aristide's election meetings 'I'm not here for money, it's

my own free will'.

Aristide had come to power on the basis of a massive mobilisation against the big landowners and its American backers.

Democratic

Groups based on the trade unions, the peasantry, students and community neighbourhood committees, came together to form a huge democratic movement.

This movement mobilised through strikes, land takeovers, demonstrations, and putting forward de-

mands for land reform and basic wages.

Aristide echoed the sentiments of this movement.

He promised radical reform and a confrontation with American Imperialism, saying 'we would rather die standing up than live on our knees.'

His term in office lasted less than seven months.

In September 1991, he was ousted by a military coup and the new regime of General Raoul Cedras was installed.

That regime consisted of former supporters of Duvalier.

A wave of repression swept through the shanty towns, driving the mass movement underground.

At the beginning, it seemed that the United States was prepared to use its influence to restore democracy.

In the days following the coup, Bush declared that 'We want to see President Aristide returned to power'.

But what America wanted in reality was somewhat different.

US diplomats began to pressurise Aristide into coming to a power sharing agreement with the army commanders.

The US wanted to bring Aristide back but also to stop him from making radical changes by leaving the army a large share of the power.

This meant that US diplomats consistently denied any connection between the military and the human rights abuses which were occurring systematically under the Cedras junta.

Murdered

In May alone, death squads murdered over 300 people.

At the same time, the US embassy human rights officer in the Haitian capital, Port au Prince, wrote that she was 'frankly suspicious of the sudden, high number of reported rapes of women opposed to the regime'.

Meanwhile the thou-

sands of refugees who risk their lives fleeing the regime are denied any asylum within the US.

While publicly declaring support for Haitian democracy, Clinton's regime has continued to raise barriers against the boat people.

Applications for asylum are not heard in the US but aboard US Navy ships off Jamaican coast.

One of the reasons why Clinton is moving towards an invasion now is to stem the tide the refugees coming from Haiti.

Almost 3,000 a day are leaving.

Racists across America are trying to target these poor Haitian refugees and Clinton has bowed to their demands by not letting any more into the US.

Unfortunately, Aristide has been convinced by some of his wealthy supporters to seek conciliation and follow the line of the US.

He has not sought to mobilise the power of the mass movement or the trade unions to defeat Cedras' Regime.

He has finally come down in favour of an American military intervention.

But the US's only aim is to stitch together a new arrangement to protect the rich in Haiti.

They will try to set up Aristide as a puppet figure while the Haitian army will still hold power behind the scenes.

NORTH AND SOUTH: Korea's rulers fear workers' unity

FEW socialists will have mourned the death of the North Korean dictator, Kim Il-Sung.

Kim Il-Sung had ruled the country since it won independence from the Japanese in 1945.

But at home they smashed all opposition and spent a small fortune in building statues to 'the great leader'.

At the end of his life, Kim Il-Sung ordered the building up of a big nuclear programme.

He wanted to get ahead of the growing arms race in South East Asia and use the threat of nuclear weapons to get more economic concessions.

Today the rulers in South Korea fear the fall of the Northern regime and the flow of refugees to the South.

With eyes fixed on the costly reunification of Ger-

many, they have decided that South Korea's still weak economy could not absorb the huge costs of reunification.

As the *Guardian* put it before Kim Il-Sung's death, 'this is one rogue regime... where no-one wants the 'rogue' overthrown'.

The greatest worry for the leaders of both regimes is a mass popular uprising like that which swept Eastern Europe in 1989 could take place.

Eight million South Korean families still have relatives in the North.

Call-Up

Until the late 1980s South Korea was ruled by a parade of dictators, each one given western support.

In 1987 some democracy was introduced in South Korea but only as the result of a huge wave of strikes and protests.

In June of this year South Korea ordered a call-up of

6.6 million reservists for a huge civil defence drill and forced anyone under fifty on the reserve list to prepare for war despite popular opposition.

The state-controlled press in the North has been urgently insisting on the need to 'unite around the dear Leader Kim Jong-Il', Kim Il-Sung's son and successor.

But divisions are appearing in the regime.

Some of the older members of the ruling class are opposed to Jong Il's modernising reputation and the economic crisis fuelling discontent and bitterness throughout the state.

Fightbacks like the recent upsurge of struggle by South Korean workers show the real alternative to both the tyrants in the North and the tyrannical 'democrats' in the South—a workers' movement that unifies North and South Korea in fighting against exploitation and oppression.

'New South Africa -same old police'

SOUTH AFRICA is facing its largest strike since the election when 15,000 workers at the Pick 'n Pay supermarkets walked off the job in July. They are demanding an increase of £100 a week.

The strike has shown how little the bosses and the police have changed in the post-apartheid regime.

The bosses at Pick and pay won an injunction which stopped striking workers coming within 1,000 feet of the shops.

But workers responded with more walk-outs and in Johannesburg by locking management into a store.

Pick 'n Pay called in the police who arrived with rubber bullets and shotguns.

Twenty workers were injured and 1,000 were arrested.

The next day hundreds of Cape Town Pick 'n Pay workers defied a court order and



marched on the company's head office.

They were met by a line of police with tear gas grenades fixed to their rifles.

'New South Africa,

same old police' was one chant.

Now the union federation is threatening a one day general strike in August in support of the shop workers.

The strike at Pick 'n Pay is part of a rise in workers militancy.

The number of strikes between April and June of this year has doubled over last years figures.

As the recession starts to lift, many workers believe that it is 'payback time' for the bosses.

Sam Shilowa, the general secretary of COSATU, says:

'We are being asked by our members if democracy will ever mean more than the right to vote every five years'.

The strikes are causing new strains between the unions and the ANC.

The ANC has promised the International Monetary Fund that it will limit wage increases in the public sector.

But ANC members of Parliament are earning 15,000 rand a month while many public sector workers only take home 1,250 a month.

South African workers are learning that they must use their own strength if they are to reap the fruit of the victory over apartheid.

TEAM, Irish Steel shows...

Coalition targets Public Sector workers

THE COALITION is determined to attack the wages and conditions of public sector workers.

Labour Minister Ruairi Quinn has been charged with making an example of Irish Steel and NET workers.

The FF hardliner Brian Cowan is organising the attacks on ESB, Bord na Mona, and Aer Lingus.

Already 7,000 jobs or 10% of the workforce have been slashed in the last two years in the commercial semi-state sector. But still the government is looking for more cuts.

The ESB is getting ready for more 'top exits' and consultants have been hired at a huge cost to plan out where new

attacks are to take place.

In GSE, there is a threat to privatise the company by 1995.

But in the meantime the management have been discussing the possibility of selling off routes.

What is needed now is unity and solidarity through the public sector to fight this rotten government.

THE COALITION government are doing everything to beat the TEAM workers. They have laid off 1,300 workers because they will not buckle down and accept longer hours.

They have given the management the go ahead to transfer work to London and to Shannon Aerospace.

If the government get away with these attacks it will have major implications for other groups of workers in the semi-state.

It will allow them to push for a more 'flexible workforce' where workers can be forced to work for up to 48 hours to suit the company.

The ICTU got involved in the dispute in mid-July—but in the role of a third party rather than defending TEAM workers.

Up to then, the company had adopted a take-it-or-leave-it approach to the Labour Court recommendations.

These involved a two-year pay freeze, cuts in holiday pay and overtime rates, and a 48-hour week as standard.

These attacks were rejected by craft workers, general operatives and supervisors.

The ICTU intervention led to direct talks between unions and management, but as one shop steward said:

"The company is only going through the motions, and reluctantly at that."

TEAM management has said it wants "continuous improvement".

One of the union negotiators told *Socialist Worker*:

"That just means they want the right to keep coming back for more and more."

He said the company were frustrating the talks every step of the way.

The Dublin Council of Trade Unions called a protest march in support of the TEAM workers at the end of July.

This followed a meeting of shop stewards from various public sector workplaces, many of whom face similar attacks if the TEAM workers are defeated.

Shop stewards from the ESB power station in Ringsend said workers there were prepared to strike in solidarity with TEAM workers.

Post office workers from

Rathmines have also voted for strike action.

Turning this solidarity into action will achieve far more than any talks.

A TEAM craftworker said *"For the lads, building for the stoppage and march was far more important than the talks—the talks are just a charade."*

The best way to fight the management attacks was shown by aircraft handlers in TEAM at the end of July.

Blacked

Members of management loaded components onto a plane to be flown abroad for maintenance.

Normally this work would be done inside TEAM. The handlers blacked the plane and walked off the job.

An ATGWU member said *"This was a great show of solidarity between craft and non-craft, SIPTU and non-SIPTU."*

But the action must be taken further. TEAM workers should be stepping up the action in order to bring the airport to a halt.

Air France workers defeated similar attacks earlier this year when they blacked Paris airport. TEAM workers can do the same.

More pressure should be put on the ICTU.

Instead of sitting on the fence, or acting like an alternative Labour Court, they should be fighting to defend the TEAM workers.

That means calling a national stoppage.

The support is there from other workers who know that their necks will be next on the chopping block.

The trade union movement must act now.

What you can do:

■ *Collect petitions in your workplace calling on the ICTU to call a national stoppage.*

■ *Pass a motion in favour of strike action in support of TEAM workers in your trade union section or branch.*



Steel workers stand up for their rights

CRAFT workers at Irish Steel have been hounded by the media after they voted overwhelmingly against the company's plans.

But they were absolutely right to stand up for their rights.

According to one workers the changes would mean:

"We would be going back to conditions that existed 20 years ago."

The package that the craft workers rejected included:

■ Pay Cuts:

Workers on a two shift system stood to lose 5% of their pay while those on a four cycle shift stood to lose 13%

■ Reduced Overtime Payments:

Overtime that used to be paid at double time is to be reduced to a time and a half payment.

■ Pay Freeze:

Irish Steel workers

are to get no pay increase until July 1997

■ Increased Transport costs.

Irish Steel is located on an island. Workers are being asked to pay a £10 weekly charge on the ferry.

■ 'Cross fertilisation':

Craft workers at Irish Steel are being forced to take on the jobs of SIPTU members.

One worker explained:

"They were going to get craft workers to operate the radio control on the gantry cranes."

"But this would mean that one skilled worker would eventually be doing three unskilled workers out

of a job."

■ Redundancies:

The Irish Steel

bosses are demanding 205 redundancies immediately and 25 more later.



The press have tried to pretend that the craft workers at Irish Steel are isolated.

But it is a lie.

A SIPTU member told *Socialist Worker*

"Many of us were proud of the stand that the craft workers made."

"They were not just fighting for themselves—but also for us."

'ICTU swung the mood against fighting'

WHEN the proposals were first announced at Irish Steel, there was huge anger from all workers.

One SIPTU member explained,

"We had this meeting in the canteen. There was 268 workers there and we decided to have a vote. The result was 248 against the plan and only 20 for."

But when the ICTU

became involved they did everything to break this mood of defiance.

"The ICTU sent us a letter saying we had reached the end of the road."

"There could be no improvements in the proposals from Irish Steel. It swung the mood against fighting."

The union official from SIPTU, Ann Egar, refused to read out a letter of support from the Cork Council of Trade

Unions which had promised to organise solidarity action.

One of the craft union officials, Pat Guilfoyle promised that the workers would abide by an aggregate vote—without consulting his members.

This is the real face of 'social partnership'.

It means that the ICTU spends its energy dampening down resistance rather than organising it.

We Think

THE COALITION government can be beaten. The opinion polls show that there is a huge sympathy with TEAM and Irish Steel workers.

But sympathy alone is not enough.

The only way to win is by taking militant action. If TEAM workers placed pickets on Dublin Airport and got support, this government would shake at the knees.

Maximum pressure must be brought to bear on the ICTU to call a national stoppage in support of TEAM and Irish Steel.

Their job is not to act as referees between us and the bosses—but to start leading struggle.

If the ICTU does not act, we need to build links between shop stewards in the public sector who are willing to call for solidarity action.

INTERVIEW WITH EX-SOLDIERS

'You're off to finish what King William started'

HERE we reprint sections of an interview with four former British Army soldiers who served in Northern Ireland.

The interview first appeared in the paper of our sister organisation in Britain, also called *Socialist Worker*.

The four soldiers are:
DUNCAN MELVILLE, 25
Field Regiment, Royal Artillery

BILLY MCGOWEN 94
Lo-cating Regiment, Royal Artillery

NICK — last name withheld

BOB HARKER *Durham Light Infantry*

How were you trained?

DUNCAN: We did nine months training to go on a four month tour of Northern Ireland.

The Colonel said "You're off to Northern Ireland to finish what King William started."

They said we were there to keep the peace between two warring tribes. But the only enemy identified was the IRA.

They prepared you to be shot at and gave endless scenarios of the ways you might be shot. So when you went out on the street you'd be shit scared.

At "Tin City" they rig up a two thirds scale model of a housing estate. You're taught all kinds of house searching, riot control and so on.

You had all this propaganda - how all the soldiers killed had been killed by the IRA.

The atmosphere feeds through, mixed in with myths, until it becomes "We're going in there to sort out the pad-dies."

We were told that all Catholics are basically subversive.

What did the local people think about the troops?

DUNCAN: We were told that we weren't allowed to talk to anybody at all when we were out on patrol.

The atmosphere was sullen. As you walked down the street people slammed doors and shouted "Fuck off you Brit bastard!"

NICK: They instill in you that you might be shot at from this window or that. There are so many possibilities that it scares you shitless. You don't know whether the next telegraph pole might blow up or the dustbin is hiding a bomb. It could be anything.

There are so many combinations, so you begin to feel it's a matter of get them before they get you.

What happened on patrol?

BOB: One August during a riot a squaddie was killed and we shot a 16 year old lad. That evening this Lieutenant Colonel - we called him "Iron Pants" -

said to us:

"Well chaps it is a sad thing we have lost one of our soldiers today, but we had a good kill."

We used to go from house to house. We would kick the doors down sometimes. Every time we searched a house we would check and record every-thing.

Were there strict regulations about firing weapons?

BILLY: There were rules but they weren't always stuck to.

People took extra ammunition on top of the classified amount. They could produce the regulation five rounds at the end of the patrol but might have fired one off apart from that.

There were many, many guys who over-reacted on many, many occasions.

To give one example, I know a guy called Johnny B who was in the Royal Ordnance Corps.

We had reports of somebody shooting at army patrols in the Bogside. Intelligence found out where he came from and Johnny was hidden in a dugout at the end of his garden.

When the guy came out of his house Johnny shot him dead. He shot him in the back and there was a great furore.

Do you sympathise with people who fight back against the army?

DUNCAN: Having seen the way that we treated people I can fully understand why people fight back by throwing stones and spitting at us. It's a reaction against the brutality of the soldiers themselves.

I remember thinking that if I was in their situation and someone was bullying me, I'm sure I'd fight back.

Most squaddies firmly believe that they were right to open fire on Bloody Sunday and those kids and women shouldn't be on the streets demonstrating in the first place. They see any demonstration as a cover for the IRA.

The Catholics were making simple demands in 1968 for decent jobs, better housing - simple demands.

Our job was to stop them fighting for the rights that are due to them.

Should the troops get out?

NICK: Yes. There wouldn't be the same level of violence if the troops hadn't been there. The real violence isn't between the Protestants and Catholics. It's between the troops and the Catholics.

DUNCAN: The UDA and the Ulster Volunteer Force get their guns from the British state and that's where the violence comes from.

The IRA are a response to that - they'd lose their reason for existing if the British were to go.

25 YEARS ON ...

WHY THE TROOPS NOT BROUGHT

ON AUGUST 14th 1969 the British Army first appeared on the streets of Derry.

It was an attempt by the British government to gain control of a street rebellion in Northern Ireland.

The rebellion started when the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association found that its demands were not being met.

They had wanted an end to discrimination in housing.

They demanded 'One man, one vote'—because rich business men could have as many as 25 votes in local elections while the unemployed were denied a vote.

The B-Specials started bloody confrontations with those who marched for civil rights.

The B Specials were an exclusively Protestant force that were sometimes recruited directly from Orange Halls.

They were part of the official security forces of the Northern state.

The B Specials, off duty RUC officers and sectarian mobs of loyalists tried to drive the Civil Rights Movement off the streets

Attack

One famous attack took place at Burntollet Bridge in April 1969. The civil rights activist Bernadette Devlin wrote about what happened:

"We came to Burntollet Bridge, and from lanes at each side of the road a curtain of bricks and boulders and bottles brought the march to a halt.

"From the lanes burst hordes of screaming people wielding planks of wood, bottles, laths, iron bars, crowbars, cudgels studded with nails, and they waded into the march beating hell out of every-one"

The police, who were supposedly protecting the marchers, offered no support whatsoever.

Although 87 people were taken to hospital, no charges were ever brought against the perpetrators.

As the summer wore on, loyalists escalated their attacks on Catholic housing estates in Belfast and Derry.

Homes were burned and Catholics were driven out of particular areas by the Shankill Defence Association which later went out to become the UDA. Five percent of all Catholics in Belfast were forced to move house.

Finally, a confrontation between the RUC and residents of the Catholic Bogside in Derry turned into a full-scale riot.

The "Battle of the Bogside" marked a turning point in the struggle.

The battle started after an Apprentice Boys Parade in the city.

When clashes started between the Orange marchers and young Catholics, the RUC attacked the Catholics and then laid siege to the Bogside.

They were helped by hundreds of Orangemen who broke windows and attacked the residents.

For the next 48 hours, the rioters set up barricades, defended themselves with home-made petrol bombs, and devised gas masks to counteract the CS gas used by the RUC.

For the first time, the RUC was beaten and driven back towards the city centre. To add to the problems of the police, the rioting spread to other towns across Northern Ireland, including Belfast. In Dungannon, Coalisland and



Strabane RUC stations were attacked by Catholics who were outraged by what was happening in the Bogside.

In Dublin, the Fianna Fáil Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, said "he would not stand idly by" and called for a UN peacekeeping force.

The Unionist Prime Minister Chichester-Clarke, played his last card. 8,500 B Special were mobilised.

As the RUC were being driven back, a large force of B Specials gathered behind them ready to join the fray.

It was at this point that the British Army arrived on the streets for the first time.

The British government was becoming more nervous about the antics of the Unionists. A bulletin produced by local socialists summed up the situation, "This is a great defeat for the RUC. It is not yet clear whether it is a victory for us"

The troops were never intended as a solution to the problems of Northern Ireland.

Rather, they were sent to restore the viability of a regime which was seriously discredited at that point.

As soon as the troops came into

Derry, sectarian mobs in Belfast launched an immediate attack on the Catholic Falls Road.

The mob was joined by RUC forces who used heavy calibre machine guns in an attempt to break down Catholic resistance.

One of the first casualties was a fifteen year old boy shot dead in the course of the struggle.

Anger

Anger at what was happening began to rise in the South. There was large scale rioting in Dublin as protesters converged on the British Embassy.

The British and Irish government were terrified that Southern workers would join in the uprising.

When the troops finally arrived in Belfast they were welcomed in Catholic areas as a protection against the RUC and Loyalist mobs.

But it soon became clear what their real purpose was.

Their first aim was to restore stability to the North.

Only after that had been achieved would they oversee some reforms that

would lessen discrimination.

But preserving stability meant shoring up a sectarian state.

Within weeks of their arrival the British army was working hand and glove with the RUC.

The Catholic working class who had moved into revolt were not content to wait for gradual reform.

When they kept on fighting, the British army met them with a vicious curfew of the Falls Road and the imposition of internment in 1971.

Since that time, the role of the army has not changed.

Its record is one of collusion in the sectarian politics of the Northern Ireland state.

Its forces are concentrated on Catholic working class areas.

The reforms that have come in the last twenty five years have benefited the growing Catholic middle class.

The working class who began the battle of the Bogside still face discrimination and poverty.

And on top of that they now have to face daily harassment from the British army.

ROOFS HAVE PEACE



Preventing a bloodbath?

WOULD there be a sectarian bloodbath if the British army left the North? This is what British and Irish politicians claim.

The record of the British Army shows that this argument is false.

In the 25 years since the army went in, its troops have been directly responsible for the killing of more than 300 people.

The most famous murders happened at Bloody Sunday in Derry, when troops opened fire on a peaceful anti-internment demonstration and shot fourteen people dead.

This contradicts a statement made by the Derry city coroner, who said "It seems to me that the army ran amok that day and they shot without thinking what they were doing."

"They were shooting innocent people. These people may have been taking part in a parade that was banned but I don't think that justifies the firing of five rounds indiscriminately."

"I say it without reservation—it was sheer unadulterated murder"

The British army has always cooperated behind the scenes with loyalist murder gangs. This was originally encouraged by the Unionist establishment.

In response to the rise of the IRA in the early 1970's, loyalist MP William Craig promised to meet the rebels with force:

"When we say force we mean force."

"We will assassinate our enemies as a last desperate resort when we are denied our democratic rights"

This speech signalled the beginning of a policy of state-inspired terrorism which was mirrored in the army's shoot-to-kill policy.

Links were developed between the military and loyalist death squads such as the UVF.

One report in the UVF's publication, *Combat*, in the early 1970's, spoke of the close links between its senior military commander, Jim Hanna, and officers of the British army.

Campaigns which attempted to terrorise and intimidate the Catholic community, like the murders carried out by the "Shankill butchers" were largely ignored. Between 1962 and 1966, 30 people, 18 of them unarmed, were shot dead by the police and the army.

Surrender

From 1967, the scale of killing increased. Eight IRA members, surrounded by the army and RUC at Loughgall, were shot dead without any chance to surrender.

In 1988, Aidan MacAnespie was shot dead on his way to work by a soldier at the border checkpoint of Aghnacloy.

The army described the shooting as "accidental". A few weeks later three unarmed IRA members were shot dead by the SAS in Gibraltar. Local eyewitnesses said that the three were given no chance to give themselves up. They were deliberately finished off at close range while lying wounded on the ground.

But the army and police have not simply concentrated on the IRA.

They have also sought to intimidate the Catholic population which supports the IRA. In the space of a single month during the IRA hunger strikes of 1981, a total of 16,656 plastic bullets were fired in Northern Ireland.

Since 1972, plastic bullets have killed 16 people in the North. They have seriously injured many others. All except one of those who died were Catholics.

Six were aged 14 or under. At least five were expressly declared by inquests not to be involved in rioting.

Only one British soldier has ever been convicted for murder. Ian Thane was sentenced to life imprisonment for shooting a civilian in the back.

He served only two years of his sentence before returning to his regiment in the North.

The presence of the British troops has done nothing to avert a bloodbath so far in Northern Ireland.

By suppressing the popular protests of the civil rights movement and taking the side of the loyalists, the army provided the impetus for the growth of the IRA.

At the time of the August 1969 riots, the IRA forces in Belfast numbered only 100-120 members. But according to the historian of the IRA, Boyer Bell, the Belfast Brigade numbered 1,000 by 1971.

The presence of the British army has helped to shore up the Northern state. It has given confidence to groupings like the UDA to murder random Catholics.

Getting the British army out of Northern Ireland will help to open the way to a lasting peace.

COMMENT:

A question of 'tradition'?

In July nearly a thousand people packed out the Mansion House to hear Gerry Adams and Bernadette McAliskey take on Michael McDowell of the Progressive Democrats and Paddy Harte of Fine Gael in a debate on whether a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland was necessary for peace.

Fine Gael and the Progressive Democrats fought to have Adams censored from RTE and to have his party banned from using the Mansion House.

The arguments of Harte and McDowell were pathetic. According to Harte, the British establishment had wanted to get out of Ireland since the nineteenth century. What stopped them was a concern to keep the warring Irish apart.

The possibility that British colonialism might have played a role in stirring up those divisions never occurred to Harte.

McDowell denounced the 'legitimate targets' of the IRA. But he never once condemned any actions of the British army and the RUC.

As long as you have a uniform on, Irish liberals will accept that you are acting like peace-keepers.

With nonsense like this, you would think the supporters of British withdrawal would have a field day. Yet while Adams and McAliskey made some reasonable points, there was an element in their argument that did not relate to the changing face of Ireland today.

Adams praised Reynolds' 'positive role in the peace process'. Now, Reynolds is despised for his attacks on TEAM and Irish steel workers. The idea that this politician, who plays a vicious right wing role in the South, can suddenly become a progressive on 'the national question' was never explained.

What possible interest could Reynolds have in bringing about a situation where the sectarian divisions between Catholic and Protestant workers were ended?

But by far the saddest contribution came from Bernadette McAliskey. Back in 1968, Bernadette Devlin, as she was known, was the best known socialist in Ireland.

At that time she hammered home the point that the only force that could liberate the working class, was the working class itself. She toured England in support of striking miners and the Shrewsbury building workers who were jailed on a conspiracy charge.

But at this meeting she argued as if the conflict in the North was one about Irish and British traditions. And, naturally, the Irish tradition was superior.

According to McAliskey, the monarchy still rules Britain. The fact that Britain did not have a written constitution made it a far less democratic than countries which did—such as Southern Ireland or the USA.

This is a bizarre message for the countless black people who were lynched in the USA or for Irish women who were denied information on contraception in decades gone by.

The point of McAliskey's argument was to show that the 'collective historical life experience of the British' made them less able to understand democracy than the Irish.

This is just rubbish. The fight for voting rights, for example, was started by the British Chartist movement which united English workers and Irish immigrants in its ranks.

Her argument absolves the British ruling class of blame for colonialism because they were just acting out of the general British 'life experience'.

It also leads to a notion that there is a huge gap between Protestant and Catholic workers. It is almost as if democracy is going to have to be beaten in to the Protestants.

And the argument is important. The revolt against oppression in the North has come to a dead end in recent years. Some want to revive by a greater appeal to ethnic identities.

If religion may seem a rather old fashioned basis for these identities, then the idea of different 'historical life experiences' might do instead.

In reality those who speak about unbridgeable British and Irish identities only play into the hands of our rulers who are looking for solutions which seek to institutionalise sectarianism and police us apart.

They miss out on the fact that the Harland and Wolff workers who struck after the murder of a Catholic worker have far more in common with the thousands of working class women who took to the streets over the X case two years ago.

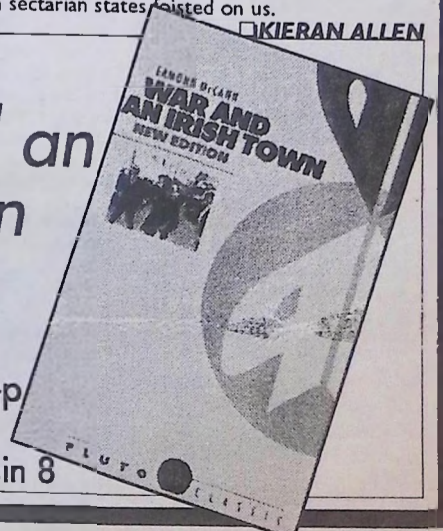
They at least started to realise that we do not have to be imprisoned in the ethnic identities that two rotten sectarian states insisted on us.

KIERAN ALLEN

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RWANDA:

Is Africa descending into tribalism?

"HORROR" is the only way to describe the reaction of most people to the images coming from Rwanda these last three months.

A half million slaughtered in the conflict.

Over two million refugees threatened with cholera, famine and death.

This is only the latest in a long line of disasters that have gripped the African continent.

If it were not for the reaction of ordinary people around the world, Rwanda would have seen even more deaths.

The cholera epidemic grew because the big powers delayed taking action.

According to Andy Storey from Trocaire:

"The US intervention was a PR exercise. They dropped food when it was not required. Only later did they arrive in water purification machinery"

The French government played an even more disastrous role.

They claimed that they went into Rwanda for 'humanitarian reasons'.

But they set up an enclave to protect the former government which had organised the genocide against Tutsis.

Amnesty International has called for their prosecution for genocide.

But the French government is still protecting them.

They allowed these butchers to use their radio stations to frighten Hutus into fleeing across the border in the hope that they could recruit them for a new army.

What are the roots of the current disaster? Today the media bombard us with images of Africa where a veneer of civilisation is being ripped away by deep tribal instincts.

They pretend that Africans naturally stick with their tribes.

But right across the world right wing groups are trying to foster ethnic divisions.

In Bosnia, Serbs, Muslims and Croats have been whipped up by nationalists.

In India, Hindu fundamentalists target Muslims.

There are particular reasons why ethnic identities in Africa have an appeal.

One word is key to understanding how these rivalries were encouraged—colonialism.

Over a hundred years ago, Britain, France, Germany and Belgium carved up the African continent—what became known as "the scramble for Africa".

But having conquered the continent, the question was how to rule it.

Brute force was certainly often used.

But the colonial powers did not have enough men under arms to



suppress Africa by force alone. They had to find ways of dividing the population and winning some allies.

The European missionaries played an important role in this. They standardised into a written form many of the languages and dialects.

Elevated

It was they who often wrote what were to become official tribal histories.

It was they who defined what was custom and tradition.

Traditional African authorities, chiefs in particular, were elevated by the colonial authorities into a status and importance that they did not have before.

A recent example of this was the creation of Bantustans by the apartheid regime in South Africa.

A tiny minority of blacks were

thus given a small stake in the regime.

Buthelezi and his Inkatha movement were funded, armed and trained to try and divide and demoralise the opposition.

In Rwanda, the Belgian authorities deliberately used the Tutsi leaders.

A foreign office official wrote: "The Tutsi are not, of course, people of the first rank."

"But they will prove an unlikely ally, a godly aid, in pacifying the continent for the higher race."

Education was used to reinforce the notion of tribal identity.

In 1917 a British War Office official stated: "The spirit of nationality or perhaps it would be more correct to say the tribe should be cultivated..."

It is suggested that in each ethnographically distinct district the schools should as far as pos-

sible form integral parts of the tribe and centres of folklore and tradition."

But if ethnic identity was encouraged by the colonial powers how has it continued today?

Divisions continue as a result of the economic devastation of Africa.

Thousands of people are forced to spend much of their lives as migrants.

In order to sustain themselves African workers who move to urban areas have to regularly return to their traditional lands.

The cities are made up of huge areas of shanty towns.

There is no proper health service. Food shortages occur regularly. So workers have to rely for support on the traditional village system.

The question of land is therefore of huge importance. In many African countries, Rwanda in-

cluded, land is in dispute.

Rwanda is the most densely populated country in Africa.

It is no accident that those who voluntarily joined the Hutu militia are mostly landless and unemployed.

Forcible

This movement from the land to cities is part of the history of the development of capitalism.

It happened in Europe with the enclosures, in Ireland with the Famine and the mass evictions from the land.

But the result was the same—the forcible movement of millions into the cities.

But in Africa the partial and failed nature of capitalist development means that this process continues.

The idea of tribal identity, of loyalty to traditional chiefs, can

play a very important role in providing migrants with a sense of control that they might not otherwise have.

It strengthens their sense of links and control over their lands.

Returning migrants often present gifts to the so-called chiefs as a way of ensuring that their interests are looked after in their absence.

The appeal of ethnic ideas is strongest amongst migrants.

It is rooted in the countryside but can be strengthened and consolidated in the cities.

Very often the employers make use of this existing sense of tribal identity to maintain divisions within the workforce.

The Zulu Inkatha movement in South Africa is a clear example of this.

Its strength lies in the rural areas of Natal and in the hostels for migrant workers around Johannesburg.

These migrant workers were consciously kept separate and isolated from the general population of the black townships.

Although living in the city, their wives, families and lands were in the countryside.

In contrast settled Zulu workers identified not with their tribal origins but with the ANC.

The liberation struggles of the fifties and sixties saw the defeat and withdrawal of the colonial regimes throughout Africa.

The hopes and aspirations of millions were raised.

But the reality today looking across the independent nations of Africa is economic weakness and collapse.

Today Africa's output only contributes one percent of world trade.

In Rwanda half the population is illiterate and the average income is less than £3 a week.

There has been the failure of these countries to fulfil the promises of prosperity which would follow their independence from colonial rule.

In this situation people's desperation is turned on one another.

Every division, both real and imagined, is emphasised.

Politics divides not along lines of class but in support of one or other faction that fights the hardest for scarce resources.

Civil wars are the logical consequence.

Nearly a hundred years ago the German socialist Rosa Luxemburg said that the prospects facing the world were for "socialism or barbarism".

That barbarism is not something that might happen in the future.

The horrors of Rwanda are the direct consequence of the failure of capitalism to provide even the basics of life.

Socialist Worker Appeal



Help us produce a fortnightly paper

SOCIALIST WORKER is winning a growing reputation among workers. Most of the press in Ireland is controlled by big tycoons like Tony O'Reilly and are used to put over the bosses side of the story. Up to now **Socialist Worker** has only appeared on a monthly basis. But

now we need a more regular paper to provide socialist answers and to bring together the thousands who are increasingly fed up with the capitalist system. That is why in 1995 the paper will appear once a fortnight. But to produce a fortnightly we need money. A lot of money. In the next few months we need to raise £10,000.

This will go a long way to buy a new printing machine. We appeal to all our readers to give as generously as possible. We need every donation no matter how small. Send your cheques or postal orders made payable to SWM, to PO Box 1648 Dublin 8 without delay.

What we stand for

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. It has to be overthrown. The machinery of the capitalist state—parliament, courts, army, police etc.—is 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 SWM 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. Workers' revolutions are needed to win real freedom in the East. 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 SWM aims to build such a party in Ireland.

STOP THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILL

THE Tories are trying to introduce a vicious law in Britain called the Criminal Justice Bill. In July, nearly 50,000 people took to the streets of London to protest about it.

The Bill tries to stop people protesting or even attending raves.

It snobbishly refers to

rave music as "sounds wholly or predominately characterised by the emission of repetitive beats".

If the police hear these sounds 'at night' or in a place that is 'partly open to air' they can move in and disperse people.

Anyone who objects could get three months in jail or a £2,500 fine.

cordon around a whole community for 24 hours.

The new law attacks the right to silence so a "confession" will no longer be necessary for the police to secure a conviction.

Silence can be treated as an admission of guilt.

Craigavon: Dream City?

CRAIGAVON town is in county Armagh, between the towns of Lurgan and Portadown. It was built in the 60's with the aim of providing another city in the north besides Belfast and Derry.

But now, over 25 years since Craigavon was built, it is clear that the plans have failed. The big companies had no commitment to the area and soon pulled out. The closure of the Goodyear factory especially put many workers on the dole.

Unemployment in Craigavon is high. While the official figure is 28%, the unofficial rate including those who can't sign on is 46%.

Half of Craigavon's households have an income 50% below the Northern Ireland average. This leads to poor health. Craigavon is top of the poor health league across a range of indicators including low birth rate, asthma, heart disease and cancer.

mainly young, 55% of the population are under 25 but there few facilities for training or leisure. Over half the young people leaving government training schemes are unemployed; and many are becoming long-term unemployed.

As one teenager told *Socialist Worker*: "There's nothing for us to do. We can't get into Disco's or pubs, and not everyone wants to go to the youth club. We just get some drink."

But Craigavon has a positive side, although it has loyalist and nationalist areas, the main part is essentially mixed with a lot of mixed marriages. Brownlow college was one of the north's first integrated high schools.

The past year has seen

Craigavon's residents fightback, with residents of one estate picketing the Housing Executive over poor conditions

A large demonstration was held and a petition collected demanding Lurgan Hospital remain open.

Residents of the old people's home fought in court and kept their home open when it was threatened with closure.

Now the Socialist Workers Movement is organising to set up a branch in the area.

A public meeting is planned for September and members are starting sales of *Socialist Worker* on the housing estates. Anyone wanting to join the branch should write to the SWM address.

Organised

This little measure gives unbelievable power to the RUC in the North.

It means that get can move in on any organised social whether it is a private gathering of beer can drinkers with some music paying or an organised rave.

But this is not all. The police can throw a legal

Arrested

The Criminal Justice Bill is very similar to the Public Order Act that was introduced to the South early this year.

Ominously, the second person to be arrested under this Act dies in a police station in Trilce, Co Kerry.

Right across the world our rulers are becoming and more frightened of street protests.

That is why they are strengthening their armoury of repression today.

Socialist Worker

AUGUST PUBLIC MEETINGS

25 YEARS ON: WHY WE SAY...

The troops must go!



Speaker: An Ex-British Soldier

Dundalk: Thursday 18th; Cork: Friday 19th; Belfast: Saturday 20th; Waterford: Monday 22nd; Dublin: Tuesday 23rd; Derry: Wednesday 24th

What's On

Branches of the SWM meet around the country at the following times and venues

ATHLONE: Meets every Tuesday. For details of time and venue write to the SWM national address.

BELFAST: Meets every Tuesday 8pm See SW sellers for details or contact national office

CORK: Meets every Tuesday 8pm Anchor Inn, Georges Quay

DERRY: Meets every Tuesday 8pm Badgers Pub Orchard St

DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL: Meets every Wednesday 8pm Conway's Pub Parnell St

DUBLIN NORTHSIDE: Meets every Tuesday 8pm The Old Brogue, Dorset St

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL: Meets every Thursday 8pm Trinity Inn Pearse St

DUBLIN SOUTHSIDE: Meets every Wednesday 8pm Clarkes Bar, 11 Wexford St

DUNDALK: For details of time and venue write to the SWM national address.

MAYNOOTH: For details of time and venue write to the SWM national address.

TALLAGHT/CLONDALKIN: Meets every Wednesday 8pm Tallaght Welfare Society next to Foxes Covert in Tallaght village

WATERFORD: Meets every Tuesday 8pm ATGWU Hall, Keyser St

To contact the SWM in Athy, Bray, Coleraine, Cookstown, Craigavon, Drogheda, Dun Laoghaire, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick & write to SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Phone (01) 872 2682 or PO Box 103 Belfast 15 2AB

JOIN US!

If you would like to join the SWM or receive more details, send this slip to: SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Tel: (01) 872 2682 or PO Box 103 Belfast 15 2AB

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The lost generation

by LUKE HOLLAND

GENERATION X has become the latest obsession of the media. Just in case you've been asleep for several months, Generation X refers to "the lost generation", apathetic, depressed twenty-somethings who have been dealt a raw deal by society.

Their apathy stems from their inability to progress beyond low paid service sector employment.

They have a general sense of disillusion with the culture and political environment of the capitalist society in which they live.

Attention was first drawn to Generation X by the book of the same name which was first published three years ago in the United States.

It was immediately acclaimed as a great work, drawing comparisons with *Catcher In The Rye*.

The *Sunday Times* Culture Supplement now runs a regular column entitled "Generation X".

I expect that Douglas Coupland didn't realise that his novel about young people unhappy with living in a capitalist, consumerist society was to become the buzz word at the centre of the present feeding frenzy between media establishments desperate to cop one another's profits.

Coupland refers in the book to the fear Generation X have of becoming a target market for advertisers.

The knock-on effect of his book has been to make them just that.

There is something rather disgusting in the way the profit-making establishment has realised a definable section of society which it has made unhappy, and reacted only by jumping on its potential for exploitation and profit generation.

If Coupland was trying to send a message attacking a greedy and insensitive society, perhaps he should have seen the double cross coming.

Generation X tells the story of three friends living in Palm Springs, California.

They are interesting and intelligent people, but society seems to have no place, or more poignantly, no use for them.

In telling their story Coupland demonstrates his talent as a writer, as we see the wastefulness of capitalism and the distress it causes to these people.

And don't think, by the way, that this would make for a depressing read. Coupland's use of irony and subtle sarcasm along with the occasional quirky anecdote make it extremely funny.

It is a book well worth reading, as is its sequel *Shampoo Planet* which is the tale of an aspiring young capitalist whose ambition is to become a cosmetics baron.

Both books are enjoyable on the level of the stories they tell and the skill with which they are written, but they also give a real insight into the ground level effects of a competition-based economy on society.

The back cover of *Generation X* carries this description of its characters:

"Unsure of their future, they immerse themselves in a regime of heavy drinking and working at Mcjobs—low pay, low prestige, low benefit, no future, jobs in the service industry.

"Underemployed, over-educated, intensely private and unpredictable, they have nowhere to direct their anger, no-one to assuage their fears and no culture to replace their anomie."

The media comfort themselves that this apathetic generation will never get political.

But there is not a big gap between an apathy that scorns the values of capitalism and open rebellion.

When the French conservative government tried to cut the minimum youth wage this year, the Generation X exploded.

They took to the streets in their thousands and fought the riot police.

A year after Coupland's book appeared, the L.A. riots happened. Black, white and Latino youth rose up against the racism and poverty of US life.

Sooner or later, the generation that Coupland depicted will have to trade in their apathy for action. That will also mean joining the fight for socialism.

Play:

Behan's Borstal Boy

by MICK DOYLE

BRENDAN Behan's *Borstal Boy* is one of the funniest and most moving plays you're ever likely to see.

It tells the story of how, at the age of seventeen, Behan embarked on a bombing mission to the North of England, how he was caught and jailed, the people he met and the experiences he had in prison.

He is arrested in Liverpool shortly after he finds digs and grilled by the police.

Behan had come up through the Fianna and graduated to the IRA.

He'd been brought up on the belief that the English were at the root of all Ireland's problems.

This first encounter with English people seems to bear out his views of them.

The police are racist and the prison staff they pass him on to are even more brutal.

The Catholic Church shows its true colours too when a beefy priest bawls him out and demands that he reject violence.

It leads into one of the funniest scenes in the play.

Behan reels off a litany of instances in which the

church stabbed republicanism in the back and winds it up by telling the priest to "fuck off".

It's a courageous thing for a seventeen-year-old Catholic, in a foreign jail and threatened with excommunication, to do and it earns him a savage beating from the screws.

But it's in prison that his views begin to change. He meets a cockney called Charley and they immediately become "chinas".

And, although not all of his relationships with the other prisoners run so smoothly, he soon realises a common bond between him and them.

Big Knobs

Be they from Glasgow, Dublin or London they are all working class. Or, as Behan himself said, "Our mothers all went to the pawn".

They see nothing wrong with a bombing campaign as such. They just wish the IRA would hit some of "the big knobs" and let ordinary people get on with their lives.

Most of them take to Behan. As one inmate puts it, "E's a comical bostod innry," and by the end of the play he has them shouting "Up the Republic!" right, left and centre.

The production itself is



excellent.

The sets are fantastic and the acting strong. Whether it's Niall Tobin or David Parnell (playing the young Behan) you have to keep reminding yourself that it's not actually Brendan Behan up there on the stage.

I felt there was a little too much song and dance myself, but only just, and

there are some great songs in it.

You'll find yourself singing them for days afterwards.

Stirring

There's a stirring rendition of "Keep The Red Flag Flying", although I suspect some of those stirring around me weren't

doing it out of a sense of pride.

Too bad, it's a working class play, by a working class author, about working class people.

Borstal Boy plays at the Gaiety Theatre in Dublin until September. Tickets range in price from £7.50 to £15.50, with reductions on Mondays and Tuesdays. And it's well worth seeing.

Music:

Fun-da-mental anger

Damien McLoughlin and Terry Connolly interview Fun-Da-Mental

FUN-DA-MENTAL have rightly been described as one of the best British bands of this decade.

Described as the Asian Public Enemy, their new album "Seize The Time" is very political and very good, an awesome collision of hip hop, noise and anger.

On stage, Fun-Da-Mental are unbelievable.

The lyrics are furious, tense:

"...A brother lies in a coma/A family is burnt alive... Fifty million slaves killed by your ancestors... Five centuries of oppression cost how many lives?"

PACIFISM IS NOT A STRATEGY

Aki, aka Propa-Ghandi, appears with a headscarf wrapped PLO-style around his face.

Images of Islamic women on a firing range fill the backdrop.

The swathes of noise add more fire to the belly as the four men (two Asians, two blacks) shout "Self Defence Is No Offence!" and "Smash the BNP!"

Later, Aki, friendly, dry humoured and extremely articulate, talks to *Socialist Worker* after the gig.

"Yes, we do live in a class society but where the majority are being fooled by the ruling class, who have always worked on dividing us."

The band had just returned from a tour of South Africa.

"It was depressing. There is so much wealth. We went to the shanty towns as well and were shocked.

"It's a good thing

Mandela is in but the economy has been built for a minority in which the majority suffered," said Aki, agreeing that political apartheid may have gone but that economic apartheid will continue.

Is Aki a socialist?

"We do not argue with most of Marxist theory but what you need is positivity you can't alienate people. I'm a Muslim and humanism is very important. Socialists should be on a more humble level."

And what about hip hop?

"Hip hop needs to be more positive, it needs to get rid of the sexism and all the shit like that.

"I can understand why it is done in gangster rap for example, but it's got to raise itself above that," said Aki.

Bullshit

"A lot of bands are real hypocrites, saying one thing in interview and then having a different thing in videos.

"It's total bullshit, part of the marketing cam-



paign."

Fun-Da-Mental have a lot of religious images in their set. Why?

"We love our religion but accept others. Intellectualism is a religion. Respect is very important.

"Religion helps to discipline ourselves towards good ways. I hate fanaticism but don't mind fundamentalism.

"And the media are scared of Islam. Oppression of women happens all over the world, not just in Islam," said Aki.

What about Ireland? "The troops should

have fucked off out of the North long ago.

"I'd like to know more about both the South and the North."

Fun-Da-Mental admit that the message is more important than the music, with the music being just a platform.

And the music is bloody brilliant.

"If we didn't think things could change, we wouldn't be doing what we do," concludes Aki optimistically.

"Seize The Time" is out now on Beggars Banquet. Fun-Da-Mental hope to play in Ireland (soon!)

If you have a story from your workplace phone (01) 872 2682

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Scheme workers organise

THE organisation set up to protect the rights of workers on SES and CEP schemes, the Scheme Workers Alliance, has been organising a series of protests against the imposition of tax on their allowance.

Joe Carolan, a member of Scheme Workers Alliance: "The government claims I'm being trained but I'm on a scheme as a receptionist. It doesn't take six months to learn how to pick up the phone. The campaign has been getting increased support from the trade unions. We see this as the way scheme workers can become united and start to win"

Companies like Temple Bar Properties employ 30 scheme workers when they could be taking on full time workers. Dublin Corporation Councillors are also trying to replace full time workers with scheme workers. The SWA plans to mount a campaign against

the Corporation's plans. As Martin Walsh of the Scheme Workers Alliance put it, "We really need to get organised. They started taxing schemes the same week as they dropped the residential property tax. They listen to the rich but not to us."

The Scheme Workers Alliance have made an agreement with the ATGWU which means that scheme workers can join the union at reduced rates.

If you want to get involved with SWA, contact Paul Johnston c/o Wicklow Trade Union Centre for the Unemployed, Florence Road, Bray, phone 01 286 6729 or Joe Carolan on 01 838 6265.

DEFEND OUR UNIONS ...

Anti-union laws used at Nolan transport



Nolans strikers earlier this year

STRIKERS at Nolan Transport in New Ross are learning in practice how the Industrial Relations Act is used to break union organisation.

Nolan's are suing the strikers' union SIPTU for £2.2 million over the sixteen month old strike at the Transport firm.

The company is also suing a SIPTU official, Anthony Ayton, and two truck drivers, James Halligan and Henry Nolan.

Nolan Transport are suing the workers over not sticking to rules about balloting.

Yet the real issue of democracy is that the workers were denied union rights which is why they struck in the first place.

The firm is also seeking an injunction to stop "intimidation" by pickets and to prevent blacking of the company by other workers.

But it is Nolans' who have been intimidating the pickets. Company thugs have beaten up pickets and

one striker's car was shot at with an air-gun.

Nolans' are trying to stop the workers from effectively picketing and to prevent other workers from supporting the strike with blacking.

SIPTU should organise pickets of the court hearings.

If the company wins the union should refuse to pay the costs and should step up solidarity action in defence of its members at Nolan Transport.

Trinity College strike

SIPTU members in Trinity College have taken strike action over the treatment of part time cleaners.

One cleaner at Trinity college has been employed for nearly 30 years but is expected to leave without any pension.

SIPTU members voted overwhelmingly to take strike action to demand that the cleaner and other part time workers get a pension. The union believes that pensions for part time cleaners would only cost the college £200,000.

Trinity say that they have no money to pay this modest demand. The reality is that the

college spends out vast sums of money in providing privileges for certain groupings.

The college has the finest collection of silverware in Ireland—and has never had to sell any of it off.

It keeps a huge stock of wine in its cellars. Free meals—including wine—are provided to the 'fellows' of the college on a regular basis.

Trinity College have now brought in Brian Thornburgh who has been given the job of talking on the union. Thornburgh previously worked at Guinness. According to one SIPTU member: "He seems to have got his Browne points for cutting down the

workforce. We wonder is that his agenda here?"

TCD is trying to push more and more workers onto part time contracts. It has reduced the number of full time cleaners from 13 to 8.

SIPTU members in TCD are now discussing how to escalate the action. At the moment they have told the college that further industrial action can be called at short notice.

It is high time that the pampered elite who run Trinity should be forced to make concessions to some of the most poorly paid members of their staff.

Dockers in the dock

Dockers in both Dublin and Waterford are also being attacked in the courts.

For courts dockers insisted that companies only recruited from a union register. This meant that new recruits were employed at the proper rates and had the protection of union safety standards.

Last month Pandoro Ltd won a case against the Marine Port union giving it the right to employ whoever it liked at its Dublin site.

In Waterford ATGWU members on the docks face a High Court case in October taken by Bell Shipping and Strokestown Shipping

FIGHT THESE LAWS!

The bosses have always used the courts and the police to break strikes and undermine unions. That is why it was such a scandal that union leaders accepted the Industrial Relations Act. The Act was sold as a means of ensuring "industrial peace". Yet for the boss class "industrial peace" means that workers accept their lot and leave the employers free to attack our conditions.

It means that where workers do strike they are not allowed to make their strike effective by mass

picketing and blacking of scab companies.

This has been shown in the case of Nolan Transport and in the case of dockers in Dublin and Waterford reported on this page. The National Bus and Rail Union is being sued for a £250,000 over a rail strike at Easter 1983.

There is one way to stop the law being used against workers and that is to break it with mass pickets and solidarity action. If enough workers stick together the law can be made unworkable.

But instead of defying the law union leaders use the Industrial Relations Act as an alibi for avoiding effective strike action. SIPTU failed to build the campaign of blacking needed to win the recent Pal the Baker strike because it was illegal.

Yet workers would never have won the right to organise and unions would never have been built if laws had not been broken. If workers are to win against the present attacks by the bosses the law will have to be pushed aside.

DUNNES STORES STRIKE TEN YEARS AGO

A fight against Apartheid

TEN YEARS ago workers began a magnificent strike in solidarity with those fighting the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Here KAREN GEARON, the Dunnes shop steward, explained what happened.

AT the IDATU annual delegate conference at Easter 1984 a motion was passed requiring members not to handle South African goods because of apartheid.

This instruction was passed to us in July '84.

We started to implement it on 17th July.

When we received this instruction we knew very little about South Africa and we just followed it because of the conditions we were suffering in Dunnes Stores.

The management of Dunnes did not take any action against us for the first day and a half, but then they put us on the registers so that we would be forced to refuse to handle the South African goods, which were mainly Outspan grapefruit and oranges.

During this time the management kept a close eye on us to see whether we were handling the goods or not.

Then Mary Manning refused to handle two grapefruits.

She explained to the customer why.

The management immediately intervened.

Mary was removed from the check-out and brought up to the office with Karen Gearon, shop steward.

The management kept us apart so that we could not discuss what was about to happen.

Mary was then suspended.

So began the Dunnes Stores strike against apartheid.

This strike lasted two years and nine months.

There were ten women and one man on strike in Dunnes Stores, Henry Street, Dublin.

Aware

During the first couple of months most people were not aware of why we were on strike, but in December 1984 Bishop Desmond Tutu of the South African Council of Churches asked to meet with us in London when he was on



his way to Oslo to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

Myself, Mary Manning, Don Mullens (AFRI) and Brendan Archbold (IDATU) went to meet him.

This meeting had a significant effect on the strike as it brought us into the international arena.

When we returned from London the amount of support we had from the public had increased and also the amount of people helping us on the picket line.

We started receiving invitations to speak from differ-

ent types of groups in Ireland, England and Europe.

This put a lot of pressure on the picket line but we knew that we had to attend these meetings to raise our profile and most important the injustices of apartheid.

Exciting

Although all this may sound all very exciting, we were all receiving just £21 strike pay a week and suffered an enormous amount of harassment from both the management of Dunnes Stores

and the police.

Because we were mainly women they thought they could push us around.

We suffered many injuries, but we kept it up and were determined that the strike would win.

We were then invited over to South Africa for the first anniversary of the strike to see for ourselves what apartheid was really like.

When we got there we were surrounded by more than thirty army personnel, escorted up four flights of stairs and kept in a room for

eight weeks with no contact with the outside world.

We were then sent back home on the same plane as we came in, but with a promise that we would return when South Africa was free.

On 24th December 1985 the union lifted the pickets on Dunnes Stores, Henry Street, so that the government could investigate ways of banning South African goods.

Disagreed

The strikers were not consulted on this matter and we disagreed with this decision strongly, so the union banned us from public speaking and talking to the media, using our strike pay as a way of keeping us in line.

In April 1986 we started to picket government buildings while we waited for a decision on the ban.

An announcement was made that they were going to ban South African fruit and vegetables from 1st January 1987, which would enable us to return to work.

This was a major victory for us—eleven people had forced a change in government policy.

We tried to negotiate with

Dunnes Stores to return to work and not handle the goods until the ban came into effect but they would not agree.

So we decided that we would return to work on 5th January 1987.

When we returned to work on 5th January Dunnes came up with new contracts which we could not sign until we got advice on them.

When we did it was decided that we should return to work on 13th April 1987.

Seven of us returned.

A few months later myself and Mary Manning were offered management jobs.

Mary was going to Australia and I refused the offer as this was only a buy out.

From then on the harassment started and at one stage I was brought up to the office nineteen times in the space of two weeks.

I finally was dismissed on 3rd May 1988, and brought the case to the unfair dismissals tribunal.

I won the case but it was not worth the paper it was written on because I had gained a reputation of being a "trouble maker".

It took me more than three years to get a job.

Socialist Worker

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***TWENTY FIVE YEARS SINCE THE TROOPS WENT IN**

***TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF BLOODSHED**

**Troops out!
Workers'
Unity!**

WHY THE TROOPS HAVE



NOT BROUGHT PEACE

See centre pages