

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

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# BLACKMAIL

# AT

- RELIEF BREAK CUT
- 2 HOURS EXTRA A WEEK
- 2 YEAR WAGE FREEZE
- 2 DAYS LESS HOLIDAYS

# PACKARD

**PACKARD ELECTRIC is trying to blackmail its workers.**

They want them to work longer, to take less holidays, and to give up a relief break—all in order to create more profits for their bosses.

Packard are owned by the giant multi-national General Motors.

Right across the world GM is attacking the conditions of those it employs.

They want to set workers in one country against those in another.

But the Packard workers have resisted them despite the advice of their union leaders.

They are absolutely right to do so.

Ever since the 1960s, Irish governments have told us that we have to be grateful to multi-nationals "for providing jobs".

They gave these sharks huge grants and tax breaks.

Packard, for example, has received £4.5 million in grants.

But the days of grovelling to the multi-nationals are over.

It is high time to stand up to their blackmail.

That means backing the workers at Packard Electric.

# Stand up to the multi-nationals

# WATER CHARGES: Keep up the fight

**THE CAMPAIGN** against the water charges took a major step forward when the new government promised to limit the powers of local authorities to turn off water supplies.

After a pitched battle at Hillview in Waterford against disconnections, the Coalition knew they had a battle on their hands and decided to retreat. But some of the local councils are determined to extract revenge. In the Fingal Council in

Dublin, the manager told councillors that the government had not promised to stop disconnections but only to limit their use.

## Powers

He is still demanding the same powers as the ESB and Telecom to switch off supplies. In Limerick, the coun-

cil hauled some non-payers before the courts.

The Coalition is hoping the fight against the water charges will now disintegrate.

But the Anti-Water Charges Campaign are or-

ganising a series of public meetings in local areas to explain the issues.

They will also be organising pickets of Labour and Democratic Left TDs to demand that they abolish these charges fully.

## WATERFORD:

**DESPITE PROMISES** that there would be no more disconnections for non-payment of service charges local authorities throughout the country are maintaining the pressure on households.

In Waterford the council sent intimidating letters to families that had refused to pay. The letters threatened to send the sheriff to take possession of goods to the value of the charges.

This prompted one woman to go to the corporation, offering to pay off £2.50 a week. The corporation would have none of it. She then upped the amount she was prepared to pay back to £5. That offer too was refused, the corporation demanding at least £10 a week.

The woman explained that she had three asthmatic children and that she simply couldn't afford that much. She was so angry with the corporation at this stage that she told them she wouldn't be paying anything at all.

**ABOLISH THE WATER CHARGES! PROTEST ON BUDGET DAY February 8th 1.30pm outside Dáil Eireann Called by Anti-Water Charges Campaign**

## CLONMEL:

**BRENDAN HOWLIN**, the new Minister for the Environment, has threatened to abolish Clonmel corporation if they don't roll over and pass the estimates of expenditure for the new year.

The estimates include provision for service charges which four members of the corporation are steadfastly opposed to, including Clonmel's Lord Mayor, Seamas Healy.

The other three are members of the Workers and Unemployed Action Group. They say they were elected on an anti-service charges platform and that they will not back down.

The remaining councillors, from traditional established parties, have refused to vote one way or the other.

This alone gives you some idea of the level of opposition to the charges in Clonmel as a whole.

As representatives of their community, the corporation should stand fast. Their community should back their stand and like other communities all over the country continue to campaign against these charges.

# Education: 'a question of money'

**CHILDREN'S** performance at school can come down to a question of money. This is what a new study by the Irish National Teachers' Association, has shown.

The report shows that children from poor backgrounds are far more likely to drop out of secondary school.

A study of twenty schools in disadvantaged areas found that 28 out of 100 children left school before the Intermediate Cert, compared to nine out of 100 for Ireland as a whole.

More than one in four dropped out of schools in poorer areas before their Leaving Cert, compared to one in ten nationwide.

"The way in which education has been funded has reinforced rather than lessened inequality within the system", the report stated.

Primary schools still want parents to donate money. Parents who try to save two pence on the no-name can of beans can't afford to plough money into their kids' schools.

The state of schooling in poor urban and rural areas is so bad that INTO calls them "crisis schools". A teacher in one of these schools said,

"Many pupils come to school late, having had nothing to eat. Children in our school have very poor footing and clothing and classes are still to big due to lack of government money".

The INTO report shows that poor working class children get enough education from the state to be able to work in monotonous, badly paid jobs. Meanwhile, the children of the rich can go to high-flying private schools where they are coached for entry to university.

# Journalists defend O'Keefe

**THE BEEF Tribunal** revealed corruption and tax evasion in Goodman International and the close links between big business and Fianna Fail.

Yet the outcome of the hearing has been a disgrace.

Politicians like Albert Reynolds have been whitewashed, while the hearing provided a bonanza for the state lawyers who earned £1,800 per sitting day and £1,000 per non-sitting day.

The Dáil Committee of Public Accounts requested that these lawyers, including Harry Whelehan, return some of their fees.

## Laughter

When the Committee met on the 12th January there was "uproarious laughter" at the announcement that none of them had returned a penny.

One person who is not finding the affair so

funny is Susan O'Keefe, the World in Action Journalist whose work drew attention to the corruption in Goodman International.

She has been charged with "contempt" for not revealing her sources to the Tribunal.

She faces a fine of up to £10,000 and up to two years in jail for her stand. Her trial begins on Thursday January 26th.

The National Union of Journalists is calling a protest meeting for that day.

It is important that the picket is large and lively, to show solidarity with Susan O'Keefe, and to make vocal the disgust that most people feel at the corrupt practices of Ireland's close knit circle of politicians, judges and lawyers.

# THEY EXPECT US TO LIVE LIKE THIS...



**SCAM OF the fortnight** goes to the owners of the Ardferf guesthouse on Dublin's Nelson Street.

They are being paid more than a hundred pounds a week by the Eastern Health Board to house Natalie Donohoe in a room which is barely big enough to fit a single bed.

Natalie has been stuck there for over a month—in what is supposed to be emergency accommodation.

She has to keep her clothes in plastic bags because of the damp and the wallpaper is rotting on the walls.

Even if she wanted to, Natalie could not use the room during the day because she has to be out by 11 am.

Guesthouses are not subject to any official regulations.

As the Health Board placed her there, leaving is not an option without the money for a flat.

The government tells us there is no housing crisis.

But the reason why the Health Board uses B&B to house people like Natalie is because there are not enough corporation houses to go round.

In 1981, Dublin Corporation built 1,449 houses, but in 1991, just 48 new houses were provided.

The result is that thousands of people are living on the street or in sub-standard accommodation.

In 1990, the Health Board spent £520 putting people in B&Bs.

By 1993, they were pouring a massive £273,222 into the pockets of private landlords.

Instead of condoning rip-offs like Ardferf, the government should be building more public housing.

# ALTNAGELVIN HOSPITAL: 'Trust' will mean job losses

**NURSING AND ancillary staff** at Derry's Altnagelvin Hospital fear that the move to Trust status will mean job losses.

Altnagelvin is due to become a 'shadow Trust' in April 1995 and a full Trust in 1996. This means that the hospital will opt out of the control of the Western Health Board and become a self-governing business instead.

Under the present system, if a hospital overspends, the Health Board makes good the overspending in the following year.

If a Trust makes a loss, the Board will no longer make up the difference so wards will be closed and nursing staff sacked.

This is what happened in Britain

where the first three years of Trust hospitals saw a loss of 5,850 nursing jobs.

At the same time as thousands of nurses were being sacked, the number of senior managers rose by 262 per cent from 4,610 to 15,590.

## Shortfall

Closer to home, the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast axed 300 jobs and closed several wards within a year of becoming a Trust because it had a £6 million shortfall.

A UNISON official told Socialist Worker, "the experience of Trust hospitals in the Belfast area has meant fewer nurses, more managers; it has also meant fewer hospital beds and longer waiting lists."

Socialist Worker members and supporters in Derry have already started campaigning against Altnagelvin opting out. They have collected hundreds of signatures for a petition calling on UNISON, the health workers' union, to take industrial action to defend services and jobs at the hospital.

Many of the health workers who signed the petition hold out little hope of stopping Trust status. But determined resistance to the move is vital. A good fight against opting out will mean that managers will be less likely to cut jobs and patient services. They will be afraid of the staff walkouts and demonstrations that would follow.

NOW is the time to fight to keep Altnagelvin in the Health Service.

**No Victimisation of Susan O'Keefe! Picket the Four Courts Thursday January 26th 11am Called By: National Union of Journalists**

## what we think

# Yeltsin's grisly war



Forty people demonstrated outside Aeroflot's Dublin offices in protest at the Russian invasion of Chechnia

ACCORDING to Chechen sources, nearly 18,000 people have died in Yeltsin's grisly war to take this small country back into the Russian Federation.

The market economy which Yeltsin championed has brought only poverty and hunger to the Russian people.

Yeltsin hoped to improve his prospects by winning control of the oil supplies from the Caucasus.

He needed to run a pipe line near the Chechnia region. This is why he launched the war. Yeltsin also hoped to bolster his power base by raising the flames of Russian nationalism.

Instead the second most powerful army in the world has been humiliated by a band of guerilla fighters.

Throughout all the crisis in Chechnia, the response from the leaders of the West has been one of abject hypocrisy.

The US and the European Union agreed that Chechnia was an 'internal problem' for Russia.

In other words, Yeltsin had a right to take over ownership of Chechnia.

They only expressed "concern" about the killings when too many bodies began to appear on the TV screens of the world.

But it was a different

story during the Gulf War.

Then the US and the European Union cried about the "rights of small nations" like plucky little Kuwait.

It was the pretext they used to get control of oil supplies.

Kuwait was an artificial country ruled by a Sheik

whose family had been put in power by the British empire.

Chechnia, by contrast, has suffered centuries of oppression at the hands of the Tsars and Stalin's henchmen.

## Profits

It has been able to resist the Russian army for so long because it is determined to win its national rights.

The Western powers have never really cared about "freedom" and "democracy".

They are only interested in protecting their profits and interests.

They understand that Yeltsin acts the same way.

As long as they think he will bring stability to Russia, they think he should be let trample on the rights of ordinary people in his own backyard.

## Brendan Smyth case: The cover-up continues

THE DAIL Committee examining the Fr Brendan Smyth case is making little progress in discovering why the Irish state did nothing about this child abusing priest for seven months.

One reason for this, is that they are not allowed to examine the actual file on the Smyth case that was held by the Attorney General's office.

This incredible decision was made by Dermot Gleeson, the new Fine Gael Attorney General.

No one has explained how the Dail Committee

can establish who organised protection for Smyth without looking at this file.

## 'Openness'

It is like looking for something in the dark without the aid of a torch.

Dick Spring who promised 'openness' and 'accountability' has

not protested.

Nor has Pat Rabbitte who claimed that there 'were documents that might rock the state to its foundations'.

Instead, the inquiry is being conducted by politicians who maintain a gentleman's agreement with each other.

They don't ask embarrassing or probing questions.

They even managed to make Albert Reynolds look capable.

A serious and genuine inquiry, into the Smyth affair would uncover the hidden links through which the Bishops influence Irish politics.

It would throw light on the secretive right wing organisations that operate at the top of the Irish politics.

It would reveal exactly how the Southern state operates as a sectarian state.

Fine Gael want to keep these matters out of public view as much as Fianna Fail.

That is why their Attorney General, Gleeson, is engaged in the same sort of game as Harry Whelehan: covering up.

## Where is the peace process going?

THE REMOVAL of the British Army from the streets of Belfast during daylight hours is being held out as a great 'gesture'.

But it only raises the question of why regiments like the Paras are let out at night to harass and intimidate people.

The Tory government is playing a dangerous gamble on peace in Northern Ireland.

They are hated by the

mass of working people in Britain and find themselves dependent on the Unionist Party votes to stay in office.

## Gesture

This is why every gesture they make is so late and tiny.

The British and Irish governments are trying to

complete their framework document. In the next few weeks, the Unionist Party will try to raise the sectarian temperature to gain maximum concessions.

In schools and college in the North, they are campaigning against the removal of 'God save the Queen' from graduation ceremonies in Queen's University.

John Taylor has called on every 'Unionist worth

his salt' to oppose the monster of an 'all-Ireland body with executive powers.

This type of bigotry and fear is important for the Unionist party.

## Dictated

It is what they have used traditionally to smother the class divisions between Protestants.

As long as the debate

about the future of Northern Ireland is dictated by the rulers of Britain and Ireland, the Unionist Party will maintain its power base.

The Southern government is only interested in pressing for a form of joint authority which will give a forum to the Catholic middle class to advance their interests.

They are incapable of ending sectarianism in the North—they only

want to adjust the balance between the Nationalist and Unionist middle classes.

What is desperately needed is a strong socialist organisation in the North.

Such an organisation needs to point out how much working class people have in common.

It has to stand for the destruction of both sectarian states in Ireland.

## THORP IN TROUBLE

THE THORP nuclear reprocessing plant at Sellafield has not even begun commercial operation before finding itself in growing financial difficulty.

On December 23, 1994, the Krummel nuclear power station cancelled its contract with THORP. A week later the Gundremingen nuclear power station followed suit.

These contracts were for THORP's projected second ten year period of operation. The loss of the German contracts, worth £90m, means that the only remaining contract for that period is an unsigned deal with Scottish Nuclear and Nuclear Electric.

It is likely that more con-

tracts will be lost as German nuclear waste is increasingly disposed of, rather than re-processed. A spokesperson

for the Cumbrian anti-Nuclear group CORE said:

"We are confident that more German power stations

## Tory cuts kill the poor

THE MEDIA and politicians claim the biggest problem in the North is the 'clash of cultures' between Catholics and Protestants.

But the real division—between rich and poor—is getting deeper according to a new report.

The Eastern Health and Social Services Board has found that in 1980 the richest 20 per cent were eight times better off than the

poorest 20 per cent—by 1990 they were eleven times wealthier.

The North has the highest unemployment in the UK and the lowest family incomes. The report finds that poverty is destroying people's health:

- Mortality rates among the poor have grown and fertility rates have dropped.
- The number of teenage mothers is three times higher in deprived areas because of less access to contraception.

will also cancel contracts in the very near future"

Socialist Worker has campaigned against THORP on the grounds that it is totally unnecessary and very dangerous. With the financial excuse being torn away, it is

- Lung cancer is twice the North's average in some areas of North and West Belfast because of pollution.
- Smoking is directly linked to stress caused by poverty and this in turn causes lower weight at birth.

The Tories' policies of attacking the health service and putting VAT on fuel will only increase this hardship. Despite his talk of 'peace' Major stands over a system that is slowly killing the poor.

hard for the British government to conceal that they want THORP to go ahead in order to have control over the weapons grade plutonium the plant produces.

## Campaign

A second blow to THORP is the possibility of a successful European Court action against British Nuclear Fuel. Four individuals from Ireland, backed by a campaign group called STAD.

Mary Kavanagh, one of those taking the action explained her reason for doing so:

"I refuse to accept that my children and I must live with the fear of cancer, while BNF make no effort to recognise the threat to the environment."

STAD won support from the recent Northern Counties delegate conference of SIPTU.

## Anti Nazi League

REMEMBER  
AUSCHWITZ

Torchlight  
Commemoration

Friday Jan 27th

8-9pm Crown Alley,

Temple Bar

Come along and bring  
your friends

Fascism: Never Again!

Called by ANL, PO Box 4007, Dublin 1

## inside the system

## THINGS THEY SAY

"We have to stop this sex lobby in Ireland. It's unnatural for anyone to go around naked. It's indecent. Be honest, where have you ever seen as ugly a thing as the naked body? The Gardai should use the laws to stop this."—Councillor Joe Brennan (Ind), Ballinasloe opposing the Irish Naturalists Association's demands for legalised nude bathing.

"The Frenchmen who dazlingly stormed that aircraft at Marseilles were in the line of their ancestors who turned back the Islamic conquest of Europe at Poitiers in 732."—*Sunday Telegraph*

"They say Flynn is a conservative, they'll tell you I'm a backwoodsman and maybe I am an oul' country bumpkin."—Irish EC Commissioner Padraic Flynn describing himself in 1979.

"Priest friends have said to me they now saw their function as making sure the Irish Catholic Church got a decent burial."—Father Pat O'Brien.

"There has to be a missionary spirit in America which says to the poor kid—the Internet's for you."—Newt Gingrich, US Republican Party leader

"We have got to help Mr Adams carry with him the people who are reluctant to see a ceasefire, who believe they might be betrayed by the British government"—Sir Patrick Mayhew

## A Savage blow

ALBERT REYNOLD's speechwriter Tom Savage is out of a job.

The new Coalition have not retained the services of Savage's company, Carr Communications, who fine-tuned Reynold's dazzling TV performances. Savage's contract was worth £36,300 last year.

He drafted key parts of Reynold's Dail speeches in mid-November when the Brendan Smyth scandal erupted, including a piece expressing Albert's revulsion at child abuse.

But Reynolds is not going to let his tal-

ents go to waste just because he's out of office—his legendary eloquence is now being sought after on the US lecture circuit.

Don Walker of the Harry Walker Agency in New York is adding Reynolds to the long line of popular figures who have lectured across the US.

They include the poet Ralph Waldo Emerson who used to get five dollars per speech plus all the oats his horse could eat.

Reynolds will probably get between \$20,000 and \$30,000 for a single address. Forget the oats—ex-Country and Western Taoiseachs don't ride horses these days!



## FOOTBALL CRAZY

CORK BORN Stockbroker Dermot Desmond has discovered "the beautiful game"—he has invested £2 million in Celtic Football Club.

The club is one of the latest to become a Public Limited Company. And since Desmond had just made millions when

Ulster Bank bought up his firm National City Brokers he decided to find out what all these working class Glaswegians get up to on a Saturday afternoon.

They should be warned—he might try to sell their beloved Parkhead ground to a telephone company like he did with a certain Dublin bakery a few years ago!

## Family Ties...

LOCHLANN QUINN has just put 200 workers on a three-day week at his two Glen Dimplex factories in Newry.

The company produces heaters but Lochlann says the 'warm winter' means sales are low.

Lochlann is a brother

of Ruairi Quinn the Labour Party's first ever Minister for Finance. Ruairi should remind his brother that the new Coalition is committed to job creation.

## RIGHT FOR THE JOB?

THE LABOUR Party quite rightly opposed Albert Reynold's appointment of Harry Whelehan as President of the High Court because he is a conservative.

But they are quite happy with the appointment of former Fine Gael TD Declan Costello to the job.

But Costello is no liberal either. In the eighties he refused the appeal by Eileen Flynn, the teacher sacked from a Catholic school over her affair with a married man.

And Costello is best known as the judge who prevented a 14 year-old rape victim from leaving Ireland to stop her having an abortion.

Workers being asked to accept pay freezes such as those at Packard or at the Sunday Business Post might like to hear the results of a recent Irish Management Institute survey.

From April 1993 to April 1994 average managerial salaries in Ireland rose 5.7 per cent—over twice the rate of inflation.

## Getting the dividend

NOW WE know what Major meant by the "peace dividend".

Shorts President Roy McNulty's salary was reported in last week's *Belfast Telegraph* to be £395,000 per year—an increase of 100 per cent on last years salary.

But Shorts have sacked

2,000 workers since privatisation four years ago. A further 220 redundancies were announced last week.

In Canada, a Toronto man was sent a bill from the Social Services Department because he had been overpaid on his welfare.

The department invoiced him for an "outstanding overpayment amount (of) \$00.1".



The Pope: Losing his grip?

religion is as Marx put it "the heart of a heartless world".

Socialist organisations should not exclude from membership people with religious ideas—that would be suicidal for any party that wants to organise the many workers who are angry at the system but

who still go to mass.

We should openly argue about religion but our main concern is not to break people away from the Church but rather to force the Bishops to keep their noses out of people's private lives.

DAVE McDONAGH, DUBLIN.

## Have ICTU joined the bosses?

AT A time when workers in Irish Steel, Team Aer Lingus and now Packard Electric are facing wage cuts, longer working weeks, lay-offs and redundancies, the ICTU have done nothing to help workers.

They have actually joined in with the bosses and employers in condemning the workers when they have refused to accept the attacks on their pay and conditions.

The ICTU made a documen-

tary which was on RTE recently. It showed the ICTU organising one hundred thousand people in a march and parade and firework display but they haven't organised one worker in defence of our hard won rights.

Instead the ICTU say workers must wake up and become realistic. Workers earning below the industrial average like the £205 a week in Packard do live in the real world. It is the

over paid grey suited Congress officials with their Mercedes and Perks who don't.

It is the rank and file of the trade union membership who pay the high wages of the Congress officials. It is high time every shop steward and trade union activist organised to win back the trade union movement to what it was set up to be in the first place: "For the workers, by the workers"

RITCHIE BROWNE, DUBLIN

## behind the headlines

by EAMONN McCANN

## If you stand for this you'll stand for anything

THE ROW over the playing of "God Save the Queen" at graduation ceremonies at the Queen's in Belfast is at once wholly ridiculous and middling significant. Mainly ridiculous.

Getting up on your hind legs in deferential acknowledgement of a tune is no way for self-respecting human beings to behave anywhere, anyhow.

When trained elephants are made to do it at Duffy's Circus fluffy protesters congregate at the tent door to denounce the spectacle as an affront to elephantine dignity. Which is a warm-hearted and decent all-inclusive reaction, but a bit naff too in some ways.

Who knows for certain what the elephants are thinking, or what elephant-thinking amounts to?

But the idea of human dignity is something we all can instinctively get a grip on. So where are the protesters outside places where humans have pressure and training put upon them to rear up like programmed animals at the sound of a "national anthem?"

## Bigotry

And God Save the Queen, for Chrissakes ... Unimaginative words of bigotry and hatred set to a plagiarised tune pleading to a non-existent being to prolong the existence of the head of an inbred family of sleaze-ball parasites that sixty percent of the British people according to the most recent opinion polls want to give the bum's rush to? What spiritual blight surrounds the suggestion that bright young people with letters newly after their names should rise in acclamation of such an intellectually contemptible proposition?

What is the British monarchy after all other than the supreme symbol of a system whereby some people are born not just into better circumstances than the generality of their contemporaries but dizzily, unchangeably, quintessentially different and superior? Any acceptance of the legitimacy of the royal family's role has to be based on a proposition that the entire population of the British State could be arranged in proper serial order in a straight line stretching from Wandsworth to Windsor.

It is not just allegiance to Britain but to a Britain thus structured that is signified in standing for God Save the Queen.

Herein lies the key distinction between socialist and nationalist objections to God Save the Queen at the graduation ceremonies in Belfast. Fundamentally, we're not against it because it represents only "one community".

We are against it because it represents only one class—the parasite ruling class which in every capitalist society lives on and off the labour of working people.

It is for this reason that our comrades across the water in the Socialist Workers' Party are at least as uncompromis-

ingly against standing for God Save the Queen as any Irish Republican. In fact more so.

Because, of course, it's not national anthems that Republicans are against, but the British national anthem in Ireland. It should be said here that we in the SWM have no respect either for the banal, militaristic dirge. The Soldier's song, which is used to rally Irish workers and all oppressed and marginalised groups to the crazy notion that they share a valuable common identity with the Irish rotten rich.

The travelling family hunted through ditches or the Packard worker who has been summoned to rise as one with Tony O'Reilly in his opulent castle, all savage differences and contradictions between them dismissed from mind as they buzz with a warm feeling of their "common identity". It's not difficult to discern whose life-style is protected by this sort of baloney.

None of this is to deny that the controversy at Queen's has its own particular connotation, to do with the sectarianism in which the institutions of the North are steeped.

Every Unionist group and party went ape-shit when the university senate agreed to drop the anthem, arguing that this was both an insult to "the Protestant people" and an example of the way Catholic Nationalists are steadily advancing. Ken McGuinness said on Radio Ulster's "Talkback" that he had no problem accepting "parity of esteem" for "the two traditions", but that to ditch the anthem was rubbing Protestant noses in it.

There is no context in which this position can be made to make democratic sense.

Northern Nationalists, for sound historical reasons, do not accept the legitimacy of the existing State. So to Nationalists, God Save the Queen is not "the national anthem".

## Reverence

Thus, to offer "parity of esteem" to "the two traditions" and then to insist that both show reverence for an anthem which represents one but does not represent the other is to be either a naive fool or a sectarian knave.

If McGuinness's position on this matter of symbols—and remember that he is widely advertised as the most "moderate" of unionist leaders—is carried over into discussion of matters of substance, it is difficult to see how constitutional talks can take place at all, much less arrive at a new settlement.

On democratic grounds, Nationalists are entitled to have their symbols and their sense of identity "esteemed". If that were attained, it wouldn't amount to a settlement Socialists would think adequate. But the indications from the controversy at Queen's are that it probably can't be attained anyway.

Socialist Worker welcomes

## letters

PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

## Heart of a heartless world

JAMES McBARRON is right when he welcomes the undermining of the Catholic Church's authority in Ireland (Letters 7th January).

No religion should have the power that the Church has had over people's lives.

But his letter raises another question. What attitude should socialists take to people's participation in

religion? He poses it in terms of leaving the Catholic Church to find spiritual satisfaction elsewhere.

For socialists the key question must be the separation of church and state.

The state should provide non-denominational schools and hospitals and Catholic teaching on divorce and abortion should not be enshrined in the law.

Many practising Catholics already agree with this idea and use contraception or live apart from their spouses despite what they hear from the pulpit on Sunday. For them

## OPEN LETTER TO PACKARD WORKERS

WE THE craftworkers in TEAM Aer Lingus wish to extend our solidarity and support to you our fellow workers in Packard Electric.

We ourselves experienced the same unjustified attacks on our working terms and conditions. We understand and appreciate fully your sense of isolation and the tremendous pressure and trauma yourselves and your families are under.

We fully support your struggle and the heroic stand you have taken to defend your rights.

DENIS SMYTH, FOR THE AER LINGUS CRAFT GROUP OF UNIONS.

# Moscow socialist denounces invasion of Chechnia

**THE POPULATION** of Grozny has sustained thousands of casualties. Houses, public utilities and basic infrastructure have been demolished on a vast scale.

The homeless have fled to the outlying towns and villages, where the rebels vow to continue the guerrilla war in the event of Russian forces capturing the capital.

For the soldiers drafted in to spearhead the attack, the situation looks equally grim. Morale in the second most powerful army in the world has collapsed and desertion is rife. One soldier told the *Irish Times*:

*"We were living in tents. We were allowed to have one bath a week. It was cold. One night, 32 soldiers just got up and went home. Then we left too. There was no problem about leaving. We just walked out."*

*Socialist Worker* interviewed a Moscow socialist about the invasion and its consequences.

## Why did the Russian army go in Chechnia?

Chechnia is strategically important for the Russian ruling class.

There is oil in the Caspian sea and Russia wants the biggest share. It also wants the oil transported through territory under its control.

That is why Russia tried to invade in November 1991 and has, ever since, been looking to bring Chechnia to heel.

The invasion happened now because of political considerations in Moscow.

The army leadership has come under pressure with newspaper exposure of corruption. Defence minister Grachev is personally accused.

In October a very popular Moscow journalist, Dimitri Kholodov, who exposed many of the scandals, was killed by a bomb.

Most people believe it was the military, yet Grachev declared Kholodov was a fool who blew himself up and Yeltsin backed Grachev on television.

This caused shock, lowering the leadership's prestige. But the real background is the economy.

Yeltsin and the government are under increasing pressure. The rouble collapsed in October. At the same time the govern-

ment announced that economic decline in 1995 would be worse than in 1994. Economic activity has already halved over the last four years.

The sectors which opened up to the market, in the belief that they would develop, have been worst hit.

Russia is becoming a raw material economy. Oil, coal and gas have become the mainstays.

The result is panic in the ruling class. Elections are also due in 1996, but there is pressure to bring them forward.

Faced with this Yeltsin was tempted to play the nationalist card to show he is a strong candidate.

## Can you explain the events leading up to the invasion?

Until November the Russian tactic was to give arms and money to the Chechen opposition.

The Russian Secret Service, the former KGB, even recruited army tank officers and sent them to Chechnia to fight with the opposition.

On 26 November they tried to storm Grozny. It was a military fiasco with 70 Russian officers taken prisoner.

Russia's rulers then faced a stark choice. Either they pulled out or they stepped up the military intervention.



Remember the Russian ruling class has been trying to overcome its "Afghan syndrome"—the legacy of defeat in the Afghan war. They have been building up for a show of strength.

## What is the reaction to the war in Chechnia?

Shock, depression and shame. Many who see themselves as pro-democracy were appalled that Yeltsin could do something so dirty.

The level of lies from the government has been extraordinary. They said the Chechens had been throwing babies out of windows, taking children hostage and raping Russian girls.

Television, the press and parliamentary deputies have shown this is nonsense.

## Have there been anti-war protests?

Opinion polls show up to 70 percent of people oppose the war. Gaidar, the former prime minister and leader of Russia's Choice party, called an anti-war rally in Moscow. On the first day there were 500. On the second day, 3,000.

At first Gaidar was talking about impeaching Yeltsin but that was quickly dropped. Kosirev, the foreign minister, resigned from Russia's Choice because of Gaidar's opposition to the war, and the party's major financial backers also threat-

ened to pull out. So Gaidar has toned down his opposition.

## What has happened to the people's living standard in the three years that Yeltsin has been in control?

The average wage has halved, but over 75 percent of the population live below the average wage, 30 percent live below the official minimum wage and about 15 percent live below the official minimum for biological existence.

Meanwhile the rich have got massively richer. The richest 20 percent became 40 percent richer in the first half of last year.

## So what is the balance of forces in Russia today?

Four years ago Yeltsin could mobilise hundreds of thousands on the streets.

Now Yeltsin mobilises nobody. The West has totally overestimated Yeltsin and the reforms.

Western correspondents talk about Yeltsin betraying the hopes of 1991 without realising that Yeltsin has extended his hand to the extreme right.

He has also healed a lot of the rifts with the nationalist parliamentary opposition that took place after the coup attempt.

He is incredibly weak but there is no obvious challenger.

One of the most extraordinary recent events was when 10,000 people turned out on a freezing cold weekday for the funeral of the murdered journalist.

But there is no organisation or individual that can channel that feeling or give it an outlet.

The Nazis, and the Red-Browns—the alliance of Stalinists and fascist groups—can mobilise tens of thousands, but their demonstrations have been smaller than two years ago. An open Nazi who stood in a by-election in November got 10,000 votes, 6 per cent.

The Communist Party stands for the great Russian imperial tradition. They boast that Stalin was continuing the tradition of the Tsars. It is viciously reactionary, using the language of nationalism and racism.

There is no party in Russia that workers associate with standing up for their interests against the bosses.

Russia is extremely volatile. There is talk of a military coup—but that would not end the ferment because the army is thoroughly demoralised and split over Chechnia.

# US pours in billions to halt Mexican collapse

**A MASSIVE financial crisis in Mexico is sending a wave of panic around the world's stock markets.**

Since December 12th, the Mexican stock market has collapsed by half, the currency by 40%. A shocked US administration has responded by rushing through a £25bn loan to Mexico.

If this amount were given to Ireland, it would pay off the national debt entirely.

At the start of the 1990's a new boom was proclaimed around the world. This was supposed to be proof of the superiority of the free market.

Just before the crash, Bill Clinton hailed the Mexican economic miracle as a model to be copied throughout Latin America.

The crisis underway in Mexico shows how weak the world economy really is. Brazil, Argentina and Chile

could now also face a Mexican style collapse.

Even the weaker currencies in the European Union like Spain, Italy and Sweden have been hit by the

shockwaves from Mexico.

## Globe

No wonder a US treasury official last week declared,

"you don't want this to spread all around the globe."

The collapse in Mexico began when Zapatista rebels in Chiapas, southern Mexico, re-launched their struggle for

justice and better living standards.

The crisis is set to continue as the tension between the government and workers increases.

President Zedillo was elected last year on a slogan of "well being for you and your family". He promised jobs, real wages and more public spending.

Instead he has attacked subsidies on food and rammed through public spending and privatisation. Inflation is set to double to 30% while the government intends to freeze wage increase.

As a result of the crisis the Mexican government will have difficulty holding the line.

But the financial crisis also means a significant addition to Bill Clinton's woes.

Instead of an expanding market and investment opportunities, Mexico is now a disaster area for US business.

## Spain: Government 'supported hit-squad'

**SPAIN'S PRIME Minister Felipe Gonzalez faced demands for his resignation this week after revelations of government support for a murderous 'hit-squad'.**

Gonzalez, head of the Socialist Party, is accused of involvement in GAL, a shadowy group which butchered 27 members of ETA, the Basque liberation organisation, during the 1980s.

Two ex-policemen produced detailed evidence of government support for

GAL, including the numbers of Swiss bank accounts into which their wives deposited £50,000 each, given to them by Interior Ministry officials.

The GAL affair is only one of a series of scandals which threatens to engulf Gonzalez.

"There is a mood like that in Italy where every official is suspected, with good reason, of fraud against the population", writes one commentator.

A poll showed that almost two-thirds of Spaniards thought Gonzalez was

lying when he denied knowledge of GAL's activities.

Behind the scandals lies a deep economic crisis which the Socialist Party expects workers to pay for. Gonzalez has been in office for over 12 years, but workers have faced a decade of austerity.

Resentment has grown steadily over the government's welfare cuts and refusal to take action against unemployment.

Nearly one in every four workers is jobless.

## South Korea's President cons peace centre

**AMERICA'S MARTIN Luther King Centre has made an appalling blunder. They have awarded the Martin Luther King Prize for "non-violence and peace" to Kim Young Sam the South Korean President.**

The centre has been taken in by Kim's claims to be "fearlessly struggling for liberty."

This is the man who has 436 people in prison for their political beliefs, including 36 members of the International Socialists.

Amnesty has a more accurate picture of how the law is applied in South Korea, reporting that charges are brought against people "merely exercising their rights to freedom of expression and association."

The Committee to Defend South Korean Socialists has so far organised protests in Dublin, London, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Seattle, Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra, Oslo and elsewhere.

■ *People wishing to show support for Choi Il-bung, one of 36 socialists facing trial in South Korea, can now write to him direct.*

*Send cards/messages of support to: No 136 Il-bung Choi, An-yang Post Office, Sasco-ham 35, Gyong gi do Eui wang-si, republic of Korea 430-600.*

■ *For more information write to the Committee to Defend South Korean Socialists P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8.*

# 'WE ALWAYS SAID WE WERE DIFFERENT'

## Democratic Left activists talk to Socialist Worker

DEMOCRATIC Left's entry into coalition has brought demoralisation and disillusionment to many party activists.

One councillor Colm Breathnach has resigned. Members in UCD and elsewhere have left the party.

**SW:** Socialist Worker spoke to DL activists Martin Hamilton and Owen Reidy, who gave their opinions on the present situation.

**S.W.:** What was your reaction to the new Coalition?

**M.H.:** My immediate reaction, intellectually and emotionally, was to resign from the party. On reflection I decided against leaving the party because it would have left hundreds of good comrades behind—I decided to carry on the fight to bring the party back to its founding principles.

**S.W.:** Democratic Left was founded as a campaigning party of the left. Is that still possible?

**M.H.:** No. I don't think it's possible for DL to be a campaigning party any longer because it's a member of a right of centre government. You can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds.

Take for example the water rates issue. For nearly eighteen months prior to them going into coalition we had campaigned up and down the country on the platform that water rates were a double taxation, that the PAYE worker was paying an inequitable proportion of tax relative to the rich minority who own the majority of wealth in our country.

We now have come to a situation where the people are left in limbo.

Even though there's been a suspension of cut-offs, it's quite clear that the county managers do not accept this and are lobbying extremely hard to have the power of water disconnections restored.

### Imposing

Now how can Democratic Left campaign against the water rates when they're part of an administration that's imposing them?

It's an indication that it's impossible for the party in coalition to go out and campaign on behalf of the unemployed, the people paying water charges, the poor and the disadvantaged, because people will rightly say "how can you campaign when you're in government". It's actually hypocritical.

**SW:** What will be the result of Coalition for DL?

**M.H.:** The party has got itself into a catch-22 situation, and I believe that the leadership, while they honestly wish to change society, don't understand the dynamics of the capitalist world system. What they're doing is looking for more crumbs from the table, rather than trying to create a system of politics that would deliver the whole loaf.

In future people are going to be looking for a political alternative, and the vehicle of Democratic Left has been taken away.

**S.W.:** Why did you join Democratic Left?

**O.R.:** I joined DL in 1983 because

when I looked at the Labour Party and saw that they were not even a social democratic party. The Socialist Workers stood for a revolutionary alternative. I was looking for a genuine democratic socialist organisation.

What appealed to me was the two sides of the party. There was a parliamentary party and a campaigning party. De Rossa said that both wings of the party were to have a say.

I do not regret joining—and I don't regret leaving. It is only when you are on the inside you find out what is happening.

**SW:** What are the main reasons for your disillusionment?

**O.R.:** The problem that I soon found was that only the youth wing were interested in campaigning on issues.

Des Geraghty was ditched in the run up to the European election and replaced by Pat Rabbitte. The aim was to pull the middle class vote towards us.

### Minimum wage

On the NEC Pat Rabbitte spoke against the idea of a minimum wage. But no one argued back against him—even though the party was supposed to stand for a minimum wage.

**SW:** What was your reaction to Coalition?

At a meeting in UCD with 35 people in attendance de Rossa said that "at no stage can I see us going into coalition with FF, FG or the PDs". But he did an about turn.

DL going into coalition will confuse the working class. We have always said we were different. DL should not join the consensus of the wealthy in this country.

During the coalition negotiations Bruton said that FG couldn't handle abortion. The DL's did not even try to put it on the negotiating table.

The only clear commitment in the Coalition programme is one to deal with wild horses in urban areas. All the rest is aspirational. There are no figures or details. The DLs should have got some details before they signed their death warrant.

**SW:** What prospects has the left got in Ireland.

It is probable that the only road open to DL is to merge with the Labour Party.

At the last election there was a great change in Irish politics. If someone had said ten years ago that two left wing parties would have 39 seats in the Dáil you would have thought them crazy. Politicians such as Charlie McCreery and Maurice Manning had even begun to talk of a Fianna Fail-Fine Gael Coalition.

By going into Coalition, DL has thrown away the opportunities that are available.

# Talk of reform will

# Rabid U Cops

A NEW report on harassment by the security forces in Northern Ireland shows that half of all Catholics have been harassed.

This makes lie of the attempt by the RUC to give themselves a non-sectarian image.

The report\*, published by the Commission on the Administration of Justice, also concludes:

"Over one quarter of all young people in Northern Ireland feel they have been harassed in some way by the security forces."

The Commission on the Administration of Justice posted questionnaires to over a thousand 17-18 year olds in the North as well as interviewing a representative sample of individuals.

Harassment ranged from abusive comments and "training of guns" on people to assaults and threats.

As a Protestant man from Moyle reported: "The army and police assume everyone is a terrorist and they treat you as they would them".

The revealed showed the sectarian nature of the security forces. "50 per cent of young Catholics believe they have been harassed by the security forces".

### Watched

This is compared to 12 per cent for young Protestants and 27 per cent for those who came under the category No Religion.

A Catholic woman from Derry told about the low level harassment that happens on a day to day basis:

"You come out of your house and there is a cop at the bottom of your path and he asks you, 'Where are you coming from?'"

"How stupid can they be, they have just watched you come out of the house."

"They can be very dirty with their comments as well, about you and your family".

The police use their powers of stop-and-search to humiliate.

A Catholic man from Newry said:

"The Crown forces made myself and two other friends take off our shoes and socks and made us walk around the town square while they held a gun to our heads."

"The RUC often throw stones at myself and other civilians from the watch-towers"

The Police Authority point to the fact that they receive few complaints.

But the report found that 69 per cent who have been harassed never report their complaints to the RUC. As a Catholic Newry man put it to the CAJ:

"In this State, harassment has become part of everyday life."

"There seems to be no point of complaint as the harassment still continues".

The findings are significant not only for the fact that they show how widespread harassment is but also because they demonstrate a shift in the way working class Protestants view "their" police.

Throughout the "troubles" Unionist politicians claimed the police and army only gave out what Catholic trouble makers deserved.

As one man put it:

"I remember being badly beaten in 1973 by the Parachute Regiment."

"But when I went to my local councillors and the local MP there was no one who wanted to know me...they said you're saying these people (the army) are wrong and all you're doing is supporting a Republican argument."

Nowadays resentment towards the po-

## Rotten to the core

THE REPORT by the Committee on the Administration of Justice calls for reforms of the police and security forces. But a look at the history of the RUC shows how the police in Northern Ireland have always been sectarian.

The RUC was formed in 1922 from two groups. The first was the Ulster Specials which grew out of the sectarian Ulster Volunteer Force.

The UVF was set up in 1913 by the Protestant business class as an illegal private army. The new Unionist Government formed the Specials by legalising the UVF. Four out of seven of the Specials County Commanders were commanders in the UVF.

The second group was the Royal Irish Constabulary. The Irish Constabulary "won" its Royal prefix in 1867 after it had put down the Fenian uprising. The RIC was mainly Catholic with Protestant officers.

Ex-RIC members were recruited to the newly formed RUC to give the appearance of a non-sectarian force. The proportion of Catholics had reached 20 per cent by 1924. Three years later the figure was down to 14 per cent. Two factors made this inevitable.

Firstly, the most RUC members were ardent supporters of the Orange Order: 300 serving members—or a tenth of the entire force—were enrolled in one Orange Lodge, the Sir Robert Peel Orange Lodge.

No wonder a Unionist MP could openly claim that "the police force openly identified with the Orange Order".

Secondly, Catholics experienced discrimination and bigotry within the North. The RUC, which was set up to defend that state, was seen as a force for oppression.

That is why even when there was no threats from the IRA, few Catholics wanted to join the RUC.

lice especially is more open.

On the walls of Newtownards Road in mainly Protestant East Belfast, the words SS: RUC have been painted.

In most Protestant areas there is growing tension between state forces and working class people.

"I don't know exactly why the relationship is so bad but it seems as if the Police in Newtownabbey aren't serving the community any more. They seem to be always cruising around looking for trouble".

This backs up the findings of other human rights campaigners.

### Useless

In 1992 Helsinki Watch reported that



17 year old Michael Tighe shot by RUC surveillance team in a hay shed outside Lurgan. The RUC claim Tighe and his friend aimed guns at them—there were three unloaded rifles in the shed. Tighe's companion was dragged wounded from the shed and a RUC man suggested "Finish him off!"

"harassment is not confined to Catholic youngsters but is carried out against Protestant youth as well".

The organisation also stated that "lodging complaints against security forces is generally seen as useless".

As a Shankill resident said:

"I think there was a general view that it was a Protestant police force for a Protestant people and that it was only the Catholics that were against the State but there's more and more incidents of young Protestants who are starting to be harassed by the Police ... the same kind of things that have been happening for years in Catholic areas".

The report's author suggests that the isolation of the police in Protestant areas goes back to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The suggestion is that for most Protestants they are seen to be soft on nationalists and are now selling Ulster out.

However this was contradicted by a Protestant interviewed in the report:

"Throughout the history of the troubles on the Shankill harassment has always been there".

The recent announcement of an end to army patrols during the day in Belfast was welcomed by the UDP and PUR, showing that they had to respond to some extent to the feelings of working class Protestants.

The experience of harassment for many Protestants as well as Catholics means there is little support for the security forces.

As one Protestant man put it:

"When people call for more security they don't realise that more security means harassment. The only way that it can work is by actually threatening people".

\*It's part of life here—The Security Forces and Harassment in Northern Ireland by Dr Robbie McVeigh (Commission on the Administration of Justice)

not change the...

# Unionist



RUC cover up British army murders

## Disband the RUC

THE NORTHERN Ireland Police Authority have written to more than three thousand community groups and are organising a series of consultation forums on the role of the RUC.

But this authority has never criticised the sectarian record of the police in the past.

It has been boycotted even by moderate parties like the SDLP.

Instead of inquiring into the role of the RUC, it is preparing a whitewash to justify their continued existence.

In 1969, another report, the Hunt Report called for "accountability" in the RUC. But it did not change its bloody record.

The IRA ceasefire has revealed how bloated the RUC really is.

### Troubles

There are more than 13,000 officers, making Northern Ireland the most heavily policed area in Europe.

The police are highly paid because of the troubles and the general increases given to them by the Tories.

They will do everything to resist any changes in their structures.

But the changes proposed will not end the bigotry and harassment.

Even if more Catholics were recruited, they would still have to take

orders from officers who defend sectarian bigotry.

A local community police force for Catholic areas would still mean harassment when people leave those areas.

The example of Palestine also shows that even a police force re-

cruited from the ranks of a nationalist movement can turn on its supporters.

The state which the RUC defends is an inherently sectarian state. That is why there can be no real reform of the RUC as long as that state exists.

## The RUC's bloody record

1968: Police baton charge civil rights marchers off the streets of Derry.

1969: Francis McCluskey murdered. Samuel Devaney beaten to death by drunken RUC men who invade the Bogside.

1972: Torture at the Castlereagh holding station is revealed.

1978: Amnesty International report denounces "maltreatment of suspected terrorists by RUC".

1982: A special unit, E4A, assassinates five unarmed republicans and a 17 year old Catholic as part of a "Shoot-to-Kill" policy

1984: RUC pressure leads to the removal of John Stalker after he tried to reveal the "Shoot-to-Kill" policy.

1981-1986: Five people killed by plastic bullets.

## what do socialists say?

### Can the multi-nationals be beaten?

"Helpless before Packard's Might" was the headline on Shane Ross's column in the *Sunday Independent*.

by KIERAN ALLEN

You could not help feeling that Ross drew some pleasure at the sight of workers being tyrannised by a multi-national.

But the same idea that you cannot beat multi-nationals has also become a new dogma on the left.

The ATGWU is seen as a more left wing union than SIPTU. But when it came to the crunch in Packard there was no difference between the stance of both unions.

The reason is that both the left and right of the labour movement believe that "Globalisation" means that the multi-nationals can move around the world at will in search of cheap labour.

They see no real way of fighting them. Instead they urge workers to make concessions in the hope of keeping their jobs.

### Disastrous

This is a disastrous approach. For one thing every concession or "give-back" to the employers encourages them to seek more. Packard is a case in point. In 1987, by a very narrow vote workers accepted a no-strike agreement.

Since then the management have been back year after year to seek pay freeze, higher productivity and even the removal of a small Christmas loan.

Multi-nationals are like thieves. If they think you have a faulty lock on your door or window, you can be sure that they will be back.

Capital today owes no loyalty to any one country. It sees all workers as unit costs who can be used to turn out profits. It has broken through national boundaries and created a world working class.

All of this means that a nationalist response to capitalism is obsolete. Socialists have been the first to recognise this and that is why the masthead of this paper has always proclaimed a fight for a "Workers republic and international socialism".

But the growing international division of labour that capitalism has created does not mean that it has become all-powerful. It is wrong to believe, for example, that multi-nationals can just hop from one country to another in search of more profit.

Take Eastern Europe. This is held up as an immense reservoir of cheap labour and employers such as Waterford Glass have threatened to move there.

After the collapse of communism in 1989 there was indeed a huge increase in applications for investment opportunities. But according to John Dunning in *The Globalisation of Modern Business* only 10% of the applications ever became operational and more than half of these were from German capitalists.

It seems that multi-nationals are more interested in using Eastern Europe as a threat to organised labour than in massively expanding there.

The reasons are fairly obvious. Modern firms are not just built around one workplace. Many capitalists use the Just-In-Time system where they cut down on storage costs by having supplies delivered at the point of their use.

They have to establish a network of suppliers who deliver components of the exact specification and quality they need. At the end of the

production process they need to have dealer and transport networks set up.

There is far more to moving than simply putting the machinery in crates. It requires a long period of planning before similar structures can be set up in other countries.

There are a host of other factors involved. They have to look at transport costs, at the degree of political stability, even at language and cultural issues which may affect their managerial structures. The last thing a multi-national wants to do is to have to move after its blackmail bluff has been called.

This is not to say that a particular multi-national can never switch production. It is rather to recognise that the Irish labour movement cannot operate under the constant threat of blackmail.

### Preserve

The starting point for workers cannot simply be 'How do I preserve my job'. It has to be 'How do I best improve my wages and conditions'.

Multi-nationals, like other capitalists, are vulnerable to workers militancy. In fact the more they try to stretch their production process and make each factory responsible for particular components the more they can be hit.

In September this year, General Motors was terrified because a strike at one plant in Buick City, USA stopped supplies one key part, a torque converter, which could have closed down 28 of its 29 other plants in America.

Instead of playing the multi-national game of competing against fellow workers, union members should stand up to demands wage cuts.

They should hit back hard by using the most militant tactics possible. Shop stewards should make links with workers in other countries.

## INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM ★ 65

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### JANUARY 27 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz.

The camp, which is a symbol of the crimes of fascism, was built in May 1940 on the site of an old World War I artillery barracks in Poland. It was originally designed as a place of punishment for Polish opponents of Nazism.

By the time it was in full operation, Auschwitz was made up of three camps. Auschwitz I housed Russian prisoners of war, gays and Jews. It was a labour camp rather than an extermination camp, although many died there.

Auschwitz II was the purpose built extermination centre at Birkenau, two miles from Auschwitz I.

The Nazis who called the Jews *Stücke* or "pieces" were determined that they be "processed" under six hours after their arrival from the train.

After they were butchered their ashes were spread on a special SS farm as fertiliser. In all a million Jews died there.

Auschwitz III was a huge plant built by IG Farben, the chemical company, which used mainly Jewish slave labour to manufacture chemicals of importance to the Nazi war effort.

During their rise to power, the Nazis used the Jews as a scapegoat for Germany's economic ills. Hitler wanted his supporters to feel that "he is a superman though he be but a worm". Nazis felt like

this when they could kick and terrorise Jews.

By the end of the 1930s they had implemented strict racial laws against the Jews. Jews could not use swimming pools; they could not teach or work as doctors; they were not even allowed to own dogs.

The first suggestion of the "imminent

**"We were not slaves but less than slaves. We were like bits of sandpaper which is rubbed a few times, becomes useless and is thrown away to be burned with garbage"—Holocaust survivor, Theodore Lehman**

Final Solution" came in May 1941 when Goering, believing that victory against the Russians was near. He spoke of the need to liquidate Jews and other "non-desirables" such as socialists, gays, trade unionists, gypsies and disabled people.

### Bolster

However, the Final Solution was only implemented in early 1942, during Germany's retreat from Russia.

It was an attempt to bolster the Nazis' flagging ideology. From time to time, the German army complained that the extermination camps were destroy-

# Fifty years after Auschwitz...

# The Nazi holocaust

by JASON  
McELIGOTT

ing valuable labour. But the Nazis pressed ahead regardless.

One of their big business backers, Gustav Krup said that "When you buy a good horse you have to accept a few shortcomings"

The first systematic deportations to Auschwitz began in March-April 1942.

The old, the sick and children were taken from the arriving trains and immediately gassed. Those fit enough were

bomb camps like Auschwitz because the operation, it was argued, would tie up considerable air resources.

When it was finally bombed in August 1944 the death camp was not the target, but rather the industrial plant in Auschwitz III.

This led the Jewish writer, Arthur Koestler, who worked for British Military Intelligence during the war to comment, "a dog run over by a car upsets our emotional balance and digestion, three million Jews killed in Poland cause but a moderate uneasiness."

Inside the camps resistance was very difficult.

But in Auschwitz on October 1944 a small group of Jewish prisoners blew up the crematorium with smuggled explosives and killed SS personnel with the long hooks that were used for pulling bodies from the gas chambers.

They were later hanged and shot.

As the Russians overran Poland, the camps were evacuated and the Jews forced to march westward where they could be set to work in Germany. Auschwitz was evacuated on January 18, 1945.

Those too weak to march were shot. Tens of thousands were shot on these death marches whenever they happened to stumble and fall. Over 1,500 were shot on the marches from Blechhammer alone.

In all the Nazis murdered six million Jews. They almost succeeded in wiping out Europe's eleven million Jews.

One Auschwitz survivor, Lilli Kopecky, believes that "this is the greatest strength of the whole crime, its unbelievable.

"The explanations, and the warnings were simply disbelieved. When we came to Auschwitz, we smelt the sweet smell. They said to us 'there the people are gassed, three kilometres over there.' We didn't believe it."

## Why did it happen?

THE HOLOCAUST was not an aberration of history. It did not happen because a few bad individuals got control or because the German people suddenly went mad.

The Holocaust was the first modern genocide.

It was totally dependent on modern technology and science, state bureaucracy and modern business techniques.

In the camps the normal exploitation of labour, at the heart of capitalism, was free from any restraint, legal, social, or moral.

The slaves had no rights to protect themselves and were literally worked to death.

There were always others to replace them. The life expectancy of the Jewish slaves in IG Farben's Auschwitz plant was three months. The workers in IG Farben's nearby coal-mines had a life expectancy of one month.

Hitler could never have taken power were it not for the support big business gave to his party.

They believed that Hitler could restore profitability to the economy and rid them of the menace of trade unions and socialists. The Holocaust was only possible because the heads

of industry co-operated with the Nazis.

In recent years, fascist groups have begun to re-emerge in Europe in response to the economic crisis.

Despite electoral successes, these organisations are extremely weak.

They do not have the confidence to openly proclaim themselves Nazis, or to beat their opponents off the streets, as Hitler's storm troopers did.

They try to claim the Holocaust is a myth, a Jewish fabrication. When they say that the Holocaust didn't happen what they really mean is that it doesn't matter that it happened.

They hope to wipe out all memory of the Nazis' genocide, and so make its repeat all the more likely.

### Re-emerge

If they ever came to power again they would produce another Holocaust—but one that was far worse.

That is why fascist groups have to be stopped organising. As Hitler himself said:

"The only thing which could have stopped our movement was, if our enemies had understood the basis of our movement, and smashed us with the utmost brutality from the very first day."

NEVER AGAIN!

## THE PROFITS OF DEATH

MANY OF the leading German capitalist companies of today made huge profits from the concentration camps.

■ **KRUPPS:** This steel firm made huge profits from the slave labour. After the war, the head of the firm was sentenced to twelve years in prison for his part in the Holocaust.

But he only served three years and in 1951 he was re-instated as head of the firm. Today Krupp's makes all sort of household products and has a factory in Limerick.

■ **THORP:** designed the crematorium ovens at Auschwitz. In 1953 they were allowed to patent the method.

■ **SIEMENS:** Made millions from the Hitler Nazi regime and is now Europe's leading electrical manufacturer.

■ **BANKS:** Dr Abbs was the banker who funded IG Farben which ran Auschwitz III. He was never tried and after the war he was invited by the British to rebuild the German banking system.

■ **OTTO AMBROS:** chose the site at Auschwitz for IG Farben and was sent to prison after the war. He emigrated to the US where he became an adviser to an American company and a consultant to the Department of Energy under the Reagan administration.

The company said that there was nothing wrong in employing him "years after whatever he did".

set to work and many of the rest were sent to the extermination camp.

On August 17 1942, for example, twenty seven girls under the age of four, and three hundred and twenty three girls under the age of sixteen were deported to Auschwitz from France. All were gassed.

One of the most hellish aspects of the death camps was the *Sonderkommando*, small groups of Jews selected to dispose of the corpses of those who had been murdered.

The Auschwitz *Sonderkommando* were forced to dig up the burial pits near the camp and drag the corpses to specially constructed crematoria, where they were burnt to ash.

Anyone who refused this work was executed on the spot.

By 1944 huge numbers of Jews were being used as slave labour for the German war effort at plants such as Monowitz, Buna, Jawiszowice and Blechhammer.

During the war, the Allies recruited millions of women into factories to enable their men to fight at the front.

Nazi ideology, however, insisted that women should stay at home. This shortage of labour, combined with the massive German losses on the eastern front, explains the importance of Jewish slave labour to the Nazis.

As early as 1942, the Allies knew about the Final Solution, yet they covered it up. In Britain, the BBC was ordered not to broadcast the full facts about what was happening. One Foreign office official dismissed reports because they came from "Jewish sources."

For two years the Allies refused to



## comment

## Just a few pints

FOR ALMOST three months now the whole country has been talking about the new drink-driving laws.

Irish vintners are talking (bawling might be a more appropriate word.) longer and louder about them than anyone else.

As soon as the festive season neared, they were up in arms, distributing leaflets to public houses nationwide and threatening to march on the Dáil.

Spokesmen warned of the danger to jobs, their voices so quaky with emotion you'd be forgiven for thinking they were from the National Organisation of the Unemployed.

They claimed that the measures were destroying the fabric of rural Ireland.

Sure it's nearly as big a catastrophe as the potato famine.

But the National Organisation of the Unemployed they certainly are not.

## Conditions

They are anti-union almost to a man and they couldn't give a damn about workers or the conditions they have to put up with.

It was they who sparked off the bar strike last summer when they refused to grant a pay rise agreed in the PESP or to negotiate payment for staff who had to stay on working in their premises after their shift had finished.

The VFI only backed down when most of the public refused to pass the pickets, despite the fact that it was a World Cup year. Their hypocrisy is as sickening as a bad pint. Just look at some of them.

■ Frank Towey is chairman of the Licensed Vintners Association and owner of The Fox Hunter on the Lucan Road.

He was primarily responsible for the summer strike, telling union officials to: "Go back and fucking sell the deal!"

■ Charlie Chawke is a Fianna Fail activist and the owner of The Goat, The Dropping Well and The Oval. His total property is estimated at £4 million. He makes his employees sign a form stating that they won't join a union.

He said recently he'd spent £2 million last year and that he was a very worried man. I know the feeling, Charlie. Me heart goes out to yeh.

■ Sean Lynch, of The Bayside Inn is another FF man. He forced his entire staff to resign from the union during the strike.

■ Tony Gibney of Gibney's in Malahide employs students at the princely sum of one pound an hour and, surprise surprise, is anti-union too.

■ And Ryans of Dunderum barred a long-time customer who served strikers tea and sandwiches.

VFI aside, the new laws do make life difficult for a lot of people at this time of year, particularly those in rural areas.

(You see, you can't hop on the DART, Bart or jump in a taxi, Maxi if you live in the wilds of Kerry or Donegal.)

Like most decent people in this country, socialists back any moves that save lives but the public don't have to suffer for it.

Working men and women deserve all the breaks they can get these days.

They should be able to have a few jars without facing the prospect of stumbling through deserted streets, teeth chattering, frantically waving their last £5 note at every sneering taxi driver that cruises by.

The solution is simple.

In rural areas, local authorities should ensure there are buses on stand-by to ferry revellers home when the pubs and clubs close and failing that, vintners should follow the example of some of their colleagues in providing lifts for their customers instead of squawking about the unfairness of the law.

Public transport in the cities should run round the clock, especially over the holidays, and the schedules and fares should be the same as they are during the day.

Think of the boost to the economy.

Think of the extra jobs, and think of how happy all those new jobs would make the VFI.

—MICK DOYLE

## reviews

## United Nations' sordid history

FIFTY YEARS ago the United Nations was founded. Many people sought jobs with the new organisation in the belief that they would be helping to bring about a better world to replace the carnage of two world wars.

But as the recent Channel 4 series *UN Blues* showed this illusion was soon shattered.

The programme documented the witch-hunts against alleged communist infiltrators in the organisation and the corruption at the top of the UN.

In the late 1940's the UN headquarters in New York was infiltrated by the FBI and 'suspects' were interrogated by the McCarran Committee.

Just as in the McCarthy hearings McCarran demanded that employees 'name names' or face losing their jobs.

Anyone who took the humanitarian ideals of the UN seriously was seen as suspect. Even employees who resisted the Red Cross's racist policy of segregating the blood of black people from that of whites were witch-hunted.

At the top of the UN corruption was already setting in. The first Secretary General was Trygve Lie from Norway who wanted to have the UN headquarters in New York because it was well away from the deprivation of post-war Europe!

## Sleaze

Lie was the first in a long line of UN officials who seemed more concerned with enjoying the good life than with creating a better world. *UN Blues* exposed this 'sleaze factor' with countless examples of corruption.

We saw a volunteer teacher in Kenya who received very little aid from UNESCO while nearby the local head of the UN used education funds to employ servants at his mansion.

We saw how former UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Jean Pierre Hoch, resigned when it was revealed that he spent funds intended for the poor on luxury air travel for himself and his wife.

Another UNHCR official called Luqiga operated a call-girl ring in Geneva, using women refugees from Africa. In Uganda in 1983 food aid disappeared from a warehouse on orders signed by Luqiga.

In 1991 in Somalia Luqiga lined his own pockets with half a million pounds worth of aid. He was never sacked but resigned on a full pension.

The Reagan administra-

tion stopped the US's subscription to the UN in the 1980's on grounds of corruption.

But that has not stopped the US from using the UN as a figleaf to wage wars against the people of Iraq

and Somalia.

Despite the best intentions of thousands of UN workers the body has never taken seriously the provision of aid for the world's poor.

Instead it is a bureaucracy fuelled by phoney

research grants and an endless round of conferences.

Behind the humanitarian image lies an organisation whose main role is to rubber-stamp the policies of the US and other world powers.

DAVE McDONAGH reviews *UN Blues*, Channel 4.

## Exposing China's myths

JULIET BRESSON reviews "To Live", by the Chinese director Zhang Yimou, showing at the Lighthouse cinema, Dublin

THIS IS a family saga spanning three generations of the Xu family in China between the 1940's and the 1970's.

Fungui Xu is a wealthy compulsive gambler in the China of the 1940's. One night he loses the family fortune to the puppeteer Long'er.

Fungui and his wife Ziazhen and two children move into a slum, and Fungui takes to travelling with a puppet troupe owned by his creditor Long'er in order to eke out a living.

Civil war is raging and Fungui finds himself fighting with the right wing Kuomintang.

Then he is captured and made serve with the Red Army.

Later he learns to rely on his certificate of service with the Red Army to get out of sticky situations.

The film shows the servile and degrading lives of the working classes in pre-revolutionary China - the rickshaw pullers and fan wavers, the street sweepers and house servants.

The wedding scene between Fungui's deaf daughter Fenzia and her crippled fiance Wan Erxi is one of the most moving scenes in the film.

It brings out all the tragedy, guilt and injustice of working class people's lives.

But Mao's revolution of 1948 does not end class rule.

The film depicts the chaos and confusion of Mao's enforced modernisation programme, and their effects on the fortunes of the family.

The main message that comes across is the guilt that oppressed, working class people are made to feel for their own misfortune.

The couple Fungui and Ziazhen constantly blame themselves for each of life's devastating blows.

They rarely seem to put the blame where it prop-



erly belong—with the ruling class.

The film is a beautiful and moving epic from a director who has not hesi-

tated to expose the myths perpetuated by the Chinese ruling class about life in the "People's Republic". It's a film not to be missed.

## JOE SLOVO:

## Fighter against apartheid

THE DEATH of Joe Slovo, lifelong fighter against apartheid, has been greeted with sympathetic obituaries all around the world.

Yet many of the same newspapers would have condemned his activities over the years.

For decades the South African rulers hated Joe Slovo and tried to paint a picture of him as being an "evil genius" working for Moscow to wreak havoc on the country. This hatred was based on the fact that Slovo was a lifelong enemy of apartheid.

When the National Party took power in 1948 and introduced a harsh apartheid regime, Joe Slovo, a member of the Communist Party, devoted his life to smashing the system.

Slovo was exiled from South Africa in 1963, by which time he had become a key figure in arguing for an alliance between the Communist Party and the African National Congress.

As a result of the successful alliance between the organisations, Slovo served as chief of staff for Umkhonto weSizwe, the ANC's military wing.

When apartheid finally crumbled in the face of mass protests, the red flag of the SACP was prominent in the marches, as was the cry of Slovo's name.

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the South African Communist Party defended Stalin's rule. Slovo kept quiet about his own doubts until after the revolutions of 1989.

Then he did an about-turn and embraced the market economy.

The second was his 'stages theory' about how change would come in South Africa.

Slovo and the Communist Party argued that workers had to restrain their demands in order to first achieve an end to apartheid.

During the long negotiations between the ANC and the National Party, he became the leading advocate of compromise between the mass movement and the South African state.

It was he who persuaded the ANC to accept the idea of "sunset clauses" - temporary concessions to white interests like the five year Government of National Unity that keeps the National

Party in coalition.

Yet Slovo knew that the end of white rule would not substantially change the lives of the black majority unless it was accompanied by an economic revolution.

Echoing James Connolly's sentiments about Irish Nationalism, he said in 1990: "The economy of South Africa that day after the ANC flag flies over the Union Buildings in Pretoria will be exactly the same as the day before."

However, unlike Connolly, Slovo resigned himself to accepting that this was as much as was realistically possible.

"Pragmatist" was the most common description of Joe Slovo.

But for the poor in South Africa, to whom the government cannot show "a house, a sewerage pipe, a borehole, a transformed township or a new school!" the word is an insult.

# where we stand

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

## FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

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

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

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

## FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST

The 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. 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.

# news & reports—politics; the unions—

# Packard bosses on the rampage

Reports by BRID SMITH

## THE WORKERS WERE RIGHT TO FIGHT

THE COURAGE of the Packard workers was not matched by their union representatives.

The leaders of the ATGWU called on workers to accept packard's demands and make 'an orderly retreat'.

The Dublin Trades Council, which used to stand on the left of the labour movement, shamefully refused to congratulate Packard's workers on their stance.

Everybody except the workers themselves were surprised at the vote against the deals hammered out between the union and company in the early stages of this dispute.

But many workers felt that they would rather fight and see the place

shut than to accept draconian conditions in their workplace.

This is the right attitude to have going into battle with a multi-national. Even if Packard want to shut the factory in the long term, workers can no longer accept blackmail.

### Submission

If Packard can intimidate workers into submission by threatening to close, other companies right across Ireland will take a leaf out of their book.

Resistance by Packard workers can also give inspiration to others to fight back. In 1913 Connolly



and Larkin closed down many sweat shops in Dublin rather than have working class people degraded. But it was better for workers that they fought and paved the way for improvement for everybody's conditions.

Neither should Packard be let leave Ireland without a fight. The factory is loaded with millions of pounds worth of equipment. An occupation of the plant could give these multi-nationals a lot of grief. A fight back could force concessions from them.

## EDDIE SCHRAMM likes to insult workers. The Coventry based boss of Packard Electric sneered at their absenteeism, "especially during football matches".

When asked by an RTE reporter if Packard had enough sacrifices from its workforce, he just replied that he "could be back for more in six weeks".

But Schramm lives on a fat pay cheque that is beyond the reach of the hardest working Packard worker.

Packard bosses wanted workers to give up two days of their holidays, to work an extra two hours a week, to lose their 10 minute break—and accept a pay freeze and lay-offs. Conditions at the factory have been getting worse and worse over the years.

Sharon who has worked there for 10 years, put it like this "We can't work any harder or longer than we do now. When I get home in the evenings I just fall asleep on the chair. It can be very degrading, especially for women, to have to wait for an hour for relief to go to the toilet."

"Sometimes if somebody on the line is feeling sick and goes to the factory nurse, a supervisor will ring up the nurse and tell her not to let that worker go home because they are needed. They only care about keeping the lines going. They don't give a damn about us, standing all day long, doing boring and hard work."

### Loan

Before Christmas the tight-fisted management withdrew the Christmas dinner and a Christmas loan of £40.00. They even took away paper cups from the canteen and eve-

rybody had to bring in their own mugs.

Cathy who works the "Twilight Shift" describes a day, typical of many women in the plant. "I leave home at 3.30 in the afternoon to start work at 4.45. We work right through the night with a half hour break and at 3.30 in the morning a bus takes me back home.

"I have a few hours in bed before I have to get the kids ready for school, do the housework and the cooking and back out again for 3.30 in the afternoon."

These are the slave-camp conditions that the bosses want to make worse and the workers have been fighting.

## GENERAL MOTORS

THE PARENT company of Packard, General Motors is a giant multi-national corporation with factories right across North America, and Europe.

The demand for their cars and trucks has hugely increased in the last two years and profits have steadily increased since 1992.

All over the world the company policy has been to 'down-size' its workforce

while at the same time increasing productivity.

But GM is meeting growing resistance. In Buick City in America last September, 11,500 workers struck for four days to force the company to employ more workers.

Linda Cromwell, a 40 year old welder who went on strike in Buick City, is bone tired. "I work from 6am to 6pm, rush dinner, and then try to help my sons with their homework. It's a lot of stress."

Another striker, Roy Ketchens, a machine operator says "You've only got so much stamina and you can't keep up the pace like you were 18 years old". The average age of workers at this General Motors factory is 47 years.

GM wants workers to compete against each other so that its profits continue to grow. If workers in one country give in to their blackmail, they will come after workers in another country for more 'give backs'.

This is why the resistance of Packard workers was so fantastic.

## Supervisors paid off nicely

NINE supervisors at the plant were paid back-money and incentive bonuses just before Christmas.

In one case £900 was paid out. "This has really made people even more bitter. We only found out about it this week"—according to Mary who has worked in Packard for 13 years.

And 50 workers who were laid off last April have still not returned to work. There has been no mention of this in the press.

# SWM branch meetings—all welcome

**Belfast Central**  
Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm contact national address for details of venue  
Wednesday 25th January: Can the RUC be reformed?  
Wednesday 1st February: See public meetings listed.  
**Belfast South**  
Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm contact national address for details of venue  
Thursday 26th January: Can

the RUC be reformed?  
Wednesday 1st February: See public meetings listed.  
**Cork**  
Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in the Anchor Inn, Georges Quay  
Thursday 26th January: How to win the divorce referendum  
Wednesday 1st February: See public meetings listed.  
**Derry**  
Meets every Tuesday at

8.00pm Contact national address for venue  
Tuesday 24th January: See public meetings listed.  
Tuesday 31st January: Is peace here to stay?  
**Dublin Clondalkin**  
Meets every Tuesday contact national address for venue  
Tuesday 24th January: How would socialists run a strike?  
Tuesday 31st January: See public meetings listed.  
**Dublin Drimnagh**  
Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Half Way House  
Tuesday 24th January: Islamic fundamentalism: Why is it on the rise?  
Tuesday 31st January: Public Meeting in Walkinstown Community Hall (beside Public Library): Packard: can the multi-nationals be beaten?  
**Dublin North Central**  
Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in Parnell Mooney, Parnell Street  
Wednesday 25th January: The Revolutionary Ideas of Frederick Engels  
Thursday 2nd February: See public meetings listed.  
**Dublin Phibsboro**  
Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm contact national address for details of venue.  
Thursday 26th January: How

would socialists run a strike?  
Thursday 2nd February: See public meetings listed.  
**Dublin South**  
Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in Junction pub Kevin St/Wexford Street  
Wednesday 25th January: Why we need a socialist paper  
**Dublin South Central**  
Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse St.  
Thursday 26th January: The Revolutionary Ideas of Frederick Engels  
Thursday 2nd February: See public meetings listed.  
**Dublin: Tallaght**  
Meets every other Thursday at 8.00pm in Killinarden Community Centre—contact national address for details  
**Dun Laoghaire**  
Meets every Tuesday in Purty Kitchen  
Tuesday 24th January: The Revolutionary Ideas of Frederick Engels  
Tuesday 31st January: See public meetings listed.  
**Maynooth**  
Meets every Tuesday at 6.00pm in Maynooth University, Class Hall B  
**Newry**  
Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm—contact national address for details

**Waterford**  
Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in the ATGWU Hall Keyser St  
Thursday 26th January: Can Socialist Worker replace the

Star?  
Thursday 2nd February: See public meetings listed.

## Socialist Worker public meetings 50 years after Auschwitz: Why did it happen?

**Belfast:** Wednesday Feb 1st, Central Hall, Rosemary St;  
**Cork:** Wednesday Feb 1st, Connolly Hall;  
**Derry:** Tuesday Jan 24th, The Playhouse;  
**Dublin Central:** Thursday Feb 2nd, North Star Hotel;  
**Dublin Blanchardstown:** Thursday Feb 2nd, Blanchardstown Community Centre;  
**Dun Laoghaire:** Tuesday Jan 31st, The Purty loft;  
**Waterford:** Thursday Feb 2nd, ATGWU Hall  
All meetings start at 8.00pm

For further details and information of the SWM in Athlone, Coleraine, Dundalk, Galway, Letterkenny contact the national address: PO Box 1648 Dublin 8 or Phone (01) 872 2682

## JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

If you want to join *Socialist Worker*, fill in this form and send it to: PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Tel: (01) 872 2682

Name .....

Address.....

Phone.....

send in your reports telephone: (01) 872 2682

# Anger grows at Nolans strike ban

**OPPOSITION IS growing to the decision of the High Court to ban a strike at Nolan's Transport.**

The strike was fought for nearly two years to win the right of workers to join a union.

The High Court decided that workers did not ballot properly—and so did not have a right to strike. The High Court decision is the just the latest attacks that the Nolan's workers had to face.

Violence, threats and intimidation against the pickets at Nolans were very much a feature of the two-year bitter strike.

The employer was taken to court by the Director of Public Prosecution for driving his car dangerously towards one of the pickets. For this he was bound to the peace for two years.

But so also was his victim and other witnesses. During the Court hearing the judge had Nolan re-

moved from the court for making noise, shuffling his feet, moving chairs etc.

A well known local Fianna Fail member and employee of Nolan viciously attacked pickets when he was drunk.

After the police were called, the attacker was not breathalysed, charged or checked out. The same scab abused one of the Welsh strikers and warned him to leave the country on the next ferry or he would get the taste of lead.

In the second week of the strike eighteen scab trucks blocked the Bridge at Ross, the main road in and out of the town for several hours.

They held up traffic to and from the Rosslare ferry. For this one of the main scabs behind the protest was fined just £25. Imagine the fine that would have been imposed on a union if this had been a strikers protest.

There were shots fired at pickets, their caravan vandalised and

constant threats against them and their families.

Nolan paid his drivers £35 a day and £33 if the driver's wife was working. This was paid regardless of whether a driver worked 12, 15,

or more hours. They received £12 for an overnight and meal allowance. Drivers never received a wage slip. Just a docket issued from an ordinary adding machine.

One of the eighteen Welsh driv-

ers employed by Nolan had to go into hospital for a period of three weeks. When he went to claim sick benefit it was discovered that no insurance or PRSI had been paid by Nolan for him or any of the Welsh

employees.

In the Summer of 1993 Ships Officers at Rosslare threatened to "black" Nolan's trucks. Nolan then said he would attend the Labour Court and negotiate with the Union. But when strikers travelled to Dublin for the meeting, Nolan pulled out. The action at Rosslare never took place.

All these facts were ignored by the High Court in the recent case brought by Nolans against the union. Nolan's barristers objected to these facts being raised in Court.

But the strike could have been won. No action was taken by the union without being cleared by the union solicitors. And no instruction was ever issued by any union to black Nolans.

Ironically the 1990 Industrial Relations Act which SIPTU was so careful not to break was finally used to break the strike and resulted in the massive £1.6 million award against the union.

## HANDS OFF OUR UNIONS

**SHOP STEWARDS** around Dublin and Waterford have begun to campaign against the Nolan Judgement. Petitions calling for solidarity with the Nolan's workers are circulating in workplaces.

A meeting of SIPTU shop stewards in Waterford was held last week to discuss what could be done. A committee was formed to campaign for the repeal of the 1990 Industrial Relations Act. This is a start and should be encouraged.

But we also need action now. This should start with resolutions at local branch meetings, section committees and Trades Councils and plans for demonstrations on February 11th.

Trade unionists should get these leaflets

and petitions circulated as widely as possible and begin a fightback for workers rights to strike.

The action has to come from the rank and file as it clear that union leaders are paralysed by the law and unwilling to respond.

At a recent Trades Council meeting in Dublin a motion condemning the judgement was withdrawn at the request of SIPTU. A further motion calling for action on 11th February was not put to the meeting.

But the rank and file of SIPTU can be moved to a big solidarity campaign with Nolan's.

Order petitions and factsheets from **Hands Off Our Unions Campaign**, c/o PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Tel: (01) 872 2682

## Marchers demand release of political prisoners

**ONE HUNDRED and twenty people marched in the centre of Belfast to demand the release of political prisoners.**

The march was organised by the campaigning group *Saoirse*.

It took place on a busy Saturday afternoon. A number of hecklers shouted about 'Fenian scum' but a loud and lively chant built up the confidence of the marchers.

Throughout the march an RUC video camera was trained on the group in a deliberate act of intimidation.

Ten copies of *Socialist Worker* were sold.

## Civil Service

**MEMBERS OF the Civil and Public Service Union are bitter at the lack of progress on low pay.**

Talks on Grade Restructuring have led nowhere.

Restructuring would probably result in an even lower paid entry grade being set up below Clerical Assistant level. And the deal would also come with flexibility measures attached.

The only alternative posed by CPSU leader John O'Dowd is a special 3 per cent claim under the Programme for Competitiveness and Work. But as one activist told *Socialist Worker*:

"A 3 per cent claim is not the only alternative. The CPSU Executive Committee must be forced to lodge claims for substantial pay increases."

Some union members have resigned in disgust at the union leaders' failure to

deliver. One ex-member told *Socialist Worker*:

"The union has abdicated its responsibility on pay and conditions."

## Inflation

"We are getting 2 per cent in June when inflation is running at over 2 per cent and we have just had a five month pay freeze."

The entire Committee of the Social Welfare (Dublin) South Branch has left the CPSU. To do this just as

thousands of union members are looking for a lead on low pay is disastrous. As a Social Welfare activist still in the union said:

"The frustration of the Social Welfare South committee is understandable. But dissolving the committee and resigning from the CPSU leaves 350 members without representation."

"Pressure can be exerted from within the CPSU. In order to do this we need the Social Welfare South members back involved."

**WORKERS IN the Department of Agriculture's local offices have rallied for industrial action over the department's failure to provide extra permanent staff.**

There are about 65 temporary workers doing routine clerical work in De-

partment of Agriculture offices around the country.

The Civil and Public Service Union wants permanent staff instead.

The Department has continued to stall on the issue.

A CPSU activist in Agriculture told *Socialist Worker* "we are determined that this is as far as it is going to go".

## Meanscoil Feirste

**THE BELFAST and District Trades Union Council voted at their January meeting to support any action called to secure funding for the Irish speaking school Meanscoil Feirste.**

Much anger had been caused by the Tories refusal to fund the school and the campaign has been supported by the Shankill women's group.

What is needed now is the trade unions to step up

support for the campaign and build for future demonstrations to secure funding.

Last month 150 teachers and pupils picketed the Department of Education headquarters in Bangor over the decision.

## St Lomans

**90% OF nurses at St Loman's Psychiatric Hospital in Dublin have voted to take industrial action. "Serious staff shortages is the biggest problem," according to the representative for the PNA—the Psychiatric Nurses Union.**

Since last October there were 34 incidents of assaults and break-ins at the hospital. There is no panic-alarm system in place and the health board are unwilling to spend money on St. Lomans which is due to close this year. Staff are not replaced following an assault, despite the chronic staff shortage.

The union representative at the hospital also said that fewer nurses are being trained in. "There is a need for the hospital to recognise the seriousness of the situation for the nurses here."

## Sit-in on Latvian ship



**TWENTY-SEVEN sailors on board a Latvian ship in Waterford port won improved wages after a sit-in recently.**

The crew of the *M.V. Vyborskij* were dredging part of Waterford Harbour but were being paid less than £60 each per week.

The General Manager of Waterford Harbour, John Clancy, denied the crew were being exploited as they were getting the average Latvian rate for the job.

But the Harbour

Board's own contract says the contractor should pay the going rate for Waterford port.

The sailors staged a sit-in on board the *Vyborskij* and contacted the local SIPTU office.

Their employer, Latvian Waterways, then agreed to send an extra \$5,000 and the original contractor Rhode Neilsen promised a further £2,500.

The Latvian sailors' victory is a blow against local port bosses' plans to undermine unions and employ cheap labour.

## UCD: Day of action planned

**STUDENTS AT Belfield UCD plan a day of walk-outs, disruption, lecture-boycotts, and more, building towards a mass demo at the Administration Block at 1.00pm on 10th February.**

The latest attack on conditions at the University is a plan to introduce "Semesterisation" into the academic calendar.

This means that students will start the year earlier—in September—and have to sit exams at Christmas, as well as in the Summer.

The only reason the UCD authorities can offer for the introduction of this system is that hope to increase the numbers at the college next year.

This means creating a "Graduate Machine", packing them in and churning them out.

In an already overcrowded college, students have to queue from 8.00am for a seat in the library in the lead up to Summer exams.

There are only a handful of copies of essential course texts between several hundred students for use in the Library. Unless facilities are

**AUNGIER ST D.I.T.: SWSS wins free speech battle**

**SOCIALIST Worker Student Society have successfully managed to insist on their right to hold meetings at Aungier St. D.I.T.**

For weeks the Society had been struggling, not against management, but against the Student's Union who had persistently put obstacles in the way of student members of *Socialist Worker*—even going as far

as to take up a page of the Student magazine for a slanderous attack on SWM.

On January 12th the Union finally agreed that SWSS could meetings the first will take place in a fortnight—a debate with the Progressive Democrats.

Socialist Worker Student Organiser, Joan Gallagher said: "students have the right to vote, so they should have the right to hear meetings—by any political party."

## N.I. Post Office

**THE UNION of Communication Workers in Belfast organised a day of action against the Tories plans to bring in back door privatisation for the post office.**

The Tories are shutting down some counter services and trying to transfer them to supermarkets.

The protest met with a good response from passers-by.

## TCD workers fight for pensions

**IN 1991, a claim for pension rights for part-time workers was served on Trinity College.**

TCD had begun a creeping policy of casualisation. Some permanent part time staff were leaving the college after 30 years with only a token payment.

The College put the claim on the long finger and pleaded inability to pay.

But they were able to put on lavish celebrations in 1992 to mark the 400th anniversary of the college. £7.5 million was spent soon afterwards on a building project and a clean up of classical buildings.

SIPTU estimated that the cost to College of a pension-for-part-timers was only £200,000 a year.

The financial commitment for an architectural face-lift was rubber-stamped almost immediately, but College couldn't find the money to provide for workers in their old age, for the women who had formed the very backbone of the University.

Workers have voted to take industrial action on the issue if necessary. At the moment the issue awaits a Labour Court recommendation.

Like all other decisions in life, it is a question of priorities.

Trinity College simply has to make a choice—as to whether the bricks and mortar of its classical buildings are more important than the flesh and blood of its most committed workers.

In an institution which is credited with having one of the finest silver collections in Europe, and which is never known to have had a dangerously-depleted Fellow's wine-cellar, claims of inability-to-pay just won't wash with the average worker in Trinity College.

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

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# SEND THE BRITISH ARMY HOME

Not just day-  
light hours!

Workers  
Unite!

**FOUR AND a half months after the IRA ceasefire, British troops have been taken off the streets of the North in daylight. About time!**

For twenty five years the British army has been described in the media as a 'peacekeeping force'. Yet since their deployment, nearly three and a half thousand people have been killed and over thirty two thousand have been injured.

The armed conflict of the last twenty five years was not begun by the IRA but by the invasion of the Falls Road in 1970 when 3,000 British soldiers killed five people and injured dozens.

Two years later, fourteen unarmed demonstrators were shot dead in Derry on Bloody Sunday.

No soldier has ever been charged with any of these murders. Instead, the officers in charge on Bloody Sunday were promoted and one of them made a Knight.

The British Army will still be on the streets at night and will still be able to saturate areas like South Armagh.

The Northern Ireland Office claim that it will be less provocative to have the troops on the streets between 7pm and 7am. But this is a load of nonsense.

Much of the harassment of young people in working class areas happens during those hours, as they are heading out for the evening.

Many of the 330,000 raids on houses—and those raids are still continuing—are carried out before seven in the morning.

And most of the army's shoot-to-kill attacks have been at night - like the murder of three IRA men in February 1985. The army claimed that a routine patrol had come upon the men and had opened fire after the three had pointed guns at them.

A pathologist at the inquest testified that one of them had been hit by at least 28 bullets, most of them fired as he lay on the ground and that all three men had single gunshots to the head.

The Amnesty International report *Political Killings in Northern Ireland* concluded that the army ambush was planned from the start to kill the suspects "regardless of the immediate threat or absence of threat posed by them".

The same report found that the British army's Special Air Services (SAS) regiment had killed 37 alleged members of the IRA between 1976 and 1992 but there had not been any SAS actions against loyalist paramilitaries.

The report said that in all cases, the men killed could have been arrested. Most of the SAS ambushes were at night.

In short, it's not enough to have the army off the streets during the day. They should be off the streets and go home altogether.

That's what most of the soldiers want to do and that's what the majority of working class people, Protestant and Catholic, want them to do



## Release the prisoners

**ANOTHER GROUP of people who should be going home are the nearly 600 republican prisoners in jails North and South of the border.**

These are not criminals but political prisoners.

They are ordinary, overwhelmingly working class people who would never have seen the inside of a prison were it not for the political conflict of the last 25 years.

Amnest International has shown up the shocking difference between the way the security forces and civilians are treated.

Between 1969 and 1991, only 21 members of the security forces (both army and

RUC) were prosecuted for killings while on duty.

Nineteen were found not guilty and one was convicted of manslaughter and given a suspended sentence.

Just one, Private Ian Thain, was convicted of murder.

### Re-instated

He was given a life sentence but released after two years and three months of his sentence and reinstated in the army.

By contrast, Brendan Dowd, a republican prisoner who has spent more than twenty years in prison in Britain was refused compassionate parole before Christmas to attend his mother's

funeral.

More recently, prisoners who have served more than ten years in Long Kesh have been refused Christmas parole.

Yet the prisoner who created most media controversy for not getting Xmas parole was Private Lee Clegg of the Parachute Regiment.

He is the second British soldier to have been convicted of murder; he shot 18-year-old Karen Reilly dead in 1990 and was sentenced to life in 1993.

Clegg had served 18 months of his sentence when British army top brass started complaining that, as part of the peace process, Clegg should get Xmas parole!

OVER THE next few months the sectarian divisions in the North could increase.

The British and Irish governments are near to producing their "Framework" document for the North.

This document will not remove the sectarian conflict which the Northern state has been built around.

Instead it will institutionalise the divisions. Catholic workers will be told that the Dublin government will get more of a say in Northern Ireland.

Protestant workers will be told that there will be a return to some type of Stormont Assembly where the Unionist party will see that they are looked after.

The whole thing is set to make one group of workers believe that they can only gain at the expense of others.

Even the "peace dividend" is all about setting up Northern Ireland as a haven for cheap labour.

The Tories want Protestant and Catholic workers to compete against each other for Big Mac jobs.

The divisions will never be overcome if we are fooled into believing the constitutional question must be solved before workers unite on a class basis.

The republicans who accept this argument have been driven into a closer alliance with the right wing nationalists of Fianna Fail in the South.

But Fianna Fail not only set up the repressive laws and courts in the South—it also helped build a sectarian state there which mirrors that of the Unionist party.

The real alternative lies in carrying a political argument into the working class movement.

Protestant workers can break from the myths of loyalism. They have a direct interest in breaking with the Unionist Party bigots who divide them from fellow workers.

Catholic workers need to understand that republicanism has come to a dead end.

It has given up on the fight to transform the whole of Irish society. This is why it can never make an appeal to Protestant workers.

Socialist politics are desperately needed to build on the day to day struggles that Protestant and Catholic workers are involved in.