

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

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No pay cuts for new nurses

Substantial pay rise

Retirement at 55

SUPPORT

THE

NURSES

RUAIRI QUINN says that he has no money to pay for the nurses but just before Christmas he managed to find an extra £500,000 to give to TDs as expenses.

It is typical of the hypocrisy with which the nurses are treated. They are told that they are doing a wonderful job, that the hospitals would not run without them ... but there is no money in the kitty for them.

Nurses have shown they have had enough. They have voted by a staggering 97% to come out on strike. They have told their own union leaders that it is time they got on side with their members.

The nurses are fighting for three major demands:

- They want to stop this government imposing a pay cut of £1,000 on young nurses who finish their training.

- They want substantial pay rises for those on the bottom of the pay scale.

- They want the right to retire at 55.

The nurses deserve the support of every trade unionist in this country. They are fighting without the benefit of strike pay.

Collections should be raised immediately in every workplace to make sure they win.

There should be solidarity strike action with them in the public sector to bring the strike to an early conclusion.

POLITICIANS' AMNESTY AMNESIA

"My gut reaction is that this is none of your f**king business."

That unparliamentary outburst came from one John Foley a spokesman for Labour leader Dick Spring.

He was being asked by the Sunday Tribune if Spring had availed of the tax amnesty.

So far Michael Lowry is the only TD to have answered Yes to the question.

Voted

It has been revealed that Lowry even avoided pay-

ing some of his tax bill after availing of the amnesty.

Lowry, like the rest of Fine Gael, voted against the amnesty in 1993.

His leader John Bruton described the amnesty as a "monster" write-off of taxes due and accused the government of preferring

"the mafia votes to the PAYE votes".

But now all politicians have closed ranks, fearful that the Lowry affair will lead to even more revelations.

Meanwhile they are insisting that there will be no amnesty for working class people who have refused to pay their water charges.

Spring plans to join the NATO club

Ireland has taken one step closer to becoming part of the NATO war machine.

The Defence Forces have already made contingency plans to send troops as part of a NATO-led 'peace-keeping' mission in Bosnia.

The government has yet to approve the request for Irish troops but are trying to excuse this breach of neutrality by saying that the NATO force will be acting under UN authority.

Shattered

Tell that to the thousands of Iraqi's whose lives were shattered by the UN-sponsored bombing of Baghdad during the Gulf War. Or the Somalis who faced the brutality of UN 'peace-keeping' forces on the streets of Mogadishu.

Labour Minister Dick Spring has brought Ireland closer to NATO than any previous Foreign Minister.

But there is not a peep out of Labour politicians who were once staunch defenders of neutrality.

Take Michael D Higgins. In



■ NATO troops in the Gulf War & (inset) Dick Spring

the 1980s he opposed US President Reagan's visit to Ireland and campaigned against US terror in Central America. But now he's too busy handing out grants to Hollywood moguls to bother with that kind of thing.

Unfortunately many genuine human rights activists have also begun to support Western intervention in trouble spots, even

when it is carried out by NATO.

But the NATO force in Bosnia will not be ensuring human rights.

Factions

They will be policing a 'peace deal' which has followed the logic of ethnic cleansing by carving up the country between the

nationalist factions.

The huge protests in Serbia show the possibility of overthrowing the gangsters who have whipped up national hatred in all parts of former Yugoslavia.

NATO forces can only act as an obstacle to the struggles that can finally bring real freedom to all the peoples of the region.

HEPATITIS C TRIBUNAL Dept. of Health broke the law

The Hepatitis C tribunal has revealed that the Department of Health was breaking EU law when it authorised the use of dangerous blood products.

This resulted in over 1,000 people being infected with an incurable disease.

The Department was supposed to licence blood products like anti-D every five years before the Blood Transfusion Service Board could continue to use them.

The licence should only have been given after the drugs had been assessed by the National Drugs Advisory Board.

But the Department avoided this procedure and only issued licences to the BTSB in retrospect.

When applying for its first licence, the BTSB failed to report an outbreak in 1977 of hepatitis C among women who had been given anti-D.

Backdated

The first licence was issued in 1986 but was back-dated to 1983.

This breach of procedure was still continuing after the anti-D crisis was revealed in 1994.

When applying for its first licence, the BTSB failed to report an out-

break in 1977 of hepatitis C among women who had been given anti-D.

The scandal has all the hallmarks of the one that shook France a few years ago when top health officials were jailed after HIV-infected blood products had been given to hundreds of patients.

Why was this Nazi released?

The soldiers organisation PDFORA has come out strongly against the release from prison of Private McAleavy.

McAleavy shot at three of his army colleagues at Tibnin Bridge in Lebanon with armour piercing rounds, killing three of them. Later he tried to blame local Arabs for the attack.

McAleavy was in fact a fascist who actively promoted his filthy politics inside the Irish army. He was linked to the Nazi organisation Combat 18 which staged the riots during the soccer international at Landsdowne Rd.

Combat 18 organises

physical assaults on blacks in Britain and is believed to have some links with loyalist death squads.

McAleavy was also associated with a National Front organiser from London.

Throughout his time in the army he was known for anti-semitic remarks and constant racist abuse against black people.

The Minister for Justice has so far not replied to the criticisms of PDFORA.

Victory for Kilmore school

For a number of years children at the Scoil Ide and Scoil Fursa primary school have had to put up with a heating system that regularly broke down.

Teachers had to regularly send them home from school when it became cold.

Meeting

Local parents got together and held a public meeting of over a hundred in their local school.

They agreed to

mount a picket at the Dail and to hand in a protest about the conditions of their school.

Within days of their decision, the Minister for Education agreed to pay for a new heating system.

It showed that when you are willing to actively protest, you get results.

inside the system

Immigrants murdered at sea

While the media was reporting the narrow escapes of round-the-world yachtsmen and millionaire balloonists, a much more horrific story went largely unreported.

On Xmas Day last, some 280 people drowned in the Mediterranean Sea.

But unlike Richard Branson or Tony Bullimore they were

deemed unworthy of media attention.

This was because those who drowned in the Mediterranean were illegal immigrants from India, Pakistan and Sri

Lanka. They had paid smugglers £4,000 to get into Europe and were forced onto a small landing vessel which was then rammed and sunk.

Culprits

Guilty though the smugglers may be, the real culprits are the rulers who preside over For-

ress Europe.

They seal off their borders forcing immigrants, like those who drowned at Xmas, to take desperate measures.

The hypocrisy is that governments praise the free movement of wealth around the globe but refuse to allow workers from the Third World to follow that wealth.

Twist of faith

The great religious revival has proved to be a flop. There were rows of empty seats at the Faith of Our Fathers "gig" in Dublin's Point Theatre.

Commentators have hailed the sales of the album of hymns from yesteryear as proof that Ireland is yearning for the 'innocence' of bygone days.

Such was the hype that Nora Bennis told Pat Kenny on TV that she expected 20 Dail seats for her National Bigots' Party on the strength

of the Catholic 'revival'.

RTE once more proved its commitment to secularism by promoting the gig as a sort of Riveardance with religion.

But the punters stayed away in droves, not even tempted by the sale of cut-price videos of a Latin mass.

After his cameo appearance in Michael Collins, singer Frank Patterson was no doubt hoping the Faith gig would shoot him into the bigtime.

No doubt Liam Gallagher is now breathing a sigh of relief!

Sacked for telling a joke

DAVID GOFF was recently suspended from his teaching job in Manchester for telling a joke about the Tory school hit squad, Ofsted.

Hundreds of parents and school students have backed David's fight for reinstatement. Even the right wing Daily Mail reported his case favourably.

There is general anger at Ofsted who are carrying through the Tories' policy of forcing schools to compete in a 'league table'.

The Wright Robinson School, which sacked David Goff, is trying to prove itself the "strictest school in the



■ David Goff

country". One pupil was excluded for not being able to afford the regulation sweater.

The headmaster who was so upset at David's joke is a

Mr Belcher. A true blue Tory, no doubt? Actually he's a member of Tony Blair's New Labour which is busy trying to be as 'tough' as the Tories.

what we think

Social partnership or rank and file trade unionism?

MOST OF the time, partnership means a voluntary consent to work together. Not so when the union leaders try to ram home wage restraint from workers for the next three years.

The way the campaign for Partnership 2,000 was conducted shows how much the union leaders actively fear open debate among their members.

In SIPTU, the vote was rushed through before the miserly tax concessions in Quinn's budget was revealed. Members were literally asked to buy a 'pig in a poke'.

The union produced a glossy magazine calling for a YES vote. No facility was given to the NO side to put their case about an issue that affected the future of the union movement for years to come.

Printed

All union officials were instructed to carry the line that came from Billy Attley and Billy Somers.

Most astounding of all, a strong recommendation to vote YES was printed on the actual ballot paper.

In the INTO, the level of democracy was even lower. No vote was allowed on the deal and resolutions calling for a ballot were simply ruled out of order. Instead the General Secretary Joe O Toole ordered the unions vote be cast for the YES side after he negotiated a last minute deal with Niamh Breathnach.

In other unions such as IMPACT, there was little literature produced and even less discussion allowed on the deal.

The union bureaucrats have good reason to fear because they are out of

touch with their members. Already there are clear signs that rank and file organisations are reviving.

The support given to the Busworkers Action Group and the National Loco Drivers Committee for their call for strike action in defiance of the Industrial Relations Act shows that a new feature of trade unionism is being born.

Trap

These organisations are not falling into the trap of the past of setting up separate unions or claiming that if only the right leader was elected, everything would be go well.

Instead, they are organising openly as pressure groups who 'support the union leaders when they fight, and take action independent of them when they don't'.

The key to their development now lies in the promotion of active socialist politics. In the seventies rank and file groups sprung up amidst a climate when militancy alone was often enough to win.

Today every struggle immediately comes up against political questions.

Can the unions break the law? Should workers make sacrifices for a Euro single currency? How do we win solidarity?

The union bureaucrats make no secret of their politics. Overwhelmingly, they are card carrying members of the Labour Party.

The preamble to Partnership 2,000 acknowledged that the government, bosses and union leaders are committed to getting a single currency in Europe. This is why they need to be met not only with militancy but socialist politics which can deepen and extend the struggle.

Trade unionists in South Korea operate under conditions of great repression and censorship. Independent unions are banned and their leaders are subject to arrest.

Korean workers: An example to us all



■ South Korean workers battle with police

Socialist Worker is proud to publish a letter from a South Korean worker which describes their recent struggles.

Trade unionists in South Korea operate under conditions of great repression and censorship. Independent unions are banned and their leaders are subject to arrest.

Yet these trade unionists have been an inspiration to workers throughout the world.

Defied

When their government met in a secret session to introduce a new law to give the bosses greater 'flexibility' and the right to hire on short term contracts, they organised immediate strike action.

Tens of thousands defied the riot police and took to the streets to assert their rights.

Now the government of Kim Young Sam has been forced to start making concessions.

He has made compromises on

the law that made it easier to sack workers and agreed to consider legalising independent unions before 2002.

For many workers this is still not enough.

Two weeks ago, 200,000 people defied the law and rallied in the capital Seoul to hear Kwon Young Kil of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions say mass strikes could re-start soon

if the government did not back down further.

If Peter Cassells and the ICTU leaders had an ounce of the courage shown by these fighters, we might start to see some real change.

'We must fight together'

I AM a worker in a Hyundai car factory in South Korea. You will know about our fight against the corrupt labour law which will help the bosses.

We are calling out for solidarity for our struggle from workers in your country.

We face a very hard fight. The government tries to repress us.

Police have been used against striking workers since we started actions three weeks ago.

Yesterday the police attacked again with tear gas. Police fired tear gas in the subway. And there was fighting in the city of Pusan.

As I write the police and army have surrounded one labour cultural centre and they may attack at any time to arrest the leaders of our strikes.

The Handra industry committee union leader is already arrested.

The government of traitor Kim Young Sam says the strikes are illegal. We are only standing up for the basic trade union rights of workers and for justice.

The police found a socialist paper at one factory union centre. The police and the government say the workers' strikes are a plot by North Korea.

They try to witch hunt the strikers. But workers still try to fight back. Today over 80,000 people demonstrated in ten cities!

There are strong laws against socialists in South Korea. But I am fighting for socialism. We need it across the world to answer our problems.

We must fight together. If they seize one labour centre, a second will follow. If we can unite the workers, we can win victory.

■HYUNDAI WORKER, South Korea

Politicians demand sympathy

'We are being persecuted'. This is the new line that has come out of Dail Eireann after Maire Geoghegan Quinn announced her decision not to stand in the next election.

Fine Gael Minister of State, Gay Mitchell even wants to give the Ceann Comhairle of the Dail 'special powers' to decide what journalists might reasonably publish.

For sheer, unadulterated hypocrisy this is hard to beat. Irish politicians already face a tame and docile media.

No newspaper, except for the *Phoenix* has

dared to name the 'Squire of Kinseally' as the recipient of large donations from Ben Dunne. The links between key figures and Dail Eireann and the business world is still a murky area.

And when it comes to the 'privacy' of ordinary people, the TDs do not show the same concern. At the moment they are negotiating with the

Bishops to enable them to discriminate against teachers who do not hold to the Catholic faith or engage in 'unconventional' lifestyles in their private lives.

No politician has denounced the authorised phone tapping that is operated by the police against political dissi-

dents.

What we are witnessing is a pathetic attempt to roll back the wave of anger that has emerged with the Dunnes scandal.

Broke

More than two months after it broke,

there is no sign that any serious inquiry is under way. No politician has been brought to a local Garda station to answer charges of bribery. Michael Lowry has publicly admitted he is a crook—but yet remains a member of Fine Gael. The politicians think they can ride out the

storm by insisting on their privacy.

This is why several of them told *Sunday Tribune* journalists to 'fuck off' when they were asked had they availed of the tax amnesty.

Glimpse

They should not be al-

lowed to get away with it. The Dunnes scandal gave a small glimpse of how this country is really run.

Socialists need to insist that those who took bribes be sent to jail. This is the best way that we get to the truth of how the Golden Circle operates in this country.

international news

Greece

General strike rocks 'Socialist' government

GREEK WORKERS are continuing to confront the recently re-elected PASOK (socialist) party government.

On Thursday of last week tens of thousands of workers rallied in the capital Athens as the private sector union federation held a one day general strike.

Notice

The strike was called at short notice to protest against tax increases on workers which are being discussed in parliament.

The day before, seafarers ended a week long strike after the shipowners made concessions which are widely seen as a defeat for the government.

Indefinite

At the beginning of this week some 70,000 high school teachers were still on indefinite strike over pay.

The government of Prime Minister Costas Simitis has claimed the



■ Greek workers on the move

teachers are only motivated by narrow sectional interest over pay.

But the strikes have proved very popular. Unofficial delegations of teachers have spoken to very large meetings of hospital workers, local government workers and bus workers.

The government is caught. A compromise with the teachers could encourage local govern-

ment and hospital workers who are set to strike in two weeks.

But, if there is no deal the teachers could connect up with public sector workers who start a two day general strike next Monday.

Blockades

Small farmers are also threatening to renew their road blockades until the

government cancels debts and restores £500 million of subsidies.

The government is hoping the union leaders will keep the struggles separate and prevent a generalised fightback.

Simitis is desperate to push the austerity measures through and cut spending so Greece can stay in the running to join a single European currency.

But splits are emerging within PASOK.

The party general secretary, Costas Skandalides, has criticised the hardline stance of the Blair style modernisers who make up the cabinet.

Sympathetic

Most of the PASOK rank and file are at least sympathetic to the strikes. There is massive discontent among workers who voted for PASOK. Many are looking to all out strike action and their own power rather than parliamentary politics to stop the wave of attacks.

Whipping up nationalism to divide workers

THE TURKISH fleet visited northern Cyprus in a show of strength on the divided island at the beginning of this week.

The display comes two weeks after the Greek government of southern Cyprus announced a £250 million deal to buy Russian surface to air missiles. Cyprus is already the most densely militarised area in the world.

The government of Turkey is a coalition of the Tory True Path Party and the Islamist Refah party, headed by prime minister Necmettin Erbakan.

Erbakan's popularity has plummeted since he formed a government last July.

He has kept up the war against the Kurdish minority and concluded military deals with the US and Israel, despite his anti-imperialist rhetoric.

There have been huge demonstrations against the privatisation, while the True Path Party reeks of corruption that is now

tainting Refah as well.

Erbakan is now playing the nationalist card over Cyprus to try and divert opposition.

Turkey is locked into a struggle for power in the eastern Mediterranean with its fellow Nato country Greece.

Nationalism

The Greek government is wary of increasing the tension, but many politicians are also appealing to nationalism.

Greece's junior foreign minister was forced to resign recently because he was "soft on Turkey". Far right MPs attacked him for being Jewish.

The strikes and protest by Greek and Turkish workers are the alternative to sharpening tensions and the slide towards a bloody war.

Albania

Free market brings rebellion

TENS OF thousands of workers and farmers fought with riot police and troops in cities across Albania last weekend.

The collapse of dodgy "pyramid investment schemes" has caused the huge protests.

About half Albania's 3.2 million population were conned into investing in the schemes.

The losses add up to a third of the value of total production in Albania, the poorest country in Europe.

Failed

The right wing government of President Sali Berisha failed to regulate the schemes and received money from two of the biggest.

The financial crisis has focused widespread anger against the government



■ Albanian workers confront riot police

which rigged results and intimidated opposition parties in elections last year.

On Sunday demonstrators shouted: "We shall overthrow the government at all costs."

The Democratic Party came to power in 1992 as

huge food riots and strikes drove out the Communist regime.

Regime

But its turn to the free market has meant more hardship not less for ordinary Albanians.

Bosses from the previ-

ous regime kept their positions and became even more wealthy overnight

The average wage for workers is £50 a week.

Ordinary Albanians fell for the pyramid scams because they thought that was how the free market would make them rich.

France

New wave of strikes breaks out

FRANCE'S RULERS are increasingly worried about a new wave of unrest.

Public transport workers struck solidly across the whole country last Friday, with the exception of the Paris.

They are demanding retirement at 55 and a 35 hours week. In Paris many public transport workers already have these rights.

Solid

All major towns outside the capital were paralysed by last week's strike while hundreds of smaller towns saw solid strikes too.

The call for retirement at 55 has been inspired by the lorry drivers' victory in their huge strike before Christmas.

Now lorry bosses are looking to wriggle out of the deal which ended

that fight, and furious union leaders are now warning of a new wave of action.

Fight

Meanwhile the workers at Credit Foncier continued to occupy the semi-public bank's Paris headquarters at the start of this week in their fight against job cuts.

A demonstration was set for Tuesday outside the bank which other finance workers were pledging to support.

The bankworkers have now released the bosses they had held hostage and the government looks to be retreating on the planned jobs cuts.

In Nantes a group of electricity workers last week stormed a power plant and shut it down briefly in a separate fight over jobs.

WEST BELFAST:

Curfew to bring new divisions

TEENAGERS have been banned from being on the streets in parts of West Belfast from late evenings.

The measure is supposed to prevent further instances of joy riding in areas like Twinbrook and Poleglass.

But the reality is that it is leading to new conflicts between working class teenagers and their elders.

"Last weekend the area was a wash with rumours about groups of teenagers commandeering cars and driving them at local petrol stations. It was supposed to be an act of defiance against the curfew" one resident told *Socialist Worker*.

The decision to impose the curfew came after a major 'law and order' type meeting was held Poleglass.

Complained

The meeting was originally organised by a member of the more right wing Republican Sinn Fein but she has now complained on television that the campaign has been 'taken over' by Sinn Fein members.

Yet the real issue is why are supposedly radical parties adopting a solution which the Tories have proposed—but not dared to implement—in Britain it-

It amounts to a form of collective punishment

self?

Although the curfew has won temporary support because it appeals to a sense of frustration, it can only help to bring new divisions to a working class community.

It amounts to a form of collective punishment against teenagers who have never been involved in joyriding.

Who really has the right to demand that a young person of 16 or 18 should not be allowed to congregate in groups when slightly older people can go to pubs, dances, parties together?

The tragedy is that the new move will do nothing to help reduce crime or joy riding in the area.

"I used to take the odd car. It was mainly for the crack, for a laugh. We were bored but I caught myself on. I don't think that peo-

ple telling me to stay home would have helped," one young man *Socialist Worker*.

West Belfast has suffered

all the deprivation and poverty that has come with unemployment and low wages. Many young people have become desperate as they feel they have been left behind without decent jobs.

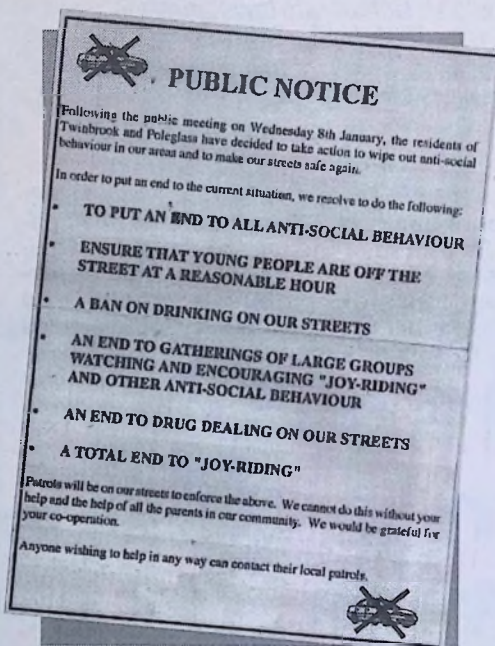
Crime

"The best way to lessen joy riding is to support projects that actively get young people involved. But the Tories are cutting back on funding for groups like Lynx and Taurus which tried to do this" another resident told *Socialist Worker*.

Inflicting punishment beatings and imposing curfews cannot get at the social causes of crime. These quick fixes never work in the longer term. In their wake they only leave more bitterness and division.

The curfew in West Belfast shows why all talk republicans about 'solving the national question' first before tackling deep economic issues will not work.

West Belfast, like East Belfast, needs a united fight against poverty, the JSA, the lack of jobs. When there is no outlet for struggles to get underway, right wing law and order ideas can surface.



■ The leaflet that has been circulating

POVERTY:

One quarter of children work illegally —official

A new survey on child labour conducted by the British Trade Union Congress (TUC) makes grim reading.

It only studied England and Wales but its findings will apply equally to the North and Scotland.

Nearly one in four children under 13 are working illegally, the survey found.

Over a quarter of school children with term time jobs say they are often or sometimes too tired to do their homework or schoolwork because of their paid jobs.

Blamed

Sadly the Irish National Teachers' Organisation blamed parents, not the bosses, for this sorry state of affairs. INTO Northern Secretary Frank Bunting said:

"The responsibility for getting the balance right between schoolwork activities and paid work rests with parents."

Convicted killer Clegg backed by Patrick Mayhew



■ Lee Clegg and the decorations for the party the Paras held to celebrate the killing of Karen O'Reilly and Martin Peake

IN ONE of his last acts as Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew has referred the case of Lee Clegg to the court of appeal.

It now looks likely that Clegg's conviction for murder will be overturned.

Clegg was convicted of the murder of West Belfast teenager Karen Reilly. Driver Martin Peake was

also killed, and passenger Mark Gorman seriously wounded.

Afterwards the Paras held a sick celebration in their barracks, which was caught on camera.

Truth

A policeman who had been at the shooting was so disgusted that he actually told the truth about what had happened.

Even though the Northern courts are notorious for letting soldiers off, Clegg was convicted.

Mark Gorman commented, "It shows how corrupt British justice is. If he is innocent, why was he put in jail, and if he is guilty why was he let out?"

The rottenness of the Northern State is exposed once again.

behind the headlines

Blair beggars relief



'Zero tolerance' is the latest slogan from British Labour Party leader Tony Blair.

Could this mean zero tolerance for the Tories who have wrecked millions of lives since 1979? Or is it their corrupt friends in the City of London?

Or perhaps he means the parasites in Buckingham Palace who are more unpopular than ever?

The answer is none of the above. Because the man who created New Labour is on the rampage against his latest targets—homeless people, beggars, petty criminals and graffiti writers.

Blair believes that the best way for Labour to win the election is to prove that they are better than the Tories at scapegoating the poorest in society.

Blair has gone out of his way to distance Labour from the unions and drop all references to socialism in order to woo big business and capture the votes of 'middle England'.

Myth

This is based on a fashionable myth that millions of workers have been 'bought off' by capitalism. They now have cars, videos and foreign holidays so their only real concern is with 'populist' issues like crime, where the Tories have traditionally made the running.

Blair should ask the Ford workers facing the sack at Halewood if they are happy with the system. And he should learn a lesson from the latest issue of *British Social Attitudes*.

The survey shows that 87 per cent of people think the gap between rich and poor is too large—the highest figure ever in the survey's history, and up from 72 per cent in 1983.

Seventy-two per cent agreed that there is "one law for the rich and one for the poor" while 66 per cent said ordinary people do not get a fair share of the country's wealth.

Blair has tried to prove that he is hard on the welfare state but the survey shows that he is out of touch.

There has been a sharp increase in support for spending on health—up from 63 per cent in 1983 to 77 per cent in 1995. A majority—61 per cent—even said they were willing to pay more tax for better health, education and other social services.

There has been a swing to New Labour which should at last rid Britain of the Tory government. But the swing is happening despite Blair's move to the right, and not because of it.

by DAVE McDONAGH

Millions are will back New Labour in the next election because of a desire for change. If Blair snatches defeat from the jaws of victory, it will be because he has not harnessed the huge anger that now exists against the system.

Socialists will welcome a defeat for the Tories, which is why the *Socialist Workers Party* in Britain calls for a vote for Labour. But there should be no illusions in Blair.

Every Labour government since the war has been more right-wing than the one before.

In 1945-51 Labour set up the NHS and the welfare state and built a million council houses. They also nationalised major industries.

In 1964-70, Harold Wilson's Labour government made few improvements in welfare and unemployment rose. The Wilson-Callaghan years of 1975-79 saw a huge attack on workers.

Now Blair promises no real reforms but tries instead to 'out-Tory' John Major at every turn.

Overthrow

This is not happening because Labour leaders are stupid or treacherous—although they are clearly both of those things!

It is happening because the Labour Party sets out to 'manage' capitalism rather than overthrow the system. Its policies therefore become tied to the state the system is in at any given time.

When capitalism was expanding after the war Labour could afford to give workers a welfare state. This also suited the bosses who needed a better educated and healthier workforce.

But now the system is in deep crisis so Labour cannot afford to give reforms without upsetting the rich. Far from upsetting bankers and businessmen, Tony Blair is bending over backwards to show them he is 'fit to govern'.

The logic of managing capitalism is that you end up more concerned about what the bosses think than about your working class supporters.

Socialist Workers Party to Stand in General Election

In the next election the Socialist Workers Party will be standing four candidates in constituencies in Dublin and Waterford. Jimmy Kelly, Bird Smith, Ritchie Brown and Peadar O Grady spoke to Emer Maloney about their reasons for standing and how they would approach an electoral campaign.

The widespread frustration at Labour and Democratic Left's performance in government is given as a primary reason for agreeing to stand in the forthcoming elections by all four SWP candidates.

Anger

"There's an anger amongst workers," says Jimmy Kelly. "There's a so-called boom, but the boom isn't being felt by workers, students, anyone who uses the health services, or underprivileged people. The trickle-down theory isn't working. The only thing that's trickling down are the crumbs off the rich man's table."

Jimmy Kelly is the chief shop steward at Waterford Crystal and will be mounting a major campaign in the local constituency.

Ritchie Brown is a union activist at TEAM Aer Lingus who, will be running in Dublin North Central where he will be challenging politicians like Sean Haughey who got £10,000 from Ben Dunne.

He cites the people he works with; "Fellas are saying to me they'll never vote Labour again. Labour said they'd break the golden circle; they didn't. They've behaved shamefully towards workers. The Labour party seems to have forgotten that it sprang from the Labour movement. I think its about time there was a serious alternative."

And the same goes for Democratic Left. Ritchie Brown points out that Pat Rabbitt and Eamonn Gilmore both campaigned against the 1990 Industrial Relations Act. But once they were in government they didn't even review it.

But what sort of alternative do the Socialist Workers Party candidates present? "The so-called left-wing members of the present government manage the system. We would challenge it," says Brid Smith.

Corruption

She uses the example of the recent corruption scandal involving Michael Lowry.

"Had we a Socialist in the Dail, we would have used the opportunity to expose the corruption. We would have used Dail privilege to name the former high-ranking Fianna Fail TD, who got a million pounds from Ben Dunne, a thing not one single TD was prepared to do. We would have used our position to call for mass public protests against corruption."

Brid Smith says she wants to re-establish the tradition of socialism in Irish politics. "As

revolutionary socialists, we're not saying to people that we can deliver. The message we bring is that real change will only come from the bottom we did during the famous X case or the fight put up by the Dunnes workers. We would use the Dail to point that out. We want to build a strong Socialist alternative rooted in the working class." Brid is employed by the union MANDATE and was actively involved in the Dunnes strike. She will be highlighting opposition to Sunday trading which most shop workers feel.

Peadar O Grady is a doctor who left the Labour Party to join the SWP.

He hopes the campaign will help swing debate in the elections to the left.

He says because of Labour and Democratic Left's failure in government, there's a danger that the political mood could swing to the right, with the possibility of a Fianna Fail/PD coalition getting in. He sees SWP involvement in the forthcoming campaign as vital.

"Take the current tax regime," he says, "the main parties are pretty much in agreement about the present system. Our arguments at election time will challenge the other parties with socialist arguments."

Socialism

But the thrust of the campaign will also be to win people to revolutionary socialism and to build the Socialist Workers Party.

For all four candidates that is paramount. Jimmy Kelly contrasts his party with the Workers Party.

"The Worker's Party thinks more of their TD's in the Dail is the answer. We say workers in solidarity with each other can make changes, not in partnership with the bosses."

If the Socialist Worker's Party succeeds in getting candidates elected. Its candidates won't be availing of the perks available to them. In fact they'll campaign against such privileges.

They say they'll take an average industrial wage for themselves, and they'll make facilities, such as free postage, available to workers and community groups.

"If we were in the Dail we would be calling for support for the nurses and the CIE workers," says Jimmy Kelly. "Labour and DL are part of a government that has attacked workers. We went through similar attacks in Waterford Crystal so I feel I know what I'm talking about."

Polls show the Progressive Democrats gr

The real of the P

Recent opinion polls show that the Progressive Democrats have grown in popularity. Their leader Mary Harney has cultivated an image of being above the corruption of Dail Eireann. Here Gino Kenny investigates what the PDs really stand for.

WHEN THE Progressive Democrats held their party conference last November one newspaper did a profile of the typical delegate. They were self-employed or professional, assertive and upwardly mobile, someone who wanted to influence society. Very middle class is how the paper summed it up.

If this is Irish liberalism

THE PD's sometimes like to claim that they are strong on liberal values but their liberalism is skin deep.

The party's founder Des O Malley opposed legalising contraception in the mid seventies claiming that the duty of a Dail deputy was to: "deter fornication and promiscuity and prevent, in so far as we can, public immorality". PD deputies have opposed the legalisation of homosexuality and have never been disciplined by the party.

When some members tried to remove an article which dedicated the Irish constitution to the Holy Trinity, they were quickly quashed.

Education

During recent debates on the education system, the PD spokesperson Michael McDowell defended the right of parish priests to dominate local schools and has even attacked measures which would prevent discrimination against teachers who do not conform to the 'religious ethos' of schools. The liberalism of the PDs is only designed to suit the lifestyle of their yuppy supporters.

At the same conference one speaker proposed that the delegates might take a bus tour around some large estates to see for themselves the scale of poverty.

It was a frank admission that the party were all but tourists to working class areas.

The PDs are a party of yuppies who have produced policies which can only benefit their class.

At their recent press conference on economic policy in the forthcoming election, spokesperson of finance

Taxes

Michael McDowell said that if the Progressive Democrats were to be in government, it would be committed to "lower taxes, encourage further privatisation of the state sector, be pro business, pro individual and cap public spending"

His brother Moore



McDowell, an economics lecturer in UCD, was more specific about what cutting public spending would mean.

On a *Questions and Answer* programme he argued that nurses were already well paid and should be denied any further pay increases.

Claim

The PDs claim that their model for capitalism is New Zealand.

Despite Dick Spring's attacks on the PDs, the irony is that New Zealand is run by Ruth Richardson, a right winger from the Labour Party.

Policies

But as one trade unionist in New Zealand described the policies "it was based on a search and destroy regime, it targeted the most vulnerable people in soci-

Hang 'em and flog 'em

THE PDs have never called for any politicians who have taken bribes to be jailed.

Nor have they ever attacked building bosses who are found guilty of breaching safety laws or complained when these are fined only £400 for the death of a worker on their site.

When they talk about more law and order, the PDs mean harsh sentences for the poor.

Liz O'Donnell has declared that "it's time for zero tolerance"

And although the party wants to cut back on public spending she is demanding a new prison building programme.

Prisons

The PDs are so enthusiastic about privatisation that they want to turn prison building into a profit making opportunity for the rich.

If they had their way pris-

ons would be owned by wealthy individuals who could decide on the diet and exercise facilities of the prisoners. It would be an opportunity for a new form of slavery.

In America, privatisation has meant that prisons compete with each other to see who can lock people up under the worst conditions. Their owners make huge profits from misery. But for the PDs this is fine — so long as their rich friends never go behind bars.

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Crats growing in popularity but in reality...

al face PD's



Harney has a right wing agenda against the poor

Not so clean PD's

AFTER THE Lowry scandal broke, the PDs rose dramatically in the opinion polls and overtook the Labour Party.

The PDs project a clean cut image and claim that they have no involvement with Ben Dunne. But the PDs have plenty of their own skeletons.

□ The PDs receive a lot of money from big business but they refuse to reveal who made the donations.

□ During the Beef Tribunal it emerged that the PDs received £20,000 from Larry Goodman in 1987.

□ Their former leader Des O'Malley resigned abruptly after it was revealed that he had received money from Tara mines.

□ And while Mary Harney called on all TDs to declare if they had availed of the tax amnesty, Des O'Malley refused to answer any questions on the subject.

The small employers who support Harney use schemes like the BES scheme to pay virtually no tax.

Big farmers whose land is valued at over £300,000 managed in the last budget

to have 90% of their inheritance made exempt from tax.

Yet Harney backs all these tax concessions and wants even less taken off the rich.

What she favours instead is savage attacks on public spending like that in Britain.

Labour's failure

WHAT IS THE potential for the PDs to get into government?

In 1987 they got 14 seats while in 1989 they entered a coalition with Fianna Fail, after they only got 6 seats. At the last election they got 10 seats with only 4.5% of the vote.

Double

But in the upcoming election they aim to double this by growing from the anger against Labour and Democratic Left.

They will claim to be on the side of workers and to be whiter than white on corruption.

But Harney and the PDs are no friends of the working class.

Class

As one commentator said of them "The PDs are becoming a niche party, largely middle-class and intensely committed. They will remain the most reactionary of the right."

Spring and de Rossa have created the conditions for the PDs to grow but now they are trying to use them by arguing that coalition with Fine Gael is better than the 'lethal cock-

ety, it went to war against social welfare, it was the scorched earth policy of the far right"

The PD's not only admire and market the New Zealand model, but they are also enthusiastic about states such as Singapore and Hong Kong, where workers have no rights to join unions, and have very few labour laws.

Mary Harney sees herself as being on side "for sticking up for the small guy".

But Harney wants to be Ireland's iron lady.

Slackers

In a recent interview on Prime Time she said "you have to pull yourself up by your boot strings up, there's no room for slackers, you don't need state interference, it's good to be an economic individual"

Harney has won some support over her plans to cut taxes.

But she never admits why Irish workers pay so much of their wages in taxes.

The reality is that PAYE workers are squeezed because the Irish rich pay so little in taxes.

Tax on profits are already among the lowest in Europe.

What do socialists say?

Following the Asian miracle

MARXISTS are internationalists. Consequently we welcome and support workers' struggles in defence of their living standards and working conditions wherever they take place.

However, there are a number of reasons for giving a particularly warm welcome to the recent magnificent struggles of the Korean working class.

This is because they so effectively explode many of the myths about South Korea and the other so called "tiger economies" of south east Asia.

For some years right wing politicians and economists have been pointing to South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore as showing the way forward for capitalism and providing a model to which people in Ireland should aspire.

Success

If we look at the history of capitalism we find that over time economic success passes from one part of the world to another. At the beginning of the 17th century Holland was, for a short time, the number one capitalist country. It was rapidly overtaken by Britain, which enjoyed a century or more of world dominance.

By the end of the 19th century, however, Britain was in relative decline and facing strong challenges from the USA and Germany.

The 20th century's two world wars, fought to resolve this issue, left the US with an enormous economic and military lead while Britain was exhausted and Germany and Japan were utterly devastated.

At first, after 1945, the USA's only serious rival was the state capitalist USSR. However, the burden of waging the Cold War drained both the superpowers and in late 60s the US was already feeling the pressure from Germany and Japan. Underlying this intense instability and volatility are two fundamental features of capitalism, both of which were analysed by Karl Marx 150 years ago.

On the one hand there is the system's tremendous dynamism.

Driven by faceless competition in the global market every firm and every country strives relentlessly to expand its operations and maximise its profits.

On the other hand there are the system's inherent contradictions, its tendency to overproduction, the tendency for the rate of profit to decline, and its class conflicts.

These contradictions repeatedly plunge capitalism as a whole and its component parts into recessions and slumps.

To this it must be added that capitalism always develops unevenly and is a system of winners and losers.

If Pepsi is marching forward it is likely to be at the expense of Coca Cola. If Germany and Japan are leaping up the world economic league table other countries are likely to be falling.

Supporters of capitalism, especially its media pundits, sing the praises of capitalism's dynamism but refuse to recognise its fundamental contradictions.

If the system as a whole or their bit of it is doing badly they attribute this not to any built in flaws of capitalism but to superficial factors such as political mismanagement or "the national culture".

They are particularly fond of claiming that the fault lies with the bad behaviour of the workers. They then scour the world for examples of countries where the system is apparently working well.

These are then held up both as proof that capitalism has a rosy future and as models which we should copy.

Above all it is repeatedly suggested that the country concerned has solved the problem of class conflict and that bosses and workers all live as one happy family and pull together for the sake of the company and the nation.

If we could only learn from their example and do likewise we too could enjoy their levels of growth and prosperity, the pundits say.

At various times over the last 30 years Sweden, Germany and Japan have all played this role of mythical model capitalism.

Recession

But with the passing of time each of these "economic miracles" has turned to dust, most spectacularly that of Japan's which has just had four years of serious recession.

Faced with this the pundits increasingly turned their attention to the Asian Tigers.

These were the new success story and pictures were painted of societies united in their oriental business spirit, their traditional family structures and their reverence for elders and leaders.

The truth is, however, that government policies and cultural factors have only a limited effect on the dynamic of capitalism-it is far more the economy which shapes apes politics and morality than the other way round.

And the contradictions of capitalism operate everywhere, if not at exactly the same time, regardless of nationality or culture.

Above all the conflicts of interest and struggle between the two basic classes — bosses and workers — are universal.

In the long run no capitalism is immune to the problems of stagnation, inflation, recession and unemployment.

It shows that the crisis of their system is truly international and so, too, is the struggle of the working class.

— JOHN MOLYNEUX

Where are the republicans going?

By Kieran Allen

THE IRA'S RETURN to armed struggle has unleashed a wave of anxiety throughout the North. Celebrities who once feted Gerry Adams are already closing their doors. We are at the start of a powerful propaganda campaign to vilify the republicans as the sole cause of violence.

Yet the reality is far different. Instead of genuinely seeking peace, the British government saw the ceasefire as an opportunity to weaken the hand of the IRA. Even before the Canary Wharf bombing, British troop levels remained at their 1992 levels and spending on military installations was even increased.

The only concession given to the republicans was a small change in prison policy which meant that 40 IRA prisoners could be released over the five years.

But nearly three quarters of all republican prisoners will still be in jail in the year 2,000.

The British government negotiated with the IRA leaders for nearly three years and promised them an "imaginative and generous response". But after the ceasefire, Major set up a series of pre-conditions to exclude Sinn Fein from talks.

One senior British source even claimed that "bringing all concerned to the table for full negotiations will take, at our rough guess, two years".

None of this should have come as a total surprise to the republicans. They have traditionally warned of British duplicity and treachery.

But still Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness found themselves in exactly the same situation as Ruairi O



■ Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams

Bradaigh and Daithi O Connell, the leaders they ousted after they concluded a ceasefire 20 years ago.

In recent years the leadership around Adams began to shift their view on Britain's relationship with Northern Ireland.

Argued

Mitchell McLoughlin argued that the interest of the British ruling class had changed. He claimed that

"The advent of the open Europe has changed the economic reasons for Britain wanting to dominate Ireland. In mili-

tary terms, modern technology has rendered (past) military strategic reasons obsolete."

The reason Britain stayed was because "it's actually inertia. They're not exercised about the issue. There is little evidence that they even agonise over the failure of their policies".

They came to believe that if 'nationalist Ireland' worked closely with the US President Clinton it could produce a settlement that fell short of a united Ireland but established 'parity of esteem' in the North.

The republicans were right to point to a changed relationship between the British ruling class and the North but they

draw the wrong political conclusions. Today the British ruling class is riven with division and instability.

The relative decline of its economy in a more turbulent world has made them far less sure of where they are going.

One smaller section of the establishment wants to raise anti-European jingoism to a new height.

The majority section has little interest in facing down their henchmen in the military and risking the charge that they are weak in the face of terrorism.

The result is a paralysis where peace in Ireland is sacrificed to the immediate short term interest of the British ruling class.

The expectation that Bill Clinton and the Irish establishment could pressurise the British ruling class to act differently ignored the fact that the international ruling class has more in common with their ally John Major than with the IRA or the Catholic working class.

Today the Adams leadership has reached a dead end. Two years ago in their TUSAS document they justified their new pan-nationalist strategy by claiming that there was a unique combination of circumstances that "are unlikely to gel again in the foreseeable future".

But despite all the publicity and donations from wealthy Irish Americans they have gained little.

Hoping

Unofficially, many of the Adams supporters are now hoping that a Blair government may make a difference.

They believe that the armed struggle can be contained at a low level until a new British administration works with a Fianna Fail led government to open up the peace process again. But this leaves out the crisis that is affecting the British ruling class. Blair is no more likely to move than the Tories.

Instead he has made every effort to dovetail the Tories over the last two years—even to the extent of sacking Kevin McNamara for making vaguely critical comments.

And even if the process began again, there is one question that Adams and McGuinness cannot answer: if it has taken so long to even get talks going, what possible likelihood is there that they could deliver any change that would benefit the working class Catholics who have made so much sacrifice?

Building an alternative

THE POLITICS of the republican movement have now come to a dead end. Sinn Fein can still be the beneficiary of Catholic anger after Drumcree — but neither wing of the republicans have a strategy to end discrimination.

There is now a small but important minority amongst Catholic workers who are looking for an alternative.

Writing in a recent issue of *An Pobhlacht*, Laurence McKeown acknowledged that "our Movement is a rapidly ageing one and new up-and-coming faces are difficult to spot".

That alternative politics has to start from the fact of common class position of Catholic and Protestant workers.

Just as republican politics have become bankrupt, there is also new conflicts opening open among Protestants.

Right

Middle class Protestants around Trimble and Paisley are shifting even further to the right to hold on to their privileges—while many workers want to put peace and some representation of their class interests above alliances with the loony right.

This means that the mood for class unity can survive alongside — sometimes more openly, other time more submerged — the pull of sectarianism.

But these moods for unity will go nowhere unless they are linked to a minority who hold clear socialist politics.

Socialists argue openly for opposition to loyalism. By encouraging notions of superiority, loyalism has been a poison which fostered division and ensured that all workers lost out.

Socialists also have to openly challenge the republican idea that all Catholics have something in common.

The gap between an unemployed worker in West Belfast and Fianna Fail politicians or wealthy Irish Americans is unbridgeable.

The 'hawks' who fight on from desperation

ACCORDING TO Ed Maloney of the *Sunday Tribune* the IRA ordered a resumption of a limited war to prevent a split in its ranks. Many of the rank and file demanded a return to armed struggle because the peace process ran into the sands.

But if the Adams strategy has failed, so too will that of the militarists. The present Army Council of the IRA has already admitted that the armed struggle cannot win. The TUSAS document argued that "republicans on their own do not have the strength to achieve their end goal".

This is an admission that those who are being sent out to bomb cannot hope to achieve a united Ireland. The best they can hope for is to get more leverage for Sinn Fein before it enters talks in the future.

This cannot provide a sufficient motivation for sustaining the long war of the past. As a result the militarists in the IRA will be forced to shift direction in order to re-build support for an armed struggle.

One way this has already begun to occur is for the IRA to present it-

self as a police force over the community. The events in the Twinbrook and Poleglass area of West Belfast shows where this is already leading. Here a curfew has been imposed so that "young people are off the street at a reasonable hour".

Adapting

By adapting to a right wing law and order atmosphere, republicans are carrying out a policy which, ironically, the Tories advocate in Britain. They may temporarily gain some support for this — but at the cost of new conflicts with masses of working class youth.

The other way for reviving the armed struggle will be through a more open anti-Protestant outlook. Many republicans already see the Drumcree events as proof that virtually all Prot-

estants are hardened bigots.

They ignore the fact that the Orange Order relied on small numbers and police collusion to get their protests going. The ghettoisation of the Catholic and Protestant workers can feed into these sectarian moods. The militarists in the IRA already see the new round of conflict as much more focused on a war with loyalists.

Ironically, the peace process set up a new conflict whereby the 'two communities' were opposed to each other over who will do best in a final settlement.

For a minority of IRA supporters the logic of all of this is to play with the idea of a civil war to 'finally sort it out'.

All of this amounts to a terrible political retreat. It can only help to impose new suffering and new divisions on working people on both sides.

And in the end the history of the movement shows that those who advocate war today become the advocates of a constitutional road tomorrow.

New laddism—old sexism

NEW LADS are everywhere, no inhibitions about being a man, just a sense of irony, and a six pack of beer.

We are told it is the role model for nineties men, but despite the talk of new departures it all seems very familiar.

The phenomenon probably started when a couple of middle class comics discovered football. Frank Skinner and David Baddiel took a stereotype of what was supposed to be working class male behaviour and set it up as a role model.

No longer hide bound by any commitment, no need to be prudish about sex, everything is for a laugh. Watch football, drink beer, look at pictures of naked women.

Suddenly being an alternative comedian meant talking about "birds", pretending to be a slob, getting pissed with the blokes, and—bizarrely—being proud of your country.

All in all clearly a deeply radical departure from traditional right wing ideas.

The best expression of new lads is *Loaded* ("the magazine for men who should know better"). It's all about "blokes and birds and beer".

The issue I had the misfortune to read had the following gems in it: A feature on a porn actor, a survey of which bread made the best toast and a holiday guide to Bosnia! But most importantly lots of pictures of women without any clothes—even a pull out centrefold.

Just to add to the fun the letters page consisted of people sending in pornographic playing cards which apparently resemble celebrities.

This apparently is men coming to terms with their sexuality, while holding on to their sense of fun.

The adverts however probably show more about the projected readership, page after page of ads for phone sex lines—for the moments between post-feminist relationships perhaps—ads for books and videos on how to become popular with women, and four double page recruitment ads for the British army.

The last presumably stemming from the disappointment of Germany beating England in Euro 96, meaning that wearing a replica jersey and singing about "Three lions" is no longer enough to satisfy the ironic patriotism of real New lads.

And it is the supposed irony of it all that is the real problem. The difference between Bernard Manning telling a sexist joke and Frank Skinner doing the same joke is apparently irony.

Insult

But the reality is the joke is still sexist, it will be told the next day by the office misogynist to insult the women workers regardless of where he heard it.

To give an example of what is supposed to be the no go area for the New Lad—racism.

On one episode of Fantasy Football it was pointed out that David Baddiel was Jewish at which point the studio audience aggressively starts chanting "Yiddo" at him. Irony or perhaps just naked anti-semitism? The defence is always "it is just a laugh, no offence meant". But that has always been the defence of every reactionary comic, it is even the defence of the *Sun* when someone takes their constant advice to bash foreigners literally.

Humour can be liberating, it can provide insights into tensions, and confusions, it can break taboos. New laddism does the opposite—it takes the predominant reactionary ideas, upholds and reinforces them.

Look at "Men Behaving Badly", the hugely popular sit com that apparently is making the new lads the butt of the joke. In reality all that happens in every episode, is two "blokes" go through a stream of rather dated sexist jokes.

These supposedly ordinary guys reflect the reality of working class men's behaviour as accurately as if they wore flat caps and kept pigeons and ferrets.

It is nothing more than the middle class view of what working class people are like. And the fact that the programme makers manage to pay the female stars less than the men suggests the programme's sexism is more than skin deep.

Rehabilitating real sexism despite the irony is essentially what new laddism is about and should be opposed as much as the old bigotry it claims to replace.

—SIMON BASKETTER

Greenfields—Gaelic sport in Ireland

Reviewed by
ROISIN CRONIN

THE GAA is the biggest sporting organisation in the country with three quarters of a million actual members and a much wider following.

Tom Humphries, a sports journalist with the *Irish Times* attempts to analyse its place in Irish life in *Greenfields—Gaelic sport in Ireland*.

To his credit, Humphries shifts the flow from "GAA Inc." and concentrates on the ordinary people all over the country who play for their local clubs.

At a time when sport is increasingly commercialised, and the GAA is moving more into the realm of big business, the genuine commitment and passion that exists at this level is refreshing.

As Humphries illustrates Gaelic games are very much based around the local community and local pride.

Humphries over sentimentalises this aspect and argues that the popularity and culture of Gaelic games is fundamen-



■GAA: Commitment and passion vie with commercialism

tally connected to an "Irish need for collective self expression".

Attraction

The GAA has always been fundamental to the soft, officially sanctioned nationalism of the Irish state.

But this is irrelevant in many ways to the attraction

of Gaelic football and hurling for thousands of ordinary people in this country.

As with all sport, these games are popular primarily because they seemingly offer an escape from the monotony and drudgery of daily life.

You feel more like a human being when you're on the pitch or up on the stand than

when you are at the production line in the local factory.

Occupied

Humphries interviews managers to bring out the different side to the GAA in the North where it has become part of the nationalist community.

As a result the GAA has not escaped the sectarian violence

of the past 30 years.

In County Down, club houses have been burned down while, in the seventies, Casement Park in Belfast was occupied in the 70's by the British army and the locals denied access.

In Craigavon the local club wasn't allowed to develop a sports complex because it was argued it would be offensive to members of the Royal Black presbytery.

In 1988 Aidan McAnespie, was shot dead by the British Army on his way to a GAA match.

Resistance

In these circumstances, being a GAA member can be part of a republican resistance. As it did in Long Kesh in the late 70's when prisoners demanded the right to play Gaelic games while inside.

This background explains why Rule 21, which prohibits members of the British security forces from membership of the organisation can seem antiquated and unnecessary in the South but important in the North.

Overall the book is well worth a read, particularly if you're interested in the GAA. It's enjoyable mainly because the church leaders and politicians who used Gaelic games for their own purposes aren't the stars of the show.

■*Greenfields* by John Humphries, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, £16.99

Glasgow meets Nicaragua

GLASGOW meets Nicaragua in Ken Loach's new film, *Carla's Song*.

George (Robert Carlyle), a Glaswegian bus driver, helps Carla (Oyanka Cabezas) to escape from a particularly nasty ticket inspector.

She tracks him down to thank him but rushes out of the cafe when George, now clutching a false phone number, tries to find out more about her background.

Yet he spots her again and soon the two are chugging towards Loch Lomond in a requisitioned double decker, emptied of passengers en route.

It takes a lot more than a highlands picnic, but in the end Carla begins to reveal tidbits of her past.

She is Nicaraguan, a Sandinista who fought for the 1982 revolution and against the Somoza dictatorship which was backed to the hilt by the brutal, US-sponsored Contras.

Though traumatised by the killings and torture back home, Carla wants to find out what happened to her lover and comrade, Antonio. George has no notion of Central American politics but gets two plane tickets and they set off in search of her companions.

As in *Land and Freedom*, *Ladybird*, *Ladybird*, and *Raining Stones*, Loach tells a highly political story through the eyes of characters which you embrace whole-heartedly in the first

ten minutes.

The acting is utterly credible as Loach, who doesn't believe in scripts, lets actors and non-actors improvise on the basis of very little information for each scene.

Carla comes to life after the Glaswegian winter as she tells George about the revolution while bouncing along country roads atop a Nicaraguan coach. They become embroiled in the horrific violence meted out by the Contras when Carla's search takes them back to her family's village.

Backlash

Carla's Song is a powerful snapshot of Nicaragua at the height of the Contra backlash. It exposes the United States' murderous intervention in a region which it still regards as its own backyard.

It is also a highly personalised film. George's lack of information keeps the



■Carla and George look to the future

plot's politics quite straightforward.

This time Loach doesn't exploit his wonderful ability to explain harder issues like the conflict between the Stalinists and the Trotskyists in *Land and Freedom*.

Carla's Song is a shorter snippet with few clues as to the fate of the Nicaraguan guerrilla-led revolution which eventually choked to death in Reagan's and Bush's stranglehold.

Today, a right-wing coalition under Victoria Chamorro has implemented vicious free market policies and wiped out many of the revolution's gains—land for small peasants, literacy cam-

paings, a basic but functioning health service.

Carla's Song seems a bit dated in 1997 when the Sandinistas are doing their best to look less radical than Dick Spring or Tony Blair.

The Nicaraguan revolution brought down the wrath of the Western powers who hypocritically preach about terrorism and de-commissioning.

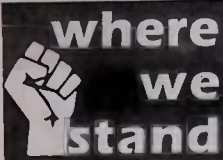
Missiles

Thatcher's government tried to supply surface-to-air missiles to the Contras. British companies supported Colonel Oliver North who ran an Iran-Contra gun-running net-

work. And the SAS, which killed three IRA members in Gibraltar in 1988, looked after training and sabotage operations in Nicaragua.

Contra leader Arturo Cruz was invited to at least two private Tory conferences. Thatcher backed the US in 1986 when the World Court in the Hague ruled that Reagan's government had broken international law in its overt and covert war against Nicaragua.

There's a lot more to the Nicaraguan story, but *Carla's Song* serves well as a terrifying reminder that imperialism is alive and kicking—and of the resilience and heroism of people who take on the world's superpowers.



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

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be reformed out of existence. Parliament cannot be used to end the system. The courts army and police are there to defend the interests of the capitalist class not to run society in a neutral fashion. To destroy capitalism, workers need to smash the state and create a workers' state based on workers' councils.

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST:

The SWP welcomed the break-up of the USSR and the end of the East European dictatorships. These states were not socialist but were run by a state-capitalist class. We are against the domination of the globe by imperialist powers and we oppose their wars. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women. We stand for: free contraception and free, legalised abortion and the right to divorce; the complete separation of church and state, an end to church control over schools and hospitals; an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians; an end to racism and anti-traveller bigotry. We argue for working class unity in the fight against oppression.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH:

Northern Ireland is a sectarian state, propped up by the British Army. Catholic workers are systematically discriminated against by the state. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers weakens the whole working class. Workers' unity can only be won and maintained in a fight to smash both the Northern and Southern states. We stand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. Violence will only end when workers unite in the fight for a workers' republic.

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT:

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

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY:

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

C.I.E.

The return of the rank and file

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

On Budget day, January 22, the anger of CIE workers around the country spilled over into unofficial action.

More than 2,500 workers stopped work as rank and file CIE workers organised marches and stoppages in protest at the attacks they face from CIE bosses.

SIPTU and the National Bus and Rail workers Union had earlier called off a planned protest march to the Dail when CIE threatened the unions with legal action.

Immediately the Busworkers Action Group and members of the National Locomotive Drivers Committee began organising for an unofficial stoppage.

Standstill

In Dublin more than 1,500 Bus and rail workers stopped work and marched to Leinster House. City buses were at a nearly complete standstill for hours and the DART railway stopped. Other Iamrod Eireann workers took action in the Midlands and West of Ireland and there were stoppages and protest marches in Waterford, Limerick, Cork and Galway.

The mood was militant. Several workers spoke of "doing a France" — blockading the roads if there were any victimisation of workers for taking action.

To rousing cheers, Owen McCormack of the Busworkers Action Group told the demonstration in Dublin:

"Bus and rail workers have stopped work today despite threats and intimidation

Defy the Industrial Relations Act!

THE union leaders justify their lack of backbone using the excuse of the Industrial Relations Act.

The Industrial Relations Act and the Courts are not fair to workers.

When the NBRU took Bus Eireann to Court last year for trying to impose the Viability Plan, Courts quickly found against the union.

Two years ago, lorry



Thousands of transport workers took unofficial action and marched on the Dail on budget day

by management. We have a very simple message today to the politicians and CIE. You lay one hand on the conditions and pay of any CIE worker and we'll have a national transport strike."

CIE are trying to force through "Viability Plans" in the three companies — Iamrod Eireann, Bus Eireann and Dublin Bus. They have demanded implementation of a £44 million cost cutting package by 31st March.

This will mean loss of overtime and other earnings. "flexibility" and new workers being recruited on worse conditions. The unions are currently in negotiations over the Viability Plans. The company says the details may be changed but the overall cuts are non-negotiable.

CIE workers are facing a big fight to safeguard their conditions. But their union leaders refuse to openly lead the fight.

The mood of the workers was defiant. One busworker spoke for many when he told *Socialist Worker*:

"We have a perfect right to protest to defend our wages. Workers will have to face down the Industrial Relations Act. The unions should have stood up to CIE and the Courts."

Threats

There was a lot of disappointment that union leaders caved in to management threats.

NBRU general secretary Peter Bunting had publicly disowned the march and stop-

page. Officials from SIPTU had instructed reps in depots to order their members not to go on the march.

Nonetheless the strength of feeling was so great that most SIPTU reps in Dublin Bus actually participated in the stoppage and march.

Addressing the protest outside the Dail, Brendan Ogle of the National Locomotive Drivers Committee criticised the general secretaries of both SIPTU and NBRU — Billy Attley and Peter Bunting.

To loud applause he called on them to "come down from their ivory towers and do the job they're paid for—to rep-

Accepted

If Larkin and Connolly had accepted to play by the rules laid down in the Industrial Relations Act the trade unions would

never have been created in this country.

The basic principle of trade unionism is solidarity—an injury to one is the concern of all.

If the law makes it illegal to put this principle into action then the law must be broken.

Mass action can defeat this law. If the Courts seize unions' assets, workers should respond like the French truckers—blockade the roads.

resent your the members." A loco driver told *Socialist Worker*: "You can't trust the union leaders. Last year, CIE refused us the 3% we were owed unless we agreed to the viability plan.

"There was a huge ballot in favour of strike action but the union leaders put off action."

"It was the rank and file train drivers who said they would stop the railway that forced CIE to back down."

Battle

The loco drivers' committee which won that battle was formed two years ago when the union leaders accepted a lousy productivity deal.

"We won't let them do that again," he added.

A Dublin Bus driver said: "We've all got to stick together — Irish Rail, Bus Eireann, Dublin Bus. Otherwise they will try to pick us off one at a

time. "We have to make the unions call an all-out national transport strike if any of us are attacked."

Strike

A member of the Busworkers Action Group told *Socialist Worker*:

"We fear that the leaders of SIPTU and the NBRU will eventually wear down the anger of CIE workers by arguing we should accept concessions, for example that new workers should come in on worse conditions.

"This is completely unacceptable. We are not trying to create a new union but make the existing unions more accountable to the needs of their members.

"Our aim is to organise the garages so that the union leaders will not be allowed to shirk their responsibilities."

Organise the rank and file

NO CONCESSIONS:

The union leaders must be made to realise that CIE workers will accept no concessions on jobs, pay, conditions or flexibility.

The company is making its demands "non-negotiable"—the workforce should do the same.

FOR A NATIONAL BUS AND RAIL STRIKE:

To effectively fight the CIE plans the unions need to ensure that no group of workers is divided off and attacked. All groups within CIE have indicated in massive ballots that they are prepared to strike against the plan.

Attacked

The unions must make it plain that if any group of workers is attacked there will be an immediate national bus and rail strike.

DEFY THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT:

The company can use the courts to injunct simple solidarity action. This law is unfair and is designed to strengthen the bosses and weaken workers. Mass action by workers can smash this Act.

ORGANISE EVERY GARAGE AND DEPOT:

The key to fighting the company and preventing a sell-out by the union leaders is strong rank and file organisation in every garage and depot. Get in touch with the rank and file committees, distribute their leaflets and papers to your workmates.

News from SWP branches

Step up the recruitment

OVER FIFTY people have joined the SWP over the last three months. This follows a major burst of recruitment after the party highlighted the Dunnes scandal with its call to 'Jail Corrupt politicians'.

However, the growth is not just confined to the South. In Belfast, six people joined the party in one week after important arguments about the bankruptcy of the republican strategy.

The challenge is now on to fill the vacuum that has opened up in Irish politics. Key to this is the distribution of *Socialist Worker* through regular paper rounds which help to give local branches roots in the area.

But on top of that there has to be another major recruitment drive.

- * Every supporter of the party needs to be met and encouraged to get actively involved.
- * Every branch needs posters around their street sale encouraging people to join.
- * Anyone who does join should be met within a week with a copy of the party's publication *The Case for Socialism*.

SWP branch meetings

BELFAST
Meets every Wed at 8pm Central Hall Rosemary St.

CORK
Meets every Weds at 8pm in Dennehy's Pub, Cormmarket St.

DERRY
Meets every Tues in Badgers Bar at 8pm

DUN LAOGHAIRE
Meets every Tues at 8pm in Smyths Pub.

DUNDALK
Meets every Weds at 1pm in Dundalk RTC

ENNISKILLEN
Meets every fortnight Contact national address for details

GALWAY
Meets every Thursday at 7.30pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square

LIMERICK
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Costello's Tavern, Dominick St

MAYNOOTH
Contact 8722682 for details

WATERFORD
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in ATGWU Hall, Keyser St.

DUBLIN NORTH-WEST
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in The Old Brogue, Dorset St.

DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK
Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm Contact 8722682 for details

DUBLIN DRIMNAGH
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in the Black Forge (formerly the Bentley), Drimnagh Rd

DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL
Meets every Wed at 8.30pm in Conways, Parnell St.

DUBLIN RATHMINES
Meets every Wed at 8pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond St.

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL
Meets every Thur at 8pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse St.

DUBLIN TALLAGHT/CLONDALKIN
Meets Monday at 8pm in the Steering Wheel, Clondalkin

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.....

There are *Socialist Worker* members in: COLERAINE; LURGAN; CAVAN; DONEGAL; NAAS; KILKENNY; DUNDALK; ATHLONE; DROGHEDA. If you would like to get in touch, contact our national office at (01) 872 2682, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

news & reports— politics; the unions

send in your reports telephone: (01) 872 2682, fax: (01) 872 3838

NURSES GO INTO BATTLE:

'We've got to win this strike'

IRELAND's nurses are set to take strike action from February 10th.

They are fighting for a decent deal with Department of Health.

The deal on offer demands a £1,000 pay cut for staff nurses at the beginning of their career.

Nurses also want retirement at 55 years of age—a demand already won by psychiatric nurses.

Early retirement is a very urgent issue for nurses in the face of the stress of nursing today. Hospitals have been deprived of resources and nurses are expected to take up the strain.

SINEAD told *Socialist Worker*:

"Over the last few years the workload has increased 50%.

"The INO estimated that last year £17m worth of unpaid overtime was worked by nurses.

"If the patient needs your attention you skip your coffee break or meal break.

"People are stretched to the limit to keep the public service going."

MARY said;

"We're dealing with human life. You won't let your patient down. But the management are exploiting that.

"Years ago a nurse wouldn't be allowed to give an IV drug injection—only a doctor could do that.



Nurses striking two years ago

"Now were expected to do it but if anything goes wrong we get the blame."

Nurses want payment for the extra responsibilities they take on.

SINEAD:

"We get nothing for the extra-curricular courses in nursing skills which nurses are expected to follow.

"But we're going to make sure we get paid adequately for our work."

ANNE said:

"There is a terrific determination. Other nurses come up to me and say we don't want to strike but we'll stick it out until we get what we deserve."

SINEAD:

"We won't get strike pay, we will be taking our turn at emergency

cover and we'll be doing picket duty. That's a lot but the commitment from our fellow nurses is great."

MARY added:

"The anger and depth of feeling is unprecedented.

"Everybody I know is 100% behind the strike.

"What a lot of people don't realise is that many nurses are the sole breadwinner for their family.

"They are not some ministering angel but a worker with hungry mouths to feed."

Emergency cover will be provided so that Accident and Emergency and Maternity departments and coronary care and intensive care, for example, will be fully staffed—but the nurses won't be paid for it.

There will be no routine

admissions, nurses won't do IV drugs or clerical duties.

The nurses have given the hospital managers fair

warning and are demanding that routine cases are run down in preparation for the strike.

But there are fears that the determination of nurses to see this fight through is not matched by their leaders.

ORLA told *Socialist Worker*:

"I sometimes wonder about PJ Madden. He seems to have a patronising attitude to nurse."

"Last November he and the Executive Council was pushing for acceptance of the deal."

"He seemed to have sympathy with the government's position. Everything appeared to be geared to saving the PCW, not winning nurses decent pay and conditions."

Despite the official recommendation for acceptance nurses overwhelmingly rejected the deal and voted 97% for strike action.

Compass agree to talks

A PLANNED four day strike by support workers at five Northern Ireland hospitals was called off by union leaders on 27 January.

The planned strike was part of a fight against union-busting private contractor Compass, which is trying to cut wages and conditions for cleaners, catering staff, porters and security guards.

At the last minute, Compass management agreed to talks to avert the strike. UNISON leaders called off the strike but no new offer has been made.

Over 400 UNISON members at five Northern Ireland hospitals went on strike for two weeks in November last year when Compass presented them with new contracts, threatening the sack if they did not sign.

The contracts cut overtime rates for weekend work and gave Compass the right to change conditions and pay rates at will.

Contract

When Compass won the private contract in 1995, workers were assured that their wages and conditions would be maintained. But new staff were employed on lower wages.

The dispute showed that the real agenda was to destroy union organisation in the hospitals.

During the strike Compass spent thousands of pounds on a massive scabbing operation, flying in workers from hospitals in Britain to break the strike, and used the Tory anti-union laws to restrict pickets. Injunctions on leading union activists, threatening them with arrest if they appeared on picket lines.

The strike remained solid

but UNISON leaders backed away from effective picketing in the face of the anti-union laws. More importantly, the massive power of UNISON, which has over 1 million members in Britain was not mobilised to prevent the scabbing operation. Most UNISON shop stewards did not hear about the strike until it was over. Those who did, at hospitals in Glasgow and Luton were able to stop scabs being recruited by threatening action.

The workers went back with the dispute unresolved. Compass has since refused to negotiate. If Compass get away with wage cuts in Northern Ireland hospitals

there is no doubt it will repeat the exercise in Britain.

Compass is a massive multinational firm which has made a killing out of the Tory government's privatisation policies. It has taken over catering and cleaning in hospitals throughout Britain. It recently won the contract for the canteen in the main civil service building in Belfast.

Profits

Compass profits increased 56 per cent in 1996 to £114.3 million. Managing director Francis Mackay openly campaigns against the TUC's proposed mini-

mum wage of £4.26 an hour saying anything over £4.26 is unacceptable.

The mood for action remains in the hospitals. A UNISON shop steward told *Socialist Worker*, "When I was distributing the strike pay after we got back to work, everyone was asking when are we going back out again."

November's strike showed the potential to push back Compass' union-busting agenda. Without the threat of strike action Compass will push for a lousy compromise. If any cuts to conditions are accepted it will give the green light to private contractors to cut conditions.

Tapping into the support

THERE IS huge public sympathy for the nurses.

Socialist Workers Party branches have collected thousands of signatures for a message of support over the past couple of weeks.

To keep up morale it is vital that this support is tapped.

Striking nurses should visit trade union bodies and workplaces to organise collections at workplaces, etc to put the case for financial support.

All trade unionists should invite a striker to address your branch, etc. Pass a message of support from your workplace/ trade union branch with regular official donations or take up a collection around your workmates, in your estate etc.

Take the money to your local hospital strike committee at the picket line.

ANNE said:

"We've got to win this strike."

"But I'm worried that the union is slow with the preparations for the strike. We've been told nothing—we're not getting a clear lead from the top."

MARY:

"It's very important that local strike committees get control of this strike from the word go. It must be nurses who decide what's urgent and not the doctors or administrators."

Anger in Cork RTC

ANGER from students and staff of Cork RTC exploded onto the streets last week with news that Waterford RTC was being upgraded to an Institute of Technology while their college was being overlooked.

Two huge marches took place through Cork city centre and over 2,000 students and staff travelled to Dublin to lobby the Department of Education.

Ballot

Lecturers in the TUI are planning to ballot for strike action if Niamh Breathnach fails to upgrade the

college.

"We have no ill will towards the Waterford RTC" said Dermot Murphy, a steward for the students union.

"But by deliberately not mentioning Cork RTC, the government has shown no concern for the staff and students of Cork."

John, an electronics student, explained:

"A diploma from an institute will be worth more than our courses.

"It could affect our chances of jobs"

Staff have been supporting the students and many came on the Dublin march.

Students in both Waterford and Cork have every right to have their colleges upgraded.

But the key issue is the scale of funding put into both in order to improve the quality of education.

Up to now, the government has been trying to pack as many students as possible into the RTCs for the lowest costs.

Danger

The danger is that the campaign in Cork will be turned into an entirely local affair.

Already Fianna Fail and Progressive Democrat TD's are trying to use the issue to garner votes.

But these hypocrites also call for more cutbacks in education spending.

Strike action by the staff and solidarity between Cork and Waterford is the way to get results.

TELECOM WORKERS REJECT KANE'S RANSOM NOTE

TELECOM EIREANN are trying to pull the same stunt as CIE tried recently by demanding acceptance of cuts before they will pay the outstanding 2.5 per cent and 1 per cent PCW increases.

Telecom want to cut out overtime payments, make staff pay a 2.5 per cent pension contribution and freeze subsistence payments.

Dave, who works in Telecom in Dublin, told *Socialist Worker*:

"The company has given us what amounts to a ransom note—give us our demands and we'll

let you have your 2.5 per cent."

Protest

Hundreds of seats were left empty as workers boycotted a series of company presentations in protest at management's arrogance.

This annoyed Telecom boss Alfie Kane who wrote a letter to staff tell-

ing them that even though the company was in profit, they would have to accept cost cuts to meet competition.

Nerve

"Kane has some nerve and he on two hundred grand a year", said Dave. "We should threaten strike action like they did in CIE"

As we went to press the CPSU looked set to ballot it's members in Telecom—the CWU and other unions should do likewise.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

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25 YEARS AFTER BLOODY SUNDAY Cover up shows Major's hypocrisy

THERE IS now clear evidence that the British establishment conspired to cover up the Massacre on Bloody Sunday, 25 years ago in Derry.

Evidence in the new book, *Eyewitness Bloody Sunday*, and in the Channel Four news investigation indicates that soldiers other than the Paras had been involved in the killing of 13 unarmed civilians on a civil rights march.

The new evidence suggests that soldiers of the Anglian Regiment stationed on the city walls 'picked off' three of the dead demonstrators. None of this came out at the Widgery

Tribunal.

Channel Four revealed tapes of what British army and RUC officers were saying to each other on the radio as the massacre went on. These tapes were available to Widgery but he refused to listen to them.

Refused

Widgery also refused to hear evidence from Dr. Raymond McClean who had pronounced four of the victims dead and attended all the postmortems.

As Dr. McClean said "If I came upon a car accident and pronounced one of the passengers dead, I would be required by law to appear at the inquest. If I refused, I would be

subpoenaed."

This information comes just a year after the official minutes were discovered of a meeting in 10 Downing Street on the evening of Bloody Sunday.

Then Prime Minister Edward Heath is recorded reminding Lord Chief Justice Widgery that "we were in Northern Ireland fighting not just a military war but a propaganda war".

Widgery agreed that it would be necessary to "pile up the evidence" on the side of the Paras and against the dead.

Widgery did his job well. He found that there had been

no crime or even misdemeanour committed by the British army on Bloody Sunday.

He was willing to lie to defend the reputation of the ruling class he served.

Why Bloody Sunday cannot be put behind us

THE BRITISH government demands that all paramilitary groups de-commission their weapons.

They try to imply that the violence in Northern Ireland was caused solely by terrorist groups.

But their hypocrisy is shown by the way they claim that the Paras had committed no crime, not even a misdemeanour.

Reacting to calls for a new inquiry, Derry's disgraced Unionist mayor, Richard Dallas, suggested that books and programmes on Bloody Sunday served only to 'bring up a past we should be trying to put behind us.'

Sectarian

But Bloody Sunday cannot and should not be put behind us as long as the sectarian Northern state exists.

Bloody Sunday, like Drumcree, exposed the sectarianism at the heart of that state and the lengths to which the British establishment is willing to go, to prop it up.

Bloody Sunday and Drumcree showed that the Catholic section of the working class are still second class citizens and cannot get justice within the Northern state.

Injustice

A divided working class has also meant that Protestant as well as Catholic workers have to live with a higher level of repression and a lower standard of living than elsewhere on these islands.

A new inquiry will not end injustice—but it would show a willingness to tackle it.

HOW LOW CAN TONY BLAIR SINK?

The Shadow NI Secretary Mo Mowlan has said that a Labour government would not establish a fresh inquiry into Bloody Sunday despite the new evidence of a cover-up. Echoing Unionist politicians she said 'we should leave the past in the past'.

Mowlan's statement shows the extent to which Labour have accepted the Tory view of Northern Ireland.

She assumes that people from a Protestant background would not want to see a fresh inquiry. This is a slander on many decent working class Protestants who might be against the IRA but still see the murder and cover-up of Bloody Sunday.

At the end of 1995, Tony Blair met Unionist politicians and assured them that there would not be 'the width of a cigarette paper' between the policies of a Labour government and those of the Tories.

Just as Blair follows the Tories in adopting disgusting policies like attacking beggars and the homeless, so too does he back up their cover-ups for the Paras.

The attitude of the Labour Party should be a warning to those republicans who have returned to armed struggle today in the hope of a better bargaining position tomorrow under a Blair government.

If we want justice on Bloody Sunday or an end to sectarianism it will have to come from working class people fighting for themselves.

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