

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

## Inside:

**How can Le Pen's Nazi's be stopped?**

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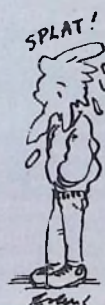
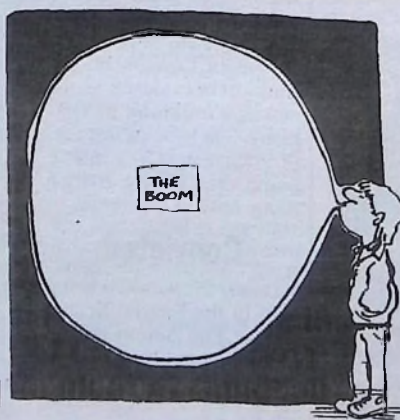
# BOOM FOR THE RICH

# We need a

# £5 an hour

# minimum

# wage!



**THE Celtic Tiger**—that is what the press calls the Irish economy.

Profits are certainly up as never before.

This year, for example, the Allied Irish Bank made a staggering £421 million in profit.

But the boom is not benefiting everyone. Poverty still stalks the huge housing estates that surround Irish cities.

Employers are still taking on young people for as little as £2.50 an hour. They demand that they work for years as 'yellow pack' workers who are stuck on contracts.

## Demand

Every time there is the slightest demand for change, they squeal that it would make them inflexible.

They are even up in arms over a modest proposal to limit the working week to 48 hours.

But workers should not put up with this nonsense.

Everyone has a basic right to a minimum wage of £5 an hour.

The TDs in the Dail, who get £34,000 a year plus huge expenses, should not be lecturing us about the need for sacrifice.

The unions should now be mounting a major campaign to demand a minimum wage.

They should demand that the Dail legislates for this but they should also start a fight in the low paid sweat shops.

They should issue a simple guarantee to every non-union worker—that they will fight for a £5 an hour rate as soon as the job is organised.

# Dunnes Scandal

## Make them jail the crooks

*"WHAT ARE we doing still calling for a tribunal? The Lowry story is old hat at this stage so the only new development in a tribunal will be if the Fianna Fail figure is outed."*

Those were the words of one Fianna Fail backbencher, worried that the Dunnes Tribunal would name the senior FF politician who got £1.1 million from Ben Dunne.

### Worried

It is a month since Judge Buchanan issued his interim report on Dunnes Stores payments to politicians, but the 'million pound man' has yet to be named.

Fine Gael are now happy to set up a tribunal.

They opposed the idea when the heat was on their man, Michael Lowry.

But the Buchanan report put the spotlight back on Fianna Fail's corruption.

Since the damage was already done in the Lowry affair, John Bruton had nothing to lose by 'outing' crooked Fianna Fail TDs.

### Moral

Bertie Ahern has since clambered onto the moral high ground with his promise to set up a Public Ethics Commission if Fianna Fail are re-elected.

But the Public Offices Commission, recently established, already has the powers that Ahern proposes.

And if the Dunnes Tribunal is anything like the Beef Tribunal, the culprits will go free and legal eagles will make a packet.

It could all be different if our trade union leaders organised demonstrations to demand that the corrupt politicians be named. And when they are named they should all be sent to jail.

## Brutons £5m sewer

JOHN BRUTON'S family could be £5 million better off if a sewerage scheme goes ahead in Co Meath.

The Brutons are all big farmers. John's brother Richard — the Enterprise Minister — and his parents own 71 acres at Castlefarm near Dunboyne.

Their land is designated for the new scheme, which was recently announced by John Bruton.

Bruton claims he was 'unaware' of the effect the new development would have on the land's value. But if he didn't know this simple fact, how did he get to be Taoiseach?

## FF Fraudster found guilty

A FIANNA FAIL councillor has resigned after being found guilty on six-teen charges of fraud.

Councillor Enda Mulkere of Clare will be sentenced on 7 April.

Mulkere received cheques totalling £84,039 from two local firms.

He claimed he was paying the money to sub-contractors who had done work for Shannon Development.

opment.

Mulkere used some of the £84,000 to pay overdrafts and arrears on his bills. He also bought two cars, a tractor, a horse and cattle.

But Mulkere may yet beat the rap.

Judge Haugh directed psychological reports after the defence argued there might be 'something in the background' which would assist with sentencing.

Or maybe Mulkere was just hanging out with a bad crowd.



Enda Mulkere

## Secrets of the Haugheys

THE DUNNES tribunal could shed new light on the secret lives of the Haughey family.

Judge Buchanan's report has already revealed payments by Ben Dunne to "persons with similar names to relatives of a former public representative, Mr Charles J Haughey."

This sounds like a polite way of saying that the Haugheys are up to their necks in corruption!

### Admitted

Maureen Haughey, the ex-Taoiseach's wife, admitted she received a cheque for £20,000 for her husband's election expenses in 1989.

Haughey's son, Ciaran, revealed that Ben Dunne gave him £10,000 for his helicopter business.

Dunne even invested in the spiritual wing of the family — he gave £2,000 to CJ's

brother, Father Eoghan Haughey, as a donation for Masses!

### Wealthy

The Haugheys are fabulously wealthy. Apart from his Kinsealy mansion, CJ

Haughey owns numerous art treasures: There were even rumours of a no-fly zone around his private island off Co Kerry!

The Dunnes tribunal might lift the lid on the source of some of this wealth.

## Bridgewater Three, Roisin McAliskey, Danny McNamee

# Victims of British 'Justice'

WHEN THE British courts were finally forced to free the Bridgewater Three, it was yet another indictment of the British judicial system.

The media have declared the Bridgewater case to be the 'last miscarriage of justice'. They have ignored countless other cases of injustice, including those of Roisin McAliskey and Danny McNamee.

Roisin McAliskey continues to be held in Holloway Prison in London on the flimsiest of evidence, as she awaits extradition to Germany. She is being accused of involvement in a mortar bomb attack on a British Army base in Osnabruck.

### Convicted

Danny McNamee is being held in the Special Secure Unit at Full Sutton prison. He was wrongly convicted ten years ago of the 1982 Hyde Park bombing, and is serving 25 years.



Roisin McAliskey continues to be held on the flimsiest of evidence

Roisin McAliskey has been refused bail even though she is more than seven months pregnant and her pregnancy is described as 'high risk'.

The authorities have denied

her proper medical attention. When she was suffering from cramps, it took prison officers an hour to respond.

Roisin is unable to climb the four flights of stairs to the roof, where she could take exercise. Yet she is still regarded as a maximum security prisoner.

Roisin may even be handcuffed while giving birth — although Holloway claims to have ended this practice following a public outcry.

### Objected

The German government has not objected to Roisin McAliskey being given bail, but the British authorities still hold her in inhumane conditions.

Danny McNamee was convicted of the Hyde Park bombing on the basis of doubtful fingerprint evidence.

His fingerprints were said to have been on a bomb, discovered in a London street, and on sticky tape found at

two separate arms finds.

But there is now evidence that the fingerprint found on the bomb is not Danny McNamee's.

The British government knew at the time of the trial that the prints were those of Dessie Ellis, who has served a sentence for bomb making in Ireland.

Hundreds of other fingerprints found during the investigation were all dismissed as being the result of innocent contact.

The forensics 'expert' whose evidence was central to the McNamee case has since been discredited. In 1991 the Lord Chief Justice ruled that the man should not be allowed to give evidence in another case.

The McAliskey and McNamee cases — along with the Bridgewater Three case — show that British justice is as rotten as ever.

## Government fudge on 48 hour week

THE GOVERNMENT has caved into the demands of US multinationals by agreeing to phase in a 48-hour limit to the working week.

They are amending the Working Time Bill to allow a limit of 60 hours in the first year, 55 hours in the second year and 48 hours in the third.

This follows protests from the US Chamber of Commerce in Ireland, which represents giants like Intel, IBM and Hewlett Packard.

They claim the 48-hour limit would make them un-competitive.

But the new limit is based on an EU directive, so Ireland would have the same conditions as the rest of Europe.

### Conceded

The Department of Enterprise and Employment has even conceded that some companies "average the 48-hour week over 6 months, or over 12 months, by collective agreement."

In other words unions would be expected to agree 'sweetheart deals' where their members would work annualised hours.

Fianna Fail are opposed to



Bosses like Peter Kearly and Leo Crawford of Spar make their money by forcing low paid workers to work long hours

the 48-hour limit but claim their stance is 'pro-worker'.

They want to amend the Bill to allow individual workers the 'right' to opt out.

But who would want to work for more than 48 hours a week if they were being paid properly for working shorter hours?

The Fianna Fail amendment would result in workers being put under pressure to work longer hours in order to keep their jobs.

The trade unions should be campaigning to have the 48-hour limit introduced immediately, without any let-out clauses.

## what we think

# Greed for profits brings death on the sites

LAST YEAR 13 people died in accidents on building sites and 1,600 were injured. In 1994 one in 64 building workers were injured at work, by 1996 this had shot up to one in 54.

The industry as a whole has the third worst accident record after fishing and farming. It is notorious for cutting corners.

The main reason for the horrendous accident and death rate is the drive for profit.

In their rush to clinch contracts for the next lucrative apartment block or office development, building bosses are risking workers' lives.

According to Eric Fleming of SIPTU's construction branch, building bosses are now using short-term, or Quickstage, scaffolding for long-term projects because it is cheaper and faster to erect.

It is also easier to dismantle and other sub-contractors often take out pieces that are in the way of their work.

Employers no longer bother to train professional scaffolders.

Instead, fly-by-night sub-contractors set up and disappear without bothering to check the scaffolding throughout the construction period.

### Failure

Recently, a scaffolding collapsed onto the Waterloo Road pavement.

Another worker was crushed under steel bars in the west of Ireland, and these are only two of seven serious accidents in the last few months.

The response of the Labour Party to the rising death rate in the building industry has been pathetic. Last month, Eithne Fitzgerald, Minister for Labour Affairs, announced that she would increase fines for safety contraventions—from £1,000 to £1,500.

But adding a few hundred pounds to the fine means nothing to building bosses who are creaming in huge profits from selling apartments at £70,000 a go.



Employers no longer bother to train professional scaffolders.

The failure of the Labour Party means that building workers themselves will have to start organising to enforce decent safety standards on the sites.

The scandalous record of safety on the sites is just a small picture of what is happening in the Celtic Tiger economy.

A section of the upper middle class

have benefited enormously from the boom. Houses prices have risen sharply and the managers of the financial sector are making a fortune. Ireland today resembles Britain in the 1980s.

It is a bubble economy that is awaiting a more painful collapse.

But for masses of workers, the scam-

ple for profits has brought few gains.

The lives of building workers are sacrificed for profit while the rest of us are told constantly to tighten our belts for the good of the country.

This sharp contrast is fuelling an anger that could yet explode in the faces of the establishment.

## international news

# Workers take action across the world

★ **COLOMBIAN** workers have won an important victory after an eight day general strike.

Up to 800,000 public sector workers struck on 10 February in protest at government plans to hold down wages to 9 percent below inflation.

After eight days of angry demonstrations around the country, and on the eve of a huge national demonstration planned for the capital, Bogota, the government of president Ernesto Samper caved in.

It agreed that wages should match inflation and to negotiate over planned privatisations of state industries.

The strike was the biggest in Colombia for over 20 years. "This marks the return to strength of the labour movement," said Wilson Borja, leader of the main public sector workers' union.

★ **SOME 1.2 million building workers held a one day strike last week after national wage negotiations broke down.**

★ **IRAN:** The authorities have been forced to release hundreds of oil refinery workers who were arrested after protests last week.

The arrests came as workers from the Tehran refinery demonstrated for union rights and increased pay.

Tehran oil workers walked out last August but returned to work after the ministry of industry promised to meet their demands within two months.

On 18 December oil workers held a two day strike, hitting refineries in Tabriz, Esfahan, Shiraz, Abadan and Tehran.

They returned to work after the



Flashback: Anti US demonstrations after the revolution 18 years ago

government asked for another month to deal with the problems but nothing has been done.

Iran's economy is heavily dependent on oil, and strikes by workers at the Abadan refinery in 1978 sparked the wave of resistance that brought down the brutal US backed regime of the Shah.

One faction of the Islamic government wants to "liberalise" the economy, applying International Monetary Fund methods, including welfare cuts and privatisation.

Another faction warns this would hit the urban middle class and traders who make up the re-

gime's base.

The majority of the Iranian population is now poorer than it was 15 years ago during the bloody war with Iraq.

The oil workers' action could be the first signs that workers have had enough.

★ **NIGER:** A two day strike by electricity workers in one of the world's poorest countries blacked out much of the country last week.

The stoppage was in protest at prime minister Ahmadou Cisse's plans to privatise the utilities.

Uranium mines, central to the economy, were affected by the power cuts and some had to close.

★ **SWAZILAND:** Workers in the small state of Swaziland, on the border between South Africa and Mozambique, have been on general strike for most of February.

The strike, demanding an end to rule by the king, has halted sugar and timber production.

The Swazi parliament was abolished by royal decree in 1973 and political parties and activity are banned.

The Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions has headed the protests and its leaders were arrested by the government in an attempt to halt the action.

★ **SERBIA:** Despite some concessions by President Milosevic over local election results, he is still in trouble—a strike by school teachers continued at the start of this week.

Teachers are demanding a pay rise.

Trade unions say that the action has closed around 1,500 of the 2,000 schools in Serbia and that many schools have been closed intermittently for two months.

On Wednesday of last week thousands of teachers gathered in Belgrade to make their feelings known to the government.

★ **ZAIRE:** The regime of President Mobutu continues to fall apart.

The fourth month offensive by anti-Mobutu forces in eastern Zaire has made huge gains and may be on the verge of taking the crucial mining areas in the south east

of the country.

Mobutu said his forces would mount a counter-offensive on 20 January but the 300 mercenaries he recruited to head the fighting have fled.

President Mandela of South Africa was set to host peace talks this week.

While ordinary Zaireans are suffering terribly, Mobutu left for his holiday mansion in France again last weekend.

Some differences are emerging within the anti-Mobutu forces. The movement is a combination of a popular movement from below and an armed force supported by the Rwandan and Ugandan governments.

★ **SPAIN:** Lorry drivers last week called off their two week old strike which had hit factories across Spain and car production across Europe.

The government made some concessions but stood firm on the truckers' main demand for early retirement on full benefits.

The truckers could have won much more, and the ending of the strike is a setback which shows the importance of politics in waging successful struggles.

The truckers' union leader said, "It has been decided not to continue with the current work stoppages because of the economic consequences," echoing government claims that the action was damaging "the national interest".

In reality workers' interests are best served by hitting their bosses as hard as possible and looking to unity with workers of other countries, not in lining up with their own bosses to compete against other countries.

## Socialist Worker

### £10,000 Appeal

The support from Socialist Worker came at a crucial time in our dispute. It was very important in helping show that we had the public on our side.

"I would encourage everyone to give to their appeal."  
—Martina Ryan, Mandate shop steward, Cork Early Learning Centre.

SOCIALIST WORKER has started a £10,000 appeal to help fund its election campaign and buy new printing equipment.

The SWP will be running a number of candidates in the forthcoming General Election to offer an alternative to the betrayal of the Labour Party and Democratic Left.

At the moment there is no party in the Dail that stands up for working people.

Fine Gael, Fianna Fail and the PD's have proven themselves to be parties of big business. Especially in their relationship to Ben Dunne.

In 1992, many voted for the Labour Party because they said that they would "expose the Golden Circle at the top of Irish society." But Labour has failed us.

The Labour Party has supported a tax amnesty for the rich which allowed people like Lowry to cover their crimes.

They told the nurses they "would not get a penny more" - yet they found plenty of reserves for TD's expenses.

And they joined up with Democratic Left Minister Proinsias de Rossa in attacking social welfare recipients for fraud while letting Larry Goodman off the hook.

The SWP's candidates are:

\*Ritchie Browne, a TEAM worker, who will stand in Dublin North Central.

\*Brid Smith, an employee with the union MANDATE who is running in Dublin South Central.

\*Dr Peadar O'Grady, a former Labour Party activist who joined the SWP, who is running in Dublin South East.

\*Jimmy Kelly, the ATGWU convener in Waterford glass who is standing in Waterford.

In the election campaign the SWP will stress that real change can only come from workers struggling for themselves.

But the get that message across we need to compete with the right wing parties who have massive financial backing.

Socialist Worker has no other backers than our members and supporters. We need your help to make sure socialism has a voice in Ireland.

Every donation, no matter how small, will help.

Please make cheques/postal orders payable to Socialist Worker and send to SW Appeal, PO Box 1648 Dublin 8.

# Deng Xiaoping: The butcher of Tiananmen Square

■Right: Deng was Mao's loyal henchman in the '40s and '50s.  
 ■Below: Students argue with troops sent in to Tiananmen Square to crush the democracy movement in 1989



**THE MEDIA** last week contrasted dead Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping with Mao Zedong, who ruled before him.

The press said Mao was dogmatic and stood for communism which brought chaos and poverty to China, while Deng in contrast was a pragmatist who brought the market and prosperity.

In fact Deng worked hand in glove with Mao for years. Both were key leaders of the 1949 Chinese Revolution.

That revolution ended decades of foreign domination and broke the rule of local warlords and landlords.

But, despite the regime's rhetoric about socialism, the revolution did not bring any control over society to the mass of peasants and workers.

Mao, Deng and the other leaders of the revolution wanted to unify China and develop it as an independent national economy.

## Defend

They looked to copy what Stalin had done in Russia in the 1930s—to build a modern industrial state and the military ability to defend it.

The interests of workers and peasants were subordinated to the task of industrialisation, directed by the state and controlled by a ruling class of state bureaucrats.

China was a state capitalist society squeezing resources to industrialise out of the mass of the population.

Throughout the 1950s Deng was one of Mao's most loyal henchmen. In 1954-5 he helped Mao purge the regime's leadership and in 1956-7 he headed a savage crackdown on intellectuals, arresting and jailing thousands.

The Chinese regime sought to build up industry and match rival states, but was starting from a very low level.

This led China's rulers to desperate attempts to force the pace of development.

The biggest and most disastrous was the misnamed 1958-60 Great Leap Forward.

Mao set impossible production targets. Unable to fulfil the targets, officials at every level lied to those above them, which deepened the chaos—millions died in the resulting famine.

The colossal failure led to bitter argument inside the ruling class, and Mao himself lost influence. In 1966 Mao moved to restore his power by launching what became known as the Cultural Revolution.

He and his supporters formed groups of "Red Guards" to mobilise against their opponents, who by then included Deng.

Mao's opponents fought

back and soon fierce armed clashes erupted between rival groups and parts of the country slid towards civil war.

Deng eventually retreated in the face of Mao's attacks and withdrew from the leadership.

The rival rulers finally looked to the army to restore control.

Tens of thousands were killed and 17 million people—one tenth of the urban population—were deported to the countryside.

The faction fights within the ruling bureaucracy dragged on until Mao's death in 1976.

They polarised around two basic groups. One, the Gang of Four, was headed by Mao's widow.

The other eventually came to group itself around Deng Xiaoping, who had re-emerged in the regime's leadership in the early

1970s.

Behind the argument lay a disagreement over how to continue their common project of building up the Chinese economy and its military power.

## Isolation

The Gang of Four wanted to continue the old methods of developing in isolation from the world economy relying only on state direction.

But it was clear to more and more of China's rulers that the limits of what was possible by these methods had been reached.

Those grouped around Deng argued the only way to go forward was to open the economy to the world market and bring in foreign investment and trade.

The argument was settled when the group around Deng Xiaoping removed their rivals at gunpoint.

# Repression and turn to market

**DENG'S TURN** to the market, from 1978 onwards, brought spectacular results. But, as with capitalist development everywhere, it also brought new contradictions, instabilities and vast inequality.

The reforms began in agriculture. The old state farms that had been built up since the 1949 revolution were broken up and land given to peasant families.

They were allowed to make money by selling part of their produce on the open market. The result was a huge surge in agricultural production.

But the initial growth has now produced huge new problems. Peasants chasing after profit have switched from producing grain to more lucrative crops, such as tobacco. In four of the last 11 years grain production has actually fallen.

## Growth

Land has been taken out of production as large scale irrigation works have fallen into disrepair. More advanced machinery cannot be used on the small individual plots.

Deng applied similar market reforms to industry, opening up China to trade and foreign investment and encouraging private business.

The results have been as-

tonishing. For over a decade now China has each year seen some of the world's fastest economic growth rates. Huge new cities like Shenzhen in the south have been conjured up out of nothing.

Industrial output has grown more than fourfold since 1979.

This year China overtook Japan to become the world's biggest steel producer.

Living standards for many people in China have increased. They can buy goods their parents could only have dreamed about. Many people eat better than ever before. Beef consumption jumped by 40 percent in 1993-4 alone.

But this is only one side of the picture. The other is the full anarchy, madness and instability of capitalism.

Rapid but chaotic industrial growth has not been matched by development in transport, power supplies and raw materials supplies.

The last 15 years have been marked by constant and chaotic lurches from boom and soaring inflation



to savage austerity plans and waves of bankruptcies.

Some 150 million people have migrated from the countryside, where most Chinese still live, in search of work in the cities.

Many sleep rough and live in poverty in the streets.

Those who do find work often work in the most barbaric conditions.

The US bosses' paper *The Wall Street Journal* talks of China's "wild, frontier capitalism" which has "provided tremendous opportunity for some and a new breed of misery for others."

"Working conditions in

some areas resemble those once described in 19th century Britain, where Marx proclaimed social revolution."

Under Mao those at the top lived in luxury while the mass of people struggled to survive. Deng's market reforms have pushed that social inequality to new heights.

There are now well over a million millionaires in China, and a wealthy middle class. Many of the richest "new capitalists" are former state bureaucrats, often the children or relatives of people at the top of the state machine.

Meanwhile over 300 million people, a quarter of the entire population, live below the official poverty line, eking out an existence on less than 60 cents a day.

## Poverty

A government study last year found that in 35 of the country's main cities real incomes had fallen for over 40 percent of all households.

China has one of the world's worst industrial injury records. The government itself admits that over 11,000 workers were killed at work in 1995.

Government repression is as savage as ever.

Thousands of people are executed each year. Dissent can be met with beatings and jail. Press and TV are strictly censored.

And when people did revolt, demanding greater democracy in the 1989 Tiananmen Square movement, Deng Xiaoping responded brutally, ordering the army in.

Hundreds were killed and many more arrested and jailed as Deng boasted "execution is an indispensable means of political education."

**Anger under the surface**

**MASSIVE TENSIONS** have opened up between the great coastal cities, which have seen the most development, and the much more backward interior.

The chaotic growth and social instability is constantly breaking out in unrest.

A senior government official, Ren Jianxin, warned last year: "Security problems are escalating enormously in rural areas." National minorities, who often live in the most underdeveloped regions within China, have also rebelled. Tibet is a con-

stant worry to China's rulers. Just a few weeks ago riots erupted in the western area of Xinjiang.

The regime executed hundreds to smash the protests by Muslim non-Chinese Uighurs.

## Unrest

In the cities workers' unrest has been simmering in recent years.

In 1993 the government admitted: "Strikes, slowdowns, collective appeal actions, demonstrations, parades and protests by workers numbered no less than

10,000 cases." For the first ten months of 1995 the government admitted the figure had gone up to 12,000 such protests.

Last year a Hong Kong boss returning from a visit to China's Heilongjiang province reported a demonstration of 100,000 workers parading in the streets shouting, "We need to live! We need to eat!" The world's rulers and Deng's successors fear such simmering unrest could erupt into wider revolt in the years ahead.

They have good reason to be worried.

## behind the headlines

# Sinn Fein court old rivals

THROUGHOUT most Catholic areas in Northern Ireland, Sinn Fein supporters are pressing for an election pact with the SDLP.

They argue that seven out of eighteen Westminster seats could fall to nationalists in the next British General Election.

Sinn Fein's proposals have, however, been firmly rebuffed by the SDLP leader John Hume. In an important article in the *Irish News*, Hume has denounced Sinn Fein and called on Catholics to return to his party if they want stability and respectability.

Even if there is no electoral pact, Sinn Fein's proposal is an indication of an important shift taking place in republican politics.

There is a deep irony about the proposal, which Hume has been quick to pick up on. Sinn Fein argues that it is vital for nationalists to win more seats at Westminster.

Yet the party also refuses to take its seats there, because of its policy of absentationism.

The policy of absentationism has nothing to do with a revolutionary approach to parliaments. Sinn Fein is more than willing to enter the Dail in the South and accepts that governments chosen there are legitimate. Its policy of absentationism is based on opposition to a British parliament.

In reality, this is blind and clumsy moralism. In the past, republicans used to argue that nationalists should make no demands on the British state for better social welfare or increased public spending lest this strengthen the British presence over Northern Ireland.

However reality soon caught up and they discovered you can make demands on an enemy without conceding their right to rule. Similarly, there should be no problem entering the British parliament.

*Bernadette McAliskey took her seat in Westminster in the 1970s. She displayed a greater understanding of the revolutionary use of parliaments, when she punched the Home Secretary in the face after the Bloody Sunday massacre, than was displayed in all the decades of Sinn Fein abstention.*

## Enemies

But there is a far deeper problem with the proposed pact that goes beyond the mere detail of electoral tactics. In the past, the SDLP were seen as the natural enemies of all republicans.

During the H Block crisis for example, republicans marched to the offices and houses of SDLP leaders and denounced them for not supporting the prisoners.

They claimed that the party sprang from a Catholic middle class that was more interested in advancing its own interests rather than the wider fight against oppression. They argued that Hume was a puppet of imperialism who's main concern was to win friends in the establishment throughout the world.

Today this has all

*'Pressing for an electoral pact with the SDLP is a frank admission that Sinn Fein has little to say to Protestant workers'*

changed. Sinn Fein has dropped all pretence of being a more radical social force and disagrees with the SDLP only on the use of armed struggle. This change has meant that an electoral pact has become possible.

A recent indication of Sinn Fein's effective embrace of SDLP positions on social policy came with the launch of their document, *Putting the People First*.

This marks a shift away from vague talk of democratic socialism to endorsing a 'social economy'. It advocates support for 'commercial viability' and sees community banking as the key to local enterprise development.

Among those invited to the launch of the new policy was George Quigley, the chairperson of the Ulster Bank!

Neither is John Hume denounced today for trying to win friends in the establishment. Instead Gerry Adams has managed to outdo his old rival by claiming that the US Ambassador is 'a wonderful friend of this country.'

## Admission

Pressing for an electoral pact with the SDLP is a frank admission that Sinn Fein has little to say to Protestant workers.

Increasingly, the party has become more strident in its view that all Protestants are active sectarians. At best, they hope that a de Klerk-type figure emerges from within Unionism.

Despair among the military wing of the organisation has also fed into deeper sectarian attitudes that sometimes just stop short of support for full conflict with the Protestant community.

Socialists need to stand out clearly against these developments. Lining up all the Catholics to vote for one right wing candidate and all the Protestants to vote for 'their' right winger will do nothing to advance the cause of any worker.

It assumes that a Catholic worker who gets £2 an hour has something in common with right wing business people such as Eddie McGrady or would benefit from their representation.

Anti-Protestant attitudes are reflected in the economic boycott campaign, which is supported by Sinn Fein. Tactics like this only help to solidify Unionism at a time when its leaders are worried about splintering and fragmentation.

—KEIRAN ALLEN

## AS TORIES PLAN SOCIAL SECURITY SACKINGS...

# NIPSA must call an all-out strike

## Union action can stop job cuts



Parents block the Shankill Road to save lollipop patrols

PROTESTS by parents have forced the Belfast Education and Library Board to cancel cuts school lollipop patrols.

Dozens of parents, supported by teachers, blocked the Shankill Road and staged a mass lobby of the board meeting which was due to vote on the cuts.

The Board backed down. But hundreds of teaching, classroom assistant and ancillary jobs in Northern Ireland are still under threat as the Tories force education boards to cut millions from their budgets.

The Belfast Board has said it will now target teaching jobs to find the £3 million in cuts. The Western Board is threatening to cut between 70 and 90 teaching jobs.

Other proposals are for increases in school meal prices and charging for school transport. The Tories are demanding £120 million in cuts, using the excuse of extra spending on the police after the rioting last summer and the resumption of IRA attacks.

The cuts come on top of a 28 per cent cut to Action for Community Employment (ACE) schemes which has devastated community organisations in recent weeks. The ACE programme provided money for unemployed people to work in community projects.

But, as workers in community centres in Protestant areas of Belfast point out the cuts are "a direct result of government tax cuts" to business and are really about "the government attempting to secure viability to join the Single European Currency."

The NASUW teachers union conference in Ballymena in late February passed a motion calling for industrial action to fight "any redundancies not related to falling class sizes".

The motion was passed unanimously, reflecting the anger among teachers. During the debate one teacher remarked that cutting education to spend more on the police "was more consistent with a police state."

The union is only planning to ballot members at individual schools affected by the cuts. This is a recipe for isolating action. Instead, unions with members affected by the cuts - NASUW, UNISON, INTO and AEEU - should make it clear that any cuts will be met by union-wide action.

## Bureaucracy

Instead of announcing such action, some union leaders have focussed on spending on administration in the Boards.

Uel Adair, head of AEEU engineering union launched an attack in last week's *Derry Journal* on spending on the Western Board head office in Omagh.

Yet Adair has consistently argued against a strategy of strike action against the cuts.

Attacks on the levels of administration should not be used as an alternative to real action. Determined union action could galvanise the huge opposition that exists to the cuts.

# Raw deal for clothing workers

SECTARIANISM weakens the working class, as shown by the new pay deal for textile workers agreed with the British Clothing Industries Association.

The 'improved' deal gives a 2.75 percent increase from the start of January with a further increase to bring the rate up to £125 per

week from July 1997. This means a hourly rate of one pound less than the £4.26 minimum wage to which the TUC is committed!

## Wrangling

The deal was described as satisfactory by the GMB union which represents most textile workers.

Negotiations on the

pay round were held as workers in a number of clothing factories were caught up in sectarian wrangling whipped up by local DUP bigots Gregory Campbell and Willy Hay.

As the bigots beat the Orange Drum from Harryville to Drumcree, it is small wonder that the North has the lowest wage rates of any region in these islands.

The Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA) are to ballot their members in the Social Security Agency (SSA) for industrial action 'short of strike action'.

This follows a walkout on 20 February by staff at the Paid Order unit of the SSA at Lisahally, Derry. The workers' action was in response to a letter telling them their jobs are to go when the Tories privatise the agency.

The workforce of over 200 have known for some time that their work is to go when the Tories introduce electronic cards instead of order books and giro cheques.

But they had been assured that they would be redeployed to other parts of the SSA.

One of the Lisahally workers told *Socialist Worker*, "The walkout was 100 percent solid. We had no option.

"As a result of the walkout the head of the SSA is coming to see us to explain the position. After that we will have a better idea of what to do next."

Walking out was the best response to the letters which were sent out without any consultation with the union.

The jobs are only the first to be axed in the privatisation bid. Management say it is possible that all SSA jobs in Northern Ireland could end up 'outsourced' by computerisation in England, Scotland and Wales.

Even if some of the jobs are kept in the North, pension rights will be lost and maternity leave and sick pay are unlikely to be retained. Although most jobs in the agency are already low paid, the private companies will try to cut wages further.

## Privatisation

NIPSA's leadership accepts privatisation as inevitable. The strategy it is following is one of co-operation.

Tragically, the private companies have already been into the SSA offices to size up the likely job cuts and potential profit making areas.

Because NIPSA insisted on its members cooperating

by GORETTI HORGAN

with the private companies, workers were forced to do interviews and explain their jobs to the people who want to sack them.

The letters received by workers in the Paid Order Unit proved this strategy to have been disastrous. If any members of the private companies set foot inside a SSA office, all NIPSA members should immediately walk out and refuse to co-operate.

The union leadership should back these walkouts but if they refuse the walkouts should go ahead anyway.

Paul Laughlin, a NIPSA rep on Derry Trades Council told *Socialist Worker*, "This is the most important challenge ever faced by NIPSA. Nothing less than immediate all out strike action is needed to defend these jobs."

## Waiting

The union leaders are hoping to drag out the action until the General Election.

But instead of waiting for Blair, NIPSA members in dole offices across the North need to start organising now for all out strike action.

They cannot now be threatened with the sack if they go on strike. They will lose their jobs anyway if privatisation goes through!

A determined fight against privatisation and JSA will bring a welcome sight to Northern Ireland: that of Protestant and Catholic workers forgetting what divides them and standing side by side in defence of their rights.

## PRIVATISATION WILL HIT CLAIMANTS

PRIVATISATION of the Social Security Agency will mean more hounding of unemployed people, single parents and people with disabilities.

People living on benefit are already being harassed under the Job Seekers Allowance (JSA).

The Tories introduced the JSA last October to pressurise people off the dole. Refusing any job offer, even if the wages are a pittance or the conditions unsafe, can lead to losing your benefit.

Privatising the dole of-

fices will bring the profit motive into the equation and intimidation of unemployed people is bound to increase.

Every unemployed person should support the dole workers in the fight to defend their jobs. SSA workers should include the fight against the JSA as part of their campaign against privatisation.

**NEW REPORT ON SUICIDE**

# Driven to despair

**FOR YEARS** suicide has been a taboo subject in Ireland. Until recently it was even regarded as a criminal offence.

The death of Aids activist Pat Tierney—who told a Sunday Tribune reporter of his plan to kill himself—threw a spotlight on the issue.

Last year in Ireland 383 people took their own lives—up from 347 in 1995. Suicide accounts for almost as many deaths as road accidents.

Most at risk are young males between the ages of 15 and 24. Since 1990, the rate of suicide among this group has increased by 253 per cent.

The number of attempted suicides among both sexes has also sharply increased.

A report in the Irish Medical Journal shows that the European suicide rate has been increasing for the past 15 years—most notably in Ireland. In fact, Ireland has the biggest youth suicide rate in Europe.

The report linked the rise in suicide cases with an increase in mental illness and 'socio-political factors'.

**This would suggest that the deepening economic crisis is driving more and more people to the point of despair.**

The report also revealed that the incidence of suicide is highest in communities where there is instability and deprivation.

Changes in family structures, violence and chronic drug and alcohol abuse were also blamed.

A counter study published last month—entitled 'Crisis'—puts the blame on the fall-off in Catholic religious practice.

This is nonsense. In the past the Church maintained a highly repressive atmosphere where sexuality was surrounded by guilt and shame.

If anything, the declining authority of the Bishops should help to reduce the rate of suicide.

## Shame

In fact, suicide itself was surrounded by guilt and shame—as was mental illness.

The Church would not allow suicide victims to be buried in consecrated ground.

The mentally ill were often either hidden from view in the family home, or sent off to institutions.

**The Church's condemnation of suicide may have been one of the reasons for the apparently lower incidence in the past, since many cases went unreported.**

But if the Church is losing its grip, why are suicide and mental illness on the increase in the nineties?

The reasons vary: the stress and loneliness of everyday life combine with feelings of isolation and alienation from society.

*In Portugal, during the Revolution of 1974, people who were in mental units for years suddenly became liberated in ways they had never imagined.*

The demands of a highly competitive school system and pressure at work are major factors.

The mental health of a society is a mirror image of that society.

## Depression

It is reckoned that 200,000 people suffer from depression which is killing more people than ever.

Psychiatric services are at breaking point.

Those most at risk of mental illness are unskilled manual workers.

They are six times more likely than their bosses to enter psychiatric units.

The reason behind this is the make up of capitalist production. Karl Marx described the relationship of workers to the means of production as one of alienation.

Workers have no control over what they produce.

They become like parts of a production line, constantly being told to speed up and always under threat of redundancy.

**The stress spills over into people's personal lives leading to domestic violence, alcoholism and depression.**

The opposite is shown when there is a social upheaval. Then psychiatric units empty and suicide rates go down.

In Portugal, during the Revolution of 1974, people who were in mental units for years suddenly became liberated in ways they had never imagined.

Revolution becomes like a 'festival of the oppressed'.

Workers are in control of their workplaces and are making all the day to day decisions which are usually left to politicians and bosses.

When the chains of capitalism are broken we can create a more caring society.

There would be a dramatic decrease in mental illness because the drudgery and alienation of capitalism would be broken.

by GINO KENNY

**AS FRANCE FRONT NATIONALE WIN**

# How can Le Pen's Nazis be stopped

**RIOTS AND street-fighting** broke out in the French town of Vitrolles, near Marseilles, as the Front Nationale (National Front) candidate, Catherine Megret, won the mayoral elections.

by CATHERINE CURRAN

Megret's victory gives the FN control of its fourth municipal council, after victories in Orange, Marignane and Toulon in the past few years. Last December the party's candidate in Dreux, an industrial town west of Paris, was only narrowly defeated.

Catherine Megret is the wife of Bruno Megret, second in command to Jean Marie Le Pen at the head of the Front Nationale.

Megret, like Le Pen, immediately used the electoral platform to push home his party's racist message.

Within hours of his wife's victory, Megret had taken up the rhetoric of Le Pen, underlining his support for Le Pen's infamous declaration on the fundamental "inequality of races".

He also reasserted the Front's plans for forcible repatriation of all immigrants, saying:

"If we want to send the Arabs and the Africans and the Asians back to where they came from, it is not because we hate them, it is because they pollute our national identity and take our jobs."

Media coverage of such statements, allows the FN to parade the idea that immigration, not unemployment, is the root cause of the crisis in France.

This allows them to promote a racist agenda that divides the working class into Jews and gentiles, Arabs and Christians, gays and straights, men and women. Such divisions serve to undermine the solidarity that exists between all these groups as workers.

## Camps

The Front Nationale's programme for the 'cleansing and regeneration' of French society includes:

■ Compulsory Aids testing and the isolation of HIV-positive patients in what would amount to concentration camps. The FN is explicitly anti-gay;

■ Returning women to the home. This means attacking the rights gained by women, including contraception and abortion.

The FN has close links with the anti-abortion group 'SOS tout petits', which has been involved in bombing abortion clinics.

Le Pen has told French women, "the fruit of your womb belongs to the nation";

■ Ethnic cleansing of all immigrants. This echoes the programme of the pro-Nazi Vichy regime of 1941. Le Pen constantly reminds his audiences of the 'heroic French' who went to fight 'Bolshevism' in World War Two.

Le Pen has also reasserted his claim that the Holocaust was a "detail of history".

## The price of Labour's betrayal

**THE FRONT Nationale** was launched in 1972 by the main French Fascist organisation Ordre Nouveau (New Order).

Their strategy was to win elections on the basis of a 'moderate' front which would give a respectable face to fascist ideas. Racist propaganda would give the party a wider audience, from which party members could be recruited.

The leaders of Ordre Nouveau admitted that the strategy depended on them not being seen as the main force behind the Front Nationale.

But the heads of the FN at the time were in fact leading members of Ordre. They included Pierre Bosquet, a former Waffen SS member; Francois Brigneau, formerly of the Rassemblement National Populaire, the 1930s fascist organisation; and Alain Robert, founder of the Neo-Nazi organisation GUD.

Until the 1980s the FN was a relative failure, dogged by internal splits and marginalisation at the polls.

It was the crisis of 1982-83 that gave the party its first taste of success, providing the ground on which it would prosper in the 1980s and 1990s.

In 1981, Francois Mitterrand led his Socialist Party (France's Labour Party) to victory in the general election. His government of Socialists, with Communist Party support, promised better conditions for workers and genuine social change.

People looked forward to a secure future under the Socialists. Within a few years these promises lay in tatters, as Mitterrand bowed to the pressures of big business and imposed a series of austerity measures.

This paved the way for years of attacks on the living standards of workers, and disillusionment with the Socialist Party grew apace.

Even worse, the local councillors and national representatives of the Socialist Party and Communist Party began to use racist arguments to justify their attacks on workers.

Pierre Mauroy, Prime Minister in 1982, accused striking Citroen workers, many of them Arabs, of being ma-

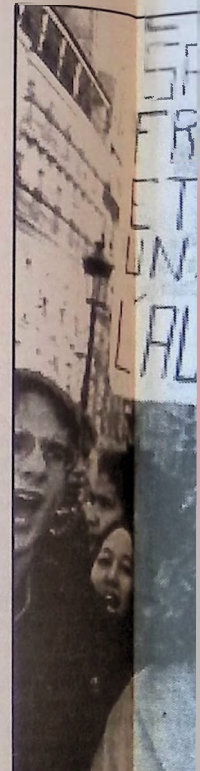
nipulated by the Ayatollahs. Former Interior Minister Gaston Deferre campaigned in Marseilles with the promise that the Left would control immigration much more rigorously than the Tories had done.

## Failure

At this point the FN began to gain from the failure of the Socialists and won significant votes in both municipal and general elections.

In the European Elections of 1984, the FN garnered more than two million votes.

In the 1995 Presidential election, Le Pen won 15 percent of the vote.



Huge protests in F

# FASCISTS

**THE ELECTORAL success** of the Front Nationale paves the way for its murderous attacks on Arabs and foreigners.

In 1995, at least seven people were murdered in racist attacks carried out by FN supporters. On May Day 1995, a homeless Moroccan youth was thrown into the Seine and drowned by FN thugs

returning from a rally. There have been similar Marseilles and Le Havre, in young Arab shot in the b skinheads who were putting posters. Such attacks add to the of intimidation and terror in migrants are forced to live underpins the increasing str and racism.

# Struggle b

**BY ACTING** decisively the left in France could even now stop the Front Nationale in its tracks.

But they must recognise that the FN cannot be beaten by electoral manoeuvres or deals with the right. This is the strategy of the Front Republicain, in which Socialists and Tories have electoral pacts to keep the FN out

Electoral pacts are clearly a failure. They amount to Socialist candidates telling their supporters to vote Tory to prevent the FN candidate winning an election.

In fact, telling people to

vote Tory simply adds to the demoralisation on the left. Workers need a clear alternative to the Tories—attacks—the mass unemployment, privatisation and attacks on social security which help the nazis to grow.

## Anger

The anger against the government, which erupted in the massive strikes of September 1995, needs to be built on. Struggles have been going up ever since the strike—in tram

## IN ANOTHER LOCAL POLL...

# Le Pen's Stopped?



Protests in France show the alternative to Le Pen (top).

## TS MUST BE EXPOSED

...from a rally... have been similar murders in... and Le Pen, including one Arab shot in the back by FN... who were putting up racist... to the atmosphere... terror in which im... are forced to live. The terror... increasing state violence... ism.

The FN has succeeded in pulling official politics even further to the right, with all the mainstream parties now pandering to its racist ideology.

### Hard Core

The Front Nationale, in its origins and programme, is clearly fascist. Beneath a cloak of respectability there lies a hard core of nazism which they have always

tried to hide. But most of the French left fails to target the FN as fascists. The Socialist Party argue that Le Pen must be accorded democratic rights and freedom of expression. But, by allowing the FN media air-time and electoral platforms, the left is digging its own grave. When fascists come to power they destroy all workers' organisations, including Labour

parties. Even Lutte Ouvriere, a group which claims to be revolutionary, refuses to mobilise against Le Pen and even claims that Islam is a bigger threat than fascism! The FN must be exposed as Nazis — their survival and growth depends on the cloak of respectability and the shield of democracy. To this end, they have successfully prosecuted a number of the liberal French newspapers—*Le Monde*, *Liberation*, *Le Canard Enchaîné*—who have called them "extreme" or "far-right".

### Reply

In keeping with the press laws, they have been accorded the "right to reply" in these newspapers. In this way they gain more respectability while further propagating their racist ideology. The legitimacy which they gain allows them to go further and further; in Toulon, where the NF controls the municipal council, the anti-FN rap group Nique Ta Mere (NTM) was first censored and then sentenced to three months in jail for an anti-police song. Now the director of Theatre at Chateauballon in the suburbs of Toulon has been sacked for his opposition to the Front and its cultural policies. One Jewish writer has had his work banned. But the NF is still not confident enough to openly declare itself a fascist party.

## Le brings hope...

...public sector and education. While 28 percent of the population agree with some of Le Pen's ideas, support for striking workers, such as the lorry drivers last Christmas, runs far higher than that. Support for workers who fight back can be found even among those who vote FN. Building a strong fightback based on opposition to the ruthless free-marketizing of premier Chirac would provide a real hope to those who are now attracted by Le Pen. Where workers have mobilised on a mass scale, the FN has been completely

marginalised. At the same time, the left needs to mobilise against the Front. The fightback of the last two years means that the possibilities for doing so are greater than ever.

### Activists

Trade union militants and workplace activists need to campaign actively against the front. This means explicitly targeting them as Nazis. People are ready to march against Le Pen, as the recent 25,000 strong demo in Grenoble shows. Pickets

should be placed on all FN meetings, while their parades should be met with angry counter demonstrations. The racism of the government, which panders to the FN, must be confronted also. Artists and film-makers have shown the way with their call for defiance of the latest round of racist legislation — the Dehne laws — which requires all foreign visitors to be registered at the local police station. Only by challenging racist ideology can the working class win the fight against fascism.

## What do socialists say?

### Will socialism make us dull?

**SOCIALISTS want everyone to be equal, but that will just drag us all down to the same level. Everybody and everything will be the same grey, mediocre and boring.**

In terms of living standards and conditions of life, socialism will mean a levelling down only for the tiny minority who currently prosper by the exploitation of the majority. For the majority it will mean levelling up. In particular it will mean that masses of people are lifted out of the conditions of poverty, unemployment and malnutrition which degrade and crush people and prevent them from realising their individual potential.

Like many of the standard objections to socialism ("You can't change human nature", "There will always be leaders:" etc) this has been repeated so often that it has come to sound like common sense. In fact it is a classic piece of capitalist "ideology" the system of ideas developed by the capitalist class over centuries which sees the world from the standpoint of that class and which serves to justify its domination of society.

Clearly they will have many things in common, but are they all the same? Not at all. What is more, a group of working class people show just as much variety and individuality as a group of stockbrokers, bankers or industrialists.

The idea that equality will produce mediocrity is typically capitalist (even though it is often repeated by workers) because it looks at the whole question from the top down, from the point of view of the privileged few.

However, the fundamental flaw in this anti-socialist argument is that it completely misrepresents the kind of equality that socialism stands for. Socialism is first and foremost concerned with people's relationship to the means of production and to their work.

As a consequence it fails to notice that if privilege and inequality are necessary for individuality and achievement then capitalism, by its very nature, condemns the large majority of people to uniform failure.

At present the means of production are owned and controlled by a tiny minority—the capitalists. If at work the average person ceases to be an appendage to the machine or a mere cog in the wheels of bureaucracy and becomes a conscious participant in the democratic control and planning of industry and society, will that reduce them to mediocrity?

### Controllers

Capitalism ensures that most people do boring jobs for roughly the same low pay and live in the same grey, miserable conditions.

This minority apart, everyone else in society is equal in their relationship to the means of production in that they equally do not own or control them in any way and are therefore equally wage slaves. The aim of socialism is to turn this non-owning majority into the collective owners and controllers of the productive process.

If individuality is dependent on inequality, what individuality is there for workers on the production line or for people living in tower blocks?

In so far as ownership of the means of production and control over one's own work are necessary for freedom, self expression and the development of the personality, socialism will mean an enormous increase in all these things for the vast majority.

— JOHN MOLYNEUX

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## EIGHTY YEARS SINCE THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION

# How Russia's workers toppled the Tsar



■ The Tsar and his family (above) and workers on the march in 1917 (left)

Eighty years ago the workers of Russia rose up and overthrew the hated Tsar. The February Revolution (March in our calendar) set in train the movement that brought workers' power in Russia in October 1917. CONOR KOSTICK tells the story.



International Women's Day 1917 was the opportunity for thousands of working class Russian women to take to the streets of Petrograd, angry at the grim conditions they faced.

Queues for bread were taking hours and inflation was wearing down living standards.

Against the advice of even the most radical revolutionary parties—concerned at the possibility of repression—women textile workers struck to swell the marches.

They sent delegates to the metal workers, to ask them to join in. Soon tens of thousands of workers were on strike and marching through the city.

## Credibility

At first the authorities thought the demonstrations were not too serious—these sort of protests had been seen before. But this time the mood of the masses was determined.

By 1917 the Tsar and the ruling circles of Russia had lost all credibility with the population. The backwardness of Russian

society was demonstrated daily in a war which devoured lives and resources.

Faced with the prospect of defeat and ruin the Tsar and Tsarina had become increasingly vicious. At the same time they grasped at straws, such as the mystical consolation offered by Rasputin, a Siberian peasant.

Even the most loyal members of the aristocracy saw the need to modernise. But lacking the nerve to confront the Tsar a small clique of nobles had killed Rasputin.

It was to no avail—the whole affair simply exposed the divisions at the top and

increased the contempt of workers for the aristocracy.

So when, ten weeks later, the women workers began their mass strike, the call was taken up enthusiastically and resolutely.

On the second day of the strike (24 February by the old Russian calendar) the numbers involved doubled.

Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* captured the mood:

"The workers come to the factories in the morning; instead of going to work they hold meetings; then begin processions toward the centre. New districts and new groups of the population are drawn into the movement."

"The slogan 'Bread!' is crowded out or obscured by louder slogans: 'Down with autocracy!' 'Down with the war!'"

In attempting to halt the demonstrations General Khabalov deployed police and Cossacks. But while the police were as vicious as ever and attacked the crowds, the Cossacks remained neutral. They too were discontented with the old regime. The rumour began to circulate that "the Cossacks promise not to shoot".

"Toward the police the crowds showed ferocious hatred."

## Routed

"They routed the mounted police with whistles, stones, and pieces of ice. In a totally different way the workers approached the soldiers."

"Around barracks, sentinels, patrols and lines of soldiers, stood groups of working men and women exchanging friendly words with the army men."

The next day, 25 February, the strike spread further and now involved 240,000 workers. Again workers approached soldiers:

"A great role is played by women workers in the relation between workers and soldiers. They go up to the cordons more boldly than men, take hold of the rifles,

with the capitalists was necessary. The Russian political representatives of big business were pleasantly surprised. Although they had no intention of making a radical revolution they agreed to form a Provisional Government. As one of them said at the time:

"If we don't take power, others will take it, those who have already elected some sort of scoundrels in the factories."

So the upper classes put on their red badges and with fake smiles tried to reconstruct their state.

The outcome of the February revolution was a situation of dual power. The Provisional Government intended to continue the war, to continue making profits for business and to limit the changes in Russia as much as possible.

The soviet leaders gave the government authority and power which it would have otherwise lacked. But the soviet rank and file, the millions of workers and soldiers who elected delegates, were impatient for real change and peace.

## Smashing

This was an unstable state of affairs that was either going to result in the smashing of the soviet system by the old order, or a completed revolution which would put all power in the hands of the soviets.

To achieve the February revolution workers needed courage and militancy. But to go on to create a socialist society, a political debate had to be won inside the working class against the ideas of the compromisers. And for that Lenin and the Bolshevik party were required.

# VICTORY NOT SECURE

THE insurrection had triumphed. But to whom did it hand over power?

The main instrument for consolidating the revolution was the workers' Soviet.

Workers did not need much prompting to recreate the organisation they had first devised in 1905 to meet the needs of a general strike. The Petrograd workers' council very quickly invited the garrison to send representatives to participate in the soviet. "From the moment of its formation the Soviet, in the person of its Executive Committee, begins to function as a sovereign."

"It elects a temporary food commission .... In order to remove financial resources from the hands of the officials of the old power, the Soviet decides to occupy the

State Bank, the Treasury, the Mint and the Printing Office with a revolutionary guard.

"The tasks and functions of the Soviet grow unceasingly under pressure from the masses. The revolution finds here its indubitable centre."

There is no doubt that workers and soldiers could have immediately taken over the running of Russia.

## Lagged

But despite the powerful revolutionary actions of the masses, their political ideas lagged behind.

All varieties of socialist and radical delegates—equivalent to our Labour Party, Democratic Left and Socialist Party—were sent to the soviet. Only a tiny number of them believed in Soviet rule.

The vast majority thought compromise



## newspaper

# Never in a month of Sundays

**MEDIA BARON Tony O'Reilly has handed the Sunday Independent newspaper over to a new style of right wing journalism.**

The paper is now dominated by gossip columnists and opinionated hacks.

Everything is seen through the rosy coloured glasses of the 'chattering classes'. All this is enough to put you off your Sunday dinner.

For starters we have the 'gossip queen', Terry Keane. Her column is full of titbits about the movers and shakers among the idle rich.

'Who is buying that lovely £2 million property in Dalkey? Why it is none other than the boss's son Tony Junior!' The 'Keane edge' provides juicy gossip for the socialites spending their Sunday afternoons down at the K Club.

For the second course we have free thinking Jonathan Philbin Bowman. His brand of journalism is straight from the gutter.

## Pompous

This little pompous clown tells us that May Day as a workers' holiday is a complete waste of time.

He even attacked the Dunnes' Stores strikers, asking why it was that he should pay more for his groceries just to give a few 'shop girls' some extra 'pin money'.

For the main course we have a generous serving of the free marketeer Shane Ross.

Ross uses his platform to gossip about 'who is doing what' with their stocks and shares. When Packard workers were fighting for their jobs, Ross said the bosses should close the plant.

We then have the multi-talented Michael McDowell, who not only writes for the Sunday Indo but is also a barrister and a TD for the Progressive Democrats.

Despite having three well-paid jobs, this Thatcherite spends his time attacking people who are lucky enough to have just one job. Every Sunday, McDowell preaches the glories of the free market.

For the last few mouthfuls we have Conor Cruise O'Brien, the new revisionist and prophet of Civil War Two. His apocalyptic vision is of full scale war breaking out in the North in the near future.

Eilis O'Hanlon poses as the authentic voice of West Belfast—'I'm a Northern Catholic and I'm not oppressed', is her constant message.

O'Hanlon's full time job is to demonise the IRA as the cause of the breakdown of the ceasefire.

She manages to demonise all working class

**Everything is seen through the rosy coloured glasses of the 'chattering classes'. All this is enough to put you off your Sunday dinner.**

Catholics as well.

O'Hanlon claimed that the Bogside residents had no grounds to object to the Apprentice Boys marching on the walls of Derry.

'The nearest houses are two hundred yards from the wall', she asserted in one piece last summer -- anyone who has ever been to the Bogside knows this is nonsense.

The Indo's brand of right wing journalism has also found its way into the 'quality' papers.

Mary Ellen Synon is back with the Sunday Business Post. Her column disappeared for a while after her racist diatribe describing Travellers as 'roaming beasts'.

Synon found a temporary home with the Indo, who obviously had no qualms about her rabid views.

Irish Times readers are regularly treated to the towering intellect of Kevin Myers. This former student radical has defended free speech for Nazis and recently declared that men were 'more creative' than women.

The new brand of right wing columnist, in the Indo and elsewhere, rarely back up their forceful opinions with hard facts.

## Attitudes

Their writing is inferior to genuine investigative journalists like Veronica Guerin. Although she supported many of the right wing attitudes of the Independent, Guerin at least tried to investigate and expose the contradictions in society.

The columnists of the new right claim that they are bravely standing up for 'common sense' against the tyranny of 'political correctness'.

But their real aim is to give new respectability to racism, sexism and union-bashing.

The Indo hacks play a role once reserved for priests: they give us a dose of moralism every Sunday to keep us in submission.

But at least the clergy get out of bed to give their sermons!

—DAVE COLLINS

## film

Shine reviewed by Melissa Halpin

# A light in the darkness

## music

## From the Dandelion to Disco heaven

**TWENTY years on, U2 have certainly come a long way from their humble beginnings in Dublin's Dandelion Market.**

With their ninth album now out the band is said to be worth £300 million.

The release of their latest single, 'Discotheque', saw their record company shipping out their largest ever consignment of 300,000 records.

The band's success is of major importance to the music industry.

## Missing

The announcement that their album was not to be released till March, thus missing the Xmas sales, resulted in a fall in Polygram Records' share prices.

These days, whether investing in hotels in Dublin's city centre or hanging out with the world's top super-mod-



U2 conquer America

els, U2 have firmly established themselves among the richest people in the country.

Their 'Joshua Tree' album cast them onto the world stage in 1987 and all of a sudden they were seen to represent a unique brand of Irishness.

It is hard though to see what exactly that meant. They owe a lot more to influences from outside of Ireland—punk in their early years, gospel in the late 80's with 'Rattle and Hum' and most recently dance music.

There is nothing particularly Irish about them at all. They are just an incredibly successful rock band and you either like them or you don't.

In the past they have spoken out on various issues -- from support for Amnesty's Conspiracy of Hope tour to opposition to Sellafield.

But now it seems they are happy with being rock stars and more than comfortable with the life style that goes with it.

—Róisín Cronin

**WHEN YOU leave the cinema after seeing Shine you are filled with a wonderful feeling of the warmth and generosity of humankind.**

The film is based on the true story of David Helfgott, a child prodigy, who grew up in a Jewish immigrant family in Australia.

David's father, traumatised and alienated by the effects of the Holocaust, refuses to let his children lead a normal life.

Through his fear and mistrust of society he pushes David into performance and music, with coming first being the only valid reward.

## Talented

At the same time he does not want to let his talented son leave the family to take up scholarships in America or England.

David shows a desire to please his father but also a remarkable persistence—the first time we see him he is valiantly playing a piano that is moving across a sloping stage.

David's love for music becomes confused with his need to live up to his father's expectations of him.

## Insisted

His only real perspective of how to live a musical life is through the competitive world that his father has insisted he take part in.

But the stress and strain of that world drive him literally crazy.

The character of

David is someone that the viewer can really feel for and you fear that society will crush him. But the film does not let you down.

When David cuts himself off from a life of daily competition he finally finds a way to reap the true rewards of his talent and through that he can once again enter a society that does not base itself on constant judgement.

He can now turn around and touch and feel the pleasure that he has both given and received.

Shine is a film that rejects the whole idea of competition. It shows us how talent—in this case David's musical genius—is only valuable when it is shared.

## Survive

The effects of the Holocaust on David's father left him with the mistaken belief that the only way to survive was for each of us to fight our own corner: as if you can beat a system by winning on its terms.

David, on the other hand, proves that despite the disastrous effects of this system on his sanity, real satisfaction and fulfillment come about by making true contact in life.

You feel sympathy for Both David and his father as victims of a cruel system and are enthused by Davids ability to win out.

## book

# Memoirs of a failed Fianna Failer

**FROM 1932 to 1973, the Fianna Fail party ran the Republic of Ireland with the exception of two brief interludes.**

Yet the historical record on the party's activities is pretty sparse.

The memoirs of former Senator Joseph Connolly are an exception. Connolly is not a well known Fianna Fail figure but he played a fairly influential role in the party's inner circle in the 1930s.

His memoirs are interesting because they show the hollowness of Fianna Fail's early radicalism. Before it came to power in 1932, the party had a strategy of appealing to workers and small farmers.

De Valera even claimed that if Fianna Fail did not capture the support of these groups, there was a danger of Irish politics

splitting permanently on class lines.

Fianna Fail told the poor that Irish capitalism could be different to the nasty English industrial variety. There would be a de-centralisation of industry to eliminate emigration.

## Eliminate

Irish agriculture was to be transformed so that family farms would replace the ranchers.

Connolly was to the fore of this verbal radicalism. In one speech, he claimed that Ireland could avoid both communism and rampant capitalism and organise itself on the

lines of Christian social teachings.

Yet his memoirs reveal just how much of a failure this vision was. He writes that 'to say I am bitterly disappointed and disillusioned by what followed (Fianna Fail taking office) would be a gross understatement'.

It was clear that very little had changed. Ireland was still 'a prosperous ranch for the favoured few and we now agree with the landlord's scheme of plenty of bullocks and very few workers'.

During the Emergency, he noticed that while workers had to make sacrifices the 'traders reaped a rich harvest'. In brief, Irish capitalists behaved exactly like their counterparts elsewhere.

Irish republicans have



Joseph Connolly

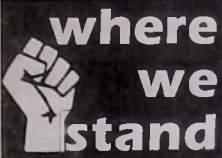
always sought schemes by which a more utopian version of capitalism can be established in Ireland.

The bitterness felt by Connolly should be noted by anyone who is attracted to the latest republican

schemes for an Irish 'social economy'.

*Memoirs of Senator Joseph Connolly* edited by J. Anthony Gaughan, Published by Irish Academic Press.

—Kieran Allen



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.

# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

## Working class women still denied equality **by GER TUOHY**

International Women's Day is celebrated on 8 March every year. It commemorates the fight by women textile workers at the beginning of the century for the right to vote and to join a trade union.

We are constantly told that such struggles are part of the past and that women have now been given equality. It is widely argued that we live in a 'post feminist' age where talk of women's liberation is outdated.

In Ireland, the huge increase in women TDs and women in business are seen as evidence that 'mná na hEireann' have finally 'made it'.

But while women TDs can vote to give themselves a hefty pay rise their presence has not made any difference to working class women.

The latest Labour force survey shows only 38.5 percent of women in the workforce compared to 69 percent of men.

### Progress

While this shows more women working outside the home than ever before, Ireland still lags well behind other European countries.

Almost a quarter of these women work in low paid part time jobs, mainly in shops, factories, hotels and textiles.

Despite equal pay legislation, women only earn on average 70 percent of what men earn.

The International Labour Organisation has said that the current rate of progress would leave women waiting 475 years for equal pay!

Marion works as a cleaner in a Dublin restaurant, famed for its 'atmosphere':

"I work four hours a day, five days a week, and get £2.50 an hour. We get a meal allowance of £15 a week, but £7 is docked from our pay packet whether we eat in the place or not.

"There is a huge turnover of staff because nobody can stick the place for long. When staff are leaving, their final pay packet always seems to be short—although the manager



■ Despite equal pay legislation, women only earn on average 70 percent of what men earn.

has a plausible excuse."

Three quarters of all part time jobs are filled by women, mainly because the lack of childcare facilities means they cannot work full time. They juggle their working hours around the times that their children are in school.

### Access

For many working class women with children it is not worth going out to work, because every penny would go on child minding costs. Only two percent of children have access to publicly funded childcare.

Trish is a single parent living in north inner Dublin:

"I can only work mornings because I've nobody I can rely on to collect Gary from school and look after him in the afternoons.

"If he's sick or on his mid-term break, I have to take time off work. His da was a great help in the past

but now he has a full time job, so he can't make halves of himself.

"If I take a day off work because of Gary, I either lose a day's pay or take it as holiday leave.

"I have often brought Gary to school in the morning knowing he's probably not well enough to go out.

"But because I've already taken so much time off work on his account, I don't want to get into trouble.

"Then I've spent a day at work waiting for a phone call from the school to get me to come and collect him.

"I'm sure my boss thinks I sometimes use Gary as an excuse for missing work, but what would he know—himself and his wife have a woman who minds their kids and does their housework."

The experiences of Trish and Marion, and not those of the few high-flying business women, are representative of most Irish women.

## WHY THE 'LIBERAL AGENDA' IS NOT COMPLETE

WE HAVE been told that the 'liberal agenda' is complete, now that we have legislation for divorce and abortion.

But access to these rights is still severely restricted. A couple will have to have lived apart for more than four years before they can even apply for a divorce.

Because working class women are less likely to be financially independent, they find it much harder to leave a relationship. Even then there is no guarantee that a divorce will be granted.

A judge can decide that one of the spouses or the children have not been properly 'provided for'. Obviously it is working class couples who will be most affected by this clause.

### Estimate

Lawyers estimate that a straightforward divorce will cost a minimum of £3,000 to £5,000—beyond the reach of many women. Those eligible for legal aid must go on a long waiting list.

This contrasts with the 'fast-track' divorces available in the High Court to wealthier couples.

When introducing the abortion legislation, the government fell over themselves to placate the pro-life bigots. Although one in ten pregnancies end in abortion, not one legal abortion has yet been carried out in an Irish hospital.

Women are forced to raise the money needed to travel to a clinic in Britain and they still travel in a cloak of shame and secrecy. The Irish Family Planning Association found that 70 percent of Irish women who had an abortion in Britain had difficulty rais-

ing the money needed. Abortion is clearly a class issue—rich women have none of these financial barriers.

Students' Unions are still prevented from providing basic information about abortion.

### Reforms

SPUC still have the confidence to pursue the legal case against the students to the Supreme Court. The pro-lifers hope to bankrupt the Students' Unions with legal costs of £400,000, and bring back a climate of fear and repression for Irish women.

The bigots are demanding another referendum on abortion, aiming to steal back the few reforms made since the X-case. The liberals in the Dail are more than willing to allow them a platform to launch their attacks.

The greatest gains in women's rights have never been made by piecemeal legislation or by women TDs. Real reforms have been achieved by workers taking to the streets fighting for things like equal pay, contraception and abortion rights.

The issues that formed the backdrop to International Women's day in its early years—equal pay, childcare and fertility control—still remain to be won by working class women today.

It is only working class women, fighting alongside working class men, who have the interest, the need and the power to make women's liberation a reality.

## News from SWP branches Urgent: Build the SWP!

SWP branches around the country are urgently trying to fill the vacuum of left wing politics in Ireland.

Crucial to that is recruitment to the party.

At a recent national meeting of the party most delegates from around the country reported progress but two branches in particular—Belfast and Tallaght—show how it should be done!

The **Belfast** branch has recruited 13 people since January.

Two new members have played a very big role in pushing the branch forward.

Both have pulled in some of their friends and

as a result the atmosphere of the branch has been completely transformed.

The **Tallaght** branch has taken the recruitment drive very seriously.

Since last November they have recruited 8 new members.

### Results

They did very systematic work around recruitment and by taking people seriously and getting back to new names quickly they have got results.

The student arm of the party, the Socialist Worker Student Society organised **Students for Socialism**.

This weekend of political

meetings and discussion attracted a large number of students from around the country to hear our ideas.

Six joined at this event. The looming election will provide us with an opportunity to put a real left wing alternative forward in a number of constituencies.

We will be making the point that real change comes from workers' action—not deputies in the Dail. Between now and then we will be visiting tens of thousands of homes with election material and **Socialist Worker**, building the SWP in the localities.

If you would like to join us or help out canvassing fill in the form on this page.

## SWP branch meetings

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

**CORK**  
Meets every Weds at 8pm in Dennehy's Pub, Cornmarket 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

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

### 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.....

# news & reports— politics; the unions

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

## CAROLANN DUGGAN RUNNING FOR GENERAL PRESIDENT SAYS...

# 'Make SIPTU a fighting union'

CAROLANN Duggan is contesting the General Presidency of SIPTU. It is the first time that a rank and file member has stood for the top position of Ireland's largest union.

The timing is not a coincidence. Carolann's branch—Waterford Branch—recorded a massive No vote in the recent Partnership 2000 ballot.

Overall, despite a campaign heavily weighted towards a Yes vote, 43 per cent of the membership voted No.

Carolann has been 12 years on the section committee of her factory Bausch and Lomb. She is a long standing member of the Socialist Workers Party

who fought against the water charges and for women's rights.

She thinks the ICTU was wrong to agree to the pernicious Industrial Relations Act and that unions should not be intimidated by it.

"Solidarity is the key to winning any strike. The union should remember its founding motto: *An injury to one is the concern of all*," she says.

### Argued

Carolann has consistently argued against the cosy partnership between unions and government. "The speed with which SIPTU came out and pushed the government's line to get the nurses to call off their strike, just shows



■ Carolann Duggan

where the union leadership's loyalties lies," she says.

She feels that top union officials earning £70,000 a year is a disgrace. If she is elected she will stay on her present wages and return the rest to the union strike fund.

"It is hardly surprising that the top of this union has failed to mention the need for a minimum wage—they are so removed from the harsh realities of low paid jobs.

### Larkin

"I pledge to fight for a minimum wage and support any group of workers fighting for it"

This year is the 50th anniversary of Jim Larkin's death. He stood for the things Carolann wants to see back in the union.

"We need a massive recruitment campaign to organise the many jobs that are contributing to Ireland's boom, particularly the microchip sector. Casualisation and union-

busting is not a thing of the past. SIPTU needs to be in the forefront of fighting it."

Already Carolann's candidacy has received a good response. One worker in Cadburys described her standing as the best thing to happen in a long time in SIPTU.

Carolann has no illusions that her standing in itself will change things: "We need a strong shop stewards movement across workplaces that can stand up to privatisation and attacks from management.

"The CIE workers showed that shop stewards can organise action themselves. If I get elected it will show that many shop stewards in SIPTU are prepared to take up the fight themselves."

# Nurses vote to accept deal

THE NURSES have been finally persuaded to vote for a deal to settle their grievances.

But their year long campaign showed what rank and file trade unionism could be like in the future.

It was only by repeatedly rejecting the advice of their union leaders that the nurses made gains. ■ The leaders of the INO, PNA, SIPTU and IMPACT advised their members to accept a £1,000 pay cuts for

young nurses who came out of training.

But the level of solidarity within the union meant that this shocking proposal was continually voted down.

■ The union leaders claimed that a demand for retirement at 55 was 'unrealistic.'

### Conditions

But the nurses made an important gain by winning 200 early retirement places each year—even though there

are miserable conditions attached.

■ Modest wage increases which breached Partnership 2,000 have also been won as the government was forced to retreat in front of militancy.

None of this would have happened without the pressure from below.

The tragedy is that much more could have been won if the fight had been kept up.

Socialist Worker produced thousands of Vote No leaflets be-

cause the nurses had the government on the run and could have inflicted a full scale defeat on them.

They key thing now is to organise to bring real changes to the unions.

### Shocked

Many nurses were shocked to discover that the INO had no strike fund.

Despite making contributions for years, the money seems to have been sunk into big offices for the union offi-

cial.

Nurses should put down resolutions in their branches demanding a proper strike fund and full accountability in union finances.

But grassroots organisation also needs to be strengthened.

When the INO was a conservative body, many of the union rep positions were held by matrons and more moderate figures.

The nurses who helped to drive the campaign forward should now start to contest these positions and start to wrest the union away from a weak leadership.

This way they will be in a position to reorganise swiftly if the commission set up to look at their grievances does not bring results.

# Binmen step up the action

THE REFUSE workers' strike in South County Dublin is now entering its third week. Last week the workers stepped up their action by having mass pickets outside the offices of the County Council in Tallaght.

Workers like those of Securicor, An Post and Ballygowen have shown their support by not passing the pickets.

The binmen are striking because the council broke it's agreement on the 17 point plan for new work practises. Point 7 states binmen should collect from a maximum of 1200 houses or 2 lorry loads. Now they have reneged on this, which means increased workloads of 2.5 to 3 loads.

### Campaign

Point 13 says that a redundancy package is available to all interested members,

but in fact it is only available to between one and nine members.

## Trinity College Student Union scabbing plan

THE Socialist Worker Student Society group in TCD recently obtained a Student Union document.

This recommends students take over from library staff in the event of more industrial action by library workers.

The recommendation included: "Active campaigning in the national media to cause maximum embarrassment to the instigators

Point 5 states when a bank holiday falls on a collection day, refuse shall be collected on the nearest or previous Saturday.

But over the Christmas this clause wasn't implemented leading up to a backlog, which they blamed on the binmen.

One worker told *Socialist Worker*,

"The council and the media, have waged a one sided campaign against us.

"We are determined to win this strike, because if we don't, the council will come looking for more, and eventually pri-

vatise our jobs"

The workers even had to put up with being taunted by the owner of Thorton recycling, saying he would take their jobs.

What is crucial now for the strike, is to spread the action to the water and parks department.

of the industrial action and other involved organisations who share responsibility."

The library staff are involved in negotiations with management to avoid further disruptions.

### Rights

Their intention is not to cause difficulty to the student body but rather main-

tain their rights as employees of Trinity College.

In attacking these rights the S.U. is not defending those of students.

Those primarily responsible for any further disruptions which may occur are the college management, the Department of Education and the Department of Finance.

Jenny from TCD SWSS said: "It is not the librarians

who forced the JCR out from the Front Arch. It is not SIPTU workers who are responsible for the accommodation crisis faced by many students each year.

"These all too familiar problems are caused by lack of funding from College authorities and the Government.

"To turn on staff for protesting against a similar lack of funding is backward and counter-productive."

# IRISH LIFE LOCKOUT... Turn sympathy into solidarity



OVER 500 locked out Irish Life workers and supporters rallied in Dublin last week as the dispute approaches a critical turning point.

Delegations from VHI, ICBS, Eagle Star and Standard insurance boosted the rally, which brought together locked out workers from around the country.

320 field workers, members of MSF, have been locked out by a management, determined to force a new plan through without negotiating with the Union.

Up until the rally, pickets have only been placed from 10am until 4pm allowing indoor staff to continue their work. But for the workers to force management into a retreat this will have to change.

### Demanded

Unfortunately many indoor staff have been listening to management propaganda.

For example management have made much of the issue that the locked out workers have demanded £40,000 to accept the plan.

This figure is not unreasonable. It is what managers got when they accepted a reorganisation in the company.

But it is far from being the main sticking point in the dispute.

Much more important is the fact that the jobs in the new plan are not guaranteed. Many locked out workers think the company intends to

force out older workers.

Also the field staff are supposed to buy their own computers and set up offices in their own homes. This intrusion adds to the long hours, the strain of dealing with recently bereaved and the threat of mugging which make the job vastly different to office work.

Indoor staff will suffer if the field staff lose. As one of them put it "do we really think the company is going to look after our interests? Not at all, if the union loses we're next.

"For example, we work 6.75 hour days, the company wants that up to 7.5, that'll be on their agenda next."

So the critical next step in the dispute will be the placing of serious pickets at the entrance to all Irish Life buildings and an appeal to the indoor staff not to cross them.

There were 100-150 indoor staff at the rally, which was warmly applauded. But there are 520 MSF members in the Dublin main office alone.

The Union needs to prepare the way with plenty of material explaining the case of the locked out workers.

Regardless of the arguments it will cause, the Irish Life workers have to step up the picketing, if as is almost certain, there is no substantial change to the companies position following a meeting at the LRC.

# Strike vote at TEAM Aer Lingus

GENERAL operatives in TEAM Aer Lingus have voted nine to one for strike action to force the company to honour a 1994 agreement.

The deal was struck in the Labour Court and followed a summer of industrial action at Dublin Airport. But the company has yet to implement three key areas of the agreement:

■ A clause to prevent the exploitation of temporary workers;  
■ The payment of outstanding productivity pay;  
■ Upskilling of general operatives' work.

TEAM workers may also strike to secure the 2.5 per cent increase they are due from the Programme for Competitiveness and Work (PCW).

As one TEAM worker said to *Socialist Worker*, "If they renege on the PCW what does it say about their commitment to Partnership 2000?"

The Labour Court showed its true colours by saying that the 2.5 per cent should only be partly paid. But TEAM workers—who already endured a pay freeze until July 1996—are demanding full payment.

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

Inside:

**How can Le Pen's Nazi's be stopped?**

-Pages 6 & 7

February 1917: How Russian workers toppled the Tsar -Page 8

# Harryville: The true face of bigotry

## Join the Demo against bigotry

**A NEW HARDLINE** sectarian organisation has emerged from Loyalist protests outside the Catholic church in Harryville, Ballymena.

Calling itself the County Antrim Orange Support Movement the group launched itself at a closed meeting of 500 people in Harryville. The meeting was addressed by a prominent leader of the hardline 'Spirit of Drumcree' group.

He told the meeting that it can expect Harryville to be another rallying point for Loyalists if Orange marches are opposed again this summer. The new group wants to see a re-run of Drumcree.

The Loyalist pickets have now been operating for 24 weeks. People going to mass have been subjected to verbal and sometimes physical abuse.

### Thugs

The pickets have escalated since January. The public meeting followed a parade by 11 Orange bands the previous Saturday. Their supporters chanted "We are the Billy boys, up to our necks in Fenian blood."

The Harryville protests have been organised by Loyalist thugs, including Billy

McCaughy. He is a member of Ian Paisley's DUP, who was convicted of murdering an innocent Catholic.

McCaughy admits that he was asked to organise the pickets by "a local politician."

### Support

Ballymena is the heartland of Ian Paisley's support.

Ian Paisley Jr was closely associated with the pickets in the early stages and Paisley himself supported the band parade.

Unionist politicians have been divided about how to deal with the Harryville protests.

The Unionist Party mayor of Ballymena and the head of the Orange Order, Robert Salter, publicly opposed the pickets because they knew that large numbers of Protes-



Bigots in Harryville

tants were appalled by them. But the pickets show the true face of Orangeism.

When Unionist politicians constantly warn of the threat to 'Protestant rights' it is little wonder that others put their violent rhetoric into practice.

Northern Ireland was set up as a 'Protestant state for a

Protestant people' and built on discrimination against Catholics. Orange parades are an attempt to return to the 'good old days' of Protestant

superiority.

The bigotry at Harryville is the logical outcome of years of state-sponsored hatred of Catholics.

## Orange lies about 'civil liberties'

THE LOYALISTS began the pickets after an Orange parade was blocked from going through the village of Dunloy.

The Loyalist pickets claim that Orange marches are about 'traditional culture' and 'civil liberties'. But Dunloy shows that Orange marches are about celebrating Protestant supremacy.

Dunloy is a village of 1,000 people, overwhelmingly Catholic.

There are eight Orange parades through Dunloy each year.

Each march causes massive disruption and harassment of villagers. One resident described how "the police would cordon off the village. They could be very heavy-handed. They made a young fellow returning from hospital in

a taxi get out and walk even though he was still seriously ill."

The Orange Order refuses to meet the residents, despite offers to compromise by limiting the number of parades.

A local councillor explained why they refuse to consider the offers. "They will be reluctant to accept them because the whole aim of the marches is to keep their feet at Catholic throats."

He goes on to explain why it is no accident that the Harryville protests are happening in Ian Paisley's stronghold of Ballymena. "It's election year and Paisley needs an issue to fight on in his own constituency."

It is exactly the same with Drumcree and every other Orange parade.

That is why every socialist should oppose Orange parades outright.

THE SIEGE of Harryville has gone on for nearly six months but there have been no mass mobilisation to oppose it.

Groups like Women Together have had the courage to organise locally against the bigots but far more needs to be done.

Now a new organisation **United Against Bigotry** is planning to organise buses from Derry and Belfast to oppose the siege. They have called a demonstration against bigotry for Saturday 15th March in Harryville.

**United against Bigotry** first appeared at the height of the marching season last year when it argued against Orange marches going through Catholic areas and also denounced attacks on the homes of Protestants in Derry.

In a statement, Colm Bryce of **United Against Bigotry** said,

"The situation in Harryville is extremely serious. The longer it goes on, the more the confidence of the bigots grow. They will try to heighten sectarianism to a fever pitch during the

marshing season. Unless we do something, it could make Drumcree look like a picnic.

"Now is the time for Protestants and Catholics to stand together against all forms of sectarianism. I reject that lie that all Protestants have a sneaking sympathy with Harryville or with Orange bigotry.

"Our organisation is totally opposed not only to the naked sectarianism of Harryville but also to the economic boycotts and constant wrangling over which community get grants or investment before 'the other side'.

"Ordinary Catholic and Protestants should be fighting together against poverty and the policies of the Tory government. I appeal to people, whatever their background to get to our Demonstration against Bigotry in Harryville."

Buses have been organised from Belfast and Derry to join Demonstration against Bigotry in Harryville. Delegations are also expected from trade unionists in Britain.

**DEMONSTRATE AGAINST BIGOTRY!**  
**Harryville, Saturday 15th March**  
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