

Socialist Worker

How the
NATO
bombing
has brought
disaster

**WAR
IN
EUROPE**



For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p Solidarity price £1

FULL STORY PAGES 6-7

Bombing means more horror

STOP THIS WAR NOW



Pictures the western media will not show: A victim of NATO's 'humanitarian' bombing

The NATO bombing campaign has been a humanitarian disaster. Within hours of the first bombs falling, Milosevic took his chance to push Kosovan civilians out the country.

According to some reports, 300,000 — or one sixth of the population — streamed across the border.

Yet the NATO generals who carefully prepared for their bombing missions did nothing to help the refugees.

Ten days after the bombing began, a reporter at the border town of Kukes noted that there were only two relief workers from the Catholic Relief Service present when ten thousand refugees came across. "They gave out boxes of biscuits to the refugees, many of whom had not eaten in days".

The NATO bombs have made life far worse for the Kosovans.

But the only time the US showed much concern was when three American soldiers were captured.

As news of the situation facing

refugees emerged, NATO switched their strategy and began bombing the centre of Belgrade. According to the *Observer* it helped to shore up the mood at Westminster which "was becoming despondent".

Reality

The pro-war press are hiding the reality of this new phase of the war. But it is already clear that NATO are using:

★ **Cluster bombs**, which increase civilian targets. The injuries and deaths

of Serb civilians have been barely reported.

★ **Depleted uranium bombs**, which leads to an increase in radioactivity. After these bombs were dropped on Iraq, cancer deaths from leukemia in young children increased dramatically.

The NATO generals want to bomb Serbia back to the Middle Ages. That is why they are destroying bridges, electricity stations and water reservoirs.

Socialist Worker appeals to its readers to join the anti-war movement and resist this modern brutality.

NATO OUT OF THE BALKANS

Flood Tribunal...Flood Tribunal...Flood Tribunal...

Roadstone cements FF links George Redmond was known as 'JR'

SOCIAL WELFARE minister Dermot Ahern has cast more light on Bertie Ahern's links to the Ray Burke rezoning scandal.

Dermot Ahern told the Flood Tribunal that Bertie (no relation) had met with Ray Burke and the builder Michael Bailey, who says he gave Burke between £30,000 and £80,000 for planning favours.

Bertie Ahern denies that this meeting took place even though

"sources close to the Taoiseach" confirm that he had one meeting with Bailey during June 1997.

Dermot Ahern's statement also says that Bailey had proposed that he and the builder Joseph

Murphy should pay £100,000 to tribunal witness James Gogarty to buy his silence.

What is Bertie hiding?

ANOTHER MAJOR company has been revealed as making a big donation to Fianna Fail.

The Roche family, founders of Cement Roadstone Holdings, donated £20,000 to Fianna Fail in 1997 through their investment company, Conor Holdings.

Family patriarch, Thomas C Roche, also paid £10,000 to former Dublin county manager George Redmond in 1989 as a "thank you" for advancing the West Link toll bridge project.

Roche has made huge profits through his holding in National Toll Roads. Motorists who face daily extortion at toll bridges will be happy to know their money is being put to such a good cause!

FINE GAEL councillor Jim Fay has spilled the beans on former Dublin county manager, George Redmond.

"Everybody knew George as JR, after JR Ewing in Dallas", Fay told lawyers for the Flood Tribunal into the planning scandal.

Fay has revealed that Redmond urged him to back the rezoning of land at Palmerstown to build a

dump. This was after "JR" had refused to sanction an extension to the dump at Dunsink, saying, "I have enough land to do me until the end of the century".

"bagman" and said, "George will never be caught".

Fay complained to Kennedy that a "constituent" had lost out over the refusal to extend Dunsink.

Redmond's self-confessed "bagman" then told the disgruntled "constituent" to put £5,000 in an envelope, as much of it in sterling and used notes as possible, "to join the club".

Pub

Fay said he met a publican named Kennedy in a Clondalkin pub in the mid-1980s. Kennedy told Fay he was George Redmond's

O'Donoghue's hypocrisy on refugees

WHILE FIANNA Fail are backing the NATO's bombing on Yugoslavia, the government has agreed to take only 1,000 Kosovan refugees, —the lowest amount of any European country.

At the same time John O'Donoghue's new Immigration Bill could result in Kosovan refugees being deported back to their deaths at the hands of Milosevic's thugs:

■ The Bill gives Justice Minister John O'Donoghue complete power to expel refugees.

■ Any non-national who has been charged with even a minor offence can be deported.

■ The Bill also gives wide powers to the Gardai to harass non-nationals whom they "suspect" of breaking deportation orders.

25 years on...

Who bombed Dublin?

NEW EVIDENCE has emerged about the involvement of the RUC and British intelligence in the 1974 Dublin and Monaghan Bombings which killed 33 people.

The detonation of the bombs in the centre of Dublin has always been seen as so expertly executed that "it had to be the work of professionals".

Attack

Documents have come to light which identifies the British intelligence officer who supplied the explosives, the UDR man who was involved in the attack and the RUC officer whose home was used to prepare the bombs.

One reason that the Garda have been reluctant to follow up inquiries into the affair is because it would disclose how some Garda detectives co-operated with a British intelligence officer who was closely involved with the bomb gang.

There are allegations that at least two British intelligence officers were brought covertly to Dublin immediately before the bombings by Garda officers.

Evidence

The Sunday Business Post has also revealed that after the bombing crucial forensic evidence was given to the RUC Special branch on orders from a high level in Dublin.

Later this evidence was passed onto the British military intelli-

gence man who was thought to have planned the attack!

Access

The then Minister for Justice, Paddy Cooney, who had access to all the files, has never commented on the situation publicly, as regards to who was responsible.

In 1973, a year before the Dublin Bombings, Socialist Workers' predecessor, The Worker, revealed a British inspired plan to destabilise Ireland.

Three Englishmen, brothers Keith and Kenneth Littlejohn and a business man Robert Stockman were arrested trying to rob the Grafton Street Allied Irish Bank.

The Littlejohn brothers who came to Ireland in 1970 claimed to have

met Lord Carrington, the Defence Minister, and Geoffrey Johnson Smith, the then Parliamentary Under Secretary for Defence.

They were then put in touch with two British

agents.

These agents gave the Littlejohn's instructions to carry out a terror campaign to push the Lynch government into action against the IRA.

The day after the

Dublin and Monaghan Bombings the Dail passed the Offences Against the State Amendment Act which allowed the state to detain suspects for seven days.



The scene of the 1974 Dublin bombing

The strange case of Philip Sheedy

IN MARCH 1996, Philip Sheedy, a middle class architect for South Dublin County Council sped onto the Glenview roundabout in Tallaght, drunk in his new sports car. The car took off "like a missile" according to witnesses and smashed into the roof of a family's car.

Ann Ryan was killed. Her husband, John, was so badly injured that he will never be able to work again.

Sheedy was sentenced to four years imprisonment but suddenly last November his appeal came before Judge Cyril Kelly.

Kelly suspended the remainder of Sheedy's sentence and he walked free having only served one year

This was strange for a number of reasons.

Firstly, Kelly was not his trial judge, who should have reviewed the case. Secondly both the DPP and the gardai only heard of the case by accident.

The DPP then challenged the ruling. Rather than fight the DPP ruling, Sheedy went voluntarily back to prison.

Why would someone who during and after sentencing fought so hard to stay out of prison claiming he was suicidal, voluntarily walk back in?

Suddenly

Kelly had a relatively undistinguished career until suddenly from nowhere in 1992 Albert Reynolds elevated him from junior counsel to Circuit Court judge.

He soon became known as "Maximum Cyril" because of the severity of his sentences. He was continually complaining to prison authorities about early releases of prisoners he sentenced.

Last year, he would not release the two building workers jailed for demanding direct employment until they apologised to court. But they refused.

Yet 12 days after "Maximum Cyril" released Sheedy in strange circumstances he was promoted to the High Court.

The Supreme Court Judge Hugh O'Flaherty has now been asked to make a statement about the affair. Strangely enough he just happens to be the godfather to one of Kelly's children. He also has close links to Fianna Fail and during the 1980s was the leading solicitor for SPUC.

O'Flaherty called hand-bag snatchers "a cancer on society". But later he cut the sentence of a paedophile priest from 6 years to 18 months.

The power of the bewigged gentlemen prevents Socialist Worker making further comment but our readers might like to draw their own conclusions from these strange events.

Nazi Haul



FRENCH NAZI leader Jean-Marie Le Pen was stopped in his car by police in Brussels last week.

Le Pen is a deputy in the European Parliament.

You might expect to find him driving round with a briefcase full of papers.

But in Le Pen's car the amazed officers discovered an arsenal of weapons.

The haul included a shotgun, dozens of cartridges, bullet-proof vests, retractable batons and teargas grenades. Incredibly, Le Pen's status as a Euro MP makes him immune from prosecution.

what we think

Kosovo: This is no humanitarian war

THE US is the driving force behind the war in the Balkans. Its main emissary to the region is Richard Holbrooke who claims that NATO is fighting a 'just war' for humanitarian reasons

Yet in 1975, Richard Holbrooke was the director of Pacific Affairs at the US State Department.

That was when Indonesia invaded East Timor and carried out a massacre. Instead of defending East Timor, Holbrooke and the US supplied the Suharto dictatorship the weapons it needed.

In the last two decades the US has carried out numerous military adventures from the invasion of Grenada and Panama in the mid 1980s to the recent bombing of Sudan and Iraq. Its motives have always been regional dominance and profit for US companies.

Different

Liberals like Fintan O'Toole who claim that this war is different, ignore the fact that the US does not have two sets of armed forces and intelligence agencies, one of which does barbaric things and one of which is committed only to benevolence and peace.

The same CIA chiefs, the same generals and top politicians are involved in all its policies.

The Clinton administration behind the bombing is the same Clinton administration that dances to the tune of Monsanto or Chiquita (formerly United Fruit) as it dictates trade policy to the Third World.

It is the same administration whose policies on debt mean, as Barton Briggs of the financiers Morgan Stanley put it, "200 million sullen Latin Americans sweating away in the hot sun for the next decade so that Citicorp can raise its dividend twice a year".

But many ask what is its motivation for this war. After all there is no oil as there was in Iraq.

One motivation is to show that NATO has finally replaced Russia as the dominant power in Eastern Europe. Just a week before the bombing began, three former Russian allies, Hungary,

Poland and Czechoslovakia joined NATO, bringing the military alliance right up to the border of its old Cold War enemy. NATO now wants to station another 30,000 of its troops in Kosovo.

The other motivation has to do with wider strategic interests.

Ever since the end of the Cold War, the US has been determined to show that it is the only superpower who can get its way in any disagreement with other states. But other states are not always willing to go along with its schemes.

The US has had repeated disputes with Western Europe - most recently over the bananas - and Japan.

The US strategy has been to pull these states into line by showing that it alone has the military power to act as the world policeman, imposing the common requirements of the big states on any smaller 'rogue' states that step out of line.

It did this admirably, from its point of view, in the 1991 Gulf War when it persuaded Japan and Europe to pay most of the war costs and then grabbed most of the contracts for rebuilding afterwards.

It had another success during the Croatian and Bosnian conflict in the mid nineties.

This conflict was ignited by Germany's recognition of Croatia but only the US was able to impose order by training the Croat army, arming the Bosnian Muslims and finally helping the Croats to ethnically cleanse 250,000 Serbs from the Krajina area.

The Kosovan war gives the US another opportunity to call the shots in the European Union backyard.

It reckons that European governments which rely on its military hardware will then be much less likely to



Protesting in Dublin against the war

complain over its policies on trade, debt, Middle East oil or anything else.

These factors - and not any concern for humanity - are behind this filthy and brutal war.

NO Partnership for Peace

BERTIE AHERN has used the war to move Ireland one step closer to NATO by announcing that Ireland is now ready to join the Partnership for Peace organisation.

This is an organisation for countries which are cooperating with NATO and are desiring to join it in future.

Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia which have just joined NATO were members of Partnership for Peace beforehand.

In the last general election, Fianna Fail promised a referendum if they changed their minds about joining PFP. But when it comes to backing the US line, election promises and democracy go out the window

UN: No solution

'Military action should have been organised by the UN and not NATO'. This is a common refrain from some in the anti-war movement.

But bombers with a UN insignia are no different to NATO. The devastation which was inflicted on Iraq for example, in 1991 was organised under the auspices of the UN.

UN sanctions have also been responsible for the death of 250,000

Iraqi civilians, according to the aid agency Oxfam.

The reality is that the UN only acts when there is agreement between the major colonial powers. It only moves then to enforce their collective interests.

Other decisions of the UN - such as its condemnation of Israel for occupying Southern Lebanon - are never acted on.

This is why looking to the UN is no alternative to opposing NATO intervention in the Balkans.

OPPOSE WAR — JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

PROTESTS against the NATO war are growing. A week after the bombing began, 250 marched from the Dail to the GPO in Dublin. 40 people also protested outside the US consulate in Belfast, and another 40 protested in Derry. Meetings have also been organised in Cork, Waterford, Tralee, Limerick and Galway. The SWP is to the fore in organising these protests. Now the party is embarking on major recruitment drive. It is advancing policies to break the dominant consensus.

■ **HOUSING:** The SWP campaigns for rent controls to stop landlords increasing rents at will, an emergency local authority house building programme and the nationalisation of building land.

■ **WORKERS RIGHTS:** The party wants a break the fake policy of social partnership. We support any group of workers who put in pay claims now to get their share of the Celtic Tiger.

■ **RACISM:** Socialists say that refugees are welcome. The real spongers are the corrupt politicians in Fianna Fail - not refugees.

■ **NORTHERN IRELAND:** All the main parties promote communal divisions between Catholics and Protestants. Socialists stand for working class unity which is forged in struggle.

If you oppose the war and want to get active in the socialist movement, fill in the form.

- I would like to join the Socialist Workers Party
- I would like to receive more information about the party

Name:

Address:

.....

Tel:

Return this form to a Socialist Worker seller or post to PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

Portadown:

Under siege from sectarianism

*Special report by
SIMON BASKETTER*

PORTADOWN is Northern Ireland's political slum. Forty-eight hours after the murder of Rosemary Nelson loyalists stood at the end of the Garvaghy Road and taunted the residents.

Graffiti appeared nearby saying: "For sale BMW, slightly bomb damaged".

A Catholic family living next to the Orange hall was forced out of their home. When the RUC came onto the scene, they joined in the taunts.

Loyalists stood on top of RUC landrovers and danced and jeered, one banging a lam-beg drum. When local residents gathered to object they were baton-charged by the RUC.

Abused

Since last July, over 150 Orange demonstrations have been held in Portadown. During this period, Catholic homes and businesses have been attacked, burned and bombed. Catholics have been assaulted, threatened and abused.

Four people have been murdered.

Sixteen Catholic families have been forced out of their homes in the last nine months. The most recent was after a Loyalist mob, including a

**The Drumcree protests are smaller than ever**

DUP councillor, attacked homes at the lower end of the Garvaghy Road. It took the RUC almost an hour to respond, while homes were attacked by loyalists throwing fireworks, ball-bearings and other missiles.

One Garvaghy resident told *Socialist Worker*: "Nobody goes into the town after 6pm. But even during the day people are hassled and shouted at, when all they are doing is their shopping. People now go as far as Newry to go shopping."

"Every Saturday loyalists assemble in the town centre to protest about Drumcree.

"I don't see why my children should be frightened to go into the town where they live.

"We are under siege."

A town built on bigotry

PORTADOWN is the heart of Northern Ireland's manufacturing base.

The population is 28,000 people, with about 6,000 Catholics. Despite the relative prosperity of the area, the Garvaghy Road has 72 percent of households on some sort of state benefits. Unemployment in the Catholic areas of Portadown is four times higher than that of the rest of the town.

Portadown has a long history of sectarianism. The Orange Order was founded just outside of the town in 1795 and within months 7,000 Catholics were

driven out of Armagh.

The first Orange march to Drumcree ended with two Catholics being murdered. Since 1969 ten Catholics have been murdered on Portadown's main street.

In the 1970s the army was used to clear the Catholic Obins Street to allow the UDA to escort the Orange March to Drumcree.

In 1996 and 1997, at least 2,500 members of the RUC and British Army were used to subjugate the local community.

In each of these years over two hundred people were injured on the Garvaghy Road alone.

Voices against the sectarians

"THE PLACE is a hole, and those idiots make it worse", is one Protestant school student's attitude to the orange protests.

"I know some people who go down to throw stones at the Garvaghy Road, but it's stupid. I'm more worried about where I'm going to work after the summer. All the politicians rant on but it doesn't mean anything, we're supposed to have peace but nobody seems to have noticed."

One GMB member in the town points out that: "Safeway has shut up and left, 300 jobs gone just like that, they blamed the Orange protests. A shopping centre has threatened to close. A lot of people see that as a consequence of the sectarianism in the town and are turning against the loyalists. They now have to ship in people from other towns."

Decline

Alan, a doctor in Portadown, also sees the decline of support for the loyalists, "The thing is that the protests are getting smaller and smaller, and to some extent that is why they are getting more vicious. The sectarianism in Portadown is a sign of the weakness of orangeism, not its strength.

"After the murder of Rosemary Nelson tensions heightened, which was the whole purpose of the murder, and there is always the possibility of things getting really bad. But most peo-

ple want to live with their neighbours. Unfortunately the only politics on offer is that of community. What we need is to offer an alternative."

Stewart, a supermarket worker, told *Socialist Worker*: "There is a man in my job who is in the Orange Order, but he doesn't think the march should go down the Garvaghy Road. There is a huge split but people aren't willing to speak out. It often seems that the majority voice of Protestants are the Loyalists, but it's not. In work it's really easy to make an argument that people shouldn't march down that road even though it's a majority Protestant workplace.

"There are some sectarians in my job who go down to the loyalist protests, but they don't speak up against me. And I think it's the same in a lot of workplaces. Overall that's where things are going to change - in the workplaces."

One T&GWU member agrees: "If you look at the factories in the town, the most sectarian are the ones with the weakest union organisation. For instance, Gaylor (a pharmaceutical company) is a vicious anti-union firm that has a rotten record of intimidation in the workplace - displaying of sectarian posters and the like.

"But Moy Park Chickens, which to be honest is a horrible employer with low wages, because of pretty good shop floor organisation is able to stop the sectarians making much noise in the job. If the peace process means anything it means workers fighting against sectarianism and for our rights."

Justice for Robert Hamill

THE WORST sectarian incident in Portadown was the murder of Robert Hamill on 8th May 1997 who was set upon by a crowd of loyalists in Portadown on 27th April.

RUC officers were present at the scene in a landrover, but did nothing to intervene. The RUC put out press releases immediately after the attack claiming that there had been a fight between rival factions and that the police themselves had come under attack.

In fact, while the crowd shouted "Die, you Fenian bastard!", the RUC jeep was about 20 feet away. The RUC did not make any move to get out of the landrover.

Robert Hamill didn't receive medical treatment soon enough. Had the RUC intervened in order to pro-

**Robert Hamill**

tect him, he might be alive today. The RUC officers who were in the jeep, Constable Andrew Neill, and Reserve Constables Atkinson, Cornett and Sharpe, have not been suspended.

There were several security cameras at the scene, but the RUC have refused to release any videos. Eyewitnesses who were interviewed by the RUC,

report that they were treated more like suspects than witnesses.

Flowers put by the family at the spot where Robert was attacked have been repeatedly torn down. Flowers were once placed on the spot where the attack happened with a card saying, "For the six heroes". When a man stood outside of the Hamill's house shouting insults, the RUC were called, and they crawled past the house in their vehicle and did nothing. Diane Hamill received a telephone call from a woman police officer, who explained that they "lost" the man.

Allister Hanvey, Wayne Lunt, Paul Hobson, Dean Forbes, Stacey Bridgett and Rory Robinson were all arrested for Robert's murder. Hobson, Lunt and Bridgett, asked to be housed in the LVF wing at the Maze prison. At the end of last month the last of the

six people charged with Robert's murder was released due to insufficient evidence.

According to Robert's sister Diane, "The judgement highlights the absolute need for an independent inquiry. The RUC are in no position to investigate the case. You can see from the investigation into Rosemary Nelson's murder that the RUC can't investigate themselves. And the Stephen Lawrence case shows that the bringing in of outside British police is totally inadequate, it's merely damage limitation."

"We'll keep campaigning and highlighting the case," continued Diane. "We intend to get to the truth, We have to hold the RUC accountable for what they failed to do that night."

Send Donations to: Robert Hamill Justice Fund, Bank Of Ireland, Market Street, Portadown.

**Eamonn
McCann**

Fairness at work?

A SECURITY GUARD, the bread-winner for a family of six, called at a Citizens' Advice Bureau in the North last November to find out whether he'd still be entitled to Family Credit if he took on extra hours over Xmas. He'd been working an average of around 70 hours a week, at £2.50 an hour.

That's £175, top line, for 10 hours a day, seven days a week. Except that he wasn't getting even that. The CAB adviser noticed while totting up the figures that the man was being systematically short-changed in take-home pay.

The case - far from unique - is cited in a CAB report, "Fairness at Work?", issued last month to coincide with the introduction of the Minimum Wage and the incorporation into Northern law of the EU Working Time Directive.

Defrauded

Based on data gathered in November last year from 22 CAB bureaux around the North, the Report detailed how the low-paid are also commonly defrauded and deprived of statutory rights.

A man working full-time for £130 take-home was sacked when he asked for written terms and conditions. Workers who took time off due to illness were sacked or threatened with the sack. Payslips were not provided, money was arbitrarily withheld, National Insurance contributions were deducted but not passed on.

The CAB's general conclusion is that, despite "pro-worker" EU directives, the promised "peace dividend", and a New Labour government, "Unfortunately...very little has changed for workers over the last three years".

The likelihood is that the Minimum Wage, too, will make little difference if workers aren't organised to fight for it, and to go further.

£3.60 an hour is a niggardly figure, anyway, amounting to £144 before stoppages for a 40-hour week. The £3 an hour rate for 18-to-21-year-olds, even when doing the same work as adults, simply legitimises discrimination against younger workers.

It is a measure of how low pay levels are in the North that almost 70,000 workers would benefit from these rates. And it is a measure of how far short of equality women remain that two thirds of these workers are female.

The rate was set so low because Blair, and the Low Pay Commission - which, naturally, included not one person actually experiencing low pay - accepted the argument of the bosses and of mainstream economists that "too high" a minimum wage would put jobs at risk.

Scrutiny

This argument doesn't stand up to scrutiny. If high wages destroyed jobs, the lowest-pay economies would suffer the least unemployment. In fact, a glance around the global economy shows the opposite.

The Trade Union Research Unit at Oxford estimated last year that the total rise in gross pay in the North if everyone entitled actually got the £3.60/£3 an hour would be around £50 million. (Other analysts put the figure higher).

As is invariably the case when breadline wages are boosted, almost all the increase would be spent, and spent locally, giving the local economy a boost in its turn. It is this which explains why - contrary to bourgeois "common sense" - a rise in wages, particularly for the low-paid, is as likely to lead to an increase as a decline in employment.

It is in the interest of all workers, and not just of the low-paid, that the minimum wage is not only paid but is regarded as a floor to be built on, not a ceiling to be reached for.

It will take a struggle, and new rank-and-file organisation, to bring this about. The lowest-paid jobs tend to be the least well organised.

But if the unions leaders gave lead thousands would join up. Such a struggle would also show that the class we belong to shapes our lives at least as much as the community we come from. A hard fight for decent pay would help underpin peace.

THE PEACE DEAL ON THE BRINK AS:

Trimble squeezes Sinn Fein

THE BRITISH and Irish governments have backed David Trimble in his demand for de-commissioning. This is despite the fact that de-commissioning was not a requirement of the Good Friday Agreement.

A joint declaration by Blair and Aherm gives the republicans six weeks to put their weapons 'beyond use'.

If they don't, they can be excluded from positions they will soon be offered on the North's executive.

Prominent

De-commissioning only became a prominent issue as a way of keeping the Unionist Party together.

The Unionist Party is a Tory party to its very core. In the past it won support amongst Protestant workers by pretending that they were 'under siege' from Catholics. Without sectarianism, the party would decline.

Trimble has tried to respond both to the needs of big business and his own sectarian supporters.

Business elements are enthusiastic about the Good Friday agreement because it offers the prospect of stability and a low wage economy.

But the rank and file of the Unionist Party want to see an effective IRA surrender before they will sign up to the deal.

They see the issue of de-commissioning as a way of forcing the most militant section of the Catholic population to bow down.

The declaration by Blair and Aherm gives a nod to these Unionist backwoods men.

It also puts peace in danger by increasing the likelihood of a break-away republican group which returns to war.

The demand for de-commissioning is also riddled with hypocrisy. While Blair was telling the IRA to hand over its

relatively puny stock of weapons, his bombers were destroying Belgrade.

Nor is there any attempt being made to disarm the RUC or recall the 140,000 legally held weapons which are mainly in the hands of Unionist Party supporters.

Yet the murder of Rosemary Nelson indicates that sections of the RUC might be willing to go to extreme lengths to cover up their collusion with loyalist forces.



The pan-nationalist alliance has let the right set the agenda

Ahern turns on republicans

'BERTIE AHERN cannot treat Irish history like this - he cannot treat the republican fraternity like this', Brian Keenan, a prominent Belfast republican, told this year's Easter Commemoration.

Several journalists have noted that loud arguments broke out between Aherm and the republican delegation at the Hillsborough talks.

In the recent past, Sinn Fein have gone to considerable lengths to construct a 'pan-nationalist' alliance with Fianna Fail and right wing Irish Americans. Such an alliance was supposed to help bring about a united Ireland.

But now Aherm has turned on Sinn Fein. It shows that in any alliance with right wing forces, the conservatives will dictate the agenda.

Struggle from below

MOST people will breathe a sigh of relief if an executive is formed. But tragically this will not guarantee peace or an end to sectarianism.

In the year since the Good Friday agreement was signed, low level sectarian conflict has grown. Although Portadown is the flash-point, other areas have also seen attempts to move families, mainly Catholics, out of areas.

Even in a joint cabinet, the communal politicians will play by the rule that 'their side' wins when the 'other side' loses. Each of them will try to divert money and investment into their 'community'.

The only answer to this is joint working class struggle from below. As Adams and Trimble prepare to take cabinet positions, Catholic and Protestant workers will have to unite to oppose their policies of hospital closures and tax concessions for the rich.

That joint struggle holds the hope for the future.

Pro-Choice 1 - Bigots 0

A POSTER campaign costing tens of thousands of pounds has backfired on anti-abortionists in the North. Precious Life, a group which has close links with Youth Defence in the South, rented out 60 billboards and 300 bus adverts to "warn" people about the "threat" of legalised abortion.

The billboards, which pictured a well-developed foetus and read: 'DEATH THREAT: Abortion Kills Babies', caused a wave of anger. Talk shows were inundated with calls from people disgusted with the advert.

The foetus in the picture was about 20 weeks of gestation, although more than 90 percent of abortions in Britain are before the tenth week of pregnancy, when the foetus is smaller than a man's thumb.

But the ads spurred pro-choice people into action. Across the North, the message was changed in many ways. The most popular was 'illegal



abortion kills women'. Other changes read 'backstreet abortion kills girls' and 'Death Threat: anti-abortionists at work'. The Belfast Rape Crisis Centre approached the ATGWU, the busworkers' union to ask them to get the ads removed.

Claims

Precious Life claims the Labour government is about to extend the Abortion Act to the North. Unfortunately for the 40 women who travel each week from the North to England to get an abortion, Labour has let working people

down on this issue as on many others.

However, the response to the anti-abortionists poster campaign means that pressure on the government to extend the Act will increase over the next while.

Unlike the anti-abortionists Alliance for Choice, the organisation campaigning for the extension of the Abortion Act to the North, has no money for ads.

Since Precious Life's campaign, however, Alliance for Choice has had an influx of new members in Belfast and Derry. Final score: pro-choice one, bigots nil.

STOP THE WAR...STOP THE WAR...STOP THE WAR...STOP THE WAR...

How NATO bombing has brought

BILL CLINTON knew that NATO bombing would bring more ethnic cleansing in Kosovo.

According to the *Washington Post*, "The warnings were there for President Clinton. For weeks before the NATO air campaign, CIA director George Tenet had been forecasting that Serb forces might respond by accelerating their campaign of ethnic cleansing - precisely the outcome that has unfolded over the past week".

It shows that NATO's claim that they went to war for humanitarianism is complete hypocrisy. Even though they knew that refugees would stream out of Kosovo, no provision was made for tents or medical supplies until a week after the war began.

Peace

NATO has never been a force for peace or humanitarianism. It was formed in 1949 as a military alliance dominated by the US. Its role was to protect 'Western interests' and ensure that left wing movements were put down.

NATO's hypocrisy is shown by the fact that Turkey is a NATO member. Over the last two decades, Turkey has murdered 27,000 Kurds and displaced 3 million from their homes. It has brought more suffering than even Milosevic has brought to Kosovo.

So far, NATO's war has been a disaster and deep divisions are already opening up within the



NATO bombs have devastated Pristina, the capital of Kosovo

alliance.

One group is arguing for escalating the war by putting in ground troops.

Yet one report estimates that 200,000 troops would be needed. If they invaded, a Vietnamese style

war would ensue. According to one senior US administration official they would have to 'invade, occupy and stay there' and operate with an attitude that 'you own this country'.

Victory for this strategy would

mean establishing NATO's 'right' to position 30,000 of its troops near its old rival Russia. This would do little to help the impoverished Kosovan population who would be crowded into a partitioned country with little industry

or wealth.

The other section of NATO are frightened by the costs of a ground war and want instead to turn Serbia into Europe's Iraq. In this scenario, the bombing campaign will be kept up until bridges, factories and

basic infrastructure are destroyed. The result would be hardship for Serbian citizens.

In Iraq, 6,000 children are dying every month because of a combination of UN sanctions and the destruction of the infrastructure that guarantee clean water.

All of NATO's options are a cynical and dirty war with nothing to do with humanitarianism. The only people who benefit are the arms manufacturers and generals who get increased budgets.

Old warmongers

■ US Ambassador to Bosnia, Richard Holbrooke, in charge of monitoring the 'peacekeeping' operations in Bosnia was the same man who flew the right wing Contra planes in Nicaragua.

■ General CIA head of the NATO bombing campaign, Lord Robertson, fought in the Vietnam War and toured universities in Britain arguing in favour of that war.

And we are told that this is for their real concern for humanitarianism.

Why NATO

KOSOVO IS one of the poorest countries in Europe. Over 90% of the population has been killed or displaced by Albanians and Serbs.

For much of the time, the population spoke other's languages.

The balance between the Albanians and Serbs constantly shifted. At the end of the 19th century, about 90 percent of the population were Albanians and Serbs about 10 percent.

Historically the Albanians were second class citizens, just like the Catholics in Northern Ireland but in time they won autonomy for the region.

But as economic crisis hit in the 1980s, Milosevic exploited the Albanians in Kosovo that they had been second class citizens since 1989, he abolished Kosovo's self-governance and the resistance of Albanians to their workplaces.

Albanians in Kosovo were expelled after 1989 by boycotting up an unofficial parliament. All this period of repression.

How the Balkans have been used

THE WORLD'S great powers have militarily intervened in the Balkans for over 120 years.

As with today, at each stage they have claimed to be standing up for the rights of smaller nations in the region. Every intervention

has brought misery, creating more divisions between ordinary people. They have drawn and redrawn the map, each time sowing the seeds for a further round of bloodletting.

In the 1870s Russia went to war with the Turkish Ottoman Empire, which governed the Balkans. Other European powers intervened, setting different groups against one another, including Serbs and Albanians.

Britain used the excuse of atrocities against minorities in Bulgaria in 1878 to get involved. This intervention led to wars between the Balkan states themselves, between Serbia and Bulgaria in 1885 for example.

War erupted again in 1912. National

groups-Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Greece-rose up against the decaying Turkish Empire which governed the Balkans. As some of these groups fought each other the European powers scrambled to back competing sides. There were atrocities from all sides.

In 1913 the Great Powers signed the Treaty of London and Protocol of Florence which recognised an independent Albania but left half the population outside the new state. The Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 were a prelude to the First World War which began when the Austro-Hungarian Empire declared war on Serbia. Once again the Great Powers encouraged the re-partition of

states. The Western Allies made the secret Pact of London in 1915.

The pact agreed to carve up the two year old Albanian state between Italy and Greece. Britain backed the seizure of Kosovo and the formation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1919-20.

The Great Powers gave Italy a mandate over central Albania as a reward for fighting against Germany. In 1921 the Kosovans petitioned the League of Nations, the United Nations of its day. They begged for reunion with Albania. They stated that throughout Kosovo 12,371 people had been killed and 22,000 imprisoned since 1918. The League ignored them.

WAR IN EUROPE

STOP THE WAR...STOP THE WAR...STOP THE WAR...

THE WAR...STOP THE WAR...STOP THE WAR...STOP

**WAR
IN
EUROPE**



bombing might disaster

This is NATO's record of 'humanitarianism'

THE IRISH Times Journalist Fintan O'Toole has claimed that while the US may be motivated by self interest, this does not preclude acting for 'genuine humanitarian reasons'.

But the record shows that Western intervention has never lessened suffering but has increased it.

★ **SOMALIA:** At the end of 1992 US marines landed in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia in east Africa. President Bush said they were there to stop famine and end civil war.

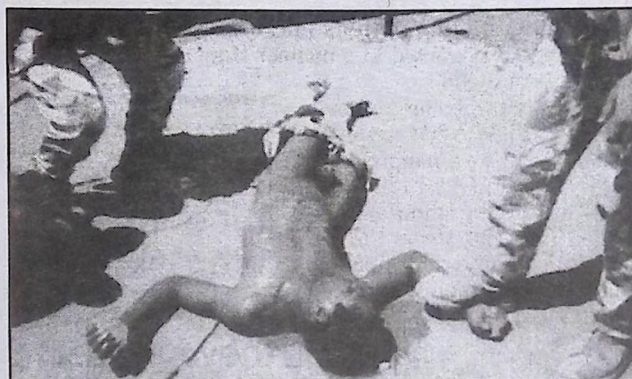
At first the 28,000 United Nations troops were welcomed by the local population. But the feeling that they had been rescued soon turned to hatred. Western troops made no fundamental difference to the amount of food supplied.

The soldiers' cruelty to local people also strengthened the hold of the Somali "warlords" they were supposed to disarm.

Night after night US helicopter gunship pilots swooped over Mogadishu raining rockets and bullets.

The number of Somalis butchered will never be known-but it was certainly thousands.

As an Italian soldier said recently, "On one occasion we fired for 24 hours



A Somali civilian murdered by US troops

non-stop. Officially they said there were 60 dead, when instead there were more than 1,000. Women and children were fired on unscrupulously."

★ **ANGOLA:** In 1975 the Portuguese colonialists were driven from the central African state of Angola.

Right wing forces, particularly Jonas Savimbi's UNITA, attempted to bring down the MPLA government which came to office as a result of the uprising that defeated Portugal.

The US was determined to stop a left wing government controlling the

country. From the beginning of the Angolan civil war the CIA channelled arms to UNITA.

In 1981, when President Reagan took office, the US government swept away a Congressional ban on openly sending arms to movements like UNITA. The result plunged Angola into 20 years of bloodshed. The Angolan war has already claimed 750,000 lives.

Two thirds of those killed were children. UNITA specialised in attacks on civilians and laying landmines in villages. Over 65,000 people have had limbs amputated as a result.

★ **BOSNIA:** During the Bosnian war, many people were horrified at the behaviour of nationalist leaders who engaged in ethnic cleansing and called for 'outside intervention'.

But the NATO forces who intervened demonised the Serbs and formed an effective alliance with Croatia.

The US Ambassador to Croatia, Peter Galbraith, made no criticism of Franco Tudjman who denied the Holocaust and renamed streets after the leaders of the Ustashe, the Croatian fascist movement during WW2. Instead he helped Tudjman to re-arm Croatia by breaking sanctions.

When Croatia was re-armed, NATO launched bombing attacks against the Serbs. They gave direct cover to 'Operation Storm', the Croatian's army's attack on Serb civilians in the Krajina district.

In all 200,000 Serbs were driven from this area in one of the worst ethnic cleansing campaigns of the war.

The record shows that Fintan O'Toole has been duped.

He has dropped his criticisms of the system and has been reborn as a B52 liberal.

THE MONEY spent on the Balkans war, could save many from famine and disease.

■ Each of the B-2 Stealth bombers used by the US costs £1.5 billion.

The money used to produce ten such bombers would provide the basic health and nutrition requirements of almost all the people across the world.

That would prevent most of the 30,000 deaths a day of children under the age of five who die because of malnutrition and easily treated diseases.

■ For the cost of five B-2s a year we could give every child in the world basic primary education.

■ Every cruise missile costs \$1 million.

That money could provide the seeds and tools for 50,000 poor peasants in the Third World to grow their own food for a year.

What's the alternative?

MANY supporters of the war agree that the US has cynical motives but they claim that "something must be done".

But the NATO bombing has only worsened the situation. It's like seeing a house on fire and throwing a bucket of petrol on it because there was no water to hand.

The bombing has given Milosevic a chance to carry out ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. It has also rallied the Serbian population around him.

Professor Vojin Dimitrijevic, the former Vice Chairman of the UN Human Rights Committee in Belgrade claims that "the air strikes erased in one night 10 years of hard work of ... the democratic opposition".

The alternative to NATO is to encourage a struggle from below against all the nationalist thugs of the area. Before the NATO bombing, mothers of Serbian conscripts protested against the war in Kosovo. They asked why Milosevic's son, Marko, who owns a night-club had not been drafted.

In April 1991, during a previous

war, 700,000 people went on strike in Serbia. Milosevic had to use tanks to defeat them.

In 1996, students and workers filled the streets of Belgrade to demand democracy and improved living conditions. Some sections of the opposition began to discuss freedom for Kosovo as one of their demands.

It showed that the solution could have emerged from a mass movement from below.

Uprising

Similarly when the Indonesia army was carrying out murder in East Timor, nobody suggested that it be bombed. Instead East Timorese independence only began to emerge as a real possibility in the course of an uprising in Indonesia itself.

The NATO generals will spend millions on war because they see gains in terms of regional domination and new commercial opportunities for Western companies. Their humanitarian concerns are pure hypocrisy and should be challenged at every turn. But we should also realise that war springs naturally from the greed and competition of capitalism. This is why its horror can only be eliminated when we end the barbarous system that produces it.

Old warmongers

■ US Ambassador Walker, in charge of monitoring the US's 'peacekeeping' operations in Bosnia was the same man who financed the right wing Contras in Nicaragua.

■ General Clark, the head of the NATO forces fought in the Vietnam war and toured universities in Britain arguing in favour of that war.

And we are told that their real concern is 'humanitarianism'.

Why NATO will not fight against Kurdish oppression

KOSOVO IS one of the poorest areas in Europe. Over the centuries Kosovo has been mainly populated by Albanians and Serbs.

For much of the time they have spoken each other's languages.

The balance between the two populations has constantly shifted. Albanians now make up about 90 percent of the population of Kosovo and Serbs about 10 percent.

Historically the Albanians were treated as second class citizens, just like the Catholics in Northern Ireland but in the 1970s they managed to win autonomy for their province.

But as economic crisis deepened in the late 1980s Milosevic exploited the feeling of Serbs in Kosovo that they had been pushed aside. In 1989, he abolished Kosovo autonomy and broke the resistance of Albanian miners who occupied their workplaces.

Albanians in Kosovo responded to repression after 1989 by boycotting elections and setting up an unofficial parallel parliament. During this period of repression the US showed no

interest in the plight of the Kosovans.

US president George Bush refused to even meet the Kosovan leaders. They were ignored in the US brokered Dayton agreement which was imposed on Bosnia in 1995. As late as last October, the US officially denounced the KLA 'terrorists'.

Interests

But now when it suits their interests, NATO is pretending that it champions the rights of the Kosovans. Yet the experience shows that colonial powers never bring freedom to oppressed groups.

In 1969, many Catholics in Northern Ireland looked to the British Army to offer them protection against sectarian gangs. British soldiers were offered cups of tea in the Bogside in the hope that they would support the local population against the RUC. But within a year, the British army turned on them. By 1972, the paratroopers had murdered 13 people on the streets of Derry.

After the last Gulf War, a section of the

Kurdish population in Northern Iraq looked to Britain and America to provide them with protection from Saddam Hussein. The Western powers used this plea for help as a way of imposing an effective partition of Iraq.

But the safe havens became reservations behind which the Kurds were imprisoned. When the Turkish army wanted to murder PKK militants it was given free access to the safe havens.

The NATO generals have conducted the war without the slightest regard for ordinary Kosovans. They lined up a huge array of weaponry to attack Serbia but they did nothing to supply tents or food for the refugees who fled.

NATO's eventual aim is to force Milosevic to do a deal where Kosovo is partitioned into two ethnically pure states. Albanians will be confined to a 'safe haven' in the poorer southern part of Kosovo where their suffering will be immense.

Yet the NATO generals do not care about this. Their objective is to station 30,000 of their troops in the region to show the Russians that they are now the dominant power.

WAR...STOP THE WAR...STOP THE WAR...STOP THE WAR...STOP

Iran 1979, when workers showed...

WHETHER IT is Serbia or Iraq, we are told that military intervention is needed to curb the power of dictators. But the overthrow of the Shah of Iran twenty years ago shows how even the most brutal ruler can be overthrown from below, rather than by outside forces.

In fact the Shah was backed by the US, who had put him in power in 1953 when the CIA orchestrated a coup against the more democratic Mossadeq government.

Mossadeq had nationalised Iran's oil resources but the Shah restored much of the power of Western oil companies.

The new ruler presided over a remarkable period of economic growth, as Iran's oil revenues soared from \$555 million in 1963-64 to nearly \$20 billion in 1975-76. This growth enriched the wealthy minority of native and foreign capitalists and led to the expansion of a new class of state bureaucrats. But the majority of Iran's people were left behind by the oil boom.

The Shah tried to crush all dissent by mobilising his secret police force, SAVAK, who jailed some 20,000 political activists. SAVAK grew to employ over 5,000 paid agents, backed up by thousands of paid informers. Murder and torture of the regime's opponents became commonplace.

The Shah used much of the country's oil revenues to strengthen his state apparatus. Iran became the biggest arms importer in the world during the 1970s, while at the same time developing ever closer ties with the US.

In 1973 the country's capital, Tehran, became the Middle East headquarters of the CIA and the US had some 24,000 "military advisers" in Iran. In 1975, all independent political parties were banned in favour of the Shah's "Resurgence Party".

There were no free trade unions, only "Syndicates" run by SAVAK. Indeed SAVAK had their own offices in most large factories.

But despite the repression, workers' strike activity grew. Economic growth had led to the emergence of a modern working class who used their bargaining power to force concessions. Strikes were never allowed to last very long. Many were suppressed but, equally, many resulted in employers caving in to prevent wider struggles from taking place.

In the wake of the oil crisis of the late 1970s, Iran's economy began to falter. In the absence of huge oil revenues, the government relied heavily on loans from the World Bank and this led to a debt crisis.

The ruling class, sensing that their grip was weakening, engaged in an orgy of speculation and corruption. They began to salt their money away in foreign banks in anticipation of an economic crash.

When the crisis finally came, it provoked a resurgence of protests

THE POWER TO TOPPLE TYRANTS



Khomeini returning to Iran.

from below.

The slum dwellers of Tehran protested against growing poverty, and this encouraged other groups to also oppose the regime.

By 1977, intellectuals, the traditional clergy and the bazaar merchants had also joined the protests. Between October 1977 and September 1978, there were daily demonstrations which culminated in a two million strong protest in Tehran.

Yet the Shah continued to think he could not be beaten and told *US News and World Report* in June 1978, "No one can overthrow me. I have the support of 700,000 troops, most of the people and all of the workers".

He was proved wrong when the street protests gave way to a massive strike wave that broke the back of the regime.

When the Shah tried to impose martial law, a strike of 30,000 oil workers brought Iran to a standstill and gave new momentum to the movement. Workers struck across

the country, taking over factories, offices, hospitals and universities. They set up committees to make decisions about production and, in many cases, forced out the old managers.

On 16 January 1979, the Shah was finally toppled. As he fled Iran, the country erupted in a carnival of public rejoicing. Crowds of people fraternised with the conscript soldiers, who themselves wept openly and embraced people. Demonstrators pulled down statues of the Shah and his father.

In an act of desperation, the ruling class installed the "moderate" leader Bakhtiar as prime minister, in the hope that he would pacify the people while saving the monarchy. But Bakhtiar too was pushed aside.

The Ayatollah Khomeini, a senior member of the Islamic clergy, returned from exile to lead a provisional government.

Khomeini represented the interests of the Bazaar, middle class shopkeepers and market traders who had been left behind by the oil boom.

Over the next eight months, the outcome of the revolution would be decided in the struggle between the Islamic leaders and the popular

power which had toppled the Shah.

The Shoras, a form of workers' council, were central to the development of popular power. They took over the managerial role in the factories and set up committees to deal with wages, insurance, working conditions and safety.

There were also committees to maintain communications with other Shoras and to produce wall newspapers and leaflets.

In one famous case, the workers' council in the Chite Jahan textile factory near Tehran gained a high level of control. They increased production, doubled minimum wages by cutting the salaries of engineers and managers, and provided free milk for the workforce.

The revolution had begun with the overthrow of a brutal dictator. Now the exercise of popular, democratic decision making challenged the notion of the Middle East as uncivilised, backward and dominat-

ed by fanatics.

But there was a major weakness. The power of workers was exercised at the level of factories and communities. Although there was co-ordination between the Shoras, the decisive power still lay in the hands of Khomeini and the state machine.

For example, the Shoras still depended on state finance to continue production in the factories. In many cases managers had suspended the purchase of raw materials and had taken their wealth out of Iran.

But Khomeini's government controlled the state, and therefore had their hands on the purse strings. Workers needed to take state power for themselves if they were to consolidate and spread the revolution.

The socialist forces in Iran could have organised to bring about a deepening of the revolution by arguing for workers to overthrow Khomeini and set up a workers' state. But tragically the majority of the Iranian left wanted an alliance with Khomeini.

When he backed the occupation of the US Embassy in Tehran, he was hailed as an "anti-imperialist".

But Khomeini used anti-US rhetoric to confuse and divide the movement from below. Anyone who opposed his rule was denounced as a "US agent".

The socialists who backed Khomeini were so concerned with "unity" that they refused to mobilise against his attacks on women and national minorities like the Kurds.

A minority of the left opposed Khomeini but resorted to the dead end of guerrilla struggle, instead of building workers' resistance. When Iraq invaded Iran at the behest of the US, most of the left dropped all criticism of Khomeini in the name of "national unity". Countless lives were lost as the excitement of the revolution gave way to the carnage of the Iran-Iraq war.

But while liberals today resort to their new found worship of cruise missiles, we should remember that in Iran in 1979 - as in every other revolution - it was struggle from below that toppled a tyrant.

by DAVE MCDONAGH

in my view

Where did feminism go wrong?

GERMAINE GREER is back. Her new book, *The Whole Woman* is a sequel to her path breaking *The Female Eunuch*. Greer says that she vowed she would never write this book, presumably meaning she never imagined she would need to.

Feminists thirty years ago could hardly have imagined that one day they would be heralding something like the Spice Girls as indication of the accomplishments of women.

But now the "high priestess of feminism", as she is referred to is back, denouncing the "fake equality" proclaimed by post-feminists and those who have forgotten "women's endless hardship, pain and grief".

Greer's book is an instruction to women to get angry again. She is outraged by the feminism of the nineties that argues that women are no longer oppressed, that it is liberating to spend half the day looking for the right shade of lipstick. The fight is over, they tell us, and women have won. All we need to do is assert ourselves.

Drivel

Greer's book is certainly a welcome antidote to the post-feminist drivel that seems to dominate the question of women's liberation today.

In all the discussion about Greer's sequel, what has been forgotten about her original book, *The Female Eunuch*, is that it sprang from a movement of struggle. The chapter on idealised domesticity is called "The Middle class myth of Love and Marriage". A whole chapter deals with work, urging women to organise in unions and condemning British Labour Minister Barbara Castle for not supporting women at Fords who were striking for equal pay.

Now you get women like Helen Wilkinson, writing in a book called *Feminism For A New Generation*, claiming that Thatcher was a heroine for "transforming the prevailing relationship between women and power. She did not shy away from showing us how much we loved power and made it legitimate for us to love it too".

Natasha Walter goes even further citing Thatcher as "great unsung heroine of British feminism", who "normalised female success". So Thatcher was a feminist we are told because "she allowed British women to celebrate their ability . . . to be cruel, to be death dealing."

A stream of these sort of publications from post feminists provoked her into such an angry response.

But Greer's own book is also deeply flawed. She is right to be angry about the inequalities that women continue to face but her solutions are less than compelling.

Men and women are inherently different according to Greer and so "liberation struggles are not about assimilation, but about asserting difference," she writes.

Enemy

Men are the root of all oppression in society. She argues that the capitalist world is nothing women would create, forgetting that women too are exploiters. Instead of seeing working class men as the natural allies of working class women, Greer argues that they are the enemy.

"Ownership of the womb is what makes you a woman", Greer tells us. She goes on a tirade against the male dominated medical profession accusing them of mutilating women. "Women are driven through the health system like sheep through a dip. The diseases they are being treated for is womanhood."

But while sexism is often dominant in some areas of medicine, the logic of Greer's argument is that contraception, abortion, smear tests and HRT are all traumas inflicted on women by a womb hating male medical system. She neglects to point out that many of these medical advances have significantly transformed the lives of women giving them control over their bodies for the first time.

The only solution for women, Greer argues, is to retreat to their own worlds and create a women centred society. Such an option is not practical for millions of working class women who are tied to their jobs.

This is the weakness of Greer's politics and the reason why she can offer no real solution to the problem of women's oppression.

by SINEAD KENNEDY

film

Giving up on Nazi myths

A MERICAN HISTORY X is a complex and confronting film about fascism, the roots of racism and one man's rejection of white supremacy.

The film is told mainly in flashbacks and tells the story of Derek, who is sent to jail for three years for the manslaughter of two black youths who try to hijack his car.

In the beginning of the film, we see Derek on the day he is released from jail, coming back to his family.

Events

We then see the sequence of events which lead to him being jailed.

The film brilliantly shows the alienation which pushes some young people towards fascism.

Derek is seen in the flashbacks as a committed fascist, complete with swastika and white power tattoos, helping to organise the fascist movement in his area.

He is angry, articulate and full of hate, raging against everybody in society, from his black teachers to his mother's Jewish boyfriend and the Koreans who own the local grocery store.

In the opening scene, as he is being arrested for shooting the two men, he is seen through the eyes of his younger brother as invincible and all powerful, triumphant in the righteousness of his cause.

It is only later, through a series of incidents in jail, that Derek starts to question the cause to which he gave his freedom.

Harm

The film is unambiguously anti-fascist, showing the harm that fascism causes to the individuals, their families and their victims.

It also shows how fascism can start from 'everyday' forms of racism if it is given a climate to grow in.

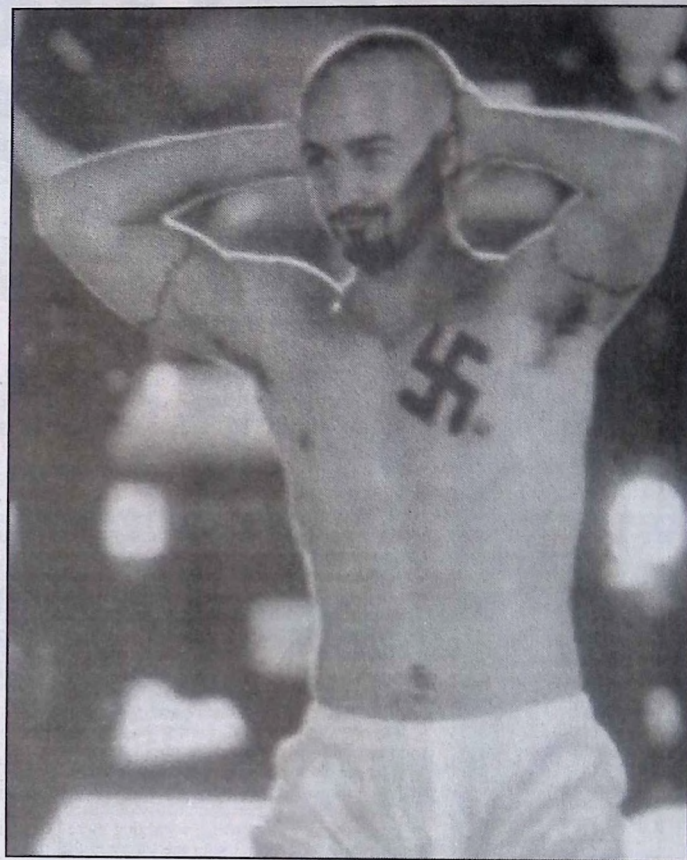
In one scene, Derek's father attacks affirmative action using similar arguments to those found in right wing tabloid newspapers.

In this sense it is a far superior film to the Australian film *Romper Stomper*, about a group of neo-Nazis, to which it has been compared.

However, the ending is unsatisfying, though Derek realises that fascism is a movement based on hate, which he firmly rejects, there is no attempt to show this in any form other than that of individuals changing their own circumstances.

Despite this, however, *American History X* is an interesting and challenging film which is well worth seeing.

by GINA HAY *Dedicated follower of fascism*



TV

Nowt so boring as Queer as Folk

"VILE, OBNOXIOUS, and obscene." has been the response of the tabloid press to Channel Four's new gay soap opera *Queer as Folk*.

The veteran pro-censorship campaigner Mary Whitehouse rose from the dead to denounce the programme on breakfast television.

Brash

A tale of three gay men in Manchester, it is loud, brash and oozes self-confidence. It also includes depictions of gay sex the likes of which have never been seen in a television drama before.

So it was bound to be good, wasn't it? Unfortunately not.

While the right wingers

by SIMON BASKETTER

are outraged at the prospect of showing gay people on television at all, and particularly at showing them having sex, this doesn't mean that the programme is any good.

What you have is a bunch of stereotypes, the predatory promiscuous male, the innocent pretty young boy- who had to be 15 for the sake of controversy, the confused and unhappy 'nice gay', and lesbians who merely goggle and gossip while they bring up a child.

Gub Neal, Channel 4's head of drama, argues that *Queer as Folk* gives people a sense "that the only thing that distinguishes gay and heterosexual people is the sexual act."

If that's the case then

we're all middle class today and there is no need to struggle for anything.

The whole programme is like the worst bits of *This Life* - with anal sex. Gay men are, of course, whatever their background, middle class, drive jeeps and live in converted lofts.

Reality

It bears as much relationship to the reality of most gay people lives as Dallas did to the experiences of the American working class.

Overall, the series, shot like a soft porn movie - sorry that should be homo-erotica for the arty types at Channel Four - suffers from all the vices of the genre, bad plot, bad acting and an unpleasant empty feeling at the end.

where
we
stand

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

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

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

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

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

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST:

The 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.

Genetically modified food . . .

Monsanto beaten in court battle

Forcing GM food down our throats

'THE CONSUMER is king' say all the supermarkets. We can supposedly choose what to buy and the market responds to our demands.

Yet what is happening at the moment shows that exactly the opposite happens.

At the heart of the drive towards GM food is the attempt by big business to gain greater control of food production and boost their profits.

Rather than developing technology that helps feed the world, Monsanto uses genetic engineering to stop farmers from replanting seed naturally.

It has spent \$18,000 million to buy a company owning the patent on what is known as "Terminator Technology": seed that can be planted only once and dies in the second generation. The only aim of this technology is to force farmers back to the Monsanto shop every year.

No one should trust those who push genetically modified food or politicians who tell us not to worry.

The pleas of arch-conservatives such as Prince Charles that we "should not interfere with nature" are not the issue. The real problem is that genetically modified food is driven by profit chasing big business and that these companies are not primarily concerned with the safety of this food.

If there were to be any future use of genetically modified food it would require patient and detailed research beforehand.

In a decent society where science was at the service of human beings this could be organised. Under capitalism where profit is the key this won't happen.

What could be used for human benefit is turned into a potential danger as it is used to boost the power and profits of big business.

OPPONENTS OF genetically modified food have scored a major victory against the huge multinational Monsanto.

Six protesters had been charged with damaging private property after they destroyed part of the GM sugar beet crops at a Monsanto test site in Wexford.

Monsanto had even installed video cameras to monitor the site. Yet all six got off with the probation act after a trial that saw GM food itself put in the dock.



Protesters celebrate a victory over Monsanto

Resistance

Monsanto has been trying to force genetically engineered crops into Europe, but has encountered huge public resistance.

Monsanto, which is worth over \$96 billion and is one of the world's seven biggest corporations, is a close ally of Bill Clinton.

It is one of the five companies spearheading his welfare to work programme. Clinton singled out the biotech company for special praise during the "state of the nation" address last year.

During the 1996 election Monsanto donated hundreds of thousands of dollars in "soft money" (legal funds which are not included in the

ban on corporate donations) to the Clinton camp.

So when Britain attempted to halt the production of genetically engineered food, Bill Clinton personally intervened with Tony Blair to stop this.

Monsanto like to present themselves as an environmentally friendly company that is committed to feeding the world by applying science in the cause of "sustainable development".

Yet before branching out into genetically modified crops Monsanto was, and still is, a bulk chemicals producer.

One of their main products was Agent Orange, a chemical defoliant sprayed by the US in the Vietnam war.

It killed and maimed thousands of ordinary

Vietnamese people and to this day Vietnamese children are being born with horrific deformities.

Monsanto also pioneered the use of other deadly chemicals called PCB's and continued selling them in Third World countries after they had been banned by the West.

Today Monsanto is the world's biggest herbicide "weedkiller" producer.

Fortune

It has made a fortune out of one of the weedkillers it developed years ago - glyphosate - which is sold under the brand name Roundup.

Monsanto has a patent on it, so no else can make it, but that patent runs out next

year. That could allow competitors to muscle in and start making the chemical and undercut Monsanto's huge profits.

So for the last ten years Monsanto bosses have been moving to protect their profits. This is what is behind Monsanto's drive into genetic engineering of plants.

Monsanto's scientists discovered that they could manipulate the genes in soybeans to make plants resistant to Roundup.

Monsanto then sell the seed for the genetically modified soya under the legal condition that the crops are only treated with Roundup, thereby safeguarding Monsanto's profits and inflicting enormous debt on Third World farmers.

SWP Branch meetings - all welcome

THE SOCIALIST Workers Party is the 'main inspiration' behind the anti-war campaign, The Irish Times journalist Patsy McGarry revealed.

But this was no scoop. From the start of the bombing started, SWP members have been campaigning against the war.

Within days, the party had produced a special pamphlet to counter the pro-war propaganda that has dominated the press.

Alongside other individuals in the No to War campaign, it has organised several protests against the war.

There are different views in the anti-war movement.

Some oppose the war primarily because it is illegal and they believe the UN should have acted. Others including the SWP see the UN primarily as a cover for Western interests and point to its role in the Gulf Conflict in 1991.

Nevertheless, the SWP believes in working alongside others in an open and honest fashion while expressing its own views.

Over the past fortnight, recruitment to the party has also increased.

New members have joined at a public meeting in Limerick University, anti-war protests in Dublin and a major public meeting in Belfast on the justice for Stephen Lawrence and Robert Hamill.

ATHLONE: Contact 01- 872 2682 for details

BRAY: Meets fortnightly on Thursdays at the Mayfare Hotel at 8pm

BELFAST CENTRAL: Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Garrick Bar, Chichester St.

BELFAST EAST: Contact 01- 8722682 for details

BELFAST STH: Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in upstairs Renshaws, University St.

CORK: Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in Dennehy's Pub, Cornmarket

April 14th: The lessons of the October Revolution

Speaker: John Murphy

April 21st: Why the Irish Labour party fails?

Speaker: Michael O'Sullivan

DERRY: Meets every Monday at 8.30pm

in Badgers Bar, Orchard St.

April 15th: Why do socialists look to the working class?

April 22nd: Genetically Modified Food: Why big business is ruining our health?

DUNDALK: Contact 01 - 872 2682 for details

DUN LAOGHAIRE: Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Christian Institute

DUBLIN ARTANE / COOLOCK: Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Artane / Beaumont

Recreational Centre opp. Artane Castle

April 13th: The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

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

April 21st: Kosovo: Can the West bring peace?

Speaker: Kieran

Allen **DUBLIN NTH WEST:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in the Snug, Dorset St.

April 14TH: The fight for women's liberation today

Speaker: Anna Hudson

April 21st: Can socialist planning work?

DUBLIN RANELAGH: Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Tom Kelly Flats, Charlemont St

Community Centre

DUBLIN RIALTO: Meets Tuesday at 8pm St. Andrews Community Centre, SCR, Rialto.

April 13th: Ireland's Revolutionary Past - The 1919 Limerick Soviet

Speaker: Conor Kostick

April 20th: Are people inevitably nationalistic?

DUBLIN RATHMINES: Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in O'Connell's Pub,

Richmond St. April 15th : Kosovo: Can the West bring peace?

April 22nd: Cuba: Is Cuba socialist?

DUBLIN STH CENTRAL: Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Trinity Inn, Pearse St.

April 15th: John Reed - The revolutionary journalist

Speaker: Simon Basketter

DUBLIN TALLAGHT: Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in Jobstown

Community Centre

April 15th : Kosovo: Can the West bring peace?

April 22nd: The fight for women's liberation today

ENNISKILLEN: Meets fortnightly on Saturdays at 4pm. Phone 01 - 8722682 for details of venue

April 10th: Was Russia socialist?

Speaker: Joe McCarroll

GALWAY: Meets every Thursday in

Currans Hotel, Eyre Square 7.30pm

April 22nd: Socialists and trade union

LIMERICK: Contact 01 - 872 2682 for details

MAYNOOTH: Meets every Wednesday in Classhall D, Arts Block, Maynooth College

April 14th: "Its a woman's right to choose: The Fight for abortion rights in Ireland"

Speaker: Joanne Berry

UCD:

Meets every Thursday at 1pm (See posters for room no.)

April 15th: Justice for Robert Hamill

Speakers: Diane Hamill and Eamonn McCann

April 22nd: Marx's theory of alienation

Speaker: Marnie Holborow

TRINITY: Meets every Thursday at 7.00pm

WATERFORD: Meets every Thursday in at 8.00pm ATGWU Hall, Keizer St.

SWP PUBLIC MEETING
Wed. 14th April
Vietnamese Centre, Hardwick St
Childcare, The right to choose: The fight for women's liberation today
Speaker: Brenda Piercy
HOUSING ACTION CAMPAIGN Ringsend Public Meeting
Thurs. April 22nd
Trinity Inn, Pearse St.
Fairview Public Meeting
Thurs. April 22nd
Committee Room, Carleton Hall
Shelmartin Ave., Fairview
Speakers include: Richie Browne (SWP), Grace Lally (Housing Action Ctte), a housing researcher, and local tenants.

news/reports/politics/industry/unions (01)8722682; fax (01) 8723838;
email: swp@clubi.ie web: www.clubi.ie/swp

Pay revolt imminent

RECENTLY released figures on the rising costs of accommodation have added fuel to a looming pay revolt.

The figures show that the majority of low paid workers have been priced out of house or apartment ownership.

The average price of a new apartment in Dublin has risen to £131,344 — a staggering 42 percent rise on the previous year.

The escalating price of accommodation means that workers are no longer taking up mortgages as they did traditionally.

53 percent of all mortgage borrowers come from the professional and managerial categories while only 23 per cent of borrowers come from manual workers.

Five years ago, manual workers made up a third of all mortgage borrowers.

Housing costs are not included in the official inflation figures, which means that the P2000 pay rises are even more inadequate than they appear.

Many workers now realise that they were conned by an incompetent group of union leaders who claimed that the P2000 increases were the best that could be achieved.

Pressure

Pressure is building up in many quarters for higher wage increases to help cope with rising costs. Among the groups looking for higher increases are:

Teachers. They settled their claim for a special pay rise early and found that they had fallen behind

Gardai.

Now they are set to ballot on industrial action to enforce their claim for higher wages rises.

ESB: The unions have submitted a claim for a special 12 percent increase after the company turned in enormous profits.

A union spokesperson pointed out that without the productivity of workers profits would not have risen.

Nurses: Nurses are pushing for a second major increase which will see them get long service increments. So far negotiators have resisted management attempts to tie this in with draconian productivity measures. The issue is due to be concluded by May 1st.

Scaffolders: These are the latest group of building workers to follow the bricklayers in demanding a substantial increase in their basic wage.

SIPTU leaders tried to recommend further talks with the building bosses of the CIF. But a mass meeting in Dublin urged the rank and file Scaffolders Association to start taking unofficial action.

The pay revolt has provoked outrage in establishment circles.

The top research institute, the ESRI, has warned

workers that demands for higher pay will mean an end of the Celtic Tiger.

But the ESRI has never objected to the greed for higher profits. It is deliberately hiding the fact that a global recession - and not workers' pay rises - are the biggest threat to the Irish boom. Workers should step up the pressure for higher wages - and in the process do away with the hypocritical talk of social partnership.

Bewleys

B EW LEYS' RESTAURANT workers in Dublin have won a major pay increase following a threat of strike action.

It is a fantastic example for every low paid group of workers to follow.

The lowest paid staff have gone from £3.14 an hour to £4.20 an hour. Staff on £3.50 have gone up to £4.80 and the top rate is now £5.50 an hour.

This victory gives two fingers to Bewleys' boss, Patrick Campbell, who provoked the dispute when he complained on radio about the "attitude" of his low paid workers.

Roughly a quarter of Bewleys' staff balloted by SIPTU rejected the offer, saying the union should have stuck out for the minimum of £5 an hour.

It is true that SIPTU officials kept postponing the strike, allowing management to demoralise union members in the less organised branches.

But the main job now is to strengthen the union in every branch, in order to build on this important victory.

Stephen Lawrence

OVER 200 people packed into a meeting sponsored by the SWP in Belfast to hear about the fight for justice.

Duwayne Brooks, a friend of the murdered black youth Stephen Lawrence, Diane Hamill, sister of Robert Hamill, and Eamonn McCann were the speakers who drew out the links between 'institutionalised racism' and institutionalised sectarianism.

The meeting took place in a highly charged atmosphere. In the same week, Rosemary Nelson had been murdered and Paul Hobson was found not guilty of murdering Robert Hamill but guilty of assault. During the case the judge expressed his surprise at how little evidence the RUC had produced.

Duwayne Brooks described how on the night of the murder of Stephen Lawrence the "police seemed

Dunnes

Strike after worker sacked for tasting pasta

174 Mandate workers took unofficial action on April 1st when they staged a sit-in in the staff canteen in support of their colleague Marian Callaghan.

Marian had been suspended the previous Tuesday on full pay pending a disciplinary hearing this week. Marian, who works at the deli counter at Dunnes Stores Terryland, was asked by a customer whether there was there much garlic in a particular pasta salad. Marian replied that she did not know.

Later she took a spoonful, in the interest of customer care.

She was seen as she did this by a member of management who accused her of stealing and reported her.

Marian was sent home on full pay.

Enraged colleagues held a "compulsory mass meeting" in the staff canteen on Thursday to discuss the issue. They decided to hold a sit-in protest at their fellow worker's treatment. As a result of this magnificent support management gave staff a '1 hour cooling off period' to return to work.

Suspended

However, staff remained in the canteen until 9p.m. that night and all 174 staff were suspended without pay. Management then refused to negotiate with staff reps.

The unofficial action escalated on Friday when staff placed pickets on all entrances to Dunnes Stores Terryland and remained there on Saturday.

Easter weekend is one of the busiest shopping

weekends of the year. Very few of the public have been passing the picket lines. The store itself is being run by a skeleton staff of management drafted in from other branches.

Speaking to *Socialist Worker*, Marian said, 'I am being treated like a thief for doing my job'.

A spokeswoman for the strikers said,

"This action has been taken against a background of pressure and bullying of staff by management. The suspension of Marian was the final straw".

Dunnes Stores have admitted that they bribed Charles Haughey. In return they got a low tax regime after they were classified as a family trust.

Their arrogance seems to know no bounds. Yet the Galway staff are determined to put some manners on this bullying company.

Royal Hospital

Management are blamed for suicide

THE TRAGIC death of a hospital worker in the Royal Hospital Donnybrook has sparked outrage among his former co-workers.

The middle-aged nurse who lived alone committed suicide over Christmas after being sacked from his job over unproven allegations that he had sexually abused patients.

The man's co-workers were unable to take industrial action to defend his position because under the Industrial Relations Act it is illegal to strike on behalf of one worker.

This shameful law meant that the man was left isolated and led directly to his death.

There is little doubt that a scheduled review hearing with the Rights Commissioner would have overturned the dismissal but unfortunately it is too late for

that now.

On hearing of his death, workers responded immediately by wearing black armbands to work for three days and calling meetings to discuss action.

They forced SIPTU leadership to ballot for strike action which was overwhelmingly endorsed.

SIPTU officials have since deferred strike action in favour of talks in the Labour Relations Commission with a view to implementing new procedures for dealing with such cases.

In the mean time, however, the management who victimised this worker and caused his death still remain in charge.

Unofficial action in defiance of the Industrial Relations Act, like that taken by workers in ESB, should be the model for workers who want to stand up to management bullying and trade union leaders' treachery.

Firefighters

FIREFIGHTERS in Northern Ireland are to consider strike action over conditions of service.

The decision to call a ballot comes after the breakdown of negotiations in London between the fire brigade union and the fire service national employers.

Jim Barbour, local union spokesperson stated that national employers walked out of the meeting and refused any further discussion on the matter.

The dispute is over plans to change long standing nationally

agreed conditions of service, including sickness benefit, annual leave and NHS charges.

Jim Barbour said that "No firefighter or control room staff want to take industrial action but we must face up to a deliberate premeditated and totally unnecessary attack on our conditions of service".

The National Executive of the fire brigade union have decided to recommend a ballot for strike action at their annual conference. If voted in favour of, action would be nation wide and take a start from the start of May.

Post office

LAST WEEK 128 staff from the distribution office in East Belfast walked out in unofficial action. The walk-outs were over health and safety issues and staffing levels.

One worker described the working conditions as ridiculous. "There were piles of work lying about the place as well as trolleys. It is only a matter of time before there is an accident. Also, East Belfast has one of the longest walking routes. This is bad enough without also being under staffed."

Workers have given management two weeks to start to alleviate the problems. If not, they are going to ballot for strike action.

A union source at Belfast's major depot in Tomb Street stated,

"Although secondary action is illegal, we will not be helping the mail reach East Belfast if action is voted for by our colleagues."

Galway Housing Action

THE LIVING City Group held a demonstration at Galway's city hall at the end of March. They were protesting at the non-implementation of recommendations made by the group regarding the new city development plan.

The Living City Group was set by the Labour Party last autumn to involve members of the public and community groups in the drawing up of the city development plan.

The group held an inaugural meeting in October which was attended by 200 people and held a further 5 meetings in the run up to last Monday. They made over 40 submissions to the development plan.

However none of the submissions were included in the plan.

The development plan was adopted by city council with only the Labour councillors voting against.

The protest was addressed by Michael D. Higgins and by a member of the SWP who pointed out that while it was very positive that Labour had organised it, more people should be brought onto the streets to show the disgust of the mass of the working class for the pathetic way in which our rulers have dealt with housing crisis.

Meanwhile the Housing Action Campaign are holding a public meeting on Thursday 15th of April at 8.30p.m in Richardsons Bar, Eyre Sq.

Community workers

SACKED community workers in North Belfast have accused the funding group Making Belfast Work of victimisation after being forced onto the dole.

To add insult to injury, the workers were forced to write their own redundancy notices.

Rita Ellis, who worked in the centre for twenty

years, said, "I have worked here throughout the darkest days of the troubles, and it is nothing short of a kick in the teeth. I actually had to sit down and type my own redundancy letter as well as those of colleagues I have worked alongside

for twenty years."

Making Belfast Work provides funding to various community groups and is obliged to plan a phased withdrawal so that groups can apply for various other funding.

But as Rita says, "In this case they simply abandoned us".

The centre's director, Vivienne Anderson says 'Money is being taken away from a place like North Belfast. It is being set aside to establish centres in the plush surroundings of the Malone Road'.

The community workers stated that they would like to ask the faceless bureaucrats what the logic there is in putting funds into job creation when at the same time they are putting people on the dole.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p Solidarity price £1

How the NATO bombing has brought disaster

WAR IN EUROPE



FULL STORY PAGES 6-7

We need £5 an hour

Minimum wage – it's not enough

THE NEW minimum wage legislation has now come into effect. Under the legislation workers between the age of 18 and 21 are entitled to just £3 an hour and workers over 21 get £3.60. Those under 18 are excluded altogether.

The bosses are screaming that it will damage industry in Britain and Northern Ireland. Yet they are happy to award themselves huge salaries.

SmithKline Beecham is handing chief executive Jim Leschy £93 million a year - or £496 every minute.

Leschy is getting more in one minute and 15 seconds than someone on a minimum wage will earn in a month.

In reality the minimum wage is not enough. It is a betrayal by Labour of millions of working class people who voted them into government. It will still leave Britain and Northern Ireland with the greatest numbers of low paid workers in Western Europe.

John, 19, who earns £2.90 an hour in a fast food outlet in Whiterock is often called into work on a casual basis. He says,

"I am set to get an extra few pence an hour. But it will not make much difference to me. When times are slack at work, I am told to sit out the back unpaid and then call in when it gets busy. So I will probably be left out the back more often if it hampers my bosses profits".

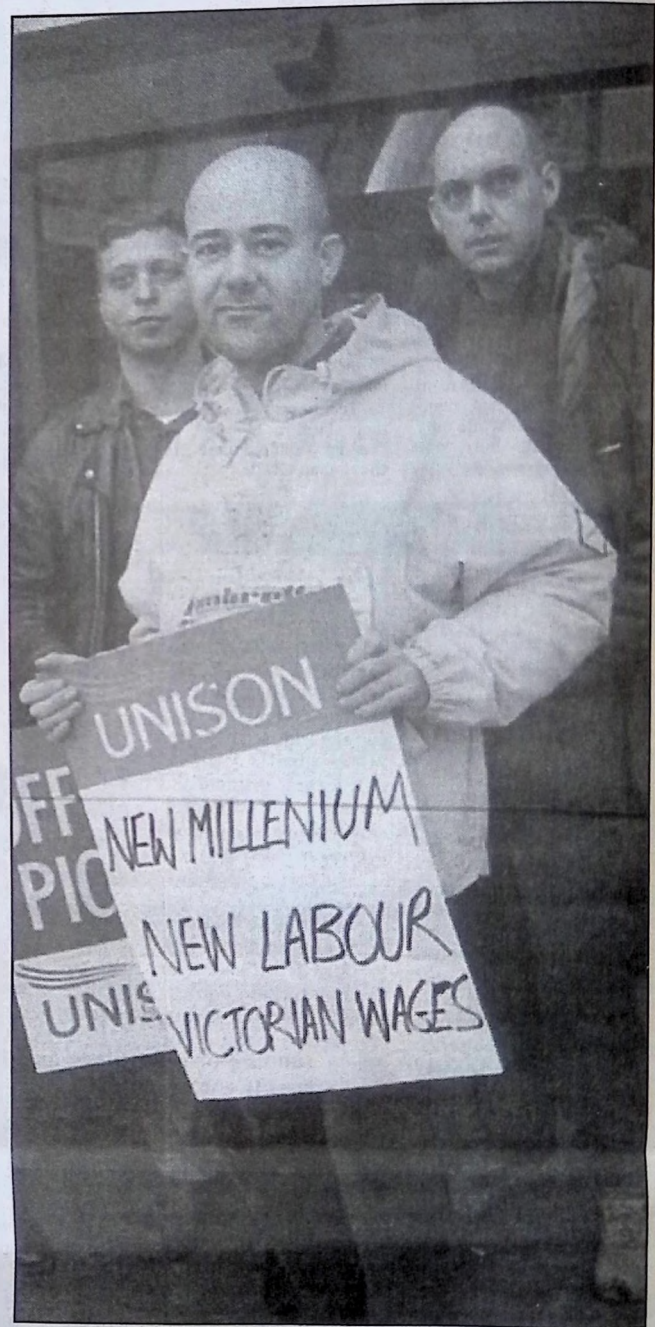
Trade unions in Northern Ireland sent a bus to a major demonstration in Newcastle on Tyne to demand a higher minimum wage.

Liam O'Bhroin of the Belfast Trades Council

who have endorsed the bus said,

"It is a fantastic initiative and we will urge all workers to attend the demo to take a stand against the disgraceful amount the minimum wage was set at"

Donations and endorsements for the bus came from the Derry Trades Council, Belfast Trades Council, FBU N.I. Region, Communication Workers Union Tomb street, NIPSA Branch 8, NAS/UWT Ashfield Girls school, and ATGWU Belfast City Council.



Organise to get minimum wage and more

WHEN TONY Blair was elected he promised he would make the bosses print their workers' hourly pay rate on their wages slips.

This would make it simple for workers to demand a

minimum wage. But after lobbying from the bosses Blair backed down.

He has also denied those in companies employing less than 20 workers the minimum wage.

The only way that workers can be guaranteed even £3.60 an hour is by joining the union.

We need a major drive throughout Northern Ireland to

recruit workers to the union. Once there is decent organisation thousands of workers will be able to go further and demand the £5 an hour minimum.

If you want any assistance in ending poverty wages and organising a union in your job, phone us on 01232 799204.

Will it cost jobs?

THE EMPLOYERS say that a minimum wage will cost jobs. But they could also cut back on their profits to pay up. The evidence does not bear out the employers' argument.

A study in the US found total employment in the fast food industry actually grew after a rise in the minimum wage.

A survey of fast food restaurants in Texas found that employers who complied with minimum wage legislation also took on more workers. A study commissioned by the Belgian government found that a minimum wage of £6 an hour would not account for any measurable employment losses.