

# Socialist Worker

inside

10 YEARS AFTER THE WALL CAME DOWN:  
HOPES THAT TURNED TO DUST



page 6-7

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

## We all need a 20% pay rise

# SHARE THE WEALTH

**CHARLIE McCREEVEY**, Minister for Finance, has almost £6 billion that he doesn't "know what to do with".



**INOUE** 'Share the Wealth' demo outside the Dail

**BIG BUSINESS** is making a fortune in the Celtic Tiger but they want to keep it all to themselves. This is what lies behind all the talk of "anarchy" and "chaos" whenever workers put in for decent wages.

It is nonsense. The fat cats have been on an orgy of greed over the past few years and now is the time to make them share the wealth.

■ In 1997, share values on the Dublin Stock exchange increased by a staggering £14 billion. It was all paper values, but if you had the paper and chose to sell shares, you made a fortune.

■ The profits of the Bank of Ireland have grown by 570 percent since 1990. Yet their tax bill is being cut to a mere 12.5 percent, even though they engaged in criminal evasion of tax.

### Planner

■ Building companies are making a 100 percent profit on every house they build according to a senior planner with the South Dublin County Council. The profits of Sisks grew by six times between 1994 and 1997.

But the building bosses will not pay for safety inspectors that could cut the death rate on their sites.

The only thing that is being controlled in the Celtic Tiger is wages. Profits, rents, property prices can all soar but workers are pegged down to miserable increases.

Workers should call a halt to this farce. The union leaders may like the sweet talk about social partnership but it is not delivering for us.

We all need a 20 percent pay rise to catch up on this boom. And if Charles McCreevy says that is too much, then ask him why he said TDs deserve a huge pay hike!



## America's silent war



Dick Spring

## Bankers love Labour

**WHEN DICK Spring** was leader of the Labour Party he claimed he was going to end the Golden Circle in Irish politics.

But there is a string of new evidence that Labour was part of that circle.

In 1996 the Woodchester Bank wrote off a £24,000 loan to four Labour "activists" by converting it to a political "donation" of £28,000 which represented the loan plus interest.

The four "activists" were Dick Spring, his advisor Fergus Finlay, accountant Greg Sparks and former Attorney General John Rogers.

★ Newspapers owned by Rupert Murdoch, such as the *Times*, constantly claim their super-rich proprietor does not influence editorial policy.

Funny then that the *Times* suddenly pulled a planned supplement recently dealing with business opportunities in Taiwan.

Could this have any connection with the following facts:

Chinese President Jiang Zemin was in London on an official visit recently. China claims Taiwan as part of its territory.

Rupert Murdoch has huge business interests in China and is hoping to make a series of lucrative deals to expand them further.

The "Woodchester Four" borrowed the money to fund the European Election campaign of Orla Guerin.

She was the candidate imposed by the Labour leadership as a rival to Bernie Malone, who was supported by the party membership.

### Modernise

Malone is no radical but was still considered too left wing for Spring who was attempting to "modernise" the Labour Party.

Labour's opposition to the Golden Circle led to its biggest ever vote in a general election.

But the party leaders immediately betrayed the thousands of workers who had voted for it by going into Coalition with Fianna Fail.

Labour leaders claim that they practise the "politics of the possible". In other words, it is better to be in Coalition with the right than not to have any say in government.

But how can Labour claim they were representing workers at the cabinet table when they were willing to accept donations from the very banks whose existence is based on ripping off workers?

THE US and Britain are running a silent war in Iraq.

One RTE correspondent recently described how she saw British planes blast a flock of sheep and murder three Iraqi children.

The war comes on top of a policy of strangling the country through sanctions.

Surveys from UNICEF and the United Nations' Children's Fund have found that one third of Iraqi children are now suffering from malnutrition.

The UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs believes that "fifty percent of rural people have no access to potable water and waste water treatment facilities have stopped functioning in most urban areas".

The reason given for this barbarity is that Iraq has refused to allow inspectors examine its weapons.

### Security

But the US Senate also passed a measure in 1997 to deny international inspection of US weapons "on grounds of national security".

The reality is that the US and Britain are holding up Iraq as an example of what hap-

pens to a country which defies their rule.

Their attacks are not primarily hurting Saddam Hussein, but millions of innocent people who are dying because of their sanctions and war.

During the Balkans war there was much talk about NATO's humanitarian mission.

But when it comes to dominating the oil supplies of the Middle East, the only language the Western powers use is the language of the colonial brute

**NO DEPORTATIONS; NO VOUCHERS;**

# Stop FF's racist attacks



Protesters outside racist Aine Ni Chonail's meeting in Maynooth last year

**THE Government is stepping up its racist attacks on the rights of asylum seekers.**

Its latest proposals are all based on a pack of racist lies put out by Justice Minister John O'Donoghue.

This foul propaganda is designed to deflect anger at corruption away from Fianna Fail and onto innocent people who come here to flee oppression.

O'Donoghue's disgusting plans include:  
 ■ Restricting the right to residency of an asylum seeker whose child is born in Ireland.

This is based on the lie that female refugees are coming here simply to give birth so that they can claim citizenship.

But why would a heavily pregnant woman come here to give birth in a country where she could not speak the language unless she was

fleeing terrible circumstances?

The new restriction is sheer hypocrisy from a government that signed up to the Good Friday Agreement which guarantees the right of anyone born in Ireland to be "part of the Irish nation".

### Vouchers

■ Forcing asylum seekers to use vouchers to buy food and other essentials while only allowing them a cash payment of as little as £5 a week.

This will result in a form of apartheid with asylum seekers being treated differently in shops and other public places.

What is there to stop a racist shopkeeper from refusing to accept these vouchers?

■ Dispersing asylum seekers outside of Dublin.

This could result in new asylum seekers being isolated from family and friends

who are already living in the capital.

Unfortunately the Irish Refugee Council has not objected to dispersal even saying it would "take the pressure off parts of Dublin that are bearing more than their fair share".

*But this panders to the dangerous myth that asylum seekers are a "problem" who have to be shared out around the country.*

It is often claimed that racism is provoked by too many foreigners living in

the poorer parts of Dublin.

But think of the outrage if the British government said there were too many Irish people living in Kilburn and that they would have to be "dispersed"?

### Criminals

■ Fingerprinting asylum seekers coming into the country.

This will result in refugees being further treated like criminals.

John O'Donoghue

claims that 90 percent of asylum seekers are "bogus" and it is already predicted that up to 70 percent of asylum seekers will be deported to their country of origin.

This racism comes from the same government which recently welcomed Kosovan refugees to Ireland.

Nobody suggested that these refugees were bogus. Instead they were being used as pawns to justify the government's support for NATO's bloody war in the Balkans.

# Fascist threat

**A student debating society in UCC has invited a Nazi historian, David Irving, to speak.**

Irving tried to visit Irish universities in 1993 but was stopped by huge protests from the Anti-Nazi League and other groups.

Irving has said that, "You can call me a mild fascist if you like... I visited Hitler's eyrie at Berchtesgarden. I regard it as a shrine."

He denies that the Holocaust took place and has even said that "Jews are very foolish not to abandon the gas chamber theory while they still have time."

For the past thirty years

Irving has been associated with fascist groups such as the British National Party and has helped them to recruit.

### Victory

He welcomed the election victory of a BNP candidate in the East End of London. After this election victory racist attacks in the area increased.

If Irving gets away with speaking in UCC, he will try again to tour Irish universities to help establish a Nazi group here.

The Nazis believe that the government attacks on refugees has created a climate that can help them establish an organisation here.

Ireland is the only country in the EU where there is no fascist party.

Stopping Irving's meeting in Cork is a way of making sure it stays like that.

## Free Mumia now

A JUDGE has ordered a stay of execution for Mumia-Abu Jamal, the former Black Panther on death row in the US. Mumia, who was framed for the killing of a police officer, had been given a date for execution — December 2nd. But now Judge Yohn has allowed additional hearings.

The stay does not mean that Mumia is free or even that a new trial will be held. Instead it puts off the planned state execution until next year. That makes it vital that protests are kept up to stop the killing of Mumia, whose "crime" was to stand up to the authorities and criticise police brutality.

Rush messages of support to the Campaign Against the Death Penalty, c/o PO Box 16085, Chicago, Illinois 60616, USA

**JOIN THE PROTEST Monday 15th November, Assemble 6.30pm Gates of UCC**



**what we think**

# Will peace talks bring prosperity?

**MOST PEOPLE in Northern Ireland hope that the recent talks result in Adams and Trimble implementing the Belfast Agreement. It is seen as a way of guaranteeing permanent peace.**

But hopes that the Assembly will signal a new beginning are likely to be dashed very quickly.

Firstly, the executive is likely to be extremely unstable.

There is no guarantee that Trimble will be able to get the support of even his own Assembly members.

The Unionist party is deeply split between those who want to follow the dictates of big business and those who know that treating

Catholics as equals undermines the whole foundation of Unionism.

The structure of the new Assembly, where every issue has to be agreed by a majority of 'each community', hands enormous leverage to the hard-right of Unionism to search for issues that can be used to fan the flames of sectarian division.

**Secondly all the main parties want to increase handouts for big businesses and lower corporate tax rates to compete with low taxes in the Celtic Tiger.**

The flip side of that is low wages, continued cuts in public spending and no guarantee of trade union rights for workers.

All that the new Assembly offers is a recipe for putting workers in Northern Ireland on the global treadmill of endless flexibility and competitiveness.

Instead of looking for a patched up compromise between communal politicians at the top, we need unity between Catholic and Protestant workers to fight them.

**Logic**

This means challenging the logic of capitalism, which destroys the lives of millions when it can't make a profit from them.

It also means demanding the nationalisation of Harland and Wolf which is now threatened by closure.

And it means refusing to accept that there is no money for jobs or social services when billions are wasted each year on the arms industry.

That is the socialist alternative that is urgently needed in Northern Ireland.



**350 people attended Marxism at the Millennium. It was one of the biggest gatherings of socialists in years.**

**Chris Bamberly along-side other leading socialists, discussing Socialism into the Millenium**

'There is an anti-capitalist mood about'. That is how one speaker described why revolutionary socialist ideas are making a big come back.

Thousands of people are demanding that Western governments cancel the Third World debt. They do not believe the talk of 'humanitarian interventions' when it comes from the biggest arms dealers. They know that if capitalism is not overthrown, it can destroy our planet.

**The challenge now is to translate that mood into a fighting force.**

At the end of Marxism at the Millennium, 20 people joined the Socialist Workers Party. But there are scores more who are looking for a real socialist alternative. That is why the SWP is launching a major drive to increase its size and influence.

If you are interested in getting involved, fill in the accompanying form.

**Poll shows 33% agree...**

## Partnership increases divisions

ACCORDING TO a recent MRBI poll, one third of the population believe that social partnership has helped to increase the gap between rich and poor. A mere 19 percent believed it had reduced the gap.

The ESRI, the politicians, the employers and the union leaders all claim that the partnership deals have

helped to combat social exclusion.

But despite the propaganda, the majority of those who felt partnership deals made any difference agreed with Socialist Worker's argument that they have produced a 'trickle-up effect'

**Attack**

All of this throws into sharp relief the disgraceful attack that Des Geraghty, the vice President of SIPTU, made on public sector workers.

Stoking up divisions between workers he claimed that private sector workers would not "sit back and see public sector workers going in for your special and your other special".

But private sector workers do not lose out if nurses or firefighters get an increase.

When the fire-fighters won 9 percent, it raised the sights of all workers so they began asking why they should not also get a rise.

This is all denounced

by Geraghty as "sectionalism" and as "a descent into dog eat dog capitalism".

**Surplus**

**But how else are workers to win back some of the huge surplus created by the Celtic Tiger?**

Social partnership has cut the link between pay and profits, and between pay and productivity.

The only way workers can make up ground is through relativity claims.

It is social partnership that has produced a dog eat dog form of capitalism where the rich grow richer.

Today Ireland has the second highest numbers of workers on low pay of any industrialised country — just behind the US.

The large minority who think that partnership has benefitted the rich need a political voice.

They will not find it in Des Geraghty's Labour Party. They need to look to real socialists.

## Join the Socialists

Name.....

Address.....

Tel. No.....

E-mail.....

- I want to join the SWP
- I want more info
- I want to get *Socialist Worker* every fortnight

Return to SWP, P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8  
Tel: (01) 8722682





## Chechnya

# Russia follows in NATO's footsteps

**BOMBS SMASHED** into a refugee convoy, slaughtering at least 25 civilians and injuring over 150 people. This could have been a scene of horror from NATO's war in the Balkans.

But the bombing happened this October and is just the latest atrocity in Russia's increasingly horrific war against Chechnya.

The Red Cross said the refugee convoy was clearly marked and visible from the air.

For the last two months Russian bombs have been relentlessly pounding Chechnya's capital, Grozny, and other towns and villages across the country.

Russia is deliberately copying the tactics NATO used in its bombing of Serbia and Kosovo earlier this year.

**Western diplomats maintain that the issue is "an internal matter" for Russia. Russia claims it is fighting a war against Islamic "terrorists".**

exchanges.

Over 40 people were killed in the bombing of a passenger bus. Ordinary civilians face living without electricity and gas, and with scant food supplies.

The war has created 200,000 refugees, who have fled the country because of the bombing, according to the Red Cross.

The United Nations estimates that one third of Chechnya's population of just over a million have been driven from their homes since the bombing started.

The refugees are living in squalid and freezing conditions in makeshift tents.

## Civilian

Like NATO, Russia is attempting to minimise casualties among its own troops by indiscriminately bombing civilian targets.

Two weeks ago Russia bombed a marketplace in Grozny, where hundreds of ordinary people were doing their shopping.

The attack mirrored NATO's bombing of Nis market in Serbia. Over 60 people were slaughtered.

One eyewitness said, "I saw a man engulfed in flames running across the market. There are so many corpses and injured."

The same day Russian bombs also hit a nearby maternity hospital and a mosque, killing even more.

The wounded lay in pools of blood and dirt in Grozny's central hospital, where facilities have been devastated.

Yet, in a series of lies to justify its slaughter, the Russian government claimed the marketplace was an "arms bazaar".

Like NATO, Russia has bombed bridges, roads, oil refineries and telephone

## Outcry

Yet despite the indiscriminate slaughter and the hundreds of thousands of refugees, there has been no outcry from the leaders of the NATO countries.

Western diplomats maintain that the issue is "an internal matter" for Russia. Russia claims it is fighting a war against Islamic "terrorists".

But the reality is that Russia is fighting a war to reassert its dominance in an area which contains the oil fields of the Caspian Sea.



*Chechen women trying to escape to Ingushetia*

# A war of vengeance

**THE WAR** in Chechnya reflects internal power games inside the Russian government.

Yeltsin's government has been deeply unpopular, especially since the

devastation caused by last year's economic collapse.

Russian rulers' problems also deepened last week when the prime minister of Armenia, Vazgen Sarkisyan, and seven members of the Armenian parliament were gunned down in

their parliament.

The assassination is likely to add to the growing instability in the Caucasus area of the former Soviet Union.

Key figures in Russia's war against Chechnya are Generals Gernady Troshch, Vladimir Shamanov and Kvashnin who are all part of a close-knit group who blame the Kremlin for the end of the war in 1994-96.

They are resolved to redeem Russia's battered military pride.

The instability in Russia has allowed the military to emerge as the dominant force in Russian politics at the moment.

A former senior Russian army officer and a current mediator in the conflict said recently that "the Generals are telling the politicians 'If you stop us now it will be treason'."

The longer the war continues, the weaker the government is becoming. Yeltsin

## Zimbabwe

## Health workers take on Mugabe

**DOCTORS** IN Zimbabwe, southern Africa, have won big concessions from the government after a strike lasting over a month. They fought not only for better pay but also for better patient care.

Zimbabwe's health service is in crisis. The government's pro-market policies and its attempts to cut back on welfare mean that the most basic equipment is in short supply.

Patients have to pay for treatment and drugs.

This is particularly cruel in a country where

one in four adults are HIV positive.

Patients frequently die needlessly and blood transfusions are restricted to those who can afford the high price.

## Conditions

At the end of September 400 junior doctors refused to work. They demanded a rise in their salaries (presently \$240 a month) and better hospital conditions.

Most qualified doctors joined the action a fortnight later.

Nurses and radiologists were preparing to get involved in the campaign when President Mugabe's government caved in and accepted many of the doctors' demands.

However all of Zimbabwe's unions are gearing up for a battle against the proposed AIDS levy.

The government wants to raise workers' tax by three percent to fund extra AIDS care.

The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (the equivalent of the ICTU) agrees that extra funding is needed, but that it should come from reducing the military budget and taxing the rich.

## Blame

Yeltsin's position is that if the war goes well that's great for him. If it doesn't he'll just blame the Generals.

But this could become more difficult.

The Russian Defence Minister could see a challenge to his power from General Kvashnin.

He sees Chechnya as his ticket into government, threatening politicians with civil war if the army is curbed.

The number of refugees is increasing daily and is only set to get worse as the battle for power in Russia gets increasingly ruthless.

## Refuses

The ZCTU assistant secretary Nicholas Mudzen-gerere said, "The government can spend millions on a war in the Congo but refuses to help its own people to survive."

"Why is the military budget much bigger than the health budget?"

"This government has got its priorities wrong and our members are saying that they are ready to use any methods to defend their living standards."

## Chechnya's bloody history

**Chechnya has a history of fighting imperialism.** In 1864, the area of Chechnya and Dagestan was conquered by the Tsar's army.

Following the Bolshevik Revolution the area was given independence and a militia from the Caucasus successfully defeated the Tsarist forces.

The Mountainous Republic of the USSR was then formed.

When Stalin sent the Red Army in to impose collectivisation in the 1930's, the people rose once more in an

attempt to defeat their occupiers.

As the USSR was disintegrating in the early 1990s, oil was discovered there.

## Control

A former general in the Russian Air Force, then declared independence, seeking control of the vast oil reserves in that part of the Caucasus.

He whipped up nationalist feeling, appealing to the idea of Chechnya as an ancient mountain race.

When the USSR collapsed, democracy and prosperity for all were

promised. Instead, the economy of the Russian Federation is in tatters and Yeltsin showed how much he values democracy by shelling the parliament.

He first tried to invade Chechnya in 1992, but the Kremlin stopped him.

The war between '94 and '96 saw the Russian army defeated by Chechen guerrillas, but 80,000 people were slaughtered and over one third of the country's one million people fled their homes.

But Chechen resistance humiliated the Russian army and Chechnya became an "autonomous republic". The military are now determined to extract their revenge.



## Eamonn McCann

# Backing up the bigots

NEXT YEAR could see the finest St. Patrick's Day New York has ever known. It will mark the 10th anniversary of the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organisation's (ILGO) campaign to be allowed to take part in the parade down Fifth Avenue. And ILGO promises a larger-than-ever turn-out to defy the bigots' ban.

Plans are under way for gay delegations from North and South to travel to New York for the occasion. March 17th 2000 could be remembered as the day when so many Irish lesbians and gays gathered in New York in such a militant frame of mind that the NYPD and the Ancient Order of Homophobes were forced to back off.

For the past decade, not only have lesbians and gays been banned from the NY parade, they haven't been allowed to hold a march in protest against their exclusion! Last year, again, dozens of lesbians and gays were lifted off the streets and carted away in the aptly named Paddy-wagons.

### Clout

The New York parade, like many Paddy's Day marches in major centres in the US, has been run by the Ancient Order of Hibernians since the last century. Politically, the AOH means next to nothing in Ireland now, but it still wields considerable clout in Irish-American circles.

And it uses this influence to maintain and consolidate an extreme Right-wing — some would say 19th century view of what constitutes Irishness.

For decades, the AOH excluded women from the march. Until recently, Afro-Americans were banned. The particular argument it now uses against gays testifies to the unsavoury nature of the organisation to this day.

The ban has been taken to the courts in both New York and Boston, where the AOH has argued that the "Irish National Holiday" is a specifically Roman Catholic affair; that the Catholic Church has condemned homosexuality; and that they would therefore be denied their rights as Catholics if forced to march in the company of gay people. This argument has been upheld in the courts.

As Dublin's *Gay Community News* comments this month, the argument clearly implies that "being Irish means being Catholic and bigoted".

It goes without saying that Irish socialists and all opponents of bigotry will fully support the ILGO protests next March and do what we can, to help fund-raise, for example, to send delegations to New York. But there are other implications, too.

The role of Irish-America in shaping the Peace Process is well-known. And the AOH has been a major player, in turn, in the Irish-American effort.

So, Nationalists who have travelled to the US looking for support have had to take account of the AOH's views. This has — or at least it should have — placed Nationalists who advertise themselves as supporters of gay rights in a quandary. But, in fact, there have been very few signs of Nationalist leaders having to agonise about what line to take.

### Prominent

Over the 10 years of ILGO's fight, not one prominent leader of Irish Nationalism has publicly endorsed their struggle. Every year, Irish politicians from North and South jet to New York to be seen in the AOH parade: their silence signals complicity in the organisers' bigotry.

Five years ago, ILGO made a direct approach to Gerry Adams. But instead of issuing an unambiguous condemnation of AOH bigotry, the Sinn Fein president issued a statement which essentially had no meaning at all. He supported "equality" and "tolerance" in general terms — but simply ignored the AOH ban on gays.

As to why Adams would refuse to support gay rights groups against a bunch of sectarian homophobes, we need look no further than the recent \$1,000-dollar a plate fund-raiser which he addressed at a Manhattan Hotel. The audience was stuffed with AOH members and supporters.

There, amid the dickie-bows and rosary beads, the idea that it's possible to play along with right-wing reactionaries for the sake of one political project, while remaining otherwise unaffected by their ideas, was seen as the self-serving delusion which it is.

## The wealth divide in education:

# Abolish the 11-plus

LAST WEEK 18,000 primary school children in Northern Ireland sat the first part of the 11-plus. The results of the tests decide whether children get entry to grammar schools. Around 75 per cent of them will fail.

The 11-plus was abolished in the rest of Britain in the 1970's but was maintained in Northern Ireland.

*Socialist Worker* spoke to teachers about the exam and why it should be abolished.

Cathy is a teacher at a secondary school in East Belfast. "The 11-plus is an unfair system and it's out of date.

"It is based on the idea that 25 percent of children are intelligent and deserve a higher standard of education and the other 75 percent are just factory fodder. Failing the exam is a hammer blow to a child's self-esteem and a constant reminder of failure."

Mark is a teacher in Belfast. "The exam puts enormous pressure on children. Kids learn and develop at different speeds and the 11-plus is based on a discredited idea that intelligence is something natural that you can measure.

"What it really does is pigeon-hole children and brands most of them as failures."

John is a teacher at a secondary school in West Belfast. "The 11-plus only examines kids in English, Maths and Science.

"But now all the children end up studying the same curriculum anyway whether they go to grammar school or a secondary school. They all do the same GCSE's.

"But with the 11-plus, any other abilities in music or art or languages just aren't taken into account. Kids are made to feel that their talents are worthless."



## Poverty is at the root of failure

"THERE IS a real wealth divide in the 11-plus results," said Cathy.

"Wealthy parents regularly pay for private tutors to help their kids pass the exam. Primary schools in deprived areas have very poor resources and parents just don't have that option."

"Private tutoring just shows that it is about being able to do an exam," said John. "It's not a measure of intelligence. It's farcical."

### Attitude

Mark made the connection between the general attitude of New Labour to education and the refusal to abolish the 11-plus.

"New Labour have continued many of the right-wing ideas that the Tories had about education.

"Blair is constantly talking about raising standards and says that 'poverty is no excuse for failure'. But it is the plain fact that poverty is still the single biggest influence in a child's education."

"Every study of exam results shows that there is a perfect match between the results and the poverty of the area that the school is in. What is needed is more resources for schools in poor areas."

"It is a fact that schools in deprived areas just don't have the resources," Cathy said.

"The schools with the worst results are in areas like the Falls Road, the Shankill and Creggan in Derry.

"Kids in poor areas often have a lot of other problems and you need extra resources to deal with that.

"In our own school we need classroom assistants and a full time counsellor to give extra encouragement to kids with learning difficulties and problems at home. But they aren't there."

"The 11-plus should be abolished," said Mark.

"I think the teaching unions should be leading the campaign to get rid of it.

"It's about challenging that old elitist view of education and demanding more public funding for education."

Only one in four of these children will pass their 11-plus

## Collusion continues

THE discovery of 300 military files on republicans in an Orange Hall in Stonyford County Antrim shows that co-operation between the British military and loyalist paramilitaries is continuing.

A *Sunday Times* investigation claimed that the files are likely to have come from a section of British military intelligence, and not through the usual sources in the locally recruited Royal Irish Regiment.

The Orange

Order attempted to distance itself from the find, saying that the Orange Hall was used by many groups in the local community.

But at least two of the people arrested are prominent members of the local Orange Order.

The Orange Volunteers, the group who had the files, emerged directly out of the Drumcree crisis.

They have sought to wreck the peace agreement and, along with groups like the LVF and the Red Hand Defenders, have carried out hundreds of sectarian pipe-bomb and

petrol bomb attacks since 1997.

Two days before last week's find, one of the men responsible for the murder of the three Quinn children in Ballymoney during the Drumcree crisis in July 1998 was found guilty.

The Orange Order and local DUP politicians all tried to claim that the murder had nothing to do with Drumcree.

But the murder exposed the violence at the rotten heart of Orangeism and led to a massive collapse in support for the Drumcree stand-off.



# Regimes were not socialist

MANY COMMENTATORS claimed the collapse of the Stalinist regimes was the end of socialism. But Tony Cliff, a founding member of the Socialist Workers Party, was one of the first to argue that Russia was a state capitalist society, with a ruling class exploiting the working class as in the West. Here are his views on why "communism" collapsed.

**WHEN A person dies, the autopsy reveals the nature of their illness.**

by TONY CLIFF

The collapse of the Stalinist regimes in Russia and Eastern Europe makes it possible to be absolutely clear about the nature of those regimes.

There was no resistance to the collapse from the mass of people. They didn't defend the system. That shows they didn't believe the regimes had anything to do with socialism or workers' power.

There was almost no resistance from the rulers either. If the system had been changing fundamentally, the rulers would have defended their privileges.

The fact is that the same people who used to be the ruling bureaucrats are managing the same factories they used to run, but now as private companies.

The rulers knew that nothing was changing qualitatively for them. That's why the shift could take place with no real resistance. If the rulers thought they were moving to a completely different society then there would have been resistance.

In 1929 Stalin said that in ten years time he would accomplish the industrial revolution. You should remember that in 1928 Russian industrial production was less than that of little Belgium.

Twenty years later Russia was the second biggest industrial power in Europe. How did they achieve it?

## Judge

You have to look not at what Stalin said, but what he did. After all, you don't judge the Spanish Inquisition by quotations from the Sermon on the Mount.

The position of Russia at the end of the 1920s when Stalin's regime fully established itself was like someone trapped in a fight with a mad dog.

In any fight there has to be a symmetry between the fighters. If I kill the dog the symmetry is broken and the situation resolved. If the dog kills me it is broken too and the situation resolved, but less happily for me.

But what happens if you live for years in the same room with a mad dog, and you can't kill him and he can't kill you? Before long you wouldn't know who was the mad dog. We'd look exactly the same!

Capitalist accumulation is the result of abstinence imposed on the majority by a minority. In Britain's industrialisation it wasn't true that people said alright, let's tighten our belts to build industry, then another notch to build railways, another notch to build the army.

No. The minority controlled the belt of the majority and the minority tightened it, one notch for industry, one for railways, one of the army — and one more for themselves because they control the bloody belt.

In Russia the rulers accumulated capital, built a military machine and did it in the same way the British did, but in the most cruel way possible because they did it more quickly and were late comers.

*In Britain it took 100 years full of sweat and blood and appalling conditions for the working class. It took just 20 years in Russia. It took three centuries in Britain to remove the peasants from the land. In Russia it took three years under Stalin.*

Britain was helped by the slave trade. The walls of Bristol, Liverpool, the City of London are covered with the blood of slavery. In Russia they had the gulag, and you can see how it fits into the picture.

That is basically what the theory of state capitalism is about. The events of ten years ago confirmed it.

Unlike those on the left who thought Russia was socialist in some way we were not demoralised by the collapse of the Stalinist regime.

For us there is no socialism independent of working class action. Socialism cannot be delivered from above.

You can have capitalism with or without democracy. But socialism, because it is about collective control by workers, cannot exist without democracy. Democracy is the heart of the thing.

# The hope turned to dust

## THE SIGHT of rejoicing people tearing down the Berlin Wall sums up for many the hopes of the 1989 Eastern European revolutions.

They demonstrated the potential of the mass of ordinary people to rise up and challenge even the most repressive regimes.

Margaret Thatcher said, "The new democracies of Eastern Europe can look forward to a prosperous future bolstered by a helping hand from the more established market economies."

*Yet ten years on the hopes of so many of those who fought for their freedom have been turned to dust.*

The East European regimes and the USSR were already in or sliding into crisis in the years before 1989.

But the market has turned that crisis into a catastrophe. The raw figures tell their own story.

The East European economies suffered a 20 percent decline in output in the early years of the transition to the market.

The slump has been deepest in the former countries of the Russian Empire. The Ukrainian economy is a third as big as it was in 1989. Russia's economy has shrunk by half.

Hungary and the Czech Republic have experienced economic growth in recent years, but that has not made up for the damage done in

the early 1990s. Both countries' economies are 5 percent smaller than in 1989.

The economic dislocation has brought an immense social crisis in its wake. This has hit even Poland, whose economy has recorded significant net economic growth over the last decade.

Official unemployment in Poland has risen from 6 to 10 percent. One in four people lives in poverty and the teenage suicide rate has more than doubled.

## Scale

The scale of that disaster was graphically spelt out in a report by the United Nations' UNICEF agency earlier this year.

It concluded that 100 million children "were in danger from war, poverty, disease and other social blights" in Eastern Europe.

The UN agency has also noted "significant drops in life expectancy" in Bulgaria and Romania. People are

also dying younger in Armenia, Belarus, Latvia and Lithuania, states which broke away from the Russian Empire.

Life expectancy for Russian men has fallen from 62 to 58 years since 1980.

"What we are arguing", said one of the report's authors, "is that the transition to market economies in the region is the biggest killer we have seen in the 20th century, if you take out famine and wars."

*"The sudden shock and what it did to the system has effectively meant that five million Russian men's lives have been lost in the 1990s."*

One of the most enduring images from ten years ago is of the appalling network of state run orphanages in Romania, where children were kept in barbaric conditions.

In the wake of the overthrow of the Ceausescu regime at Christmas 1989, aid agencies appealed desperately for funds to help

orphans in Romania.

Most of those orphanages are now gone, but life for thousands of street children in Romania is as desperate as ever.

A BBC report earlier this year found hundreds of children living on the streets of the capital, Bucharest.

As temperatures dropped to 20 minus Celsius they were forced to sleep in sewers to keep warm.



West Berliners tearing down the wall

# A revolt b

## THE COLLAPSE of the Stalinist regimes was a result of both popular discontent from below, and also crisis about the way forward among the Stalinist ruling class.

By the 1980s the Stalinist economies were stagnating and unable to compete with the West. Sections of the ruling class were looking to open their economies up to the market and

move towards closer integration of the world economy.

In Russia Mikhail Gorbachev about economic restructuring, known as "perestroika", designed to make Soviet industry more competitive.

In order to help push this restructuring through, Gorbachev signalled the limited opening up of political structures in the Soviet Union, known as "glasnost".

But glasnost unleashed social forces that would deepen the crisis

elsewhere threw their support behind the politicians who advocate Thatcherite style privatisation and "shock therapy" market reforms.

## Reality

Today the reality of the adoption of the market has meant vast swathes of poverty across Eastern Europe. The ideology of the market has become a fraud. Workers in Eastern Europe have already been

forced to fight in order to defend their living standards.

Earlier this year Poland, for example, nurses struck to take on the government over their derisory pay.

The hope is that in the process of such struggles in future workers will discover the genuine tradition of revolutionary socialism based not on the grotesque example of Stalinism, but on real workers' democracy from below.

Free market fantasy

A CENTRAL weakness in the 1989 "revolutions" was that the leaders of the opposition movements all accepted the ideology that market capitalism was the only way to guarantee democracy and freedom.

The vast majority of people went along with the ideology of the market.

It seemed to offer people an alternative to the old discredited order.

Even the leaders of the strikes which took place in Poland and Russia and



me down...10 years after

# Does that



West Berliners tearing down the wall

# olt blown off course

move towards closer integration into the world economy.

In Russia Mikhail Gorbachev set about economic restructuring, known as "perestroika", designed to make Soviet industry more competitive.

In order to help push this restructuring through, Gorbachev signalled the limited opening up of political structures in the Soviet Union, known as "glasnost".

But glasnost unleashed social forces that would deepen the crisis for

forced to fight in order to defend their living standards.

Earlier this year in Poland, for example, nurses struck to take on the government over their derisory pay.

The hope is that in the process of such struggles in future workers will discover the genuine tradition of revolutionary socialism based not on the grotesque example of Stalinism, but on real workers' democracy from below.

the ruling class and eventually threaten the Soviet state itself. This process happened on a much more rapid scale in the Soviet Union's satellite states in Eastern Europe in 1989.

The ruling class across Eastern Europe had been shaken by the revolutionary upsurge of workers' struggle led by Solidarity which had paralysed Poland in 1980-1.

The wave of strikes and workers' occupations developed into a movement which threatened the entire Polish regime.

Solidarity was eventually crushed and driven underground by a military coup at the end of 1981. But the revolt created shock waves in the ruling class of Russia and the Eastern European states.

They were terrified that such a revolt would be repeated and that in future they would not be able to contain it.

When workers' struggle erupted once again in Poland in 1988, it created a bitter debate in ruling circles on how they could preserve their rule.

The strikes in 1988 were based in the mines and were on a much smaller scale than in 1989-91. They were not enough to break the ruling class.

But the prospect of revolt from

below pushed the Stalinist leaders into seeing ways to incorporate the opposition.

Then in July 1989 a huge wave of miners' strikes swept across Russia. The strikes terrified Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

He called the strikes "the worst ordeal to befall our country in four years of restructuring".

In the face of such revolt the Stalinist ruling classes were forced to concede changes on a far wider scale than they had wanted to.

## Elections

The most hated Communist leaders from the past were removed from office. There were political changes like the introduction of parliamentary elections and other democratic reforms. These were important gains.

But despite the retreat of the old Stalinists, the ruling class preserved key positions of power for themselves. The same social group, but without its old figureheads and secret police forces, remained in power.

While government ministers changed faces, the police and the armed forces remained. Many of the

old bosses took up the slogans of "democracy" and used them to further their own interests and to maintain their positions. Many became budding entrepreneurs hoping to enrich themselves as state industries were sold off and market reforms introduced.

What was needed was a social revolution which swept away the ruling class and fundamentally reshaped society.

Such a revolution is what happened, for example, in Russia in 1917 when workers seized control. It also happened in France in 1789 when the old feudal order was swept away.

But there are other kinds of "revolution" that have a different character. Italian revolutionary Antonio Gramsci called some of them "passive revolutions", those where the ruling classes conceded reforms in order to preserve their essential positions.

This was the process, which took place across Eastern Europe in 1989. In many countries the decisive political changes were negotiated by the old governments, army generals and big industrialists at "round table" discussions with dissidents and leaders of the opposition.

In all of the countries the changes did not go far enough.

## what do socialists say?

### Do revolutions always have to end in tyranny?

**"SOCIETY MAY be in a mess, but a revolution would produce a new tyranny."**

That is one of the most common objections to the idea of revolution.

Defenders of capitalism said the monstrous societies of Eastern Europe and Russia which collapsed in 1989 were the inevitable result of workers' revolution.

But those whose privileges would be threatened by mass uprisings have always claimed that revolutions lead to tyranny.

For example, they claim the English Revolution of the 17th century led only to the establishment of a dictatorship under Oliver Cromwell and a pointless civil war.

But, by any measure, society in England was freer in the decades after the revolution than it was before.

A host of feudal restrictions were swept away. There were the beginnings of parliamentary democracy.

Later mass struggles, which at times verged on revolution, extended the vote to ordinary people.

The same is true of the French Revolution of 1789. Before it the aristocracy, monarchy and church dominated society.

Nineteenth century France, however, saw greater freedom, the growth of political organisation among workers and the poor, and the spread of forward looking ideas.

But the revolutions were led by people who wanted to replace one exploiting class, the landed aristocracy, with another, the capitalists.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 was different. Capitalism had already permeated

Russia even though most people still lived on the land. The working class led the revolution, drawing the peasantry in behind them.

Mass strikes, mutinies and demonstrations broke out in February 1917. This first revolution overthrew the Tsar, whose royal family had ruled for centuries.

It ushered in a provisional government that hoped to continue Russia's participation in the First World War, prevent peasants from seizing the land and shore up the capitalists' power.

But the February Revolution also threw up mass organisations of workers.

These workers' councils (soviets in Russian) were made up of delegates from factories, workplaces and working class districts.

They pointed to a new way of running society through collective and democratically organised workers' power.

The party which stood for workers taking power, the Bolsheviks, progressively won a majority in the soviets.

The Bolsheviks were able to lead a second revolution in October 1917 which shattered the old state machine and put the soviets in power.

It was the most democratic act in history. Delegates to the workers' councils were instantly recallable.

If they did not represent the views of those who elected them, they could be removed.

There was an enormous explosion of popular organisation in all areas of life.

There were new freedoms for women and Jews, who had faced the most appalling oppression under Tsarism.

The revolution

offered the greatest hope to humanity. It not only offered workers' control of their lives but an end to all forms of oppression and exploitation.

But Russia was an isolated and backward country. As the revolution's two great leaders, Lenin and Trotsky argued, it was impossible to create an island of socialism in a hostile capitalist world.

The Russian Revolution did spark a wave of revolutionary upsurges across Europe. In Germany the equivalent of the Tsar was overthrown in November 1918.

## Influential

But there nowhere existed a working class party like the Bolsheviks which was influential enough and understood the need for workers themselves to run society.

The capitalist rulers held on, crushed workers' opposition and encircled the fledgling workers' state in Russia.

It was under those conditions that Stalin was able to seize power.

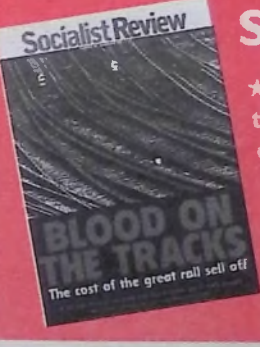
His rise was not a continuation of the Russian Revolution. It was a counter-revolution that butchered the old Bolshevik leaders of 1917.

The failure of the Russian Revolution to spread across Europe, particularly to Germany, sowed the seeds for counter-revolution.

Many of the movements which fought for revolution were crushed using the most tyrannical methods.

It is not workers' revolution that brings tyranny, but the defeat of revolution and the continuation of capitalist power.

by KEVIN OVENDEN



### Socialist Review

- ★ Blood on the tracks — the cost of the great rail sell off
- ★ Ten years after the fall of the wall: East Europeans tell us what's changed
- ★ Lindsey German asks, are men behaving badly?

From your Socialist Worker seller or £2 from P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8



# Another beef scare shows...

by SIMON  
BASKETTER

# THE POISON OF FOOD PROFITS

**T**HE FOOD companies are slowly poisoning us. This is the only sensible conclusion to draw when yet another food scandal breaks.

The latest is that French farmers have been feeding human excrement to their cows. While the British tabloids tried to whip up a trade war, the reality is that this is just the latest in a long line of horror stories about the food we eat.

Earlier this year Belgium was discovered to have fed poisonous chemicals to pigs and chickens, contaminating all the meat and products made with eggs.

## Growth

Several studies have shown that Irish bacon is full of growth promoting hormones that are damaging to human health.

*In Ireland the number of reported bacterial food poisoning cases is soaring. There was a 76 per cent jump in the number of bacterial food poisoning cases reported during the first seven months of the year. A total of 1,060 cases were identified by the health boards.*

367 people were infected in the first six months of this year with dangerous forms of salmonella.

These figures from the Department of Health are a low estimate. They themselves acknowledge that there are over 20,000 cases of fairly serious food poisoning every year.

In Britain, a Ministry of Health report found that over 1,000 supermarket products were contaminated with traces of pesticides.

Dr Lewis Routledge, a former British government advisor on food safety, estimates that up to half a million people in Britain are currently ill because of British pesticides.

Genetically modified food has crept out of the laboratory and on to the supermarket shelves without adequate testing or even labelling.

**T**he root of the problem is the pursuit of profit by global companies that care nothing for our safety. Global sales of packaged food reached \$2.8 trillion at the beginning of the 1990s.

The food industry is dominated by some very rich players, including the Dunnes family and giant retailers such as Tesco.

Others include food manufacturers such as Grand Metropolitan, Dalgety, Bass, Cadbury-Schweppes, Tate & Lyle, Whitbread, United Biscuits, and Guinness.

A relatively small number of companies dominate certain sections of the food market — this includes enormous multinationals such as Nestlé, which became the world's biggest food company in 1992 with a world turnover of



*The food industry is one of the largest in the world.*

\$37.6 billion.

Nabisco, Heinz, McDonald's and Coca Cola are some of the other conglomerates which dominate our food supply.

The power of these companies, and their brands, attracts consumers and has turned food into one of the world's largest industries.

## Choice

*These companies determine what is produced, what we eat and how much we pay for food. Behind the talk about customer choice there is a multi-billion pound industry that dictates what is made available for eating.*

By far the most significant change in the food economy is the growth of concentration in each food sector. By the mid-1980s just two or three companies were dominating the market in many foods.

In confectionery three companies — Rowntree, Cadbury and Mars — control

over 60 percent of the market.

And in frozen ready foods, three companies — Unilever, United Biscuits and Nestlé — share over 65 percent of sales. Just two companies — Heinz and Campbell — dominate the canned soup market.

**I**n the fast food business, McDonald's and Burger King dominate a multimillion pound burger market. Unilever, the Anglo-Dutch multinational, is one of the world's largest food producers with sales of \$42 billion a year.

It dominates global markets in products such as margarine and ice cream and employs nearly a third of a million people internationally.

The tampering and distortion of food is not an aberration but is a natural consequence of a market that is dominated by a few companies locked in cut throat competition.

The BSE scare, for example, was not

the result of some natural disaster. It began after Thatcher deregulated the rendering industry at the behest of the giant food companies that funded the Tories. They wanted to fatten cattle as quickly and cheaply as possible.

*Rendering is based on grinding down spare meat, gristle and bone to a make a new form of food which is fed to animals.*

For safety reasons, the companies were supposed to heat all this material to a certain temperature to kill off bacteria. But Thatcher got rid of all the regulations, opening the door for BSE.

The whole production of food — from the farm, to the processing plant, to the supermarket, to the consumer — is dictated not by the needs of those who eat it but by the profits of the multinationals.

The agricultural industry is also dominated by big business. In the United States farming is now America's biggest business with a workforce as large as that of the steel, car and transport indus-

tries combined. Poultry production in the US is now highly centralised.

Today 97 percent of all American poultry is produced by 49 chicken farmers.

**T**he anarchy of the market leads to poor quality food, but government policy and intervention adds to the problem by leading to dear food.

In Europe agricultural production is dominated by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which fixes prices and regulates production.

In 1995 the EU ordered the destruction of 2.5 million tonnes of fresh fruit and vegetables to keep prices artificially high.

Farmers were paid an estimated £500 million for this and the produce was dumped in trenches while the price of food in the shops increased.

*Both the US and EU changed policy in the early 1990s, moving from the public relations disaster of having grain mountains and grain dumped at sea, to a policy of paying farmers to leave land set aside.*

The EU now wants to set aside 12 percent of land to keep food prices high. The US followed a similar policy, taking out 56,000 miles of cropland. Lost production has increased pressure on the world's food resources — but the profits remain. The losers in all this are ordinary people.

## Starvation

If you are poor and live in certain parts of the world, there is a possibility of starvation.

If you are working class in the richest capitalist countries, you spend your time looking for the cheapest bargains and eating the least healthy food just to make ends meet.

Yet we now have the ability to feed all the world many times over. Advances in agricultural techniques, in the use of fertilisers, irrigation and machinery allows just a small percentage of the population to feed the vast majority. Intensive farming enables us to produce cheap food for all.

It doesn't need to be produced by feeding animals dead carcasses or contaminated meal, or human excrement. This does not happen because people 'demand' cheap meat, but because the drive for profit looks to more and more ways of cutting corners.

This competition between just a few companies has led to the absurdity of some sections of the world's population being constantly enticed to eat even greater amounts of food while others go hungry.

The dominance of the market means governments pay farmers not to produce food while prices rise and others go hungry.

The capitalist system has failed miserably to satisfy one of the most basic human needs. Its end is now a human necessity.



in my view

# Owning genes

A US biotechnology company, Celera Genomics, is seeking to patent segments of the human genetic code in an attempt to cash in on its research.

Celera recently claimed that it decoded about a third of the entire blueprint, the human genome, in less than a month and are predicting that they will finish the job by next year, simultaneously, or even ahead of the parallel, publicly funded, project underway in Britain and the US.

They claim to have isolated 1.2 billion of the estimated 3 billion building blocks that determine the design of the human person. The company previously assured scientists that they would make any findings publicly available, but it has now emerged that they have already applied for patents on 6,500 of their "discoveries". They now say that their findings will be available to universities and companies only "on a subscription basis".

**The unravelling of the billions of coded sequences in human DNA (the chemical base of all genes) will revolutionise medicine, and create the way for genetically based cures. It could also create countless opportunities to influence human evolution by manipulating gene codes.**

For example, genetic disorders like diabetes could be cured through gene therapy while a baby is still in the womb. Genetic cancers could be cured before they even develop.

Craig Venter, president of Celera, was a member of the British end of the Human Genome Project, until last year, when he quit to start Celera, a private financed company that uses expensive supercomputers to identify the codes and has therefore been able to leapfrog the publicly funded effort.

## Warning

However, numerous scientists are warning, that its methods are less meticulous and provide inferior information about the function each gene serves — the crucial link to combating disease.

Venter's attempt to patent the research is a severe blow to the thousands of scientists involved in the Human Genome Project who were hoping to see the fruits of their work freely available worldwide to help combat and prevent disease.

Biopatenting has become a highly profitable business. It gives companies in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries exclusive rights to own and manipulate human and animal genes, cells and tissues. This allows them to demand royalties from hospitals and medical bodies for any research conducted. Venter has already made \$250 million for allowing five investors access to the human database for 5 years.

Until recently it was considered unthinkable to apply for a patent on an organism. All this changed in 1980 when the US Supreme Court allowed an employee of General Electric to patent a genetically engineered microbe designed to clean up oil spills. The ruling stated that "the relevant distinction was not between living and inanimate things" but whether living products could be thought of as "human-made inventions".

**Proponents of biopatenting argue that it will create progress in the search for cures in terminal diseases. But biopatenting has nothing to do with saving or improving lives, it is about a quest for even greater profits.**

The US government has issued itself a patent on the genes of a man from the Hagahai people in Papua New Guinea because of his rare genetic structure. Health centres are being told that bits of their patients belonged to multi-national corporations. A genetic centre in Manchester recently received demands for royalty fees, payable, whenever it tested for the cystic fibrosis gene.

Patenting the gene itself, as opposed to the product or therapy, severely hampers developments in medicine. The point of patenting is to maximise profit. In the case of patented medical procedures this may be done by limiting its availability, and charging higher prices to people who cannot afford to do without the procedure.

Biopatenting is about further extending the notion of private property even to the point of corporation being able to own your very genetic structure. Capitalism has always tried to turn everything into a commodity and it now appears that will include the very building blocks of life itself.

SINEAD KENNEDY

film

# You Disney, Me surprised

by PAUL McCARTHY

**IF LIKE me, the thought of another Disney film, complete with cute animals and cheesy songs, makes you feel ill, you may be surprised by Tarzan.**

This popular figure has turned up in many different forms over the past 80 years.

There were 26 official Tarzan novels, as well as films, cartoons, comic-strips, mugs, t-shirts and anything else you can think of. The legend has always been surrounded in controversy.

## Imperialist

Edgar Rice Burroughs wrote Tarzan in 1912, at the height of imperialist rule in Africa.

For anyone not familiar with the plot, an English baby, lost in the jungle is brought up by apes.

He later meets with Professor Porter, a scientist, and becomes aware of the fact that he is different from the gorillas around him.

More importantly, he meets Jane, daughter of Professor Porter. It being 1912 and Jane being a woman, she swoons at his powerful masculine figure.

It is later discovered that Tarzan is in fact an English gentleman, Lord Greystoke, who returns to reclaim his inheritance.

You don't have to



Shame about the sound track

dig too deep to see why some people may find racism and sexism in this story.

But Disney seem to have made an effort to minimize this.

The plot has been changed, getting rid of the idea of Tarzan as an English nobleman, concentrating on his family relationship with the gorillas.

The point being that different races, or in this case, species can get on together. So, in its

own sentimental way, Disney may actually have done something positive to the story.

A far cry from the views of Walt Disney, who treated his workers appallingly and subscribed to racism and even fascism.

Make no mistake

about it, your kids will drag you to this film over the next few weeks.

If you can tolerate singing monkeys and swooning maidens, you might even enjoy it.

I just wish Phil Collins wasn't on the soundtrack.

book

## Boogie man

John Lee Hooker's electrifying guitar and rich blues vocals have inspired countless musicians, black and white.

In this sharply written and detailed biography, Murray shows how Hooker's refusal to accept a future as a Southern sharecropper shaped his music.

Hooker was born in Mississippi, the state with "the richest soil and the poorest blacks", and moved to Detroit as a teenager. Despite a million-selling hit in 1948, he wasn't financially secure until 1989, with the success of 'The Healer'.

He's still a fighter. Today he plays benefits for the destitute; in the 1970's he raised money for the Black Panthers. As he says, "Why can't we share what we accumulate and say is ours . . . share with the human race, which is one race".

— ROGER HUDDLE

*Boogie Man: The Adventures of John Lee Hooker in the American 20th Century* - Charles Shaar Murray Viking £20

book

## A serious question

THE NOVELS of J M Coetzee, who won the prestigious Booker Prize for the second time last week, are well worth reading.

Coetzee, a white South African, was an opponent of apartheid. *Disgrace*, his latest work, tells the story of lecturer David Lurie, who has an affair with one of his students.

Accused of harassment, he leaves the university and goes to live with his lesbian daughter.

This is the new South Africa, and they live alongside a black landowner. Then one day three black men attack the Luries' home. Lurie's daughter is raped, and he is set on fire but survives. They are forced to confront their feelings about crime.

Through an essentially simple story, *Disgrace* raises a series of issues about repentance, justice and whether black and white can live together in South Africa. It is powerfully written.

But there are problems. Sometimes the focus on individual experiences seems too thin when compared to the huge social issues that are being hinted at.

The future for South Africa depends on much more than whether previously pro-apartheid whites are sorry and ready to atone.

Nevertheless, like Coetzee's earlier prizewinning novel, *The Life and Times of Michael K*, this is a book which discusses real questions in a way that will engage you.

—CHARLIE KIMBER





**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.

**SWP Branch meetings**

**ATHLONE:**

Contact 01-872 2682 for detail

**BRAY:**

Meets every Wednesday at the Mayfair Hotel at 8.30pm.

**BELFAST CENTRAL:**

Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in the Garrick Bar, Chichester St.

**BELFAST SOUTH:**

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Queens Students Union

**CORK:**

Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Dennehy's Pub, Cornmarket

**DERRY:**

Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Badgers Bar upstairs, Orchard St.

**DUNDALK:**

Contact 01-872 2682 for details

**DUN LAOGHAIRE:**

Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in the Christian Institute

**DUBLIN ARTANE / COOLOCK:**

Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Artane / Beaumont Recreational Centre opp. Artane Castle

**DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL:**

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Conways, Parnell St

**DUBLIN NORTH WEST:**

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in the O'Mahony's pub, Phibsboro Rd (near Crossguns Bridge)

**DUBLIN RANELAGH:**

Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Tom Kelly Flats' Community Centre, Charlemont St.

**DUBLIN RIALTO:**

Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm St. Andrews Community Centre, SCR, Rialto

**DUBLIN RATHMINES:**

Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in O'Connell's Pub, Sth. Richmond St. - 3 nov. The Revolution Ideas of Karl Marx.

**DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:**

Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Trinity Inn, Pearse St.

**DUBLIN TALLAGHT:**

Meets every Monday at 8.30pm in Jobstown Community Centre.

**ENNISKILLEN:**

Meets fortnightly on Saturdays at 4pm. Phone 01-872 2682 for details of venue

**GALWAY:**

Meets every Thursday in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square (beside Cuba) 8.30pm

**LIMERICK:**

Meets fortnightly on Thursdays at 8pm. Phone 01-872 2682 for details of venue.

**TRALEE**

Meets fortnightly on Mondays at 5.50pm in Harty's Bar, Tralee:

**WATERFORD:**

Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in the ATGWU Hall, Keizer St.

**MAYNOOTH:** Wenesdays 6.30pm

**Class Hall B**

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN:**

Meets every Thursday at 7pm in Room 3051 in the Arts Bloc.

TEl: (01)8722682; fax (01) 8723838; email: swp@clubi.ie web: www.clubi.ie/swp

**NURSES:  
SOLD  
OUT!**

**"NO ONE should be fooled by the high vote to accept the deal. Our union leaders pulled the plug on this strike without a democratic vote beforehand and many felt they were left with no option but to accept it".**

This is how one nurse responded to the ending of the nurses' strike.

The Nursing Alliance have not issued figures for how many voted overall because it is believed there was mass abstention.

**Demanding**

The INO headquarters was deluged with faxes from nurses demanding a vote before the strike ended but the union leaders deliberately broke the momentum so that nurses felt they could not resume the strike again.

The main demand of the nurses was for incremental pay. At the moment a staff nurse reaches the top of her

salary after ten years and cannot move further.

The Nursing Alliance wanted a 6 percent incremental increase after sixteen years, nineteen years and twenty two years.

But they were only offered a new grade for 2,500 nurses, which is only one tenth of the total number of staff nurses.

Nurses will have to

**"There is tremendous anger about the sell out and it will re-surface again"**

wait until they are fifteen years in the job and then compete against each other for entry into this new grade. Even then they will only get a £1,120 pay rise.

It was a shabby compromise for a strike that had immense support.

An opinion poll in the *Sunday Independent* showed that two thirds of the population backed the nurses, despite the

hardship caused by the strike.

The architects of the sell-out were the ICTU. Throughout the stoppage they refused to issue a message in support of the nurses.

Instead they claimed that they had to hold themselves back to act as mediators.

But the employers organisation, IBEC, never acts as a "mediator" but backs its own members to the hilt.

The union leaders of SIPTU and IMPACT did nothing to mobilise support for the nurses from their wider membership.

They did not issue any circulars calling for collections or seek to galvanise support.

When the massive nurses march took place, officials at local level in SIPTU opposed proposals to bring other union banners in support.

All of this happened because the ICTU leaders believed if the nurses pay claim was fully won, it would destroy social partnership

So they stabbed the nurses in the back just to keep their cosy relationship with the employers.

**Mood**

A psychiatric nurse summed up the mood.

"There is tremendous anger about the sell out and it will re-surface again."

"The puny pay rise means that the recruitment crisis will not be solved."

Many nurses have already said that it will just pay for their ticket to Australia.

"We have to get more involved in the union to stop our leaders selling us out like they did again".

**McNamara's:  
Bosses  
show  
their real  
agenda**

**BOSSES AT the McNamara's building contractors have finally revealed their real agenda.**

In a letter to the bricklayers' union, they made three proposals to end the dispute. But the proposals are highly sinister and would damage the long term future of the union.

\* They wanted BATU to lodge a £1 million bond as a guarantee that there would be no future industrial action.

\* They wanted an industrial relations agreement registered with the High Court.

\* They wanted the union to issue cards to anyone that McNamara's choose to employ.

Even after all this they did not guarantee an end to sub-contracting and the introduction of direct employment.

"These proposals show that the real target of McNamara's is the union itself. They are trying to push a model for other employers to chain us down. We believe that the Construction Industry Federation is very much behind all this. They were terrified at our success in cleaning up sub-contracting and pushing up wages."

**Teachers  
'Geared up  
for a fight'**

**THE GRASSROOTS of the teachers' unions are making a major push for a 20 percent pay rise.**

One teacher said "The head office of ASTI has been flooded with letters looking for action after the nurses got something in their recent battle."

The union voted against entering discussions on a new partnership deal at a recent ICTU conference because of the anger in its own ranks.

The teachers settled their claim under the PCW early and so have found that they fell way below what was given to fire-fighters and the nurses.

"Fair play to the nurses. They managed to extract rises of over 20 percent in their four year long campaign", one ASTI executive member told *Socialist Worker*.

"The fire-fighters also got a 9 percent pay rise because they threatened industrial action. There are many teachers saying that we need a return to old style trade unionism rather than all this partnership stuff"

Teachers also feel they have given major benefits in productivity but they have not been rewarded for their efforts.

There have been two new syllabi brought in Civics and in English. We have also seen a new transition year programme coming in.

There is also a lot more stress in the classrooms as pressure goes on for exam results.

**Pursue**

The teachers conferences last Easter mandated their union leaders to call for industrial action to pursue their claims for a major pay rise.

But the union leaders have been dragging their heels.

One union activist told *Socialist Worker* "The mood amongst the members is militant but the full time officers who sometimes think they own the union, are using all sorts of diversionary tactics to stop action for the claim."

"We need to make sure that a 20 percent claim is put in immediately and that the membership is geared up for a fight".

**Tallaght  
Cops' class attack**

**A YOUNG man from Rossfield in Tallaght suffered a broken lower spine and a blood clot in the brain as a result of a brutal attack by Gardai.**

In the same attack a young woman seven months pregnant received a black eye and bruising.

A number of others were also injured in the assault which took place outside Molly Heffernans Pub in west Tallaght on October 31st

The attack occurred after Gardai were called to respond to a fight that had broken out in the pub earlier in the evening.

By the time the Gardai had arrived those involved in the fight had already left the premises.

However, bouncers in the pub told everybody to leave the building anyway.

When customers emerged from the pub they were faced by a line of Gardai in riot gear.

*An order was then shouted by one Garda to charge, and 15-20 Gardai ran at the crowd.*

One man received serious injuries after a guard held him down with a riot shield and beat him repeatedly with a baton. The same guard also pushed the mans girlfriend to the ground.

One man who witnessed the attack and indicated he would give evidence in court against the Gardai was handcuffed and suffered serious wrist injuries.

Another witness to the attack repeatedly phoned the Garda station in Tallaght to ask why this had happened. He was eventually told by a Garda that

it was because "you are all scumbags down there."

This attack shows the complete brutality and class prejudice of the Gardai.

**Scams**

While corrupt politicians, bankers and businessmen who robbed workers of millions of pounds in tax scams walk free, Gardai harass and brutalise innocent working class people.

The Tallaght branch of the Socialist Workers party and local residents plan to protest against this attack and demand that those who ordered and carried out the attack are prosecuted and jailed.

*A petition of protest is being collected and a protest meeting will be held on Mon. Nov. 15th at 8pm in the Jobstown Community centre.*



As the ICTU votes to enter talks...

# Should we sign up for partnership?

The ICTU at a recent special conference voted to enter into negotiations for a new partnership deal to replace P2000. Here we print a debate between Jack O'Connor, SIPTU Regional Secretary Midlands and South East Branch and Owen McCormack from the Busworkers Action Group that took place at the Marxism at the Millennium conference.

**JACK O'CONNOR:**  
I HAVE been a supporter of the National Agreements since 1987. But I'm not a supporter of every detail of every deal.

I supported them as the best of the alternatives and there are clearly problems with P2000.

But in the 1986 we had 18 percent unemployment and a debt GNP ratio of 130 percent. We had economic stagnation. We were looking to the British experience with the unions, which was detrimental to the standard of living.

By the end of the 1980s we had become aware of the globalisation of production, though we were all a bit naive about it. But with ten years of national agreements, unemployment is now 6% and employment is up by 45 percent. That means 400,000 new jobs since 1990.

The index of average industrial earnings has increased by 58.1 percent. The agreements gave increases of 47.5 percent and inflation throughout that period was 37 percent.

Also, we have to be careful about presuming that

Partnership is wage restraint. It isn't pay restraint in relation to inflation. But it is pay restraint in relation to productivity.

Importantly we need to look at the role played by the high tech industries. According to the ERSI, in 1995-98 there was a zero increase in productivity in the traditional industry sector but a 10 percent increase in productivity in the high tech sector.

If you look at the role of manufacturing industry 50 percent of people are in the high tech industry.

## Collective

If we went into free collective bargaining, than the issues of the high technology sector, where we are less well organised, would become crucial.

We have look at the role of national agreements in the economic recovery. The actual experience is that we have had a growth of the economy.

Education, demographic changes, American multinationals were all part of producing the boom, but there is a role for the stability that the national agreements have brought.

Under Partnership social expenditure on health, education and welfare has increased. For instance, the increase in spending on health was 117 percent, and in education it was 71 percent. Over all sectors that amounts to £85 billion.

Importantly, the tax cuts for the wealthy aren't the fault of Partnership. They happened because we have had right of centre governments. It is possible to devise a way of getting a share of the economic growth. And it is certainly worth trying.

**OWEN McCORMACK:**  
IN THE biggest and most important industrial dispute of recent times, the nurses strike, various industrial relations specialists, journalists and even trade union leaders warned that it was dangerous for the nurses to win the dispute.

The argument was that "If the nurses win we will have inflation and the Celtic Tiger will be ruined. The only thing which stands between us and total anarchy is social partnership."

The message is that Partnership caused the boom. Yet if low wages cause the boom, why isn't the developing world which has lower wages than Ireland basking in the glow of economic growth?

The reality is that the deals of the last of the ten years haven't delivered to workers. Ditching Partnership isn't a return to dog eat dog capitalism as Des Geraghty argues. It is a return to a decent fighting trade union movement capable of fighting for the rights of its members.

We are told the boom will go forever if we stay in Partnership. If this is the case, it must be a historic breakthrough, because booms and slumps are central to the system. Even right wing defenders of the system accept this, but our union leaders think they have managed to abolish slumps.

Do they think that the Wall Street crash of 1929 wouldn't have happened if Billy Attley was around to argue for Partnership. Do they really think that if the Japanese economy collapses or America enters recession, Ireland will hold out because of Partnership?

Under Social Partnership the rich are getting richer and workers are getting a smaller share of the national economy. The share of the national wealth going to capital has risen by 10 per-

cent while the share going to workers has decreased by the same amount during the decade of national agreements.

Irish workers have shown huge increases in productivity but we are not being rewarded for it.

## Quarter

After ten years a quarter of workers still earn less than two thirds of the average industrial wage.

There have been no extra resources to deal with social exclusion, or any substantial increase in spending on health or transport.

The state subsidy to Dublin Bus was in fact halved so that it gets less in grants than even the privatised service in London!

What we have seen is a feeding frenzy by the rich on the back of pay moderation.

Just compare the tax gains workers got to those given to the rich or the banks.

Where workers made gains - and they are minimal - they have happened despite Partnership, rather than because of it. They came because groups like the firefighters threatened industrial action.

The 1980s were a miserable time, but the people who made it a misery were the bosses who we are now told are our partners. They hived off their cash in the Aunsbacher accounts while telling us they were our partners.

The alternative isn't anarchy. It is free collective bargaining. It means a return to the right of workers to put in claims, returning to workers the right to make decisions. That is the only way to start to put wealth back in the hands of the people who produce it.



Nurses on strike for a decent wage

# We want our unions back

IN THE discussion that followed, Charlie Kavanagh a council worker said: "Partnership has meant cuts in jobs in my work."

"We all got small tax cuts but we have ended up paying for privatised services."

"I saw Partnership during the Nolans strike, or the Pat the Baker strike when workers were denied their right to join a union. Do you really think that those who jailed the building workers are our partners?"

Marnie Holborow from SIPTU argued: "Despite the national agreements we are seeing the emergence of a working class fight back with the nurses strike."

"The fire-fighters showed what trade unionism is about when they threatened industrial action to win a substantial pay rise".

A worker from Waterford Stanley said: "Our company has been making huge profits so we put in a pay claim but it is confusing because we found ourselves not fighting the boss but the fighting the

official who said we couldn't go on strike."

A computer worker expressed his frustration with how the union acts today. "When I attempted to join SIPTU I was told by the union 'that there is nothing we can do for you'. You can't go to the meetings because you are on your own."

"They gave me some leaflets to read and that was it. The unions should be trying to organise in these industries not telling us the bosses are our friends."

## Distorted

Jo Tully, a nurse, argued that Partnership meant the figures on the increase in health spending were distorted.

"Jack O'Connor should have taken the figures from before 1987 because the really big cuts happened then. Today there has been some rise in health expenditure but it goes hand in hand with privatisation. So they spend more on the health service but we see more private beds."

"The newly privatised board of

Telecom recently met and the first decision they took was to increase their salaries.

"And who sits on that board? It is none other than Bill Attley, the former SIPTU leader, who told his own members to show restraint!"

Another SIPTU member pointed out that "We do have increased spending but it's a trick. What matters is not how much is spent but how much of a share of that wealth workers receive."

"Union leaders should not pretend to be spokespersons for the national economy but should represent the workers who pay their wages."

A pensioner was furious with the hypocrisy around Partnership. "We have the scandal of TD's getting pensions when they are working and they have the audacity to say that they are entitled to a £200 a week pay rise."

"But at the same time they want pensioners to live off £89 per week."

"Tragically, the unions leader think that because of Partnership they are running the country but it's a con trick."

**PAMPHLET**  
by Kieran Allen  
**WORKERS AND THE CELTIC TIGER**  
Why partnership doesn't pay  
£1.50 from P.O. Box 1648, D.B.



# Socialist Worker

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

inside

10 YEARS AFTER THE WALL CAME DOWN:  
HOPES THAT TURNED TO DUST



page 6-7

## NATIONALISE HARLAND & WOLFF

# SAVE THE SHIPYARD

**HARLAND AND Wolff shipyard is threatened with closure and the loss of the remaining 3,000 jobs. Yet the Labour government is twiddling its thumbs.**

Fred Olsen Holdings, the private owners of the yard, say that closure is imminent because US company Global Marine are holding up money to complete work on the two drill ships in the yard.

Fred Olsen now says that if they can get some money released and contracts guaranteed they could finish the work and bid for new contracts.

### Problem

But the problem started from the undercutting to bid for contracts.

Privatisation of the yard has meant that workers are on a treadmill, never knowing if their jobs are safe and told to work harder, to accept short-term and casual contracts.

Employment in the yards is down from 20,000 to only 1,800 full-time workers today.

Privatisation and 'flexibili-

ty' has been a disaster.

Jobs and the future of working class areas like East Belfast should come before the priorities of the market and multinational, profit chasing companies.

Workers need to step up the pressure and demand the gov-

**Mandelson describes himself as "Mr Privatisation" He is no friend of working class people.**

ernment acts to save jobs.

That means nationalising the yard.

We are told that taxpayers' money cannot be used to bail out 'lame ducks'.

But this is from the same New Labour government which wastes £30 billion a year on Trident nuclear submarines.

They spent close to £30 billion raining cruise missiles down on the Balkans earlier this year.

The money is there. Fred Olsen says it needs £40 million immediately.

Last week alone, New Labour handed out £40 million in tax cuts to Internet bosses.

Local politicians are pleading with Peter Mandelson for help in a rescue package.

But Mandelson describes himself as "Mr Privatisation". He is no friend of working class people.

The alternative is action by workers themselves.

In the 1970s shipyard workers at the UCS yard on the Clyde occupied and forced the

then Tory government to do a U-turn and intervene to save jobs.

A similar fight now could win. That would be a massively popular fight.

Thousands of workers in Northern Ireland are in a similar position and factories are closing every month.

Harland and Wolff should be nationalised and public

money used to invest and provide work in the yard.

There is plenty of work that needs doing.

For example, the shipyard workers could build ferries. Britain's ferries are ageing and unsafe.

If the government ordered the ferry companies to modify their ships this would boost safety for passengers and it

would keep shipyard workers busy for years.

Peter Mandelson is not going to lead that sort of fight. It goes against everything New Labour stands for.

Neither are the private owners or local politicians and bank managers.

It is up to the shipyard workers themselves to take action.

## MARKET MADNESS

**RAILTRACK, the private company which is responsible for maintenance and safety, have just announced a profit of £236 million for the last 6 months. That's £1 million a day!**

Railtrack were directly responsible for the run down in safety which led to the horrific Paddington crash in October.

Yet Labour is pressing ahead with privatisation of the London Underground.

The same policies are at work in Northern Ireland. Translink, the company which runs bus and rail services here, is pressing for a Public Private Partnership to bring in new investment on the railways.

### Improve

They claim that they need private investment to improve rail services.

But Translink has over £40 million in reserves. It forced bus drivers to take three weeks of industrial action over

pay last month.

A railway guard told *Socialist Worker*, "The trains are really run down. We lost our brakes last month and had to roll back down into Portrush station and get stopped by the buffers. And those sorts of things are happening all the time".

The money is there to improve spending on public services. Gordon Brown has over £12 billion in reserves.

But it is Labour's commitment to privatisation and Thatchers' legacy which is stopping it being used to benefit working people.