

Socialist Worker

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

**NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION
JAIL THE
CORRUPT
POLITICIANS**

Saturday 13th March 3pm

Parnell Square, Dublin

BRIBERY, CORRUPTION, TAX EVASION

IT'S ONE LAW FOR THE RICH



DESPITE THE revelations about corruption and bribery, Charles J Haughey is still walking about as a free man.

People have been jailed for not paying their television licences. But when it is revealed that a former head of state lived off bribes, all we get is a costly tribunal.

Bertie Ahern is now actively engaged in a cover up. A few weeks ago the Irish Times revealed that £10,000 from the sale of a Irish passport went into a bank account in the name of Bertie Ahern.

Ahern claimed that this was all a 'ball of smoke'. Yet the facts of the case are

straightforward.

In 1993 an American property developer and US Republican Party member, Jerry Lidzon, put money into a joint account in the ICC bank to buy a Irish passport for his wife.

The joint account holder was Brian O'Carroll, a Roscommon-based a passports-for-sale broker.

Lidzon also put money into Penncastle, a ceramics company in Co. Cork.

Then on 21 July 1993 Fianna Fail was given £10,524.59p as an interest free loan.

This "loan" was never repaid. The money was put in a newly opened current account in the name of Bertie Ahern

and Albert Reynolds at the Bank of Ireland, Lower Baggot Street Branch, Dublin.

This account was separate from the normal Fianna Fail account used for party funds.

By the end of the 1993 this bank account held £300,000. It is unclear what the sources of the rest of the money were.

Fight

One of the reasons Ahern got away with it during the Dail debate was that the Labour Party did not really fight.

Labour leader Ruairi Quinn lobbied for Elena Lidzon to get the passport.

He wrote a letter to the Minister for Justice, Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, on 14 July 1993 in support of the passport application and wrote again a year later urging that the passport be granted.

Quinn sent a hand-written note asking the Minister "to give urgent attention to the matter and to direct that it be granted".

Whether the generous Mr Lidzon donated to Ruairi Quinn or to the Labour Party remains unknown.

It is time that workers moved to end this farce.

We need an end to the situation where there is one law for the rich and another for the poor.

JAIL THE CORRUPT POLICTIANS

what we think

Fianna Fail's racist Immigration Bill

JUSTICE MINISTER John O'Donoghue is pushing though an Immigration Bill which will give him sweeping new powers to deport refugees.

The Bill is designed to replace the 1935 Aliens Act which was introduced when hundreds of thousands of Jews were fleeing Nazi rule.

It ensured that a mere sixty Jewish people were allowed to enter Ireland during the Holocaust.

Restrictive

The new Immigration Bill gets rid of terms like 'aliens' but it is just as restrictive. It proposes to:

■ Give the Justice Minister complete power to expel refugees. Any 'non-national' can be deported if "in the opinion of the Minister (it is) conducive to the 'common good'."

In the past the 'common good' was supposed to be the reason why divorce and contraception was banned.

In the hands of O'Donoghue, this clause will be used to prevent Ireland becoming a multi-cultural society.

■ Deport any non-national who 'has been indicted for or charged with any crime of offence'.

Any non-Irish person who is even threatened with jail for offences as minor as not paying a bus ticket could now be expelled.

■ Give the Gardai wide powers to arrest anyone who is not Irish. They can pick up any non-national "without a warrant if they suspect

they have failed to comply with a deportation order".

This provision gives the Gardai an excuse to harass a black person because they can always say that they suspected they were breaking a deportation order.

Minor

These provisions apply to all 'non-nationals', including citizens of the European Union.

From now on, British, French or German people can be expelled from Ireland for minor offences even if they have lived here for decades.

These provisions will only be used against poorer people. As other recent scandals have shown Fianna Fail have never had any problems selling Irish passports to rich individuals who want to avoid paying tax.

Yet even if Fianna Fail push

through this measure, they will face difficulties implementing it.

When large numbers have rallied in support of particular refugees, such as the Costinas family in Dublin, O'Donoghue was forced to back down.

Climate

Racism grows in a climate where people feel they cannot do anything about the corruption at the top of

society.

The more people feel they can challenge the real spongers who are dodging taxes and bribing politicians, the less they will feel inclined to view a refugee as a competitor for scarce houses or hospital beds.

This is why the fight against racism in Ireland has to be linked to a struggle to break the power of big business.

Pope in Pinochet fan club



THE POPE has become the latest recruit to the campaign to free General Pinochet.

The head of the Catholic Church has made a direct appeal for the release of the butcher whose coup in Chile in 1973 cost the lives of thousands.

The news came as a shock to thousands of Catholics who have supported campaigns for social justice in Ireland and abroad. Yet it shows that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church is a deeply conservative force.

Pinochet is admired by right wingers all over the world because he staged a coup to remove the democratically elected government of the Socialist President Allende. Immediately afterwards the Chilean bishops celebrated mass in Santiago to express their gratitude.

The Pope's appeal for Pinochet shows the shallowness of his rhetoric about respect for human life. He denounces women who use certain 'artificial' contraceptives or have an abortion. But he argues that a mass murderer like Pinochet should not be punished for his crimes.

The irony is that Pinochet was charged while visiting Britain to buy a rocket system.

His shopping list was also said to include 'infantry support equipment', flares, rockets and CS gas canisters. In other words equipment to inflict more violence on working people in Chile.

A senior source within the British defence industry said, "All major purchases involving the Chilean armed forces have taken place only after the authorisation of General Pinochet, so obviously defence suppliers want to keep him happy".

Support

All over the world the rich are rallying to the support of Pinochet. Margaret Thatcher is one of Pinochet's main supporters in Britain, while the owner of Glen Electric, Senator Martin Naughton, has also called for his release. The Pope's dramatic appeal to Blair shows exactly which class his allegiance lies with.

Anti-Pinochet campaigners have reacted angrily to the Pope's intervention. Carlos Reyes, president of Chile Democratico, said, "we are shocked that the Pope is supporting Pinochet when the Pope himself said in December, that blood has stained the hands of those responsible for genocide and they have to be arrested".

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION JAIL THE CORRUPT POLITICIANS

**Saturday 13th March, 3pm,
Parnell Square, Dublin**

Sponsored and supported by:

Waterford Trades Council, Cork Trades Council, Waterford Glass ATGWU, BATU Dublin Shop Stewards, SIPTU Education Branch, SIPTU Health Services Branch, Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Council IMPACT, TCD Students Union, Dublin Taxes South Central Branch CPSU, TUI Dundalk, Arts and Heritage CPSU Branch.

Why you should support this march

"Everyone is appalled by the corruption revelations. It seems somebody new is implicated every day. The resolution to support the March was passed unanimously - People were happy to see something being done."

**Roisin Croinin - Sec., Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Council Branch
IMPACT**

"Haughey was the guy who was always telling us in the eighties to tighten our belts. All the time he was getting millions out of big businesses. Nobody in our branch voted against the resolution. One person even suggested that we delete the word 'corrupt' and change the resolution to 'Jail Politicians'."

Paul Sweeney - Sec., Dublin Taxes South Central Branch CPSU



news of the world

The Kurds: Victims who suffer ruthless oppression

NO ONE sets themselves on fire as a protest without good reason.

The thousands of Kurdish people who have taken to the streets of cities across Europe over the last two weeks have all the reason in the world to demonstrate.

Kurdish guerrilla leader Abdullah Ocalan's abduction to Turkey sparked the protests, but they are driven by decades of injustice.

The Kurdish people's suffering is colossal, yet it is rarely reported by the media.

The Western powers have complied with it for most of the century.

Second

The majority of the 26 million Kurdish people inhabit an area of 200,000 square miles in the Middle East where four countries—Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria—meet. Each of those states treats them at best as second class citizens.

At worst they face lethal oppression.

The largest group of Kurds, about 13 million, live in Turkey where they make up a fifth of the population.

The Turkish army has waged a filthy war



Turkish soldiers show no mercy to Kurds fleeing from Iraq

against the Kurds for the last 15 years. Over 30,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

That is 50 times more than the number of Albanians killed in Kosovo.

Yet the West does not talk of action against its NATO ally Turkey. Instead Britain and the US sell it arms and turn a blind eye to the massacres.

The Turkish state has

tried to force the Kurds to adopt Turkish culture over the last 70 years.

It has repeatedly crushed the Kurds' resistance. The latest phase of the conflict began in 1984 and its targets went way beyond a few thousand guerilla fighters in the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

The Turkish army has conducted a scorched earth policy in the

Kurdish areas of south east Turkey.

It has tried to depopulate vast areas of the countryside to destroy PKK bases of support. The army has burnt and bulldozed over 3,000 villages.

Over three million Kurds have been driven from their homes. Grinding poverty has set even more to flight. Half a million have sought refuge in Europe.

sellers of the Kurdish paper *Ozgur Gundem* during its brief two year existence between 1992 and 1994.

The New York based Committee to Protect Journalists said in its 1995 report that Turkey had the world's highest number of journalists in jail, 53, most for writing about the Kurds.

Parties calling for Kurdish independence are banned.

Four Kurdish MPs belonging to the Democracy Party—Leyla Zana, Hatip Dicle, Orhan Dogan and Selim Sadak—asked to take the

parliamentary oath in Kurdish as well as Turkish in 1991.

They also wore clothing in the colours of the banned Kurdish flag.

They were accused of treason. Their parliamentary immunity was revoked in 1994 and they were imprisoned for 15 years on trumped up charges.

Turkey's internationally renowned writer Yasar Kemal was prosecuted for writing an article in a German magazine in 1995 which questioned Turkey's policies towards the Kurds.

European leaders are

Record of abuse

AMNESTY International, Human Rights Watch and other groups catalogue human rights abuses in Turkey every year.

All admit their reports give only a glimpse of the true toll.

The latest Amnesty report refers to 1997 and reads, "Hundreds of people were detained because of their non-violent political activities... Torture continued to be widespread... At least nine people 'disappeared' in security forces custody."

Turkey's human rights record is so bad it has been condemned by the European Parliament, European courts, the US State Department and the country's own sham human rights ministry which was forced to acknowledge "state terrorism".

well aware of the suffering Kurds face, yet they have sent their police forces to batter Kurdish protesters off the streets and have threatened to hand them to the Turkish army.

Who are the real terrorists?

ABDULLAH OCALAN founded the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in 1978, two years before the army staged a coup which was aimed at eliminating a mass left wing movement.

The Western press has swallowed the Turkish government's line that the massacres and 30,000 dead of the last 15 years are the work of the PKK. But the conflict only exists because Turkish forces hold the Kurdish areas under martial law.

Atrocities

They have committed countless atrocities and often tried to blame them on the PKK.

For example, Amnesty International reported last year that the massacre of 11 Kurdish men near the town of Guclukonak in 1996, which at the time was blamed on the PKK, was most likely the work of the Turkish state.

Turkey has also stirred up divisions among the Kurds. It relies on rich Kurdish landlords to deliver the votes of their tenants for establishment parties. It pays corrupt "village guards" and murder gangs to wipe out the families of PKK members.

Whatever killings the PKK has

carried out in reprisal cannot be compared to the terrorism of the Turkish forces and their Western backers.

The PKK is a guerilla force and is not subject to the democratic control of workers and the poor. It presents itself as an alternative state to Turkey. Its fighting units can, therefore, be remote from and conflict with ordinary Kurds.

But the Western governments which denounce Ocalan for "killing fellow Kurds" are hypocritical.

Only last month the US invited two rival Kurdish leaders from northern Iraq to Washington. Massoud Barzani of the Kurdish Democratic Party and Jalal Talabani of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan have for decades been killing one another's supporters, members of the PKK, Iranian, Iraqi and Turkish Kurds. Each of the two leaders has allied himself at different times with the Middle Eastern states which oppress the Kurds, and with the West and Israel.

Yet the US government hails them as freedom fighters and is set to lavish them with arms because for the moment they are both in conflict with Saddam Hussein.

Population

Many more have been forced into shanty towns around major cities in Turkey.

The population of the south eastern city of Diyarbakir, for example, has tripled to over one million over the last eight years.

The Kurds live in the poorest part of the country.

The state does not recognise them as a minority group and the Kurdish language is banned from schools and broadcasts.

Partial legalisation in 1991 has had little effect. Catch-all clauses of the anti-terrorism law mean anything which "damages the indivisible unity of the state" is a high crime.

This can be used to include the "crime" of promoting languages other than Turkish. State sponsored death squads killed 17 journalists and

The West's brutal ally

THE WESTERN leaders only takes note of the mountains of Kurdish dead when they think they can use them to camouflage their aims in the Middle East.

Since 1990 Britain and the US have talked about the suffering of four million Kurds in northern Iraq. But this has nothing to do with compassion. It is used to justify killing tens of thousands of civilians in Iraq through bombs and sanctions.

Impunity

Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was a Western ally in the two decades before 1990. He was allowed to murder and mutilate Kurds with impunity. In 1988 Iraqi forces killed over 200,000 Kurds, including 5,000 in a massive chemical attack on the town

of Halabja in March.

The US and European powers supplied the chemicals to make the poisoned gas and the means to deliver it.

They knew about the gassing when they sent representatives to an arms fair in Baghdad the following spring.

The so called "safe haven" for the Kurds in northern Iraq, which the West set up in 1991, has more to do with Bill Clinton and Tony Blair's undeclared war against Iraq than with protecting Kurdish people.

The West allowed Turkey to celebrate its capture of Ocalan by pouring 5,000 troops into the "safe haven" to hunt down Kurds.

Turkey has invaded northern Iraq and bombed the many Kurdish people there repeatedly over the last seven years.

The US just looks the other way and continues to send its planes from Turkey's Incirlik air base to bomb Iraq.

Eamonn McCann

Looking to Ahern is a dead end

AT THEIR City Hall rally in Belfast on February 28th, Sinn Fein leaders expressed frustration and anger at the impasse over decommissioning and the formation of an Executive.

Their rage against David Trimble was understandable. But the main reason Republicans have found themselves in a cul de sac is that they have followed a path laid down by Bertie Ahern, and by Fianna Fail generally.

And the reason they have accompanied Fianna Fail so far along this path is that they have rejected the need for analysis based on class.

There is no room for doubt that on the decommissioning issue, Sinn Fein is right, and David Trimble is wrong. No ifs, buts or maybes. The Agreement doesn't say that paramilitary groups must give up arms before political parties associated with them can take seats in the Executive.

What's more, the Agreement doesn't say that decommissioning must be completed by summer 2000. Or summer 3000, for that matter.

All it says is that every party must use what influence it has to try to bring this about. Sinn Fein says it is doing its best. That's all it undertook to do.

So, their dismay at the line now taken by Ahern must be deep indeed.

Serve

After all the to-ing and fro-ing over his *Sunday Times* interview last month, Ahern repeated in Leinster House that it would be 'unrealistic' to expect Trimble to serve in an Executive with Sinn Fein unless IRA decommissioning had begun, and 'impractical' to try to sustain an Executive while associates of any one party insisted on retaining arms.

This is no more or less than what Trimble has been saying. Now that Dublin is saying it, too, why should Trimble move an inch, irrespective of the terms of the Agreement?

Sinn Fein vice-president Pat Doherty can write all he likes to the *Irish Times* saying that the Agreement was negotiated word by word - and that Trimble is going back on his word. The fact is that Fianna Fail has given Trimble the go-ahead for this manoeuvre, and Sinn Fein will either have to accept it - or make the break with Fianna Fail.

But to break with Fianna Fail would be to break with the whole 'pan-nationalist' strategy on which Sinn Fein has based its involvement in the Peace Process over the past decade.

In the long-running debate throughout the period of the Peace Process, many rank-and-file Republicans have consistently agreed that Fianna Fail is a corrupt and sleazy outfit representing the interests of the bosses. But when it comes to the North, they say, class doesn't matter - not at this stage anyway. Or that insofar as it does, the 'national question' matters more.

And on the national question, Fianna Fail is sound. Or at least, a lot sounder than any available alternative.

It has been on this basis that Republicans who see themselves as socialists have continued to make Fianna Fail their second-preference party.

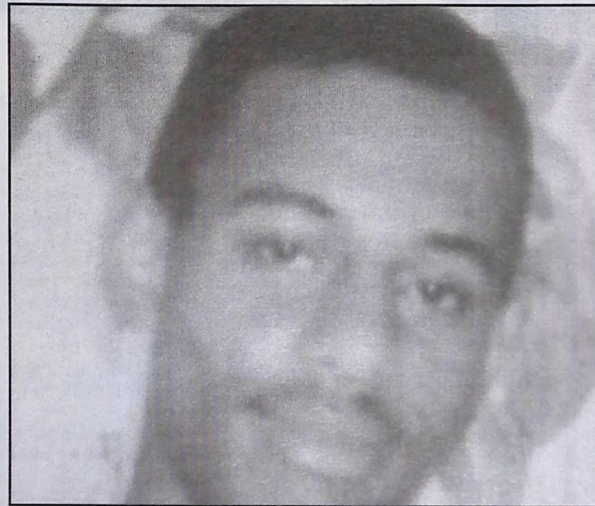
But as a party of capitalism, what, fundamentally, Fianna Fail wanted from the Peace Process was not an advance towards 'national independence' or an end to the oppression of nationalists in the North. It was essentially out for political and economic stability on the island as a whole, and prestige and preferment for itself, as the Southern economy merged ever deeper into the new European Union, and the State into the western military alliance.

This required the enclosure of the Republican Movement - or as much of it as possible - within the constitutional arena, and the maintenance of a close relationship with Britain as they jointly supervised the new arrangements.

Encouraging the Provos to believe that there was more on offer than could actually be delivered has been part of this strategy. Sinn Fein went for it not because they are naive, but because they believed that the national question must take precedence over class.

What we have just seen illustrated is the ancient truth that the class a party serves ultimately dictates its stance in every policy area.

TWO MURDERS: SAME POLICE COVER-UP



STEPHEN LAWRENCE

THE REPORT on the murder of black teenager Stephen Lawrence has exposed the racist nature of the British police.

The report shows that the investigation into the Lawrence murder was obstructed by 'institutionalised racism' in the London Metropolitan police and the failure of senior police chiefs to take the investigation seriously.

Violence

Stephen Lawrence was stabbed to death by a gang of racist thugs in south east London in April 1993.

The suspects were the Acourt gang which had a reputation for violence against black people and links to the BNP.

The BNP set up their headquarters in the area three years earlier and afterwards racist violence shot up by 210 percent within one year.

Rolan Adams and Rohit Dougal both died in racist attacks before Stephen's murder. But the police refused to accept that these were racially motivated killings carried out by gangs inspired by the BNP.

In the Lawrence case a flood of evidence poured into the police, confirming the Acourt gang as the main suspects.

Yet the police did not arrest the gang until two weeks later giving them time to cover their tracks. Even these arrests only

happened after Nelson Mandela met the Lawrence family and brought the case to widespread public attention.

Evidence against the suspects included an eye witness identification of them fleeing the scene of the murder and another witness who saw the gang cleaning blood off their clothes and a large knife.

Yet the crown prosecution service dropped the case saying that there was insufficient evidence to go to trial.

Black youth Duwayne Brooks who witnessed the murder and told the police where the murderers went was himself treated as a suspect. He was arrested a few weeks later on an angry protest outside the BNP headquarters.

Police also attacked a 60,000 strong demonstration in protest at the killings to prevent it reaching the BNP headquarters.

They savagely beat protesters and arrested dozens.

While the killers of Stephen Lawrence walked free, nine anti racist protesters were sentenced to 20 years in prison between them.

Racism

The entire episode shows the institutionalised racism at the heart of the police and the legal establishment.

Paul Condon, the chief of the London police is trying to claim that police racism is simply a reflection of the racism in society.

This is nonsense. Britain is a racist society but the whole Lawrence case shows that racism starts at the top.



ROBERT HAMILL

PAUL HOBSON is currently on trial for the murder of Robert Hamill, the Catholic man who was kicked to death by a group of loyalists thugs.

In Northern Ireland the case has had the same impact for many that the Stephen Lawrence case has had in Britain.

The similarities between the two cases are striking.

Robert Hamill was walking home with friends in Portadown in April 1997.

Hassling

Not far from the night-club was a group of about 30 loyalists. Usually they would have waited for a taxi but they saw a RUC Land Rover parked opposite and assumed that the police would be on hand if the group started hassling them.

They were wrong. Four RUC officers armed with pistols and machine guns sat and watched while Robert was knocked unconscious and repeatedly kicked to death.

Two other members of Robert's group banged on the side of the RUC Land Rover and begged for them to help but they did nothing.

Six men were originally arrested and at their own request they were put placed in LVF wing of the Maze.

Yet by November 1997 charges against five had been dropped. The DPP said, just as it did in the case of Stephen Lawrence, that evidence was insufficient to provide a

conviction.

But an eyewitness had approached the DPP and said that he had seen one of the accused attack Robert. But no identity parade was conducted.

Joking

The same witness said he saw the man concerned sitting in the RUC Land Rover after the attack on Robert and that the officers seemed to be joking with him.

There were close circuit cameras overlooking the scene of Robert's murder, but the police claim nothing was recorded.

Robert's sister, Diane, has repeatedly complained of harassment by the RUC since Robert's murder. On occasions after the attack the RUC would beep their horns at members of the family in Portadown.

But still after almost two years after four RUC officers sat back and watched Robert Hamill being kicked to death, no criminal charges have been issued against the officers involved.

Not surprisingly, the most senior police officer to attend the scene of Stephen Lawrence's murder, Chief Inspector Jonathan McIvor, is now serving as an RUC superintendent in Enniskillen.

The RUC Chief Constable, Ronnie Flanagan, says he has complete confidence in him.

In Britain the police have been convicted of 'institutionalised racism'.

In Northern Ireland, it is called 'institutionalised sectarianism'.

Death penalty

America's murder machine

IN 1992, during this presidential election campaign, Arkansas governor Bill Clinton stopped off in his home state to oversee the execution of Ricky Ray Rector. Rector was a man so brain-damaged that on his last night, minutes before his execution, he put his desert aside to eat after he returned to his cell.

Clinton sponsored legislation which greatly expanded the number of federal crimes punishable by death and accelerated the number of executions at state level.

In the six years that Clinton has been President, more than 315 people have been executed in the US.

In the entire 12 years of the Republican presidencies of Reagan and Bush, 185 people were put to death.

In the last two years alone, record numbers have been executed. In 1997, 74 people were executed - the largest number in a single year since 1956.

But even that is nothing compared to the barbarism of this year. So far 18 people have been put to death in the first seven weeks of this year.

If this pace continues, more people will die this year in America's gas chambers and electric chairs, or by lethal injections than ever before in US history.

During the late sixties and early seventies the civil rights and anti-war movements changed the way Americans viewed the death penalty.

Racist

People began to see it as cruel, inhumane and racist.

In 1972 the Supreme Court ruled that the death penalty was a violation of a person's civil rights and that nobody should be subject "to cruel and unjust punishment". But it was reinstated four years later.

The first recorded execution in America was that of George Kendall in 1608.

Since then the United States has used every conceivable method of killing from burning, drowning, tying people to ant hills or burying them alive, to the so-called more 'humane' methods in use today like lethal injection, gas chamber, firing squad and electric chair.

The history of the US is intimately connected with the death penalty.

Then as now, who was executed was strongly influenced by issues of race and class.

"Legal lynching" is not just a metaphor in the United States.

In the midsummer heat in

by SINEAD KENNEDY

1912, for example, T.Z. McIlhane, a black boy of 14, went out into the cotton fields with a young white acquaintance.

The boys had a gun and started fooling around.

The gun went off accidentally and the white boy was shot. McIlhane was convicted on involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to three years.

The sentence was barely out of the judge's mouth before a mob of 25 armed men seized McIlhane from the court and dragged into a street car and then shot him shot fifty times in the face.

Four men stood trial for his murder but all were acquitted.

Nothing much has changed today in the state of Georgia, for example, in which two thirds are white, 12 of the 20 prisoners killed in the past 20 years have been black.

Two-thirds of its murder victims are black, but 85 percent of those on death row have been convicted of killing white victims. After 220 years Georgia has yet to execute a white person for the murder of a black person.

The state of Pennsylvania is currently trying to execute a political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther who was been accused of killing a police officer.

The death penalty has also become big business. The prison industry is the fastest growing section of the economy.

It is also being suggested that executions should be privatised. In a sick gesture, the industry has produced a new magazine, Death Row.

"Business is great. The rate of executions is astounding. If this pace continues, it will be a record year." Said the editor Bobbi Bobit.

But the tide in the US is changing. While more and more politicians support executions, public opinion is shifting against the death penalty.

Ordinary people are becoming more and more incensed against a system that condemns and executes the poor while wealthy criminals go free.

NEW BBC SERIES SHOWS

Loyalists: back to political establishment

"The UVF and UDA slaughtered 1,000 people, most of them Catholics who played no part in the conflict." These are the words of the commentator on a major new BBC series, *Loyalists* by Peter Taylor.

Although a number of loyalist leaders today describe themselves as "progressive", their organisations were formed as forces for reaction.

The "new UVF" was formed in 1965 after Terence O'Neill became the first Unionist Prime Minister from the old Stormont parliament to meet a southern Taoiseach, Sean Lemass.

Paisley denounced this as "treachery" and soon one of his closest associates, Noel Docherty, began forming secret armed cells. Docherty claims he did this so that "Paisley would have his private army and he'd have been a second Lord Carson".

Recruits

One of the earliest recruits to the UVF was Gusty Spence. He had been approached by two Unionist politicians to join and within year he was involved in the killing of two Catholics who strolled into the Shankill Road for a late drink.

The inspiration for the UDA came from William Craig, a hard line Home Affairs Minister in the old Stormont regime. Craig had ordered the RUC to baton charge the first civil rights march in Derry.

"We must build up dossiers on those men and women in this country who are a menace to this country, because one of these days it may be our job to liquidate them", Craig said.

Some had already begun to take Craig at his words. John McKeague, who had a fanatical hatred of Catholics formed the Shankill Defence Association. Soon various "defence associations" sprang up around Belfast and amalgamated to form the UDA.

The UDA worked closely with the Vanguard Party, which was formed by Craig. Vanguard had links with the racist right wing Monday Club in Britain and the Nazi National Front. Vanguard held rallies where masses of men stood in formation and saluted

Craig. The deputy leader of the Vanguard Party was David Trimble.

Once the loyalist organisations were formed their main strategy was to terrorise the Catholic community in order to get them to "turn" on the IRA.

In the mid seventies, the notorious Shankill Butchers emerged from a UVF unit. They roamed the city abducting Catholics and torturing them in "romper rooms" before hacking them to death with knives.

The loyalist organisation were only able to carry out their activities because they received help from official society.

Even to this day, one of the banners of Lodge 633 of the Orange Order lists Robert Bates, one of the Shankill Butchers under the heading "In fond memory of our fallen brethren".

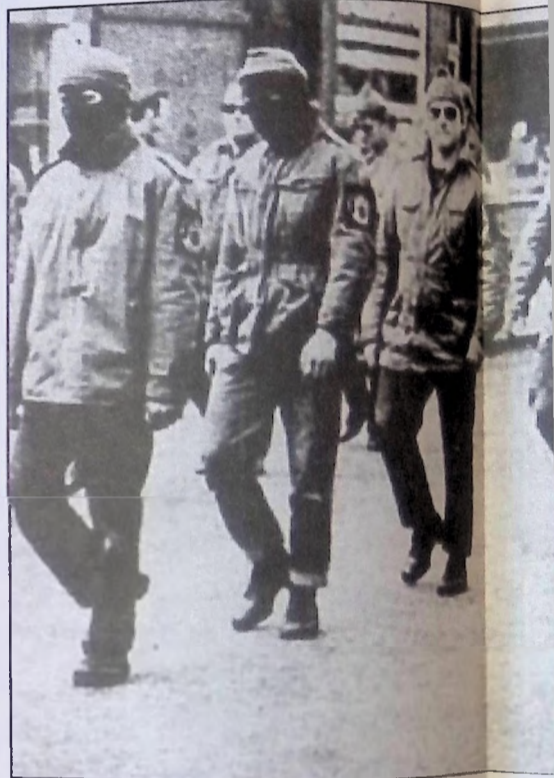
By 1992, the loyalist organisations had become highly effective killing machines.

Their transformation occurred because of outside assistance.

They were re-armed with the assistance of more middle class unionists who had formed the Ulster Resistance Movement and the Ulster Club movement, in opposition to the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

They had also made links with the white apartheid government in South Africa who was willing to supply arms in return for access to missile technology in Shorts.

According to Taylor, the cash for the South African arms was



For bigotry and Ulster

transported by "respectable Ulster Protestants involved in the world of banking, business and insurance who knew their way around the financial world".

But, most crucially, a British Intelligence agent, Brian Nelson supplied the UDA with files on

individuals who were to be recruited. His army handler, J. later admitted that his "to persuade the UDA to normalise their targeting...at concentrate on known Pro IRA members".

The BBC programme L

From killers to

"THE DAYS of putting a Union Jack on a donkey in order to whip the working class electorate into shape at the polls are long gone" says Gusty Spence, the folk hero of the UVF.

After Spence was jailed for the murder of Catholic barman, Peter Ward, he thought long and hard about the "fur coat" brigade of Unionism who whipped up sectarianism and let working class people take the rap for the violence that followed.

Just as the republicans underwent a political education in prison, Spence inspired a generation of former loyalist killers to re-think their strategy.

It led to a new political

rhetoric about socialism and the needs of the working class.

Back in the sixties Billy Mitchell was so inspired by Paisley that he helped organise a series of bombings, even before the troubles began, to destabilise the liberal Unionist government of Terence O'Neill.

Now a spokesperson for the Progressive Unionist Party, he says "the politicians' come down every four years or five years with their 'Kick the Pope bands' and we were happy enough to cheer them on. They'd wave their Union Jacks and flags at us and wind up my parents and people like that. At the end of the night we went back to our ghettos and they went back to their big houses."

The reality is that the biggest divide in Northern

Ireland is not between Catholics and Protestants runs right through both communities "on class lines.

System

In the Shankill Road example, only a tiny number of children manage to pass the notorious 11 plus system of discrimination against the working class. Poverty and unemployment make a sharp contrast with the uprisings represented by Robert McCartney on the Gold Coast.

Yet while the new Irish politicians respond to the calls about injustice to the working class, they never promote genuine politics.

by KIERAN ALLEN

Backed by the establishment



Loyal
to
what?

Loyalists have always argued that their allegiance is to "the Crown", rather than the elected government at Westminster.

The siege mentality at the heart of loyalism means British politicians cannot be trusted. Only the monarchy itself captures the true essence of "Britishness".

But behind all the veneer about "identities" the reality is that Elizabeth Windsor is a mega-rich parasite whose personal jewellery is worth £3.5 million.

Why should Protestant workers in Clarawood or Taughmonagh who have to live on housing benefit be loyal to such a scrounger?

And what use is a "Britishness" that is built on image of empire when even the majority of mainland British workers are tired of these symbols?

No matter what background they come from, socialists need to challenge the pressure for allegiance to a "community" or its traditions.

For those from a Catholic background this means opposing the argument of Gerry Adams and John Hume that they need a "pan-nationalist" approach that links the Catholic ghettos of Belfast and Derry to Irish American businessmen or crooked Fianna Fail politicians.

For those from a Protestant background, it means breaking from the claim that the monarchy or the Northern state has the primary call on their loyalty.

Socialists throughout Ireland have no allegiance to either the British or Irish state. Our aim is to replace them with a socialist Ireland where all workers gain

What do socialists say?

How do we end third world debt?

MILLIONS OF people support the call to cancel Third World debt. The Jubilee 2000 coalition has won wide coverage, with popstars like Bono supporting its campaign to wipe out £60 million of the most pressing debts owed by the poorest countries.

Ordinary people are outraged by bankers pumping money away from the desperate and the starving.

A recent United Nations agency report showed that the lives of 21 million children a year could be saved by diverting money from debt repayment to health and education. In some countries, such as hurricane hit Honduras, debt repayment still devours over 60 percent of the government's revenues.

The local rulers are doing little more than acting as tax collectors for the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and big finance companies.

The Live Aid concerts organised by Bob Geldof raised £123 million. That amount is handed over every week by African nations to Western banks. That sort of experience means that people have increasingly demanded more fundamental changes. Support has moved from simply money raising events to organisations like Jubilee 2000 which argue for more far reaching change.

The growing pressure for action over debt from below has forced some sympathetic noises from other world leaders. At the Cologne G7 summit in June prime ministers and presidents will discuss writing off some "unpayable" debt. But nobody should believe this makes a real difference.

Under a recent scheme backed by the big powers, 88 percent of Mozambique's debt was cancelled. Over £1.5 billion was shelved. This debt was not being repaid anyway. So Mozambique's actual repayments only fell from £69 million a year to £61 million.

Facts like those show the need to go much further into the way the system operates. Everyone should support Jubilee 2000 against the bankers and the governments that protect them. But debt is just one aspect of a global system of capitalist

exploitation.

This system means workers and peasants are paid low wages, while multinationals collect vast profits. It means that companies and governments seek to play workers off against one another to accept lower wages and worse conditions as the price of receiving investment.

It means that ordinary people across the globe are denied any real say over economic life. And when people revolt they come up against the brute force of the police and the army.

Not all countries have equal power in the world system. Western imperialism means that some ruling classes can impose their own terms on others. The G7 ruling classes stand at the pinnacle of a pyramid of exploitation.

But just beneath them stand the ruling classes of the poorer nations, enthusiastically pushing through programmes that impoverish their own people. Indeed, because they are rulers of poorer and weaker nations, these leaders can be nastier than the rulers of richer countries.

Demands

In Zimbabwe, President Mugabe is carrying out the most brutally repressive measures, partly to satisfy the demands of international banks. The unlamented President Mobutu of Zaire simultaneously drained a fortune from his own people, stole £5 billion of Western aid and loans and then tore into ordinary Zaireans in order to get the money to repay the banks.

Socialists are for the cancellation of all the Third World debt, every penny of it, now. But without revolutionary methods - mass demonstrations, militant marches, strikes and insurrections - there will not be significant movement over debt.

As well as confronting the symptom of debt we argue to take on its cause—capitalism. That campaign will not pull together as wide a group of titled backers as Jubilee 2000. But the natural audience for an assault on capitalism and its murderous priorities are the five billion workers, unemployed and peasants of the world.

HAZEL CROFT

Individuals who were to be assassinated. His army handler, Colonel Ter admitted that his aim was persuade the UDA to cease their targeting...and concentrate on known Provisional members".

the BBC programme *Loyalists*

provides enough evidence to show that the death squads were unleashed in Northern Ireland by establishment figures.

This simple fact makes nonsense of the argument that only the IRA was involved in violence and that de-commissioning must occur

before Sinn Fein can enter into the cabinet.

The reality is that Unionist politicians who inspired or worked closely with paramilitaries are using the de-commissioning issue only to stir up sectarianism.

s to politicians

is not between Catholics and Protestants but is right through both "communities" on class lines.

System

in the Shankill Road, for example, only a tiny number of children manage to pass the notorious 11 plus system that discriminates against the working class. Poverty and unemployment make a sharp contrast with the upmarket area represented by the Shankill Road.

Yet while the new loyalist politicians respond to the feelings about injustice towards the working class, they can never promote genuine class politics.

Their base lies in paramilitary structures rather than the organised working class. To this day, for example, PUP spokesperson Billy Hutchinson, still says he has no regrets for helping to kill two Catholic half brothers.

The arguments of the progressive loyalists about socialism still rest on a notion that Protestants are better than Catholics.

A recent PUP pamphlet, for example, baldly states that "the Protestant working class are more progressive and could embrace the notion (of socialism) much easier than those from the Catholic working class".

Billy Mitchell himself argues that socialism grew out of the Protestant Reformation and

that by embracing its principles "we are being more faithful to the spirit and intent of the Protestant reformation".

But this is just an echo of previous sectarian politics because it writes off Catholic workers as ignorant nationalist dupes.

Instead of promoting genuine class politics, the PUP and the UDP see themselves in competition with Catholic areas for jobs, grants and resources.

But as long as workers are locked into the sectarian competition, upper class Catholics and Protestants will get away with policies which promote low wages, low taxes on profits and a notorious system of education which guarantees high working class failure rates.

AS THE PRESS TALKS ABOUT 'GOLDDILOCKS'

The other side of America's boom

“All great and getting better”. That is what Bill Clinton says about profits, wages and living standards in the US.

Since the start of the economic crisis in Asia in 1997, a number of economists have argued that the US economy is largely insulated from the crisis which now covers 40 percent of the globe.

America is supposed to be the model of stability and growth, a “Goldilocks” economy that is neither too hot nor too cold, but just right.

The reality for American workers is very different. Workers' wages have taken a real hammering.

Between 1973 and 1990 real hourly rates in manufacturing and other parts of the private sector fell by 12 percent. By contrast, in the decades up to the 1970's real wage levels rose decade after decade.

On the other hand the rich are getting richer. The top 1 percent of the population took 70 percent of all increases in family incomes in the early 1990s. In 1979 chief executive officers of companies earned 35 times the wage of the average workers. By 1996 they were paying themselves 209 times the average workers wage.

There has been a huge growth in jobs - over 30 million in the service sector alone. But most of these are low wage, insecure, “flexible” jobs.

The growth of these jobs was accompanied by “downsizing” and company restructuring. The outcome of which has been that one in seven US workers lost their jobs in the 1990's and one third of all workers earned less than \$15,000 a year in 1997.

While wage rates are falling, working hours are increasing. The typical family now puts in 15 weeks more work a year than 20 years ago.

A staggering 90 percent of workers are now concerned about their job security.

The temporary jobs agency Manpower is the largest private sector employer in country and one in ten workers are now on temporary contracts.

There has been growth in the US economy but it has neither been spectacular nor steady. Last year, between August and October it looked like the US was headed for a serious economic recession. The US stock market was in turmoil and a financial panic gripped US banks and investors.

Even the magazine Newsweek argued that the world could face an economic meltdown on the scale of the 1930s. In October its cover title was “The Crash of 1999?”. Inside, the lead article by Robert J. Samuelson argued that “The United States is the last great domino propping up the world economy. If it falls, woe to us all.”

But then the stock-market had a miraculous recovery and ruling class panic gave way to increasing self confidence.

This recovery happened because the US government intervened to prop up a collapsing hedge fund and also cut interest rates to stimulate the economy.



UPS strikers showed the strength of the American working class

The strength of consumer spending, it was argued would buoy up the US economy and stimulate other ailing economies.

The economy was also fuelled by a devaluation of the dollar. This allowed for a huge growth in US exports to Latin America and South East Asia. But as these economies collapse like dominoes, US export markets are drying up.

All of this shows that the economic experts can offer no real explanation of what is happening in the US economy.

A closer examination of the US economy reveals deep cracks and contradictions that can only lead to further destabilisation and crisis.

Since the beginning of the global crisis in the Summer of 1997, there have been three serious market debacles, all of which followed a similar script.

A real economic disaster acted as a catalyst to market panic; a government rescue program offered temporary recovery and stabilisation and stock markets surged in the belief that the crisis had been avoided.

Each ‘recovery’ has been more speculative than the last. Stock markets reach record levels and become increasingly disjointed from the real economy.

This disjunction between the real

economy - the production and circulation of goods and services - and an over inflated stock market cannot continue. The warning signs of recession are already there. Overproduction and overcapacity has already led to manufacturing layoffs and chaos in the farming sector.

There has also been a huge increase in credit card debt. Middle class Americans borrow on the basis that the boom is here to stay and working class Americans borrow to survive job destruction, low pay and a shattered welfare system.

Much of this debt has been financed by Japanese banks, but as the crisis deepens in Japan, banks will become reluctant to continue this. Any drying up of funds could then burst the stock market bubble.

The US trade deficit has expanded to a record \$150 billion in the first nine months of 1998, and may hit \$300 billion in 1999, as markets for American goods dry up and as cheaper imports take increased shares in the US domestic market.

Compared to much of the rest of the world the US economy is performing well. Yet growth rates have continued to be lower than in all previous periods of expansion of the US economy.

In the 1960s growth rates were around 5.25 per cent a year, in the 1980s 4 percent a year, but they have failed to move beyond 2 percent per year after 1989.

Growth rate for 1991 was so weak that it took government economists

until the end of 1992 to agree that it had arrived.

In 1996 the bosses were celebrating the fact that their profit levels had recovered - but only to their 1973 levels. Today many commentators are arguing that profits have been declining since the end of 1997.

However the mini-boom is helping to fuel worker militancy. American trade unions suffered a huge blow to their confidence after Reagan smashed the air-traffic controllers strike in 1982.

This was followed by a sustained attack on the labour movement by the employers and government.

Yet the 1990s have seen a growing mood of anger at the blatant inequalities in wealth, insecurity at work and the failure of union leaders to do anything about it.

This new mood inside the working class was seen clearly last year in the disputes at General Motors, amongst transit workers in Philadelphia and in communication workers action against outsourcing.

This anger was reflected in the emergence of a new layer of leaders inside AFL-CIO union federation and in unions such as the Teamsters.

Clinton was sufficiently worried by this development to intervene in the

Teamsters. One year after the successful UPS strike Clinton sent in government commissioners to run the union, alleging funding irregularities in an election campaign. He succeeded in ousting the newly elected head of the union.

There are a lot of difficulties with the tactics put forward by this new layer in the unions. Instead of action they prefer public relations or boycott campaigns.

The union leaders refused to sanction stoppages during the Caterpillar, Stanley and Bridgestone-Firestone disputes in the mid 90s. This was disastrous in the Caterpillar case when after 6 years of a bitter dispute the action was lost.

But on the other hand large numbers of workers were radicalised by involvement in campaigning for support for these disputes. Although working class consciousness is rising, people still do not have the confidence to break with their trade union leaders. Nonetheless the UPS and GM disputes were tremendously important.

Firstly they showed that the new ‘flexible’ labour forces could unite and win. And secondly they showed just how vulnerable the multinationals still are to organised workers.

US society is a powder keg that could explode at anytime. It is a society torn apart by class and racial divisions.

But the sense of despair that has dominated the working class is beginning to change and among those who are fighting back there is a sense of hope that comes from struggle.

by Sinead Kennedy

in my view

And the Oscar for informing goes to...

ON MARCH 21st the film director Elia Kazan will receive a life time achievement award at the Oscars. The man who made *A Street Named Desire*, *East of Eden*, and *On the Waterfront* surely deserves an award.

Kazan brought to the screen Marlon Brando and James Dean. He even directed *Viva Zapata* about the Mexican revolutionary. What socialist could object to recognition for a great directors life's work? This one can. The reason is that Kazan was an informer.

In 1952 at the height of the McCarthyite witchunts Elia Kazan went before the House of Un-American Activities and named eight people as communists.

"He is getting a life time achievement award for ratting on his friends," says Walter Bernstein a screen writer who was blacklisted.

"I don't think he should get it. In his testimony he badly hurt the film industry that is giving him the award. If he had some kind of remorse I would feel different but it is academic because he hasn't." In the 1950's the American ruling class set about trying to destroy the trade union movement and build support for the Cold War, by whipping up anti-Communist feeling.

Sacked

Thousands of trade unionists were sacked. The FBI spied on workers and passed on information, often false, to their employers.

The most public aspect of the anti-communist crusade was the witchhunt in Hollywood. Many actors and writers had been influenced by left wing ideas in the 1930's, but the real reason for the show trials was to create a high profile climate of fear.

Many refused to testify or name left wingers but Kazan didn't.

If this had been a response of someone acting out of fear then perhaps, while contemptible, it would be understandable. In fact, Kazan's reason was greed.

He was a rising star in Hollywood and wanted to enhance his career. He was proud enough to place full page adverts in the papers to encourage others to do the same.

He made *On the Waterfront* to defend his actions.

In the film, Marlon Brando plays a docker who informs against the hoods that run the union and the docks. Kazan portrays the stool pigeon as an inspiring martyr.

The character Brando plays, Terry, becomes aware of his strength and cries "I been ratting on myself all these years, I

"He is getting a life time achievement award for ratting on his friends,"

didn't know it. I glad I done what I done."

The movie is moving and powerful and the acting brilliant. Some argue that it stands alone as a tale of workers taking back a corrupt union for themselves.

But it is also about the turncoat as hero. When Terry is beaten up for his betrayal, Kazan portrays him in religious lighting as a saint.

Significantly, Brando, who moved to the left through the 50s and 60s, to the extent of supporting the Black Panthers and turning down an Oscar over the treatment of Native Americans, later denounced the film.

Arthur Miller who had been Kazan's friend, and who had originally been involved in the project, wrote his anti-McCarthyite play *The Crucible* as a direct rejoinder to *On the Waterfront*.

Kazan is a talented film director who was once attracted to left ideas. He had made films in the 1940s against racism and anti semitism.

Spy

But as the tide turned to the right he was happy to go along with it.

While making *Viva Zapata*, Kazan had the FBI spy on the crew because he was convinced that Communists would take over his film.

He shouldn't get an Oscar.

It should go to John Garfield, Walter Bernstein, Zero Mostel, and the thousands of writers, actors and technicians who didn't inform and so didn't work - some of them for over twenty years.

But this is not going to happen because, like Kazan, the Academy of Motion Pictures was complicit in McCarthyism and like Kazan, has never apologised to those it victimised for their political beliefs.

SIMON BASKETTER

film



When laughter means defiance

IS IT possible to make a humorous film about the Holocaust? Surely it is in extremely bad taste to deal with the most barbaric act of the twentieth century in anything less than a sombre fashion?

These are the understandable questions raised about Roberto Benigni's Oscar nominated film, *Life is Beautiful*.

But far from trivialising the Holocaust, Benigni uses humour in two ways.

The humour of the first half of the film creates a backdrop of joyous humanity against which the horror of the second half is all the more shocking.

Crush

The humour of the second half is that of people resisting the attempts to crush their spirits.

Benigni, who is like a modern day Groucho Marx, plays the part of Guido, the main character, who leaves his Italian village to find love and fortune in the city.

His uncle gets him a job as a waiter and Guido comes into contact with the local middle class who have enthusiastically embraced fascism.

At a posh dinner, he overhears the wife of a fascist official praising the German education system for teaching seven year olds to calculate how much money can be saved by eliminating all the nation's cripples.

In the midst of all the fun of the film,

this casual conversation piece brings home the full horror of the Nazi's cold calculating attitude to humanity.

Slogan

The fact that Guido is Jewish does not register until his uncle's horse is painted green and daubed with an anti-Semitic slogan.

Later Guido and Dora, a local school teacher, have a son together and open a

bookshop. Guido tries to shield his son from the harsh reality by making fun of the anti-Jewish slogan that is daubed on the shop front.

But then the nightmare begins. Father, son and uncle are dragged off to a German concentration camp.

Dora, who is not Jewish, refuses to be separated from them and she barges her way onto the cattle train.

In the camp, Guido keeps up his clownish

humour but does so to save his son.

He tells the child that they are in a holiday camp and that he must play along with the game of hide and seek.

The boy survives because of his father's courage and quick wit.

Taste

Guido's humour stays with him until the end. Far from being in bad taste, the film is a tribute to the humanity of mil-

lions who refused to let their spirits be broken even as they faced death.

It is probably a coincidence, but the film's title echoes the words of a great champion of the struggle against fascism, Leon Trotsky, when he wrote,

"Life is beautiful. Let future generations cleanse it of all evil, violence and oppression and enjoy it to the full."

—DAVE McDONAGH

book

Moving memories of another world

PAT BARKER is best known for *The Regeneration Trilogy* for which she won the Brooker Prize in 1995. It was one of the greatest fictional representations about World War 1.

Her latest novel *Another World* is about an individual's experience of the war. On this occasion Barker focuses her attention on the remembrance of the conflict 80 years on.

Geordie, a 101 year old veteran is nearing death. During the last few weeks of his life he re-visits the killing fields of France.

Geordie's story shows how the ex-soldiers grappled to put their lives back together. Barker shows the dispensability of human life under capitalist society.

The veterans were callously discarded by their governments once they had served their purpose.

Geordie's story is only one element of *Another World*. Most of the book is con-

cerned about his grandson, Nick, a college professor who struggles to keep his dysfunctional family together as they move to a bigger home.

The metaphor of moving and starting afresh is very apt as Barker seems to be exorcising her past literary concerns.

Her earlier novels, such as *Union Street*, were mainly concerned with the struggles of working class people. *Union Street* vividly portrayed the daily battle of seven women against the poverty of Northern England in the 1980s.

Fails

This novel captured the contradiction between a society which seeks to instil its values into its inhabitants yet simultaneously fails to satisfy even their most basic needs.

Yet in *Another World* the council estates and its inhabitants are an unwelcome intrusion into the 'normality' of the middle class world Barker is presenting.

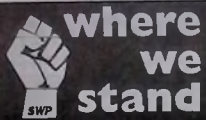
Moreover their intrusions often threaten violence as with the bullying of Nick's son by a group of working class children.

Ultimately Barker's main conclusion in *Another World* is about the subjective nature of memory. *Sometimes* Geordie's tortuous flashbacks are made to seem as unreal as the ghost Nick believes is haunting his new home.

Geordie's death means everyone's else's life assumes a greater semblance of happiness. Barker seems to indicate that it is good to forget the harsh reality of the past for the sake of present happiness. Yet we also need to learn the lessons of the past as war is still an ever present reality in many parts of the world.

Ultimately Pat Barker's new book is a disappointment because it settles too comfortably into Blair's imaginary world of a safe middle class Britain.

—Kate Martin



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.

North and South it's... War on welfare

NOT CONTENT with their onslaught against the unemployed, Tony Blair's New Labour has come up with another attack - their new "Welfare Reform and Pensions Bill" announced in February.

Social security minister Alistair Darling described the bill as "harsh but justifiable", but disabled and lone-parent campaigners quickly denounced the Bill for its discrimination against the poorest people in society.

Instead of putting resources into helping the disadvantaged the Bill is clearly designed to intimidate people from claiming benefits.

Cost of training staff in the new measures,

alone, will be £80 million.

Lone parents, the disabled and other benefit claimants will be forced to attend interviews or forfeit all benefits.

Some categories of benefit claimants will be required to attend these grillings every few

months. Darling claims that none of those called into an interview will be forced into a job.

Scapegoat

But it is clear from the whole tone of the Bill

that lone parents and the disabled are to be scapegoated as "welfare scroungers" who are a burden on the state.

For lone parents there will be a series of "milestones" depending on the ages of the children when the parent will be called in and pressurised into

getting a job.

Included in the Bill is a 'Stakeholder Pension Scheme' for people "who have worked hard all their lives". People need a decent pension scheme but the implication is that, in comparison the unemployed, lone parents and disabled are idlers

and work-shy. And unpaid childcare is clearly not regarded as work of any significance.

New Labour has shown itself to be following the Tory agenda. These attacks, along with those in Health and Education must be beaten back.

Why are they persecuting the poor?

WORKING CLASS people are living in fear as Social Welfare Minister Mary Harney steps up her campaign to force more claimants off benefits and into low paid work.

Prompted by IBEC's complaints that they can't find people willing to work in low paid jobs, Harney's department has begun to haul in unemployed people into her offices to make them explain why they are unemployed.

One unemployed woman told Socialist Worker, "I was told that no one was forcing me to get a job but that if I didn't get a job in three

weeks my unemployment benefit would be automatically cut off for nine weeks."

Meanwhile, low paid civil servants who are forced to do Harney's dirty work have come under increasing pressure.

It was even suggested that Clerical Officers—on take-home pay of £190 a week—should operate the vehicle checkpoints which are planned for working class estates.

Socialist Worker spoke to one CPSU trade union activist who works in a local office in the Dublin area: "We are understaffed when it comes to helping people but they have no problem putting resources into chasing people."

"While fat cats get away with tribunals, Joe Soap is threatened with prosecution."

"The woman who does four hours in the chip shop to buy shoes for her children is now regarded as a major threat to society!"

Harney's crackdown also means that Social Welfare staff - who often live locally - are viewed with suspicion outside of the office.

"People know my job and when I went out for a drink recently I was asked, 'Are you watching us in the pub now as well?'"

"I tell them not to worry, that I'm on Family Income Supplement myself because I get paid so little!"

Socialist Worker has also heard

reports of discontent among Welfare Officers—the grade who carry out most of the "interviews". One Officer is reported as saying that the job she was expected to do made her stomach churn.

The bosses in Social Welfare like to encourage their staff to regard all claimants with suspicion. But life behind the hatch is not much better than life on the dole. Many dole offices are miserable and overcrowded, demoralising for both staff and claimants.

Being low paid means that Social Welfare staff have far more in common with people on benefits than they have with the likes of Mary Harney.

No time for safety

SEAN QUINN is worth £250 million according to the Fermanagh Herald.

This fortune has been built up on the merciless sweating of his employees and a vicious anti-union campaign.

He sacked five drivers who tried to set up a union in his company.

He was recently in the news for giving one of his employees, Sharon Sweeney, a different job with less status, when she returned from maternity leave.

Sharon took her case to an Industrial Tribunal and won £20,000.

Quinn's neglect of workers' health and safety was highlighted when his Derrylin cement factory was fined £3,000, the maximum a magistrate can impose, for not providing guards for machinery.

On 22 May a Health and Safety Inspector served four prohibition notices on the management at the cement factory for guarding defects.

The Inspector also spoke to

management about these defects.

Four days later management reported to the Inspector that all the defects had all been remedied.

Two months later on 24 July, a Health and Safety inspector found a conveyor running with part of the head pulley guard missing.

The Health and Safety Head Inspector said the dangers were "well known" and "have resulted in serious injuries and indeed fatal accidents".

NEWS FROM THE SWP GO FOR GROWTH

THE CURRENT Tribunals are exposing the nature of the Irish state. Every few years people are given a chance to vote - but no matter who wins big business dictates.

Sometimes it does this with direct bribes — at other times it uses its economic muscle to dictate. But even if politicians are caught taking bribes, the rule that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor still applies.

What is needed is a major revolutionary socialist party that is capable of tackling the roots of corruption and bribery. The Socialist Workers Party has played the most visible role in campaigning for jail sentences for corrupt politicians. Each week, its street stalls highlight the need for action. SWP members in the unions have raised resolutions calling for protest marches.

Now the party has launched a major recruitment campaign to swell its numbers for the struggles ahead. Since the campaign was launched at the party's National Committee a week ago, 21 people have joined. Three people joined at Students for Socialism, a weekend of discussion that brought over 80 students together from over the country. 4 joined in Dublin North West, 3 in Dublin, 2 in Cork, 2 in Dun Laoghaire and 1 each in Dublin Artane, Dublin North Central, Derry, Galway, Tralee, Limerick and Belfast. A new branch has also been formed in Tralee.

Over the next few weeks, SWP will be approaching all its supporters to encourage them to get involved.

SWP Branch meetings - all welcome

ATHLONE:
Contact 01- 872 2682 for details
BRAY
Meets fortnightly on Thursdays at the Mayfare Hotel at 8pm
Mar. 11th: **The Fight Against Fascism Today**
BELFAST CENTRAL:
Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Garrick Bar,

Chichester St.
BELFAST EAST:
Contact 01- 8722682 for details
BELFAST SOUTH:
Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in upstairs Renshaws, University St.
CORK CENTRAL:
Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in Dennehy's pub, Cornmarket
CORK SOUTH:
Meets every Monday at 8.00pm in Scellig, UCC
DERRY:
Meets every Monday at 8.30pm in Badgers Bar, Orchard St.
Mar. 8th: **Are Women Liberated?**
Mar. 15th: **Can Socialist Planning Work?**
DUNDALK:
Contact 01 - 872 2682 for details

DUN LAOGHAIRE:
Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Christian Institute
Mar. 9th: **Future Socialist Society**
Mar. 16th: **Capitalism, Corruption and Democracy**
DUBLIN ARTANE / COOLOCK:
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Artane/Beaumont Recreational Centre opp. Artane Castle
Mar. 9th: **How we build a revolutionary party?**
Mar. 16th: **Genetic Engineering: How Big Business is Ruining our Health**
DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL:
Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Conways, Parnell St.

Mar. 10th: **The Fight for Women's Liberation**
DUBLIN NORTH WEST:
Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in the Snug, Dorset St.
Mar. 11th: **Do the Media control our lives?**
Speaker: Paddy Moen
DUBLIN RANELAGH:
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Tom Kelly Flats, Charlemont St Community Centre
Mar. 11th: **The Origins of the International Socialists**
Speaker: Pedro Borges
Mar. 18th: **Against Postmodernism**
Speaker Richard Boyd Barrett
DUBLIN RIALTO:
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm St.

Andrews Community Centre, SCR, Rialto
Mar. 9th: **The Fight for Women's Liberation**
Speaker: Marnie Holborow
Mar. 16th: **Hughie Newton and The Black Panthers**
Speaker: Sheila Delaney
DUBLIN RATHMINES:
Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond St.

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:
Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Trinity Inn, Pearse St.
DUBLIN TALLAGHT:
Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in Jobstown Community Centre
ENNISKILLEN
Meets fortnightly on Saturdays at 4pm. Phone 01 - 8722682 for details of venue
Mar. 13th: **Why Workers are Exploited?**
Speaker: Joe McCarroll
GALWAY:
Meets every Thursday in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square 7.30pm
LIMERICK:
Contact 01 - 872 2682 for details

Join the socialists

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

Name

Address.....

Phone.....

Union:.....

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in Dennehy's pub, Cornmarket
Meets every Monday at 8.00pm in Scellig, UCC
Meets every Monday at 8.30pm in Badgers Bar, Orchard St.
Mar. 8th: **Are Women Liberated?**
Mar. 15th: **Can Socialist Planning Work?**
DUNDALK:
Contact 01 - 872 2682 for details

Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in Tom Kelly Flats, Charlemont St Community Centre
Mar. 11th: **The Origins of the International Socialists**
Speaker: Pedro Borges
Mar. 18th: **Against Postmodernism**
Speaker Richard Boyd Barrett
DUBLIN RIALTO:
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Conways, Parnell St.

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond St.
DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:
Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Trinity Inn, Pearse St.
DUBLIN TALLAGHT:
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email: swp@clubi.ie web: www.clubi.ie/swp

Firefighters

We want the same pay rise as the Gardai

Firefighters have voted by a narrow majority of 54% to go back into negotiations on their pay claim.

But they are still angrily rejecting any suggestion that their traditional pay link to the Gardai should be broken.

Last year, Gardai got a 9 percent increase after staging two days of 'blue flue protests'.

This increase was significantly above what other public sector workers received.

In return the police had only to agree to operate a new computer system, attend court cases and issue on the spot fines.

As soon as this rise went through, firefighters submitted a claim for parity and offered thirteen items where they could show improvements in productivity.

But Dublin Corporation tried to use the occasion to squeeze even more out of the firefighters.

And even then they would not promise to match the increase given to the Gardai.

The management proposed to destroy 64 jobs by 'civilianising' the operation of a new computer system, the Computer Aided Mobilisation Project.

"They wanted to take on yellow pack workers who would not have the experience responding to distress calls. Traditionally this work is reserved for fighters who have been injured in the course of their duties. It has been an important assurance.

"Who in their right mind would charge through a door of a burning building, if they thought their might be no job for them if they were injured" one SIPTU shop steward explained to *Socialist Worker*.

Stations

The Corporation management also wanted a blank cheque to be able to switch appliances across the stations in Dublin.

They hoped to start this by moving one tender from Donnybrook to Tallaght.

"We cannot simply switch around appliances for an expanding city. We need to put more resources into the service", the shop steward said.

The corporation also wanted to change the whole shift system even though workers were quite happy with the present one. The Labour Court originally came down on management's side by urging the workers to discuss these drastic proposals for change even though it failed to guarantee the pay link with the Gardai.

Firefighters, however, mobilised quickly against these developments.

Nearly a thousand workers from all over Ireland came to a meeting in the SIPTU headquarters, in Liberty Hall, which was originally convened to conduct a strike ballot.

A powerful National Committee representing firefighters across the country had recognised that if the link between Dublin firefighters and Gardai was broken, the pay levels in other areas would also be adversely affected.

"I am convinced that if the national strike had gone ahead, it would have sorted out a whole number of issues. Several reports have shown that morale among Dublin firefighters is at rock bottom and there have also been local difficulties in other areas.

The Dublin meeting showed there was a wave of solidarity where we were all going to stick together"

Just before the strike ballot was due to go ahead the soldiers union, PDFORA, issued a statement saying they would have severe difficulties providing a service during the strike. It was an important signal that they did not want to be used as scabs.

These developments created panic in government circles.

With hours to go before the Dublin mass meeting, the firefighters received another 'letter of clarification' from the Labour Court.

This gave a vague acknowledgment that the firefighters had a right to a link with the Gardai but it did not remove the draconian productivity proposals they were supposed to discuss.

The SIPTU officials argued that there had to be a new ballot on the 'clarification' and continually invoked the Industrial Relations Act to claim they had no other option.

However, many militants rejected this approach and spoke out openly against it. In the end, however, the proposal for a new ballot was reluctantly accepted. Many firefighters are still keeping a wary eye on the SIPTU officials.

ANL

Opposition is growing to the Immigration Bill.

One hundred and twenty people turned out to a picket on the Dail that was organised by the Anti-Deportation Committee (ANL).

The lively protest was addressed by Pat Guerin of the Anti Racist Campaign and Kieran Allen of the SWP.

Meanwhile, fifty people marched through the streets of Galway and gave out information leaflets on the Bill to passers-by. The march was organised by Galway against Racism and was addressed afterwards by the local Labour T.D. Michael D Higgins.



Protesting against the Immigration Bill at the Dail

Housing

Over the last few years rents in Dublin have risen relentlessly.

Now, tenants from Rathmines and Ranelagh have decided they've had enough. They've set up a housing action committee to mount a challenge to the landlords' greed.

A public meeting was held in Rathmines on Feb 16th to launch the campaign. It was a great success with over 75 people attending.

The overwhelming feeling at the meeting was one of anger, but also a strong determination to do whatever it takes to win their demands.

The campaign is focused around four main demands which would alleviate the housing crisis:

- Rent controls
- Security of tenure
- Affordable accommodation for all
- A Public Housing building programme

Some people at the meeting were facing eviction due to rent rises they just couldn't afford or in some cases for no reason at all.

Many people there, however, were just angered by the lack of rights a tenant in Ireland has and the insecurity of knowing that you can be evicted or have your rent raised at any time.

Simon Brooke from Focus Ireland, who spoke at the meeting, stressed that rent controls were very common in other European countries and that there was no reason why they could not be introduced here.

Derek Delaney from the Socialist Workers Party was equally adamant that in the middle of the Celtic Tiger the only obstacle to implementing these demands was the government's unwillingness to act.

As more evidence emerges daily in the tribunals about politicians receiving back-handers from rich property developers and speculators, it wasn't surprising that speakers from the floor also turned their anger on the government.

Scapegoat

When one person tried to say that refugees were to blame for the housing crisis he was shouted down by the crowd. Obviously, the government's attempts to scapegoat refugees just doesn't wash anymore.

As a result of the meeting around 20 people picketed the Irish Property Owners Association on Thursday 25th February. As one woman on the picket said "I've never done anything like this before in my life but I just got so angry that I had to do something". Almost everyone who passed by the protest

was very sympathetic and some even joined it.

This is clearly an issue that people from all over Dublin and Ireland feel strongly about and the campaign is set to get much bigger in the coming weeks.

A nation-wide petition has been launched and there are plans to have a major march on the Dail.

These are the tactics which the Dublin Housing Action Committee used in the 60's to force the government to take action and it can work again.

To join the housing action campaign phone Kevin Wingfield 8622209

**Public meeting
8pm Tuesday
March 9th
Vietnamese Centre
45 Hardwicke
Street
Off North Frederick
St**

Students

Left make a come back

THE LEFT is making a major comeback in student politics.

Socialist Worker Party member, Terry Connolly, scored 1,100 votes in the most recent student union election in UCD.

Traditionally UCD has provided a major base from which Fianna Fail students set out to capture the national students union, USI. In recent years Fianna Fail has had a strategy of working with 'pro-life' students to destroy all vestiges of left wing politics in the student movement.

For a period they were highly successful. Last year when Terry Connolly ran for President of the Students' Union he only got 7 percent of the vote. Yet in this election he scored 35 percent of the vote and won the majority in the large Arts faculty.

There are two main factors underlying the change.

First, more and more students are looking for a radical alternative to the 'do nothing' policies of the right wing. This year 2,000 stu-

dents marched on grants for the first time in years. Many carried slogans calling for 'Double the Grant: Tax the Rich'.

The USI policy of giving more tax concessions to landlords has also been met with contempt. A recent report showed that only 7 percent of UCD students found it easy to get accommodation. Terry Connolly's policy of demanding rent controls won huge support.

Second, the corruption in Fianna Fail is devastating their own supporters.

The UCD Cumman did not even run a candidate for the Students' Union Presidency and increasingly finds itself in a minority in student union council meetings.

Terry Connolly's main campaign slogan was 'For a return to student radicalism'. Other candidates in TCD and Maynooth are raising similar policies.

It looks like the days when journalists could patronisingly write off today's students as far less radical than their parents are coming to an end.

BATU

BRICKLAYERS across Dublin stopped work and converged on the Harcourt Development site in Park West, Clondalkin.

The bricklayers were protesting against threats made to BATU union official and his family. Shortly after the union official visited the site to check if the workers were getting PRSI contributions, arrangements were apparently made to send some heavies to his house.

It is believed that some of the heavies involved had republican paramilitary connections. In the past, the BATU union offices have been firebombed. The work stoppage and mass pickets were organised by the group, Building Workers Against the Black Economy, which has promoted a militant campaign against sub-contracting on the sites.

One of their spokespersons told *Socialist Worker*, "We called this action to face down the threat of intimidation by unsavoury sub-contractors who are being used by so-called respectable employers

Royal Mail

WORKERS AT the Royal Mail have voted narrowly to accept a pay and productivity deal agreed between the CWU and management.

The pay increases for clerical, technical and secretarial staff were set at 3.2 percent while the uniformed postal grades got 5 percent and a £2 minimum pay supplement.

The Branch Committee of the CWU Number 1 branch recommended against this on the basis that it created divisions between the workforce.

One union activist said, "

We made £640 million for the Royal Mail last year but some workers were offered a derisory 3.2 percent. Why don't our union leaders fight for a decent wage so that workers are not relying on productivity to make up their earnings?

The reality is that they are too close to Tony Blair and New Labour. But our needs are different to those of Tony Blair".

In the end 41 percent of workers voted against the pay element of the deal.

The productivity deal also allows workers to increase their earnings above the basic if they reach certain targets. But it is also designed to create huge divisions

"We all work at different paces.

But this deal will create the divisions so that someone will say that they are not 'carrying' other workers."

The productivity deal was only carried by a tiny majority. Forty-seven percent of workers voted against it even though it was enthusiastically endorsed by the union leaders.

One Royal Mail worker told *Socialist Worker*, "The vote shows there is a real opposition developing in the union. We have to build on that opposition by winning endorsements for the Action Programme that is now circulating throughout the UK."

Socialist Worker

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

**JOIN THE LOW
PAY PROTEST
GET TO
NEWCASTLE ON
APRIL 10TH**

Despite huge profits the...

Fat cats pay poverty wages

COMPANIES IN Northern Ireland boosted their profits by 15.4 percent last year while workers have been fobbed off with miserly 2 percent pay rises and the promise of a £3.60 an hour minimum wage.

The list of the top 100 companies, published last month, is a list of shame.

It shows that bosses of every hue - multinational, Protestant or Catholic - are lining their pockets while sacking their workers or paying them poverty wages.

Take FG Wilson, the Larne engineering company that is laying off 400 workers. It made £35.3 million in profits last year - and one of its directors got the fourth-highest salary in the top 100, 'earning' £471,000!

That's the equivalent of employing 30 workers at just over £15,000 a year. FG Wilson was bought up last year by US company Caterpillar which is

widely known as a union-buster amongst American trade unionists.

Or look at Compass, another huge multinational which has laid its hands on every lucrative catering contract in the NHS while paying its workers peanuts. Its workers now get £3.60, the minimum wage - and they've been offered a pay rise of 5p for this year!

At Harland and Wolff, one director raked in a £257,000 salary while work is being farmed out to cheap, corner-cutting sub-contractors.

Profits

Workers in Belfast aerospace firm Shorts have been told their jobs may be 'rationalised' for the past two years, yet Shorts made £43.8 million profits in 1998.

For a real jobs massacre, look at the supermarkets. Wellworth's made £22.3 million in profits in 1997 and sold its 21 stores to SuperValu.

Soon after, 84 workers were sacked in Derry's Wellworth's and 108 jobs went in Bangor and Antrim.

The textiles sector in Northern

Ireland has laid off thousands of workers but the fat cats are still protecting their profits. Desmonds laid off 225 workers but still made £5.8 million in profits.

US multinational DuPont, which produces lycra in Derry but has also dabbled in genetically modified foods, sacked 218 workers in February '98 - to ensure the group's usual gigantic profits.

Home-grown capitalists are no better. Sean Quinn, the Fermanagh producer of cement products and roof tiles who also pays poverty wages to his hotel workers, came away with £7.5 million in profits.

And let's not forget Viridian, the parent company of - privatised - Northern Ireland Electricity.

NIE's charges are far too high, the electricity watchdog says, and its ageing, cash-strapped network left 50,000 customers without electricity for up to four days after the Christmas storms.

But the cost-cutting and overcharging has paid off - for the fat cats.

Viridian took a massive £76.7 million in profits and one of its directors received a £433,000 salary!

**We need £5
an hour**

THE TOTAL profits for the top 100 companies in Northern Ireland came to some £770 million in 1998.

Yet Tony Blair tells us companies can't afford to pay workers more than £3.60 per hour as a minimum wage.

Yet even in Southern Ireland, the minimum wage is being set at £4.40 and many trade unionists are protesting that this is still too low.

We should tell Blair workers can no longer afford to work for starvation wages. £3.60 an hour is only about £100 in take-home pay.

No one can live on that.

This is why every trade unionist should support the national, TUC-backed, march for a living wage in Newcastle-upon-Tyne on April 10.

We want £5 an hour for every worker, regardless of age.

It's still peanuts compared to top directors' £200 an hour.

**DEMONSTRATE
'Demand a Living Wage'
Saturday 10 April
Newcastle upon Tyne**

(officially called by UNISON)

Supported by the TUC, ASLEF, AMO, AUTT, BFAW, BECTU, BIFU, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, CWU, Community and Youth Council, Equity, FBU, GMB, GPMU, MSF, MU, NAPO, NATFHE, RMT, NUJ, PCS, Society of Radiographers, TSSA, UCATT and NUS

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