

Socialist Worker

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WASHINGTON PROTESTS:
Rage at the heart of the beast



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Ahern is up to his neck in corruption

Fianna Fail:

ROTTEN TO THE CORE

BERTIE AHERN is accused of taking £50,000 from the developer Owen O'Callaghan.

A Cork businessman claims to have passed on the cash from O'Callaghan.

He claims £50,000 was given to a wealthy former Minister in the summer of 1989, followed by an alleged payment to Ahern in the Burlington Hotel.

Ahern has denied the payment but he has admitted that he received £100,000 from the generous developer, as a donation to the Fianna Fail party, when he was its treasurer in 1993 and 1994.

Shortly after O'Callaghan made the contributions, he benefited from a decision by Ahern to grant special tax breaks on a site in Athlone. O'Callaghan gave £50,000 to Fianna Fail as late as 1998.

But this is the just tip of a very large iceberg. Ahern has a long record of dealings with business friends:

★ Ahern signed almost all the 1,615 cheques of taxpayers' money that funded Charlie Haughey's exorbitant lifestyle.

★ It was Ahern's brother-in-law who reduced Haughey's tax bill from £2 million to zero.

★ Ahern was the signatory to a number of FF accounts including one that held £325,000 in 'donations' from the passports for sale scam.

★ Ken Rohan is a big donor to Fianna Fail. Ahern brought in legislation that was backdated for twelve years to allow property owners with art collections to claim tax breaks. Rohan was the only one to benefit.

★ John Finnegan, who had £2 million in the illegal

Ansbacher bank, regularly attends Ahern's £2,000 a head fund-raising bashes. Finnegan arranged the purchase of Ahern's Drumcondra home. The house was part-paid for by Jim Lacey a former Fianna Fail fundraiser. Lacey was in charge of the National Irish Bank when they stole from their customers.

Fianna Fail are in the pay of the developers. Twelve developers gave £432,501 to the party in 1998. We now know that developers bribed councillors, local authority officials and TD's.

The corruption scandals go right to the top — Fianna Fail is rotten to the core.

JAIL THE CORRUPT POLITICIANS

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Mary Coughlan speaks on Billie Holiday



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Fianna Fail lobbyist gave £112,000 to politicians: Corruption scandal spins out of control

THE ROTTEN networks between big business and the politicians are starting to come out at the Flood Tribunal.

The developer Owen O'Callaghan paid at least

£1 million to former Fianna Fail press secretary Frank Dunlop to help him get the Quarryvale (now Liffey Valley) shopping centre built.

Councillors Colm McGrath and Liam Lawlor

both received money from Barkhill Ltd, O'Callaghan's investment company.

Dunlop has admitted paying off 15 Dublin County Councillors in the run up to the vote on Quarryvale.

He paid them from £2,000 to £12,000 late at

night in cash either in their homes or in the Dail Bar.

The Tribunal has a list of all the politicians Dunlop lobbied but has so far refused to make it public.

The AIB bank, who put up the money for the project, were, according to Dunlop, "concerned that planning permission came through".

They let Dunlop withdraw money from a dodgy Channel Island company in one of their branches.



Bertie Ahern and Frank Dunlop

Make the builders pay us back our money

IN 1989, the building company Brennan and McGowan received £1.9 million of public money when Dublin County Council was forced to pay compensation after it refused them planning permission.

The cheque was signed by the then assistant Dublin city and county manager George Redmond who never even consulted

the councillors. Now it turns out that Brennan and McGowan had paid £50,000 over to Redmond.

They also financially backed the disgraced former Fianna Fail Minister Ray Burke since the 1970s.

Burke got £150,000 in cash and their architect John Keenan designed his house.

Later Burke appointed Keenan to An Bord Pleanala, where

he mysteriously turned down the planning permission for Brennan and McGowan.

This was the pretext for Redmond giving over £1.9 million in compensation.

Brennan and McGowan should now be made to hand back this money.

Dublin needs several more play ground and the money used in this skullduggery could pay for them.

Developer

Originally another developer, Tom Gilmartin wanted to build the shopping centre.

He was told that if he lodged £500,000 in an account in the Channel Island then everything would be OK.

He refused — and didn't get to build the shopping centre.

Coincidentally the successful builder, Owen O'Callaghan put over £500,000 into a Channel

Island account controlled of a former Fianna Fail spin doctor and fund-raiser.

O'Callaghan engaged Dunlop as a lobbyist long before the Liffey Valley project. Dunlop began his work in early 1991.

As *Socialist Worker* first revealed this was the time when Bertie Ahern was granting special tax status in unexplained circumstances to a development O'Callaghan was building in Athlone.

Who is Dunlop?

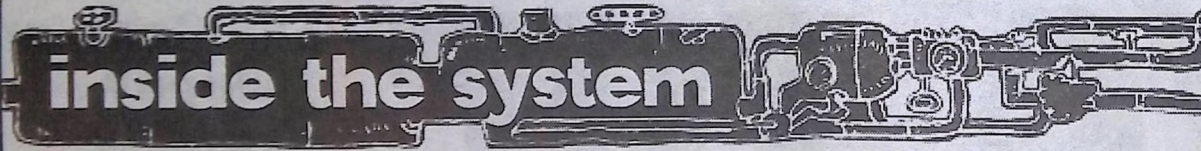
DUNLOP USED to be a press officer for the Fianna Fail. He is also one of the key lobbyists making the links between businessmen and the politicians.

★ He is the spin doctor for the building bosses in the Construction Industry Federation. He organised the publicity campaign against workers who took strike action to eliminate the black economy.

★ He also promoted the high rise Spencer Dock Development. The company has admitted paying politicians including Ruari Quinn.

★ Dunlop covers the cost of catering at the annual Fianna Fail hospitality tent at the Galway races.

★ He organises the donations to Fianna Fail for one of his clients — the low pay employer Penneys.



inside the system

THINGS THEY SAY

"Oh Jesus, I hope not."
■ Fianna Fail councillor BETTY COFFEY's response when asked if she had received any money from Frank Dunlop.

"What we are dealing with here is not a case of backhanders, what we dealing with is a nest of vipers."

■ A GARDA SUPERINTENDENT who attempted to investigate corruption in Dublin County Council.

"The demonstrators say the IMF is arrogant — it doesn't really listen. They'll say the IMF is secretive and insulated from democratic accountability. They'll say the IMF's economic remedies often make things worse. And they'll have a point."
■ JOSEPH STIGLITZ, chief economist at the World Bank until last November

"Irving is an active Holocaust denier...is anti-Semitic and racist and... associates with right wing extremists who promote neo-Nazism."
■ JUDGE GRAY

"It may become imperative to go into the Bogside [in Derry] and root out the terrorists and hooligans."
■ Army chief of staff LORD CARVER's letter to Tory prime minister Edward Heath a couple of months before the Bloody Sunday massacre of 14 unarmed civilians in Derry.

Army promotes murderer

THE BRITISH army has promoted Lee Clegg, the paratrooper who was convicted of murdering a Belfast teenager.

Clegg opened fire on a car at an army

checkpoint in 1990. He was subsequently jailed for the murder of 18 year old Karen Reilly and the attempted wounding of 17 year old Martin Peake, who also died. But last

year, after a massive campaign by the right wing and its media, Clegg's convictions were quashed. He has been promoted to corporal and may soon become an officer.

It's an unfair cop

A RECENT Irish Council for Civil Liberties seminar heard calls for the abolition of the Garda Complaints Board.

★ **FOOD GIANT** Unilever is determined to get you one way or another. On Wednesday of last week the company announced it had taken over two other firms.

The first is Ben And Jerry's Ice cream company. The second is Slimfast, the slimming products company.

Its own report shows that less than 1 percent of annual complaints against the Gardai are successful.

Some 60 percent of complaints are rejected as "inadmissible" and 20 percent are withdrawn — often under pressure from the Gardai.

James MacGuill, a solicitor who spoke at the conference said, "It's not unknown for me to have to advise clients in some cases of the possibility of the Gardai vindictively prosecuting people in return for the complaint they have lodged."

"I have to say you can make a complaint but it's a monumental waste of time".

★ **A MAN in the US has been jailed for 16 years for stealing a Snickers bar.**

The man has other convictions for shoplifting so prosecutors decided to change the charge from shoplifting to felony, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years.

The assistant district attorney said the charge was raised because "He needed to be taught a lesson."

"The Snickers was kingsize. If it had been a Milky Way we probably wouldn't have tried him."

INCINERATORS

Campaign hots up

C A M P A I G N S AGAINST incineration are escalating all around the country.

In Ringsend, Dublin, residents and activists are planning a mass picket of Dublin Corporation to force councillors to reject the proposed incinerator.

Petition

Over 10,000 people signed a petition against the building of incinerators in Galway.

These plants always release dioxins into the atmosphere. Local people

are worried about the risk of cancer and damage to the immune and reproductive systems from these poisons.

Experts from the American Environmental Protection Agency agree that even the most minute exposure to such dioxins is dangerous.

As well as being a health hazard, incineration is a waste of money.

Even after the rubbish has been burnt, the toxic ash that is left has to be disposed of. This is often done at sea or in landfills.

Only 5 percent of waste is recycled. Yet even the government admit it should be possible to recycle 80 percent of waste produced.

PROTEST PICKET ON DUBLIN CORPORATION
Mansion House, Dawson St.,
Monday, May 8, 6: 30pm.
Supported by:
Earthwatch, Ringsend Community Council,
Clondalkin against Incineration, SWP and others

Galway protest meetings
April 26, 8:30 pm, Oranmore Hotel.
May 14, 3:00 pm, Corrib Great Southern Hotel, Dr.

Socialist Worker

"PEOPLE BEFORE Profit". This is the cry of a powerful new movement that is seeking global justice.

Last month tens of thousands demonstrators converged on Washington to protest against the way the World Bank and the IMF are robbing Africa of valuable resources.

But the same cry can be heard across Ireland whenever workers take on the super-rich who run the Celtic Tiger or challenge the sectarian politicians who dominate the North.

Largely unreported by the mainstream media, thousands have marched against service charges, incinerators and privatisation.

The days when people accepted Thatcherite arguments about leaving everything to the market have come to an end.

Discontent

The key task is to turn this mood of discontent into a powerful anti-capitalist movement.

A socialist paper will play a vital role in doing that.

Every movement that opposes the established order needs a radical newspaper to challenge the dominant ideas.

The United Irishmen used the *Northern Star* to organise. The early Irish labour movement looked to Connolly's *Workers Republic* for its ideas.

Our rulers constantly resort to propaganda that is designed to divide and demoralise. One of their weapons is Tony O'Reilly's Independent Group of Newspapers.

This company produces four out of five newspaper papers sold every Sunday.

It puts its spin on stories so that refugees are targeted



Marching for decent minimum wage

Your weapon against the system

as 'spongers' or strikers are berated for "holding the country to ransom".

Yet no stories ever appear about the tax-dodging activities of its owner who officially lives on an off-shore island to avoid tax.

Socialist Worker aims to provide the arguments to tackle this propaganda. But we also do more.

We want to help organise; to produce news about

the tactics that have helped workers win; to bring together network of readers and sellers who will form the backbone of the

anti-capitalist movement.

We aim to become the paper of dissent.

To that end, *Socialist Worker* is being re-launched. We are opening a letters page for readers to contribute their own ideas.

We will be interviewing many who do not share the SWP's views but who want to see an anti-capitalist movement.

Our journalists will be following up more of

the stories that our readers want reported.

We want to reach a much wider audience so that the paper becomes the eye and ears of a movement that challenges the establishment.

This is why we are appealing to our readers to take extra copies to distribute to their friends and workmates.

"In the recent refuse services strike by SIPTU workers in Bray against privatisation, *Socialist Worker* carried reports, offered clear arguments against privatisation and concrete proposals for building solidarity among the strikers."

□ EOIN GALLAGHER, SIPTU Shop Steward

"*Socialist Worker* is one of the few sources of real information on workers struggles. In this era of social partnership and consensus politics it provides an outlet for opposition views. Everyone concerned with real change should read it"

□ EDDIE CONLON, spokesperson for Teachers for Unity & currently seeking nomination to run for president of the TUI.

"*Socialist Worker* goes deep down into events. It doesn't just describe events it explains why they happen. I am most attracted by its decisiveness. They always take a position. I like the presentation and clear print especially if your eyes are bad like mine. You always know where you are with *Socialist Worker*."

□ JOHN DE COURCY IRELAND, President of CND

I read *Socialist Worker* because it's a paper that reports stories you don't hear about anywhere else. The press try to blame refugees for the housing crisis. *Socialist Worker* stands up to racism and tells the truth especially on the housing issue."

□ TOMPSON AKINWEUMNI-STREET, Nigerian refugee

"It's not the news — it's what behind the news that counts. *Socialist Worker* is the best newspaper in Ireland"

□ PHILIP MURRAY recently joined the SWP after 53 years in the Labour party



"*Socialist Worker* is extremely useful in highlighting struggles that the media do not cover. I am greatly impressed by the support and commitment it gives to workers. Jim Barbour, Northern Ireland Executive Member, Fire Brigades Union."

□ JIM BARBOUR, Northern Ireland Executive Member, Fire Brigades Union.

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As politicians and media whip up racism:

Defend refugees

"THEY ARE de-meaning the spirit of human beings. It like being imprisoned or detention — it is not a life for human beings."

This is how Josephine, an African asylum seeker, described the government's policy of dispersing refugees.

Since November 1999, asylum seekers who arrive in Ireland only get £15 a week in cash.

They are given a room and board in hostel accommodation, often in rural areas.

They are located far away from legal advisors who can help process their claim. They are cut off from other immigrants, who

could provide a support network.

A refugee from Rwanda described the conditions of a friend sent to Bunbeg, in the Donegal Gaeltacht.

"He walks the strand for most of the day. The library is half a kilometer from his B&B but it closed a year ago.

"He is told what to eat and when to eat. He is not allowed to make his own sandwich. The food does not suit him so the landlord even gave him pills to help him digest it."

Hardships

Despite these hardships, a racist campaign is being whipped up against the refugees. In Myshall in Carlow, one speaker at a public meeting branded refugees as "war criminals".

Residents of the upper class Pembroke Road in Dublin Four have protested 'refugees' would not make suitable neighbours. In Rosslare local business elements have stirred up opposition.

Fianna Fail councillor Padge Reck said "the policy of looking after our own is in a shambles not the policy of looking after refugees."

But Fianna Fail never looked after the Irish poor when there were no refugees. They were too busy getting tax breaks for the Irish and ensuring that Haughey and his cronies lived a life of luxury.

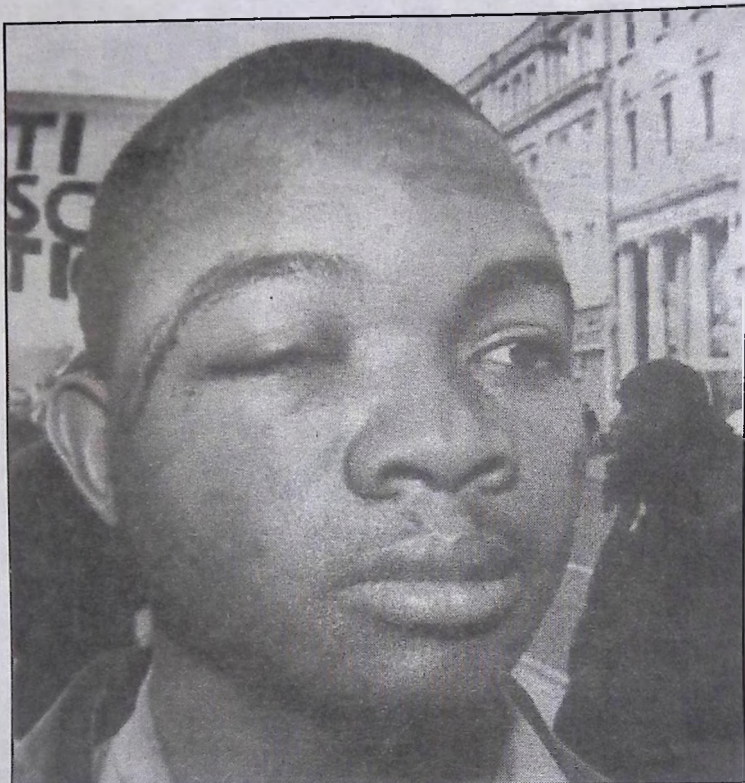
But they think they can play the race card to re-build their populist base in the next election.

The signal for the racist offensive came when Ahern announced that the government was considering opening detention centres.

Justice Minister O'Donoghue's proposal to open "flotel" or prison ship also gave out the message that refugees are a problem.

The Independent Group of newspapers and Fianna Fail politicians are stoking up the racism. Their aim is to deflect the growing discontent with the Celtic Tiger away from the tax dodging rich.

But they can be resisted if we stand together to say "Refugees are welcome here".



Paul Abayomi a victim of a racist attack in Dublin

'It doesn't have to be them or us'

JACKIE COONEY, from the Housing Action Campaign in the Tom Kelly Flats in Dublin's inner city is convinced that racism can be beaten back.

"It does not have to be them and us. It can be one and one — especially when we are all standing together to fight for social housing."

The Tom Kelly flats complex is surrounded by expensive flats, which no one can afford.

When refugees came to the nearby Santa Maria hostel, racist ideas could have gained support. But the community has a tradition of standing up for itself.

Last summer, the area mobilised to stop a landlord tearing down the St Ultans' flats and selling off the site to property speculators.

A 24 hour picket and marches forced Dublin Corporation to take the block over and provide 50 flats for people on the housing list.

"If we fight for social housing, we will show there is a common interest between refugees and local communities".

Recently, Tom Kelly Flats Residents Association and the local Socialist Workers Party branch organised a highly successful 'Kids against Racism' day in the area.

It was a real sign that a multi-cultural Ireland can grow out of working class communities fighting together.

Nail these racist myths

MYTH Refugees are causing a housing problem

THE HOUSING crisis started before the refugees arrived. It was caused by the Haughey government cutting back on local authority housing. In 1975, 8,794 local authority houses were built but by 1989 this dropped to only 768.

MYTH The country is overcrowded and takes in more than its fair share of refugees

IRELAND IS the most under-populated country in Europe. In the 1980s, one quarter of a million people emigrated. Cities like Amsterdam have a far higher population density than Dublin. Belgium, Germany, Holland and Norway all take in more refugees per head of the population than Ireland.

MYTH A generous welfare system attracts refugees.

REFUGEES WHO arrived in Ireland after November 1999 gets a mere £15 a week in cash compared to £32 a week in Britain. Refugees, who arrived before that, get the same payment as everyone else.

MYTH We have to look after our own first

IRISH POLITICIANS have never looked after the poor. According to the UN Human Development Index Ireland has the second highest level of poverty in the industrialized world. The Celtic Tiger barely taxes the rich so there is little to redistribute. Removing refugees from Ireland would not change that — but it would deflect attention from those who caused the poverty in the first place.

Unions speak out

THIS DISPERSAL policy is a form of institutional racism. ICTU President Inez McCormack told a recent 400 strong conference organised by the Irish Council for Civil Liberty and the Irish Refugee Council,

The Supplementary Welfare Act of 1975 specified that anyone living in the state who did not have insufficient means was entitled to supplementary allowance. But the government has instructed health boards not to give this allowance to refugees.

SIPTU union official Jane Boushell and IMPACT's Kevin Callinan who represents community welfare officers, say that their members are opposed to this discriminatory policy.

Some rank and file members, though, want more direct support.

"We need the union to come out and issue a directive telling us not to cooperate with this form of discrimination.

That would offer protection to the individual officer who might find their job is on the line' one community welfare officer told the conference to large applause.

**MARCH
against
RACIS**

Refugees are welcome here

Speakers from:
African and Romanian communities; Irish Council for Civil Liberties; Union of students in Ireland; ATGWU; Green Party; Irish Travellers Movement & SWP

Assemble 2:30pm
Saturday May 13
Garden of Remembrance
Parnell Square Dublin

Anti Nazi League

Eamonn McCann Ministry's dirty war

IT MAY have been coincidence, but it was nonetheless significant, that the day set aside by Lord Saville for argument on whether British soldiers should come to Derry to give evidence about Bloody Sunday (May 22nd) is the day for completion of paramilitary decommissioning under the terms of the Belfast Agreement.

Saville decided at the outset that his Tribunal should be based in Derry. But the Paras — who have already been granted anonymity, anyway — say that their lives would be in danger in Derry. So, their lawyers and lawyers for the families of the victims will argue the issue out on May 22nd.

Decommissioning will be a major element in the argument. Saville has already ruled that decommissioning is relevant. Dealing last February with a Ministry of Defence application to withhold the names of informers from intelligence documents, he noted that "not all terrorist organisations have declared themselves party to (the) ceasefire, nor... has there to date been much progress in the decommissioning of weapons".

The Tribunal added that: "Nothing should be done which would prejudice the capability of the Government to respond to the threat of terrorism or which would be of assistance to terrorists, either now or in the future".

Objective

This makes clear that while the Tribunal may be "objective" about Bloody Sunday in the sense of having no pre-conceived idea about what actually happened on the day, it is far from objective in its view of the various forces involved in the conflict.

At a fundamental level, the Tribunal accepts the bona fides of the British Army, but sees its armed opponents as illegitimate and evil.

Come May 22nd, there will be enormous concentration anyway on decommissioning, as the British and Irish Governments, the Unionists and the Provos wrangle about who's to blame for the fact that it hasn't happened. Discussion at the Tribunal will slot neatly into this argument.

In the process, any illusion that the Inquiry can remain independent of current politics will be shattered. The Tribunal will be seen as neither neutral, nor detached.

To some extent, this was always going to be the way of it. Inquiries established under the 1921 Tribunals Act are an integral part of the apparatus of the State they are inquiring into.

Part of their constitutional function is to restore faith in the institutions of State. But in Saville's case there's an additional factor.

When Tony Blair set up the new Inquiry in January 1998, he will have imagined it operating parallel to the ongoing Peace Process, its unearthing of the truth easing the families' sense of grievance and helping all sides to put the past behind them as "normal politics" took hold.

But the Peace Process is in tatters as Saville prepares to begin hearing oral evidence, making the Tribunal less a calming influence than a force for instability. In this situation, the bad faith of the British authorities is exposed.

The Ministry of Defence managed to destroy rifles that had been fired on Bloody Sunday and which the Tribunal had specifically asked should be kept safe for use as evidence.

On the other hand, the Ministry was able to dig out from its vast archives a single document from 1984 in which an unnamed informer is quoted saying he heard Martin McGuinness admitting to having fired the first shot on Bloody Sunday.

But the Ministry hasn't found a single picture taken by any of the 10 British Army photographers on duty in Derry on the day.

It is clear that the military top brass and the mandarins at the Ministry of Defence are going to fight dirty all the way to keep the truth hidden. Lying, cheating, the selective disclosure of some evidence, the destruction of other evidence—there are no lengths they won't go to. But then, we knew that already. After all, they've gone as far as murder.

Crisis in Unionism

Nothing to offer workers



WHEN DAVID Trimble took over from James Molyneux as leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, he was presented as the man to modernise the UUP.

The "baby barristers", a group of young lawyers led by Trimble's then good friend Jeffrey Donaldson, were going to bring the UUP into the 20th century.

In 1995, Jeffrey Donaldson proposed that the link between the Orange Order and the UUP be broken.

"Modernising" the UUP and breaking from the notion of Northern Ireland, as a protestant state for a protestant elite was always going to be difficult.

The links between the Unionist Party and the Orange Order go far deeper than the 120 Orange Order votes on the Unionist Council.

Many members of the Unionist Council and almost all of its MPs are also members of the Orange Order.

The Orange Order has been allowed to re-market itself as representing a "traditional culture" that has to be preserved. This was confirmed most clearly by Mr Mowlam's message to them at the height of the Drumcree crisis of 1996 when the three Quinn brothers were murdered.

When asked by a reporter what she'd like to say to the Orangemen at Drumcree her reply was "I'd like to tell them their culture is safe". Mandelson's suspension of the Executive and Assembly has reinforced the same message: New Labour will protect old-style Unionism.

Splintering

This hasn't stopped the splintering of the UUP, however. Some still want to "modernise" the party, to build a Northern version of the Celtic Tiger through closer ties with the South.

They are quite happy to share power with the SDL and even with Sinn Féin as long as they keep their left-wing ideas South of the border — something they tend to do already.

On the other side the hard right around Burnside and Donaldson want the RUC preserved as an exclusively Protestant force.

They want no links with the South and hanker after some version of majority rule.

But the reality is that neither wing of Unionism has anything to offer Protestant workers.

As Harland and Wolff teeters on the brink of closure, Unionist MPs are more concerned about the name of the RUC than the 1800 jobs.

Time to fail the 11+

THERE IS growing pressure to abolish the 11+ exam in Northern Ireland. In February the NASUWT — the North's biggest teaching Union — voted at its Federation Conference to actively campaign against the exam.

Following a series of high profile articles in the *Belfast Telegraph* debating its merits, the Queens' University School of Education issued a damning report on the 11+.

The report found that over sixty-five percent of children

obtained scores of over 70 percent.

Many would see such a high score as success but with the transfer test, only 30 percent of children are considered to have passed the test.

The report also found that a mere 12 percent of marks separated an A grade from a D, making the whole system a complete lottery.

There will also be a Campaign Against Selection delegation on this year's May Day demonstration in Belfast on Saturday May 6th.

Campaign Against Selection

Public Meeting

Why the 11+ must go

Speakers include:

Mike Rosen (Childrens Author); PJ O'Grady (Head Teacher St. Patricks College, Bearnageeha); Cathy Sloan (NASUWT Belfast Executive - personal capacity); Elizabeth McAllister (Newry & Mourne Community Groups); Eamonn McCann (Journalist & Socialist Workers Party)

7.30pm, Thursday 11th May Peter Froggett Centre Queens' University

For further details: Phone CAS on 01846-660011 or E-mail: Campaign Against Selection@hotmail.com

No to job losses at Harland and Wolff

WORKERS AT Harland and Wolff are facing major attacks on their conditions while the threat of job losses still hangs over them.

Shop stewards at the shipyard are concerned about management plans to set up a new company, employing less than half the existing workforce with new contracts which cut hard fought for conditions.

Management are modelling their plans on a shipyard in Germany which employs just 600 workers. A similar scheme in Belfast would mean over half the workers losing their jobs.

"They should be laying off management before laying off any blue-collar workers," a shop steward said "This management has wasted millions here." In addition, the

new contracts would get rid of £1 an hour allowance and a £12 pre-paid bonus.

The potential for tackling the Blair government over job losses was shown recently in Birmingham.

Over 100,000 people marched to defend jobs at the threatened Rover plant in Longbridge.

Nationalisation

Workers at the yard should be demanding a mass meeting, so that people aren't left to sink or swim as individuals when offered new contracts. It should also call for nationalisation of the yard.

That would strike a chord right with thousands who are sick of seeing their jobs disappear overnight, at the whim of a multinational company.

Zimbabwe

How dare the whites say the land is theirs

THE POLITICAL crisis in Zimbabwe has suddenly become big news. But this is not because of a growing mobilisation of workers and peasants against the regime of president Mugabe, which has given handouts to its friends while doing nothing for the mass of people.

It is big news because white farmers, who have done very well over the last 20 years under that regime, have suddenly started screaming about being "racially persecuted".

This completely ignores the fact that the modern history of Zimbabwe is about how colonialism and racism wrecked the lives of millions of black people.

Zimbabwe was one of the most developed early African societies. The ruins of Great Zimbabwe show there was a rich and complex society of black Africans in the 12th century. The later white settlers were so embarrassed by this that they claimed that the stone structures must have been built by "outsiders".

Cecil Rhodes used force and fraud to trick the Africans out of their land and eventually the named the country, Rhodesia, after himself. Africans later rose in revolt but were indiscriminately slaughtered by the white rulers. Once the whites had won, they used the most brutal methods to extract Zimbabwe's mineral wealth.

Starvation

A forced labour system meant that black mine workers were kept in closed compounds and paid only starvation wages.

The whites grabbed all the land they could. They came to regard servants, big houses with swimming pools and utter luxury as their birthright.

When they thought the British government might give away some of their privileges, they illegally declared independence in 1965. Blacks were denied all rights in the land of their birth. When people rose in revolt, special army and police squads butchered thousands.

In response to the harshness of the regime, black opposition moved from protests and strikes to armed struggle. The white regime, based on just one in 25 of the population, could eventually hold out no longer.

In 1980 Robert Mugabe's ZANU party was victorious at the first free elections ever. Mugabe faced the choice of whether to work with big business and the large landowners or to confront them. Tragically he went down the road of work-

by SINEAD KENNEDY

ing with the rich.

He crushed strikes by black workers and refused to redistribute land to black peasants. Opposition to his rule however grew and Mugabe is now in real trouble. He recently lost a referendum, which would have increased his powers.

The main opposition to Mugabe comes from workers and peasants. They are the ones who have launched waves of strikes in the last few years and who have suffered the most from 50 percent unemployment, shortages, welfare cuts and the government's corruption.

Mugabe has only encouraged the land occupations in a desperate effort to regain his credibility.

Simultaneously his thugs beat up opposition activists and have tried to stifle debate.

The opposition is dominated by the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), which is headed by trade union leaders. It was formed mainly in response to pressure from below to challenge Mugabe and is extremely popular.

But the MDC leaders have courted the middle classes and are trying to construct alliances with big business and Western governments.

The MDC is popular because it is anti-Mugabe and people believe it is more left wing than it is. This has led to a highly unstable situation because MDC's supporters want fundamental change.

Zimbabwean socialists, who are linked to the SWP, argue that Mugabe has to go, but that he should be replaced by a government that serves the interests of workers and peasants.

Peasants should seize the land, join the occupations that presently exist and push them further.

They should take back more land and use it for the masses of rural workers, landless peasants and the poor. It is important that movement is not allowed to be swallowed up by businessmen, big landowners or the multinationals and their supporters. Zimbabwe needs change, but the last thing it needs is to protect the rich whites and to cover up the racist past.

PROTESTS SHAKE IMF AND WTO

Rage at the of the beasts

HASSAN MAHAMDALLIE reports from the anti-capitalist protests in Washington D.C.

"THIS IS what democracy looks like." That was the chant that rippled through the tens of thousands of protesters who took over the streets of Washington DC. Organisers estimated that 35,000 people took part in two protests which converged in the centre of the city.

The anti-capitalist protesters were young and old, trade unionists, steel workers, machinists, environmentalists and students.

They had been out blocking off the major roads and intersections around the World Bank Headquarters from 4am. The police were also out in force in their "robocop" gear.

They deployed armoured vans, teargas and pepper gas, billy-clubs and guns. Police cars escorted the 2,000-plus finance ministers and free market economists into the World Bank building.

They eventually succeeded in starting the meeting a few hours behind schedule.

As protest organiser Han Shan said, "We have put their institutions under siege. They had to militarise the capital city of the USA to get those delegates through."

'We must demonstrate if we want democracy'

TRADE unionists mingled at a "permitted" legal rally in the Ellipse Park next to the White House.

Black steel worker Abe Adams listened intently to the environmentalists and union leaders who spoke from the rally platform. "The way these corporate powers operate today reminds me when I was oppressed as I was growing up in Alabama in the 1950s and 1960s.

"When I was sent to Vietnam I was told it was for democracy. What democracy do you see today? If we want democracy, this is what we must do."

"We've got to start by scrapping the World Bank and the IMF. I'm with the students on that."

Trade unionists chanted, "The

"This just shows what the IMF and the World Bank are like. They choose to partner with the police and the military across the world. Against the masses."

Police waded in with clubs and pepper spray against the peaceful protesters.

The previous evening police had carried out a mass arrest of 600 protesters. They raided the protesters' "convergence centre" — the organising hub of the anti-capitalist protest.

None of this dissuaded the tens of thousands who took over the city. They forced street democracy onto the capitalist "heart of the beast".

Symbols

All the main symbols of capitalist and corporate tyranny were targeted — the World Bank, the IMF, the Bank of America and the US Treasury.

The route to the White House was cordoned off. It was a carnival of revolt against the rule of capital.

On the streets was steel worker Carol Ford-Duncan. Carol told *Socialist Worker*, "I'm very proud of all these people," pointing to direct action protesters chained together on Pennsylvania Avenue.

"It's our future that's at stake. Too many people are dying because of the World Bank and corporate rule. The drive of the capitalist system is taking us back to the 19th century. It has got to stop."



Protesters came out in their thousands despite police attacks

"There are no borders when it comes to this. I'm with my brothers and sisters everywhere. We have got a goal now. We're all anti-capitalist."

Protester Don McIntosh said, "We don't believe we can reform this system. It's like a cancerous tumour — the only thing you can do is remove it." As a young woman student said, "The world is becoming more corporate. We've got to keep doing stuff like today."

Questioning

PROTESTS, TEACH-INS, rallies and demonstrations took place in the run up to the main demonstration against the IMF and World Bank.

"This US government cannot be changed," said school student Chris, who was thrown out of school for putting up a pro-choice poster. "All these institutions — the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO — they're all laughing in the face of humanity."

Bob Hamburg, from a small town in West Virginia: "I was a young man in 1968, but I didn't really get involved in the anti Vietnam War movement, apart from burning my draft card."

"Recently I decided to get active. I became part of a

concerned citizen stop the building mills in my area two people to Se came back enth I'm getting in direct action."

Demonstrators high street shop that exploit work

The chief e. Gap clothing. Drexler made \$4 1998-\$4,000

Workers turnin goods. Third V tries are paid as cents an hour.

Chris Abad sweatshop work island in the I said. We have organic. We wo a day, seven da We live in squa tary barracks, sur barbed wire. V



people united will never be defeated." Students chanted, "The workers united will never be defeated," and, "Whose streets? Our streets!"

The fat cats and the corporate suits are likely to feel the anti-capitalist heat wherever they meet to cut

their dirty deals.

As machinist union member Tom Dunne said, "This is working America waking up. People are starting to realise this is a class war — an understanding we haven't had for a long time."

Police defend

POLICE AND National Guardsmen cordoned off the main streets of Washington DC to make sure delegates to the World Bank and the IMF met.

Police officers took their revenge on the protesters.

The total arrest figure for the week's protests was about 1200.

WORLD BANK

the heart

ast



questioning the system

TEACH- and ns took on up to onstra- the IMF nk. verment ed," said hris, who school for ro-choice Bank, the they're all face of

concerned citizens' group to stop the building of pulp mills in my area. We sent two people to Seattle. They came back enthused. Now I'm getting involved in the action."

Demonstrators targeted high street shopping chains that exploit workers.

The chief executive of Gap clothing, Millard Drexler, made \$47 million in 1999, \$4,000 an hour. Workers turning out his profits in Third World countries are paid as little as 50 cents an hour.

Chris Abad represents sweeping workers on an island in the Pacific. He said, "We have no right to organise. We work 12 hours a day, seven days a week. We live in squalid, insanitary barracks, surrounded by barbed wire. Women get

fired if they are pregnant. We have no ventilation inside the factory. We have to drink rainwater."

Neal Gorfinkle from the SEIU public sector union in New Jersey was also on the picket. Neal stayed for the week's protests after he attended a rally called by trade union leaders against the entry of China into the World Trade Organisation.

Workers

Workers in the US fear that their jobs will move to China as the multinationals open up China's markets.

Neal told *Socialist Worker*, "It was a big rally. The focus unfortunately was China-bashing, which I'm against. I have nothing against workers in China.

defend multinationals

AND National cordoned off the streets of Washington to ensure delegates to the World Bank and the IMF took their revenge on the 1200.

The police used tear gas and pepper spray. Medical volunteers washed blood and tear gas off clothes and told of police brutality.

One protester was pepper sprayed and then hit full in the face with a baton. "Will this dissuade us? No. It makes our point more apparent," said student protester Joanna Helmuth.

It's the multinational corporations I hate. But I think the motion of the labour movement is generally in the right direction.

"The union federation, the AFL-CIO, endorsed Sunday's rally against the IMF and World Bank. Seattle was a shot of adrenaline into the labour movement."

Some 1,500 people listened to 23 speakers at one massive 13 hour teach-in.

International student activist Colin Rajah told the audience, "The World Bank oppresses the masses for an elite of powerful people.

"We can feel it in the USA and around the world. It is race and class based, and reinforced by the military and the police.

There were activists from all over the world at the teach-in, which was held in the church where Bill Clinton goes to repent.

Njoki Njoroge Njehu from Kenya said, "The consensus is that the IMF and World Bank cannot be reformed. They have to be abolished. The oppression is global-the resistance and solidarity has to be global.

"The enemy is not fellow workers around the world. The enemy are the owners of capital."

Chris Cross, from the

Times are changing

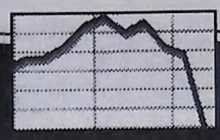
THE BEST thing is that the whole movement is moving to the left again. All this is brand new. I hope it keeps growing. Trade unionists in the US didn't really take part in the struggles of the 1960s, but we're here now. This is going to change the US. I can feel it.

Locked out steel worker DON KEGLEY

Student Alliance to Reform Corporations, argued that the protests against capitalism had to deepen. He said, "We are calling into question the system-capitalism.

"Free market economics has failed us. We feel that students and workers have lost control over the means of production to corporate control.

We want to reach workers, but we don't know how. Some people want to stop at reforms. I think you get to the point where if you're going further forward then you have to go for revolution."



what do socialists say?

Why the dot com bubble burst

IN ONE DAY Bill Gates lost \$12 billion. It still left him with an obscene amount of money but it gives some sense of the scale of the "correction" to the world markets.

The US markets lost \$2 trillion in a week — equivalent to the entire economy of Germany. The losses in the value of internet companies alone was a massive 70 percent, a staggering \$278 billion. The Nasdaq — the market for hi-tech stocks — slumped 25 percent. Suddenly all the hype surrounding tech stocks is over. Companies such as Lastminute.com halved in value.

Prices

Even when the market recovered, the prices of four stocks on the New York Stock Exchange declined for the first time since they were turned into IPOs.

turning point. A significant rally is somewhere between zero and none," said Ralph Bloch, chief market analyst for Raymond James & Co.

The price of many technology companies have soared in recent months to several hundred times their earnings. Yahoo Inc.'s price in January, for example, was more than 772 times its earnings. Some companies did not declare any profits, yet still their stock price went up.

Investors who were scared of productive ventures poured money into the stock market. Companies

in turn used the strength of their stock market value to borrow heavily. As a result private debt in America is now \$2.5 trillion higher than in 1994.

But borrowed and imaginary wealth can only prolong a boom for a limited time. In the real economy manufacturing companies have already started to lay off workers in greater numbers and are suffering from falling profits.

The stock market collapse started in the US but it has implications for the global economy. As *Newsweek* put it, "The United States is the last great domino propping up the world economy. If it falls, woe to us all."

The warning signs of recession are already visible in the US. Over-production and overcapacity has already led to manufacturing layoffs and chaos in the farming sector.

All it took was the threat of inflation going up to bring the markets down.

There has also been a huge increase in credit card debt. Middle class Americans borrow on the basis that the economy will 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 are reluctant to continue this.

Further, the US trade deficit has expanded to a record \$300 billion in 1999, as markets for American goods dry up and as cheaper imports take increased shares in the US domestic market.

The chaos on the stock markets has a real rele-

vance for Ireland.

First, Ireland has its fair share of over-hyped Internet companies. The newspapers are full of glowing tales of Internet entrepreneurs and the "new paradigm" of growth based on information technology.

The reality has been a growth in tele centres — in reality low paid sweatshops and massive profits for some. Now all the talk about a "new paradigm" looks like hype.

But more importantly, Ireland has the highest level of American investment in Europe.

The companies that lost money in the "correction" include Intel, Citibank and Coca Cola. Intel for example lost \$100 billion — more than the entire value of the Irish economy — in a single day. In the immediate future it will mean that American companies have less cash to invest in Ireland.

If the US economy goes down, the Celtic Tiger will crash.

Unplanned

Capitalism is an unplanned chaotic system of competition and overproduction that makes crisis the rule rather than the exception.

Stockbrokers and economists who promise that the Celtic Tiger will go on forever are con artists who want to talk things up to protect their investments.

That is why we should fight for whatever we can get while the boom lasts — and prepare to resist when it collapses.

by SIMON BASKETTER

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM ★ 86

TAKING ON CAPITALISM AFTER SEATTLE

- ★ John Charlton interviews activists
- ★ Abbie Bakan on the World Trade Organisation
- ★ Mark O'Brien examines the work of Susan George
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TONY CLIFF ★ REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST ★ 1917 - 2000

The pilot who weathered the storm

TONY CLIFF, who died on April 9th, was an inspiration to successive generations of socialists. The inspiration came from his incredible dynamism, his hatred of every form of oppression, and the clarity of his ideas.

He was born in Palestine in 1917, the son of Jewish settlers from the old Russian Empire. He got involved in politics at the age of 14 or 15, just as the Nazis were rising to power in Germany.

He was forced to confront the horror of what Nazism meant—many of his own relatives in Europe were to perish in the death camps.

He could see that capitalists had sponsored Hitler's rise to power and became a revolutionary socialist.

But Cliff also found that the main organisations that called themselves socialist had abandoned the fight for a better world. The German Social Democrat Party at first told its members not to fight Hitler because he was keeping to the German constitution.

The German Communist Party, obeying the orders of Stalin in Russia, insisted that Hitler was not a real danger—until it was too late.

Cliff began to see that the only way to fight for a better world was to follow the call of the exiled leader of the Russian Revolution, Leon Trotsky, and to oppose both capitalism and the bureaucracy that ruled Russia.

He also found that fighting oppression meant challenging the ideas of the Zionist settlers in Palestine, then a British colony. The Zionist trade union, the Histadrut, followed a policy of trying to exclude Arabs from jobs.

Left wing Zionists claimed the answer to the oppression of Jews in Europe was to unite with the British Empire in oppressing the local Arab population. One of Cliff's first political memories was of being beaten up at a supposedly left wing meeting because he called for Jewish workers to unite with Arab workers. Cliff's opposition to colonialism led the British authorities in Palestine to imprison him during the Second World War.

CLIFF MOVED to Britain after the war, determined to fight for socialism at the centre of an empire that then ran a third of the world. The Labour government deporting him to Ireland!

He worked with a tiny handful of Irish Trotskyists producing leaflets on Connolly's real tradition.

In the early 1950s he was allowed to rejoin his family in London.

by **CHRIS HARMAN**
editor of *Socialist Worker, Britain*

In these years he made astounding contributions to Marxist theory. More than 99 percent of opponents of capitalism in the West and the Third World at the time regarded Russia and the other countries of the Eastern Bloc as socialist.

Even the small groups of followers of Trotsky, who was assassinated by Stalin's agent in 1940, still held to his view that these were "workers' states" of a "degenerated" sort.

Cliff set out to defend this view himself and found it fitted neither with the facts about life in Russia nor with the view of the state to be found in the writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin. Not afraid to face up to reality, he came to the conclusion that a completely new view of Russia was needed if socialists were to struggle consistently against exploitation and oppression.

He provided this in his pathbreaking book *State Capitalism in Russia*, written when he was only 30. In later writings he extended his analysis to the countries of Eastern Europe, to China and to many of the new regimes that called themselves "socialist" in the Third World.

But Cliff did not merely expose these regimes as non-socialist. He also challenged the idea that they were like the society portrayed in George Orwell's novel *1984*, under the control of a regime so powerful that no opposition could ever succeed.

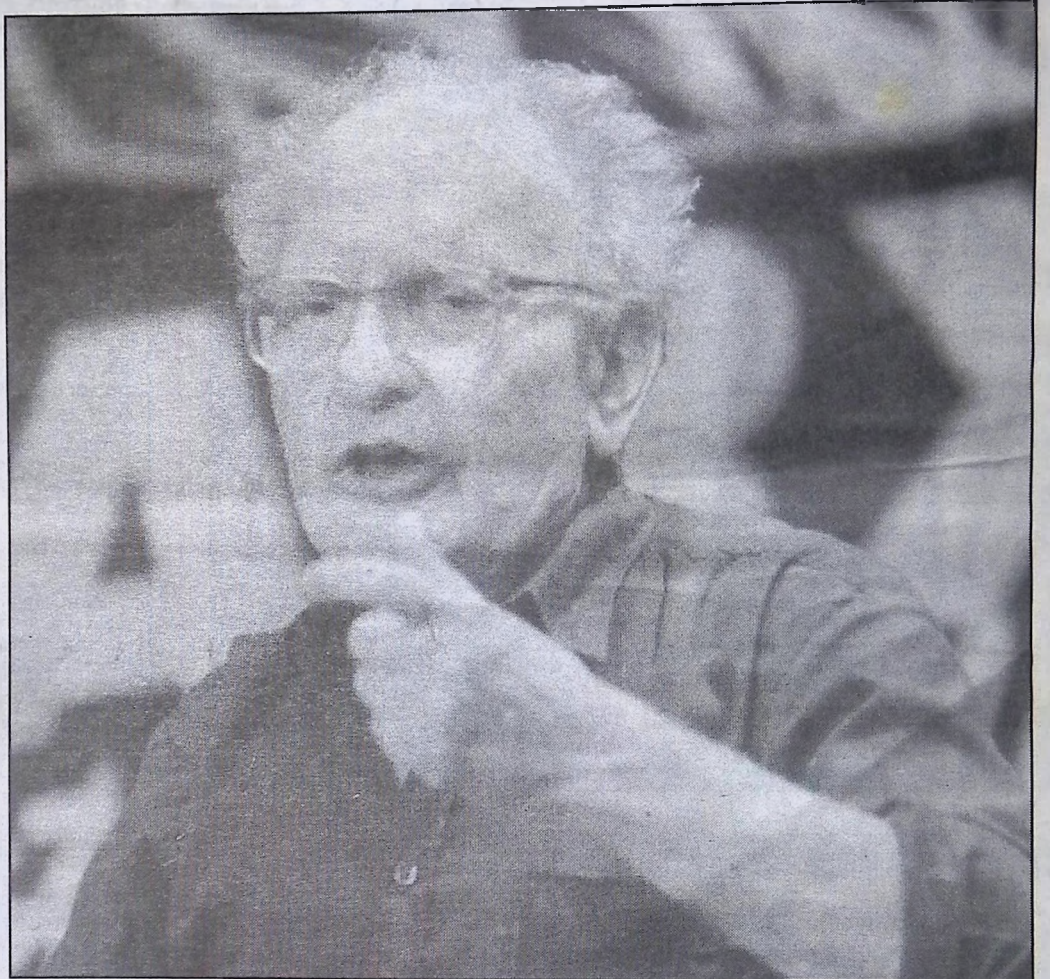
Cliff showed that the so-called "Communist" countries were a form of capitalism, with the state as the only boss. Like every other form of capitalism, it was giving rise to an ever bigger working class with the potential to shake society apart. This happened in Hungary in 1956, and then in Czechoslovakia, Poland and eventually Russia itself.

His slogan, "Neither Washington nor Moscow", provided socialists with a way of resisting pressures from the rival imperialisms during the miserable decades of the Cold War.

It also prevented them suffering terrible disillusion when the Berlin Wall came down and the USSR eventually collapsed. Cliff also produced an important analysis of Western capitalism alongside his account of Russian state capitalism.

Socialists were surprised when capitalism did not experience more slumps in the 1950s and 1960s. Cliff recognised that the system had stabilised—but that this was due to the ultimate insanity of piling up weapons of mass destruction.

This, however, could not prevent the eventual return of devastating economic crises and he was proved right. Economic crisis returned in 1974-6, 1980-1, and in the 1990s.



Tony Cliff

During the 1950s illusions in both Russia and Western capitalism were at a peak. Cliff had to reconcile himself to finding a very small audience for his ideas and to building a socialist organisation of only a few dozen members.

Nonetheless, Cliff travelled from one end of the country to another, speaking to meetings—a pattern he kept to right up to the last months of his life.

THE YEAR 1968 was a turning point, with the student and anti-war movement in the US, the general strike in France and the events in Czechoslovakia. As thousands of people began to question the system, Cliff began to find a large audience. His organisation, the International Socialists, grew rapidly among students.

Then, in 1969, a Labour government tried to introduce anti-union laws. Cliff had already produced a pamphlet for shop stewards on the threat of wage controls which sold 20,000 copies.

He followed it up with a book on productivity deals and inspired many of the new student socialists to take the arguments over the union laws into the

factories, mines and docks. He also ensured there was a clear socialist opposition to the wave of racism which followed Enoch Powell's repeated attacks on black and Asian people.

The *International Socialists* grew in the years of strikes and protests which culminated in the fall of Heath's Tory government in 1974. Cliff won the respect of thousands of activists as he displayed his amazing ability to give concrete expression to abstract ideas, using a repertoire of jokes, stories and metaphors.

But after 1974 the union leaders worked with the new Labour government and the employers to bring the ferment in the workplaces to an end.

The employers took advantage of the political confusion amongst militants and launched a counter-attack on workers' organisations.

In 1979 the election of Margaret Thatcher crowned efforts that had begun with the connivance of Labour ministers four years earlier.

Once again Cliff insisted on looking reality in the face. He was among the first on the left in Britain to recognise that the years of rising struggle were over, arguing that a new period of "downturn" had begun.

This prepared the Socialist Workers Party (the new name for the International Socialists) for the hard years of the 1980s which saw the defeat of steel workers, miners, and print workers at Wapping.

Cliff certainly did not ease up on his activity in these years yet he still found time to complete biographies of Lenin and Trotsky.

Cliff rejected the idea, common on the left in the early 1980s, that joining the Labour Party and electing left wingers could lead to quick victories. He said there had to be a revival of struggle.

He could see signs of it in the last decade of his life with the growth of a new political bitterness, not only in Britain but internationally—in Italy, Germany and, above all, France.

Once again there was a new audience for socialist ideas, and once again Cliff threw himself into addressing it.

He insisted again and again that if we do not succeed in building mass revolutionary socialist organisation then the bitterness created by the crisis of the system could lead to the growth of fascist forces as in the 1930s.

Socialist organisations based on the ideas developed by Tony Cliff now exist in most developed capitalist countries, and in places like South Korea, Zimbabwe, Turkey and Poland.

In all of them people will be shocked and saddened by the news of Cliff's death.

In all of them we will sorely miss his brain and his determination. But in all of them we will also be inspired by his 70 years of struggle to redouble our own fight for a better world.

in my view

Revenge of history

ON THE final day of his libel case, David Irving let his guard down and mistakenly addressed the judge as Mein Fuhrer.

This was no ordinary slip of the tongue. Hitler's ghost stalked the proceedings in the London courtroom as Irving set out to wash Hitler's guilty hands of any implication in the death of millions of Jews in the death camps of the Third Reich.

Irving who is a well known anti-Semite and a self-confessed "soft fascist" lost his libel action against the American academic Deborah Lipstadt who had accused him of being a Holocaust denier. Irving had contended that the Nazis did not gas millions of Jews and others. He argued that the Poles built the crematorium in Aushwitz in 1948 as some sort "Disneyland for tourists".

The sick and distorted view of history articulated by Irving represent a concerted effort by the far right to rescue fascism from history. If fascism can be separated from its role in the Holocaust it could become a respectful theory like any other political viewpoint.

This is not just a point of historical debate, but a real living issue that has relevance for us today. The editor of History Today has said, "Holocaust deniers are actively trying to gain a foothold on campuses in Britain". Ask a Turkish emigrant in Berlin or a black person living in a French town with a Mayor from Le Pen's National Front, whether the Holocaust and fascism are just historical points of interest.

When Irving attempted to speak in UCC recently a protest of over 600 people prevented him from gaining a platform to spread his vile theories.

Protestors

Kevin Myers of the *Irish Times* criticised these protestors as "cultural fascists" and defended Irving as a historian who deserved to be heard. On the day after the result of the libel action the editorial of the *Irish Times* in a veiled attack on those very protestors in Cork said, "It was not the argy bargy on university campuses or the shouting down of his message by student adolescent voices, that stopped Irving. It was the clinical, forensic examination of his credo (in court)".

However, this fact dovetails badly with historical experience. In Britain the rise of the fascist BNP has not been thwarted by cool rational arguments in the mainstream media, but by mass action and organisation by the Anti Nazi League and others.

And in Germany the liberal media were useless and complicit in the face of the rise of Hitler. It was the "argy bargy" voices of those on the left who posed the biggest threat to Hitler's accession to power. And it was those who he destroyed first.

The branding of Irving as a racist liar has in fact exposed the hypocrisy of writers like Myers. He effectively argued that Irving had a right to insult victims of the Holocaust by pretending their suffering never occurred. As Deborah Lipstadt said, "No self respecting institution would give such a man a platform".

To compound the hypocrisy the *Irish Times* issued no condemnation of the fact that four left wing societies in UCC, including the Socialist Workers Student Society, were banned and denied their right to free speech for protesting at Irving.

The Holocaust, which Irving attempts to deny, was a most heinous consequence of the system we live under. After the financial collapse of the Wall Street Crash in 1929, capitalism found itself on the ropes. It lashed out irrationally in a desperate attempt to survive this crisis.

German capitalist and financiers lined the pockets of the Nazi party, and most remained silent and contented through Hitler's reign.

Krupps, Volkswagen, Daimler and Deutsche Bank have all had to contribute to a \$5.5 dollar fund to compensate those who were used as slave labour during the Nazi era. Ford and General Motors who had subsidiaries in Germany at the time also co-operated with Hitler's war effort.

Until the system that spawned fascism is overthrown there will always remain a danger. That is why there must be always protests when fascists like Irving try to spread their obscene views.

DAVID LYNCH

music

Mary sings the blues



Billie Holiday

The life and music of the American jazz singer Billie Holiday is being celebrated in a new show by the singer MARY COUGHLAN. She spoke to Socialist Worker.

"UNTIL I was about seventeen, like any teenager, I listened to nothing but pop music. But when I moved to London I came across an old Billie Holiday record in a shop on the Portobello Road and ended up listening to nothing else till I was about twenty-six.

"It was the music I had three kids to. While I was changing nappies I would be singing Billie Holiday songs.

"I have always sung her songs at concerts and I always had one or two on each album.

"But I wanted to do a show of just her

music.

"We have John Kelly providing links between the songs, which hopefully will tell people a bit more about her life and give a context to the music.

"She recorded over 500 songs and a lot of them she hated, though she still gets a range of emotion into them.

"Things like *Them There Eyes* and *Miss Brown To You*, she simply had to do them to make a living.

"The ones she liked were towards the end of her life where she is doing ballads — serious songs with powerful emotions.

"Her life was tragic and it shows in the songs but there is also an anger against the tragedy.

"She was in the first mixed race band but

STRANGE FRUIT

by Lewis Allen

Southern trees bear strange fruit,
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze,
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.

Pastoral scene of the gallant south,
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth,
Scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh,
Then the sudden smell of burning flesh.

Here is fruit for the crows to pluck,
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck,
For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop,
Here is a strange and bitter crop.

the same hotel as the people she played with.

"If you add that context to the amount of abusive relationships she suffers, and a life racked with drugs then the pain and anger are obvious but the way she gets it across in the music is unique.

Unique

"Other people have recorded the songs she did, but it's not the same.

"Billie herself knew that it was different, she would say things like 'Other people sing a song to make it sound pretty. When I sing it, I want people to know my heart is breaking. 'Cos it is

breaking.'

"There is a relevance for today.

"I have just recently started doing the song *Strange Fruit* again which is about lynching in the Deep South and introducing it by talking about Ireland today.

"For instance, I saw recently on television about black people not being let into pubs in Ireland.

"When the government puts people fleeing for lives into floating prisons, then Billie's work has a real resonance."

■ **Lady Sings the Blues with Mary Coughlan is at HQ in Middle Abbey Street, Dublin for a limited run from May 2nd.**

film

Thirst for justice

OCCASIONALLY HOLLYWOOD comes up with a really good tale.

by GEORGIA SUMMER

The new film *Erin Brockovich* is one, but maybe that is because it is based on a true story.

Erin Brockovich is a fearless, unconventional working class woman who needs a job. She is a former Miss Wichita, who believed she could use the post to fight for world peace and end hunger, but instead spent most of the time opening supermarkets.

Now, with \$74 in the bank, debts of \$17,000, three kids under the age of six and no partner, she has a few problems.

After many rebuttals she is given a chance to prove herself by a liberal lawyer.

Her hard work and unorthodox methods uncover a major scandal involving the local \$28 billion water company.

It covered up a contamination of the water supply which led to serious health problems.

Erin persuades her boss to take on the water company, and her concern for those involved earns her a respect she has never had. This is a great film—both funny and moving. It shows how against all the odds you can fight and win.



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.

news & reports/politics/industry/the unions (01) 8722682 /fax (01) 872 3838 e-mail swp@clubi.ie

PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS

Vote for Rank & File candidate

CAROLANN DUGGAN the Waterford factory worker, who has shocked the Union establishment before, is contesting the election for vice president.



CAROLANN DUGGAN

In 1997 Carolann Duggan confounded mainstream pundits when she secured 42 percent of the vote in the SIPTU presidential election.

In the successive vice-presidential election she again performed well, obtaining

over one fifth of the votes.

As the Irish Times said in 1997, "Many PAYE workers, whether white or blue collar, feel they have not benefited from the partnership

agreements. The strong vote received by Ms Carolann Duggan, a rank and file candidate, clearly reflects this sentiment"

Carolann Duggan has consistently given voice to the anger that in Ireland's biggest Union.

Standing firmly against the union leadership's role in the Partnership agreements, she has reflected the desire of many workers for a stronger and more militant union.

She is the only candidate in the forthcoming election that campaigned against the Partnership for Prosperity and Fairness programme.

Carolann Duggan argues that partnership deals let the bosses give themselves huge pay increases while the workers are pegged down to low rises.

In her manifesto she says, "In the Celtic Tiger profits, house prices, and rents can all shoot up but the only item which is controlled is wages"

The election occurs against a background of the biggest wave industrial action in many years. During the recent bus-workers dispute Carolann Duggan gave full support to the strikers while SIPTU's leadership refused to make

the strike official.

Carolann Duggan's main opponent is Jack O'Connor who is a supporter of the present SIPTU leadership and in favour of the partnership approach.

Recently he had a letter printed in the Irish Times attacking Charlie McCreevey for his "pinko socialist" jibes.

However such opposition remains hollow when compared to Jack O'Connor's record. He has made no criticisms of the Union leadership's role in the Bus dispute. And he is undoubtedly the favoured candidate of the Geraghty clique who dominate the union.

A high vote for Duggan would send a stark message to the union leadership that workers want more from the Celtic Tiger than they getting now.

SIPTU

It's time for a new strategy in SIPTU. Join the network of SIPTU activists: **New Directions**, 105 O'Hogan Rd, Ballyfermot, Tel: (01) 623 7585

New Directions

Fax (01) 872 3838
Email swp@clubi.ie

or send to

letters

PO BOX 1648, Dublin 8

Stop this racism before it spreads

Telecentre sweat shop

I HAVE worked in the tele-sales industry both here in Ireland and in the US.

Everyone goes on about how wonderful these white collar jobs are, but I can tell you, its very different. Basically, they are just puppets for large multinationals.

You are supposed to be there to help customers, but in fact, all your responses are scripted. Your individuality is completely wiped. It's a system that treats its workers and customers like dirt.

Conversation outside of the script is forbidden, and management are monitoring our calls. Despite the hype about these jobs, we are still only paid minimum wage.

If you don't make a certain number of sales, your hourly rate doesn't rise, so even after working 36 hours, I often only earn £160. Even the highest paid worker there, probably

only gets about £270. This is pathetic. Something needs to be done to humanise this alienating industry. No telesales company I have worked for had a union. That would be a good place to start.
 MIKE, DUBLIN 8

Student nurses: Treat with nothing but contempt

I WRITE this letter in disgust at the way Student Nurses are being treated by the Government in our fight for equality in third level education.

We are the only students that must pay full fees- up to £3,000.

It is extremely frustrating to face this dilemma, and at the same time be told by the Dept. of Health that highly skilled and qualified nurses are a necessity.

Their refusal to acknowledge our situation forced us to stage walk-outs, petitions and occupation to be even get noticed by the Depts' of Health and Education.

Our fees issue is directly linked to the nurses strike last October because the Government refuses to acknowledge that the public sector has been ignored

who are getting a hostel built. Then at a meeting in Roslare, there were ugly scenes over plans to turn a local hotel into a hostel for asylum seekers.

What I heard from that meeting made the hair stand up on the back of my neck.

People came out with the most outrageous racist statements.

The few locals and councillors who defended ref-

ugees were shouted down. It's frightening to see people taking their frustrations out on asylum seekers. How are they to blame for the problems caused by our government?

This isn't the country I thought I lived in.

Something needs to be done to stop this racism before it spreads further.

KEVIN RYAN, Wexford

for too long. Since the nurses strike, public sector workers have become more militant in their efforts to secure fair pay. The recent actions by the bus and train drivers, psychiatric nurses and teachers are simply the natural response to a government and a system that has £1 billion surplus but cannot provide enough housing or an adequate education or health service - even though it can award its already wealthy Ministers with massive pay increases.

It is encouraging to see the rank and file of the public sector are taking the appropriate and overdue action needed to achieve equality in this time of unshared prosperity.

ELIZABETH GREENE
1st year student nurse

Join the Socialists

(PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS)

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone.....

Union.....

E-mail.....

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- I want more information
- I want to get Socialist Worker fortnightly
- I want to subscribe to the SWP e-mail network

Return to SWP PO Box 1648 Dublin 8. Tel (01) 872 2682

SWP branch meetings

- ATHLONE:** Contact 01- 872 2682 for details
- BRAY:** Meets every Wednesday at the Mayfair Hotel at 8.30pm
- BELFAST CENTRAL:** Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in the WhytesBar.
- BELFAST QUEEN'S UNI:** Meets every Tuesday 1pm (see poster for details)
- BELFAST SOUTH:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Queens Students Union
- CORK:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Hairy Lemon, Oliver Plunket Street
- DERRY:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Badgers Bar upstairs, Orchard St.
- DUNDALK:** Contact 01 - 872 2682 for details
- DUN LAOGHAIRE:** Meets every Tues-

- day 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 Pub, Parnell St
- DUBLIN NORTH WEST:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in O'Mahoney's Pub, Phibsboro (near Crossguns bridge)
- DUBLIN DUNDRUM:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Dundrum family recreation centre
- DUBLIN RIALTO:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm St. Andrews Community Centre, SCR
- DUBLIN RATHMINES:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in O'Connell's Pub, Sth. Richmond St.

- 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:** Phone 01 - 872 2682 for details
- GALWAY:** Meets every Wednesday in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square (beside Cuba) 8.30pm
- LIMERICK:** Phone 01 - 872 2682 for details
- SLIGO:** Meets fortnightly on Saturdays, phone 01-8722682 for details
- TRALEE:** Phone 01 - 872 2682 for details
- WATERFORD:** Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the ATGWU Hall, Keizer St.

Teachers

Revolt across the unions

A MAJORITY of teachers across the three main teaching unions voted against the last partnership deal but their union officials have carried on as if nothing happened.

The annual congress of the union will now see a backlash from the rank and file. The key issues which affect all unions is how to respond to the ASTI's wage claim. One ASTI activist

explained, "Our union will be taking the first two years of the partnership increases. But that is not the end of the matter.

"Teachers have given huge productivity over the last few years and we want a 15 percent catch up claim to compensate us. We want all teachers across the different unions to rally together to fight for this."

Inside ASTI there have been clear signs that the union officialdom is dragging their heels. They seem to be more loyal to the ICTU bureaucrats than their

own members.

They have now brought in SIPTU to represent their gripes against the elected leaders of the union.

Support

Meanwhile support for ASTI's position is growing in the INTO. That union accepted partnership deal by only 91 votes.

At this year's conference, left wing delegates will demand that the union vote on whether or not to accept the 3 percent offer as a final settlement for early starters.

They argue that the issue of how teachers have fallen behind other workers has not been resolved by the partnership vote.

Some schools and union branches are also refusing to implement new curriculum due in September until productivity payments are made.

The focus of much anger is Senator Joe O'Toole who has become a key figure in the ICTU.

In the TUI opposition to the bureaucracy is rallying around the election campaign of Eddie Conlon for union president. Eddie played a key role in building Teachers against Partnership and has been hounded by the union executive because of it.

"I want to see all teachers get behind a claim for higher wages. The 3 percent for early starters is just not enough," he explained.

The election campaign provides a major opportunity to build a network of rank and file activists who can ensure that the union leaders obey the decisions taken at annual conferences.

Firefighters

North and South ballots for strike

MEMBERS of the Fire Brigade Union in Northern Ireland are balloting for strike action over cuts in conditions for new recruits.

Jim Barbour, FBU National Executive member for Northern Ireland said, "Fire-fighters are massively solid on this. We don't take strike action lightly. But we have been pushed to this by the employers."

Recruits

The local Fire Authority want to take away the NI Allowance from new recruits and plan to cut other entitlements such as annual leave.

"This is all about equality and fairness," Jim Barbour said. "We only want the same contracts for all fire-fighters."

Tony Maguire, from Cadogan Fire Station in Belfast, said, "Things have reached crisis point. We've had 5 years of efficiency savings. People feel that if they get away with cutting conditions for new recruits, they will then try to harmonise conditions down for the rest of us."

Regions like Derbyshire, Essex and Manchester have successfully resisted the

cuts through ballots for strike action. Northern Ireland is the latest battle in that wider struggle.

Jim Barbour explains, "There's no doubt there are grave implications for public safety if they get away

with this. It will mean further cuts in fire appliances. We're not asking for a penny more. We just want what we have to apply to new recruits. The FBU has had enough of belligerent, confrontational employers."

99% for action

WORKERS AT Dublin Fire brigade have balloted for strike action after the Corporation's continual refusal to pay increases agreed after action last June.

The ballot was virtually unanimous with 99 percent of workers voting in favour of the deal

Retired

No increases have been paid to retired workers who were supposed to be included in the deal. In a letter to Dublin Corporation the workers said that if no date was given when retired members would be given their increases, then specified withdrawal of in instructors from training centres would begin towards the end of May.

Corporation are claiming that the increases had to be sanctioned by the Depart-

ment of Finance.

But as one worker told *Socialist Worker* "This dispute has been going on for 6 months.

"Nobody else is going to take up the cause of retired workers, who need the increases more than anyone with the huge rises in inflation".

Firefighters in Cork are also threatening strike action. After action last June firefighters in Dublin won a 9.5 percent increase. The Dublin Brigade wanted to bring in a number of changes including the civilisation of the control room and roster changes.

However it was agreed that these changes would not be looked at until Phase 2.

Management have tried to introduce these new measures in Cork, Limerick and Waterford as well. But Cork have unanimously rejected these proposals.

Workers are now threatening strike action and fire-fighters in Dublin have agreed to back them.

Dublin Port

DEEP-SEA dockers at Dublin Port prevented the unloading of vessels at Dublin Port.

The unofficial action was part of a dispute, which has been going on for over 12 months. Workers went on strike because of unagreed deployment of new recruits by the company Ocean Manpower.

The workers already had an agreement with management that no new recruits would be introduced until everything had been negotiated.

But as one worker told *Socialist Work-*

er, "This dispute happened because management knew they weren't going to get their own way so they thought they'd rail-way it through."

Workers are also objecting to the company stalling on the payment of men over 68 and on the redundancy settlement following the seven month lockout in 1992.

The dockers, who are all members of SIPTU, balloted almost unanimously for action with 70 out of the 73 workers involved voting for unofficial action.

The action was suspended pending labour court talks.

Irish Rail

Vote to de-rail management plans

PERMANENT WAY workers in Irish Rail are balloting on proposals offered by CIE management after their strike last month.

The strike, which coincided with the removal of contractors and the lifting of a high Court injunction.

But all the contractors who were removed have now been reinstated. These contractors get paid as much as five times as much as permanent workers.

One worker told *Socialist Worker*, "We should be getting rid of the contractors and giving the work back Irish Rail. There are sending us on courses on reading, tracking and sensing but won't train us to use the new Atlas machines."

Part of latest proposals could lead to up to 300 job losses. Many of the existing workforce have been on temporary contracts for as long as eight years.

Rises

Many of these workers believe management will dump them. As one younger worker put it, "By 2003 we won't have a job. Our jobs are being given away in return for pay rises.

"But the increases are being dressed up to be much more significantly than they are in reality."

The deal offers 20 percent increases in basic pay, which gives and indication of what can be gained by direct action. But there are real problems with the deal.

Apart from the job losses, the deal is proposing a flexible 46-hour week and, 26 night weeks per year.

As one shop steward told *Socialist Worker*, "Workers in some parts of the country, Dublin, Limerick and Athlone, will be worst affected, but workers across the country can stick together."

"Otherwise we will giving our life over to the company."

Junior Doctors

IN AN unprecedented move, Junior Doctors, at the recent IMO conference in Killarney decided to "name and shame" the teaching hospitals where the worst conditions for junior doctors can be found.

The organisation says that University College Hospital Cork, University College Hospital Galway and St. Vincent's Hospital in Dublin are the most serious offenders when it comes to junior doctors conditions and pay.

Our Lady's Hospital Crumlin and Limerick Regional were also named along with the others for persistent breaches of national agreements.

In UCH Cork, junior doctors are regularly paid for 65 hours when they have

worked upwards of 94 hours a week.

New conditions are frequently agreed between management and the IMO, only for the hospital to revert to old practices when a new group of doctors arrive.

One doctor discovered that he had been underpaid by £12,000. The hospital subse-

quently refused to provide details of overtime payments to another 30 junior doctors, forcing them to pursue freedom of information cases.

As one doctor told *Socialist Worker*, "No one can be left in doubt at the huge anger felt by doctors" Junior doctors have voted to refuse to accept half pay for working overtime, called for

the same rates of overtime as other healthcare workers and are agreed a mandate to strike if their "bottom line" was not immediately agreed to. That is the immediate change of overtime payments to reflect work actually done and a date by which real contract negotiations between junior doctors and HSEA will begin.

Psychiatric nurses

THE WORK to rule by psychiatric nurses in the PNA is continuing.

The nurses are protesting at the provision in the new partnership deal which sees the government reneging on commitments given to the Promoted Grades in Nursing after last October's National Nurses Strike.

After the strike the government had agreed to differentials between grades which would be paid by October 2001. They are now saying that these won't be paid until after the current agreement

expires. The action has so far not included nurses from SIPTU. But anger among SIPTU nurses is high and it is a disgrace that SIPTU union leaders are not calling for support for the work to rule.

Right across the Health Service anger among nurses is emerging. Agency nurses are still owed £1,250 from before the October strike and are planning action.

As one nurse Sinead, told *Socialist Worker*, "The conditions that forced us to go on strike last year have not gone away. If anything conditions have worsened and our anger has intensified."

NIPSA

SOCIAL WORKERS in North and West Belfast have voted by a 97 percent majority to take industrial action.

One NIPSA rep, Kevin Lawrenson, told *Socialist Worker*, "social workers in North and West Belfast are burnt out. The cuts have meant that posts have been frozen when someone leaves."

Since the threat of industrial action, management have already agreed to advertise for six extra social workers. But NIPSA says that's nothing like enough.

The industrial action, due to start on May 2nd, will see social workers working a strict 37 hour week.

They also plan two half-day strikes. If this action does not win the necessary investment in services, then more strikes are likely.

The Belfast social workers' action has had an electrifying effect on social workers in other parts of the North.

One social worker in the Foyle Trust said "we've been talking about taking industrial action for over two years. When we heard about the ballot in Belfast, everyone in my office wanted to follow their lead. This is not about more money for us, it's about funding services that kids need if they're not going to end up in prison as adults".

CLEANING, SECURITY and maintenance staff in Trinity College held a one-hour demonstration on Tuesday April 11.

They were protesting over pay increases promised to them under Partnership 2000. The increase, agreed over three years ago has still not been introduced.

This effects all porters, ground staff, cleaning and catering workers in the college. Onewoker said, "They tell us it's because their computers can't process the increase. But any idiot can sign a cheque. This is just nonsense."

Housing

Cork tenants place pickets

ANGRY CORPORATION flat residents in Blackpool, Cork have placed pickets on building sites involved in the construction of a bypass surrounding their homes.

As a result of the construction work, residents are forced to live in what amounts to a building site.

Conditions are particularly hazardous for children, who have been left with nowhere safe to play.

One protestor told *Socialist Worker* that her children were "being caged like animals".

Since construction work began two years ago, the situation has steadily worsened and the large volumes of

dust now filling the flats pose a potential health risk.

At a recent public meeting, Corporation officials suggested that anyone protesting too loudly may find themselves at the bottom of the housing list.

Campaign

One young woman, central to the campaign for re-housing, has been issued with an eviction order over a paltry £45 rent arrears bill.

The corporation has also tried to impose a £120 service charge.

But as one resident "This is only the beginning. Pickets will remain in place until an undertaking is given guaranteeing immediate re-housing".

Socialist Worker

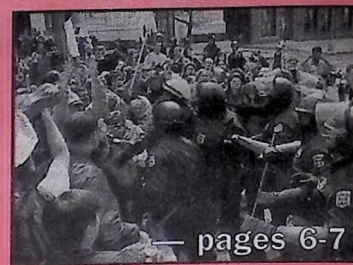
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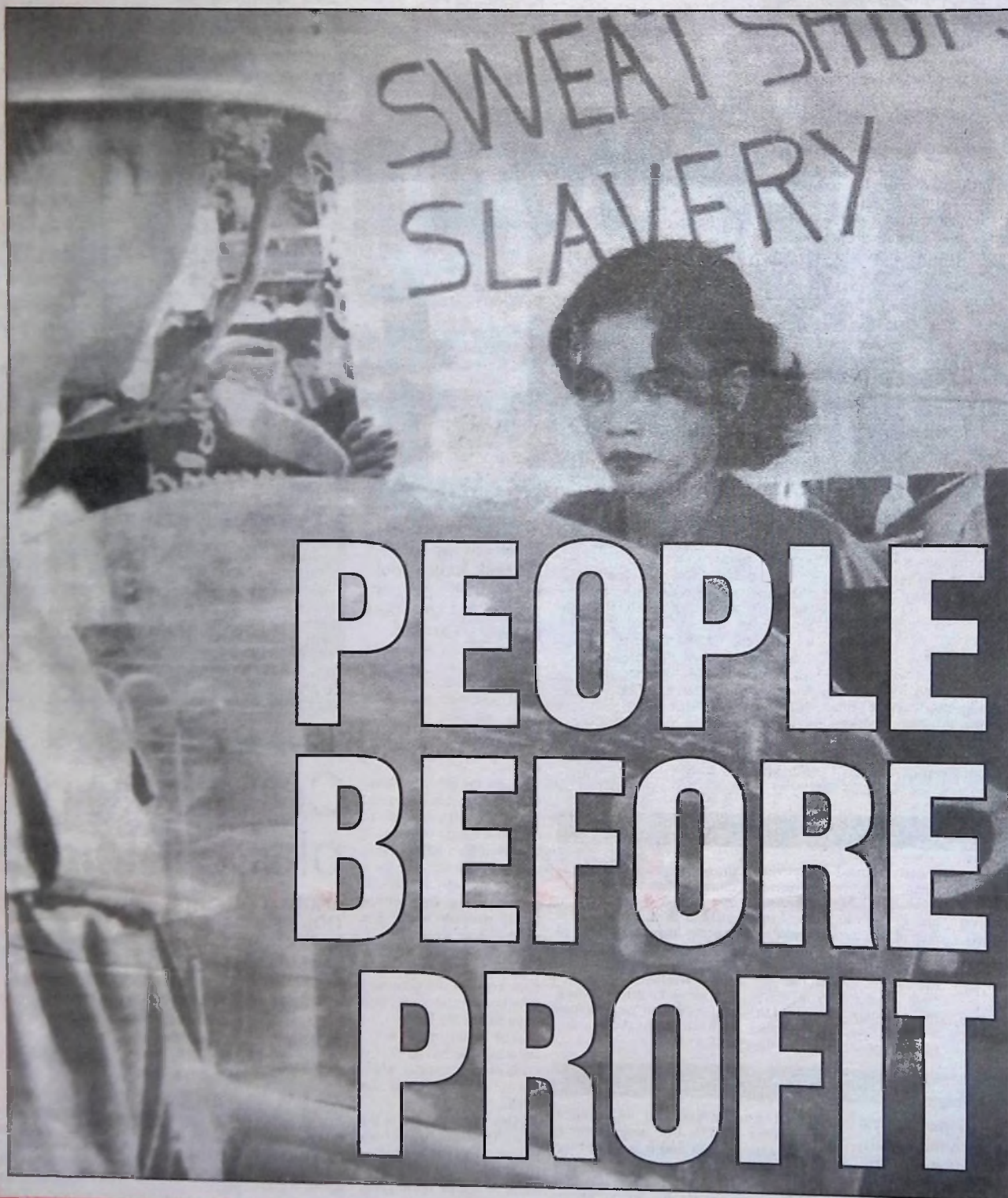
WASHINGTON PROTESTS:
Rage at the heart of the beast



— pages 6-7

Solidarity price £1

Cancel the debt



SINCE THE start of the year, over two million children have died as a direct result of the global debt crisis.

Zambia shows how the bankers are crucifying the poor.

In 1991, the country spent £40 on the education of every primary school student but today that has declined to £10.

Infant mortality has jumped by 25 percent since 1980.

Instead of looking after its own, Zambia has been forced to look after the fat cats that run the world's banks.

Scandal

This is the scandal, which brought thousands onto the streets of Washington recently.

They wanted to close down the World Bank and the IMF, the main debt collectors.

A new global anti-capitalist movement is growing to oppose this robbery.

For the first time since the sixties, many now see "the system" itself as the problem.

This is why environmentalists, trade unionists and debt campaigners are coming together.

The picture shows a demonstration of sweatshop workers in Cambodia.

Global

"Think global, Act Local" is one of the slogans of the new movement.

That means linking the energy of anti-capitalist movement with the struggles of workers at home who are resisting job cuts, privatisation, and are demanding their share of the Celtic Tiger that has been withheld up to now.

Organised together we can defeat a system built on greed and make sure that people come before profit.

Build the anti capitalist movement