

Socialist Worker

inside

TEN YEARS SINCE THE GULF WAR:
END THE SANCTIONS page 8
BAN DEPLETED URANIUM! page 4

INSIDE INTEL:
Taking on the
multinationals page 6-7

Rebel Heart
reviewed
page 9

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ONE WEEK ISN'T LONG ENOUGH...

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THE KEY!

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THE REST

OF THE CROOKS



Liam 'Mr Big' Lawlor

★ IRELAND'S RICHEST man, media tycoon, Tony O'Reilly has gone into business with one of soft-porn mogul Richard Desmond. Desmond made a fortune through a string of porn magazines.

Only 1 in 3 get pension

A RECENT survey by Landsdowne Market research show that more than one third of all workers are employed by companies that do not offer a pension scheme.

That figure is a decrease of 5 percent from the 1999 figure.

The survey also found that even in companies where there was a pension scheme one in five workers were not eligible to join as the plans tended to be restricted to management.

Pension Scam

LAST YEAR the taxpayer forked out £43,416 to Charles J Haughey for his Dail pension.

Every politician who has been a Minister gets a pension whether they have retired or not.

For instance, crooked ex Dublin North TD Ray Burke got £23,130.

And over £2 million went on pensions, retirement lump sums and gratuities to members of the judiciary.

If the opposition seemed quiet on the issue, it may have had something to do with John Bruton getting £29,935 and Ruari Quinn getting £13,752 out of the scheme.

Sellafield Fire

WHILE PEOPLE were enjoying the holidays on Christmas Eve a horrifying glimpse of what could happen occurred at Sellafield nuclear fuel plant.

A fire which was reportedly started by sparks from a grinding machine used to cut up contaminated waste required both the Sellafield site fire brigade and other local units to put out.

The British Nuclear Fuels Ltd is investigating the incident, so everything should be OK then!

How many more near misses and glimpses into what could happen are required before the plant is forced to shut down?

Molloy offers little to tenants

ONCE AGAIN the government have refused to respond to the crisis in the private rented sector.

Instead of helping people who are at the mercy of greedy landlords it established a commission to inquire into what was required.

It then sat on the report for six months and now wants to wait a further two years before implementing the proposals.

The commission's main proposal which will now be introduced in 2003 is that tenants of six months get a four-year lease.

A four-year security of tenure is an improvement but it is completely inadequate especially for the increasing number of families with children in rented accommodation. Is Bobby Molloy proposing that they be forced to move every four years?

According to Threshold the number of illegal evictions in Dublin more than doubled last year, with an increase from 135 in 1999 to 341 illegal evictions in 2000.

A growing number of landlords are refusing to give the statutory 28 days notice.

According to Threshold landlords are becoming increasingly aggressive as

people come home to find their locks changed or the power cut off.

The proposal to restrict the frequency of rent increases to once a year and that rent levels would be no greater than the market rent is simply a statement of the current situation.

The problem most people face is that the rent is increased at market rates every year.

The government has no difficulty letting landlords get their tax breaks immediately but the rest of us have to wait two years just to get limited legal rights.

★ Henniges Elastomer, the car components manufacturing plant and Ballina's largest employer is to close.

The company

blamed wage inflation and said it could no longer afford to remain open.

Incidentally, Henniges Elastomer is owned by Gen Corp, a major international arms manufacturer which recorded record profits last year to the tune of \$101 million.

Arms dealers court government

IRELAND'S INVOLVEMENT in the NATO aligned Partnership for Peace and the government's recent endorsement of the EU's Rapid Reaction Force has seen Ireland become a major attraction for the international arms industry.

If the Irish army is to partake in either of both of these military alliances it will need to rapidly upgrade the defence

forces.

Ministers, senior civil servants and politicians have all been subject to a welter of invitations from arms manufactures.

They have just spent £40 million on armoured personnel carriers. Another £100 million is going to be spent to supply and maintain a contract for aircraft.

The two companies in the running are the British-Italian consortium EH Industries and the Scottish based Bong Helicopters.

Both of these are offering US and Israeli military designed hardware.

Lawlor scandal shows Fianna Fail ...

Rotten to the core

AT LAST! More than four years after the corruption scandals began, a TD has been sent to jail.

But Liam Lawlor will only serve a week behind bars.

Scores of people are sitting in Mountjoy for much less than Lawlor did. They did not cost the country a fortune by being up to their necks in re-zoning scandals.

Lawlor has shown that he was more interested in serving himself than the people who elected him.

In fact just like many other FF politicians.

The real issue is why aren't people like Haughey, Lowry, Foley, Padraig Flynn all

behind bars as well.

People like Haughey have used their vast fortunes to hire top lawyers to delay any proceedings against them. Like Pinochet Haughey has even pretended to be too old and too ill to face justice.

But Haughey never showed any mercy to the tens of thousands of old people who were denied proper medical services due to his cut-backs. These cut-backs helped to pay for tax concessions for his rich friends.

Lawlor's imprisonment is the first tiny step.

We need to turn on the pressure to make sure the rest of his friends follow him.

LIAM LAWLOR sits on a pile of cash at the centre of the corruption scandals.

Lawlor's main backer was Cork property developer Owen O'Callaghan. O'Callaghan became embroiled in controversy in 1995 when his company bought a site at Horgan's Quay in Cork from CIÉ for a cheap price.

When he was attacked in the Dail, three FF TDs leaped to his defence.

All three received big donations from O'Callaghan. They included

- Health Minister Michael Martin who received a total of £6,500 in payments.

- Batt O'Keeffe who got £10,000 from O'Callaghan.

- Liam Lawlor, got £40,000 from the property shark. O'Callaghan is one of the main backers of FF. At a secret dinner party in Cork, he donated £50,000 to the party. He went on to build the Liffey Valley Centre.

Charlie Haughey appointed O'Callaghan director of Bord Gáis.

And Ahern did him an

extra special favour. A site that O'Callaghan owned in Athlone received a special tax concession from Ahern.

Lawlor also got £3,500 a month from property developer Tom Gilmartin.

Gilmartin admits paying off numerous councillors and former EU commissioner Padraig Flynn.

The Czech Company, Ambrose Kelly (Eastern Europe) provided Lawlor with huge payments. Its directors are close to Ahern.

Tim Collins, whom Bertie Ahern describes "a friend", was with Ahern and Lawlor when they met Tom Gilmartin to discuss planning.

Collins works for the Ambrose Kelly Group, architects to the Cork property developer Owen O'Callaghan.

Frank Dunlop, former FF Press Secretary and bag man for developer Owen O'Callaghan.

Dunlop has admitted to paying off more than 40 councillors.

Lawlor also had close links with Jim Kennedy, a prominent FF businessman, who ran the Laurels pub in Clondalkin.

This was where corrupt official George Redmond and Lawlor used to cash huge unexplained cheques.



What is Ahern hiding?

Mr Big and the Beef Baron

LIAM LAWLOR is a long time associate of Beef Baron Larry Goodman. Goodman's companies defrauded the Irish taxpayers of millions.

Lawlor was on the board of Larry Goodman's meat company.

against him.

Instead, Goodman was given £6.44 million of taxpayers' money to cover his legal costs.

And we footed the £70 million EU fine for irregularities in the

beef industry.

Goodman company executives went alongside Ahern when he visited Russia to do a deal on Irish Beef.

And his company is still donating to Fianna Fail.

Rich club expels Lawlor

THINGS REALLY aren't going well for Liam Lawlor.

On top of all his tribunal woes he is facing expulsion from his influential and exclusive club Trilateral Commission.

The Commission's members include Bill Clinton, US Vice President Dick Cheney and Northern Ireland Secretary Peter Mandelson.

Former Taoiseach Gareth

Fitzgerald and former EU commissioner Peter Sutherland are among its Irish members.

The Commission was formed in 1973 by banker David Rockefeller on the advice of former US national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, who proposed an alliance of political and business interests between the US, Western Europe and Japan.

what we think

BSE chaos doesn't make incinerators safe

THE GOVERNMENT is using the BSE crisis in a cynical way to push through incinerators. Almost every local authority has rejected plans to build an incinerator as a result of huge public pressure.

But the government claims that they will be needed to deal with the 25,000 cattle a week it is supposed to be killing to stop BSE.

The argument is pure hypocrisy. It would take at least four years to build incinerators even though the cull is taking place now.

And there is no guarantee that incineration would destroy the tiny particles, prions, which carry BSE.

Richard Lacey, who is a professor of medical microbiology at Leeds University, says that 'The infective agent had already shown to be incredibly resistant at high temperatures.

Anyone who says that this process will destroy infectivity is really very silly.'

A report in the Observer Newspaper in 1997 indicated that strands of BSE even survived a 1500°C test.

Incineration will lead to other health hazards. It releases dioxins, which are highly toxic and survive for long periods.

Dioxins can suppress the immune system and they are cancer-inducing agents.

Figures released by the US Environmental Protection Agency last year suggest that as many as 7 per cent of all cancers are caused by dioxins, mostly from incinerators.

Waste

Waste has grown enormously in the Celtic Tiger and this government wants to use the crisis over BSE and waste management to hand out lucrative contracts to their rich friends.

The real solution lies in forcing industry to clean up its act and to provide public facilities for recycling. But that would mean extra costs and taxes on big business.

So instead this government wants PAYE workers to pay more refuse charges and put up with incinerators.



Thousands of cattle culled because of the BSE crisis

A disease of the free market

THE APPALLING killing of 25,000 cattle a week is a direct result of the free market economics that this government espouses.

BSE arose because governments followed the lead of Margaret Thatcher and introduced weaker regulations on how animals were fed.

Lured by big profit, farmers were encouraged to move to intensive agriculture which fed animals carcasses of other animals that were ground into bone meal.

Worse, the manufacturers of cattle feed introduced carcasses of diseased sheep that suffered from scrapie into the food chain.

They were also allowed to lower the process temperatures - again to cut costs. This allowed the BSE prions to survive.

Ever since the disease was discovered, the Irish government has put the interest of the beef industry above the health of consumers.

★ The dumped BSE infected carcasses in landfills near water tables.

★ They artificially reduced the numbers of Irish cases - to

580- by avoiding post-mortem tests on every carcass.

★ They continued the practice of feeding bone meal to animals until the EU told them not to.

★ They told people that Irish beef was the safest - even though Ireland has the second highest rate of BSE infection in the EU.

All of this stems from right wing policies that put profit before people.

The growing scandal over BSE is one more example of why we need to get rid of a system that is endangering our health.

Belfast Agreement teeters as police reform ditched

NI SECRETARY Peter Mandelson has pulled out all the stops in an attempt to impose an unreformed police service on the North.

The RUC was set up to defend a sectarian state, and have served for nearly eighty years as the shocktroops of bigotry and oppression.

Aided by the Tory press in Britain and in the Republic, David Trimble and the right wing of Unionism want to rehabilitate the RUC as the "thin line" between democracy and terrorism.

Democracy

But this is ludicrous on both counts: the police were the front line defence against democracy in the North, beating the civil rights movement off the streets in the sixties.

And far from aiding in the war against terrorism, the RUC have been up to their necks in sectarian violence all along.

The collusion between the RUC and loyalist paramilitaries uncovered

by the Stevens inquiry is only the tip of the iceberg. Yet even the Patten reforms which Mandelson has watered down, would leave the existing structures of the RUC intact.

The new police ombudsman has received more than 700 complaints against the RUC in just two months in office, including allegations of more than 270 police assaults.

Riot police were most recently deployed to herd scabs through postal workers' pickets before Christmas. And their ineffectiveness in protecting the lives of civilians against terror can be seen clearly in Larne, where loyalists have been conducting a vicious campaign of sectarian harassment with virtual impunity for months.

"I have no faith in the Larne RUC," a father of four put it after being forced out of his home by a pipe-bomb attack. "These attacks are going on in this town day and night and the police are doing nothing."

Despite this pathetic record of "reform," it seems likely that Mandelson will ram his plan through. He has the support not only of the unionist establishment but also the Southern government.

Socialists can give no support whatever to such a sham.

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news of the world

Ban Depleted Uranium NOW

"DU is the stuff of nightmares. It is toxic, radio active and pollutes for 4,500 years" says Davy Rokke.

● Rokke is the former director of the Pentagon's DU Project. He was sent to investigate the effects of US bombing in the Gulf in 1991.

Out of his 50 strong team, 10 people died of cancer. Only one did not get any illness and he was covered in radioactive clothing all the time.



THE EFFECTS of Depleted Uranium on Iraqi children

THE IRISH government has refused to call for a ban on depleted uranium weapons.

Defence Minister Michael Smith has agreed to screen Irish soldiers who go to Kosovo but he has said nothing about the terrible effects that these US munitions are doing to the civilians who live in the area.

Warned

A UN survey has found evidence of "considerable contamination" by radioactivity at 8 of 11 sites hit by depleted uranium weapons in Kosovo.

Another UN report in May warned that much of Kosovo's water could be considered unfit to drink.

Six Italian soldiers who served in the region have contracted leukemia and died.

In Belgium, five cases of cancer have been diagnosed in soldiers who served in the Balkans. Several cases of leukemia have developed among Dutch soldiers.

Tons of the radioactive debris from the weapons are lying scattered across the region, mostly in Kosovo and Serbia.

US planes used some 10,000 rounds of depleted uranium weaponry in the 1995 conflict in Bosnia.

No one yet knows the long term damage to the health of people living

in these areas.

But one indication comes from the horror in Iraq, where US forces fired some 850,000 rounds of depleted uranium weaponry.

Fired

A 1998 World Health Organisation report found a huge increase in cancer rates, especially childhood leukemia, in southern Iraq, where most of the war took place.

Journalist Felicity Arbuthnot visited southern Iraq and reported in 1999 that "Iraq's leukemia rate has leapt 70 percent since the Gulf War".

As well as such cancers, she found "an astonishing rise in congenital abnormalities".

She described seeing in one hospital a typical victim, a baby born an hour ago. "The tiny being made small bleating noises.

"It had no genitalia, no eyes, nose, tongue, oesophagus or hands. Twisted legs were joined by a thick web of flesh from the knees."

She reported that "vegetation in the area shows up to 24 times background radiation".

Suffered

The potential effects on pregnant women are all too obvious.

In May 1998, Dr Jououd Khadein al Ali produced maps showing that cancer rates were four times higher

The Cancer causing bombs

CAMPAIGNERS HAVE long warned about the dangers of depleted uranium.

Retired biologist Margaret Ryle spoke to *Socialist Worker* about depleted uranium during the 1999 Balkan War:

● Uranium is a radioactive material. It is chemically poisonous and affects a variety of biological processes.

● Depleted uranium (DU) was a waste product of the nuclear industry

until it started being used in ammunition.

● It is used in ammunition because it is high density. It is very hard and it is better at penetrating armour than conventional shells.

● When, on impact, the DU catches fire and burns, it produces a smog of fine particles which is radioactive and can spread over a wide area.

● It can be inhaled by people and get into the water supply and so into the food chain.

● This can give rise to cancers, foetal deaths and malformations. There is no threshold below which no harm is done.

around Basra where DU munitions had been dropped.

Bosnia has suffered similarly. After US forces bombed the Ramont Institute near the town of Bratunac in 1995 Yugoslav scientists reported,

"There are unusual and unnatural occurrences in vegetation, among animals and human beings.

Bizarre, massive illness has affected cows. Rapid hair loss is happening to boys of school age."

Robert Fisk has also report that of the 5,000 Serb

refugees who fled to Sarejevo and lived in the Hadji area, 300 have died of cancer.

The area suffered terribly from US A 10 bombers.

An official investigation by the United Nations Environment Programme in Kosovo this year confirmed fears of depleted uranium contamination.

Head of the programme Pekka Haavisto said,

"There remains a risk for the local population. Much ammunition is deep in the ground and affects groundwater."

USA

Bush gives boost to far-right

US AUTHORITIES are expecting the largest ever number of demonstrations for George Bush's inauguration since Richard Nixon's second inaugural in 1973, at the height of the Vietnam War.

Many of the demonstrators will be veterans of the anti-capitalist demonstrations in Seattle in 1999 and at the Washington IMF meetings last year.

Bush has already tacked his right wing colours to his sleeve.

He is determined to appoint extreme right-winger John Ashcroft as Attorney General.

Ashcroft has called the National Endowment for the Arts 'communist style central planning'.

In his native Missouri he blocked the nomination of a black judge to bench and hankers for the Confederacy values of the old South.

In 1988 Ashcroft co-sponsored a Bill to ban all abortion, even in the case of rape and incest.

When asked on television what 'one law' he would pass if he could, he

replied 'outlaw abortion.'

Abortion has become a heated issue in the US as violence against doctors and women at abortion clinics has hit crisis point.

Ashcroft is a frequent contributor to the neo-Confederate magazine, *Southern Partisan*, which carries articles praising the Ku Klux Klan and deploring the 'dissipation' of the nation's genetic pool by black and Hispanic people.

Opposing

Ashcroft has been described by many as building a career out of opposing African Americans for public office.

In the most notorious case he prevented the appointment of Ronnie White to the federal bench. Ashcroft argued against White's appointment on the basis that he was pro-criminal.

He cited one single opinion that the judge had written in 1998 - White had objected to a death sentence where the convicted man had an inadequate defence.

But Ashcroft himself helped a friend Charles Sell who is a member of a white supremacist group dodge a murder conviction. Ashcroft is not the only right-winger Bush has

appointed.

His choice for Interior Secretary is Gail Norton, a former Attorney General of Colorado, who criticises environmental laws.

She consistently favours the rights of business over environmental concerns and she too hankers for the lost values of the Southern confederacy.

A company which she worked for as an anti-environmental lobbyist is being sued by New York City for causing lead poisoning among inner city children in the Bronx.

Meanwhile Bush himself is planning to spend almost \$50 billion on a National Missile Defence System (NMD), nick named Son of Star Wars.

Announcement of the plan has already lead Russia and China into a tactical alliance against the US.

Bush has taken a clear line to boost defence spending, the first increase in ten years. The main reason for this is the desire of US corporations to boost earnings.

The US defence industry is dominated by a few contractors Boeing, Lockheed Martin and TRV all of whom have suffered heavy losses in recent years.

But they have immense lobbying power and close links with the Republicans.

Eamonn McCann

Cynicism across the border

THE RELEASE of British and Irish cabinet papers from 1970 revealed the depths of the cynicism of both governments in relation to the North.

The documents were put into the public domain at the beginning of the year under the "Thirty Years" rule governing the publication of official papers.

They don't tell the full story. Minutes, memoranda etc. which senior officials regard as especially "sensitive" are weeded out and held in sealed archives for 75 years. Some of the most sensitive and secretive documents of all — concerned with the role of the intelligence services in shaping government policy, for example — will have been shredded rather than stored.

And in many instances — government ministers giving the go-ahead for law-breaking — nothing will have been put in writing in the first place.

As ever, these points weren't made in the mainstream media's coverage of the documents. But even with these limitations, what comes across is that neither London nor Dublin had any serious commitment to the Unionists or the Nationalists in the North. What was most prominently in their minds was the possibility of trouble spilling over the border and threatening both the stability of the South and friendly Anglo-Irish relations.

Insofar as a section of the Southern ruling class, colluded to import arms, allegedly for use by Northern Nationalists in the event of a "doomsday" situation, the papers show they did so to ensure that the Dublin establishment retained influence on how resistance to Unionist rule would develop. They didn't want events to drift in a direction which threatened themselves.

It also emerges that the change-over in Britain in June 1970 from Labour under Harold Wilson to the Tory Government of Edward Heath made no difference to British policy. The Falls Curfew of June 1970 — when the entire community was coralled indoors and humiliated as hundreds of homes were smashed by British search parties — demonstrates how the two governments finessed their responses to serve one another's needs.

Reassure

As local people began to turn to the IRA for protection and revenge, Taoiseach Jack Lynch sent Foreign Affairs Minister Patrick Hillery on a visit to the Falls without informing the Northern or British authorities. The purpose was to reassure the community that the Dublin Government was with them. In diplomatic terms, the visit was an outrageous breach of protocol. Moreover, the Hillery visit coincided with the dubious dismissal in Dublin of arms importation charges against sacked Minister Neil Blaney.

Heath's Government might have exploded in anger, but didn't. British ambassador John Peck sent a dispatch from Dublin saying that Lynch and Hillery were "terrified (of) any worsening of the situation", that Hillery's visit had been "aimed at relieving pressure" and that the British side should "avoid any action which would...shake still more the already precarious position of Mr. Lynch..." Which is what happened.

A short time previously, on May 7th, the British (Labour) Cabinet had resolved to "refrain from any action which would weaken the position of Northern Ireland Prime Minister, Major James Chichester-Clarke".

Neither Tory nor Labour Governments were guided by any ideological or emotional commitment to the Union but by a desire for stability as Britain and Southern Ireland moved together towards membership of the European Union.

Similarly, the Fianna Fail regime, far from being fuelled by the old dream of a united Ireland, was "terrified" by the new challenge to Unionism in the North and intent on controlling and curtailing it. The difference between the Haughey and Lynch factions in this respect were matters of tactics.

This is to say that the approaches of the British and Irish governments to the gathering Northern crisis reflected the common interests of capitalism.

Each side was sensitive to the needs of the other as they tried to damp down passions and manage demands for justice in ways which would disrupt nothing fundamental.

Thirty years and more than 3,000 dead later, in this regard at least there's been little change.

McGuinness' market madness

Belfast parents reject PFI school takeover

OPPOSITION IS growing to Assembly plans to hand over education to profiteers.

Parents at the Wellington College School in South Belfast have mounted protests against attempts to privatise the rebuilding of their school.

Insists

"The shape of things to come under the PFI scheme can be clearly



Fighting PFI

seen in the new plans for Wellington College," local activist Bob Stronge insists. PFI hands the best publicly-owned land in South Belfast to real estate developers while squeezing the new school build-

ings onto "the smallest possible site they could get away with."

Parents and members of the St. John's and Rosetta Resident's Association reject the privatisation agenda being pursued by all par-

ties in the Assembly and have rightly insisted that the Northern Ireland Assembly should itself be responsible for financing the building of the new school.

Sinn Fein Education Minister Martin McGuinness has come under sharp criticism recently after it emerged that over £600,000 has been paid in consultancy fees alone to the firm contracted to build St. Genevieve's High School in West Belfast, but not a murmur of criticism has come from his erstwhile foes in the Ulster Unionist party.

PFI seems to be one

policy upon which a parties to the Assembly agree, even though it is a flagrant waste of money and a sop to the rich at the expense of working class people.

Building

Their agenda can only be halted if working people mount a strong campaign to keep the profiteers' hands off our schools and hospitals and the first step in the process is building solidarity with all those who are willing to stand and fight.

Adair's bloody record

NOTORIOUS LOYALIST thug, Johnny Adair, has been kept in prison, by the Sentence Review Commission. This follows after a special report from police on his involvement in drugs and sectarian attacks when he was released last year.

For the moment, Adair's release is seen as too risky.

But Adair is a monster created by the Unionist state in Northern Ireland. He boasts his Ulster Freedom Fighters killed dozens of Catholics in the 1980's and '90's.

Claimed

John Taylor, deputy leader of the Unionist Party later claimed that

"The loyalist paramilitaries achieved something which perhaps the security forces would never have achieved, and that was they were a significant contribution to the IRA finally accepting that they couldn't win."

Adair's C Company of the Ulster Freedom Fighters, based on the lower Shankill Road, had direct links with sections of the RUC and the British Army, who passed them information about republican targets.

He was only arrested after his gang were judged to be out of control and murdering too many Catholics.

The special relationship between loyalist paramilitaries and respectable British and Unionist politicians continues. Unionist

Party ministers, Chris McGimpsey and Reg Empey raced from Stormont to Belfast City Hall to vote for the Ulster Democratic Party's Frank McCoubrey as Deputy Mayor last year, in order to keep Sinn Fein's Alex Maskey out of the post. The UDP is the political wing of the UDA.

Pleaded

Last week McCoubrey pleaded for Adair's release, claiming,

"The Protestant people on the ground I have spoken with are absolutely disgusted... The people on the ground feel that the Good Friday Agreement is totally one-sided."

In recent weeks the UDA has been at the centre of a wave of sectarian murders and pipe-bomb attacks.

They have embarked on a campaign to drive Catholics out of Larne.

Adair has forged close links with the LVF in Portadown, appearing with them at Drumcree.

Provoked

He brought the LVF to a UDA show of strength on the Shankill Road last summer, which provoked the loyalist feud with the UVF.

Newspaper reports claim that a majority of the UDA's seven brigades are now opposed to the peace process, claiming that they have got nothing out of it.

But the reason they have no political representatives, is that they got a derisory vote in the Assembly elections.

They only represent a tiny minority of working class Protestants.



Johnny "Mad dog" Adair

'We're a defence company'

RAYTHEON, THE world's third largest arms manufacturer, has officially confirmed that its plant in Derry could soon be making software for Raytheon's weapons systems.

This flies in the face of comments by John Hume who said the plant would only make civilian air traffic systems.

A spokesperson at its London headquarters said: "We're a defence company. We've never hidden that."

Visited

"The guys at Bombardier Aerospace in Belfast are making the ASTOR (Airborne Stand-Off Radar) and if we have additional requirements for ASTOR in the future then we'll use the plant in Derry."

Despite this, a delegation of councillors

visited the plant at Winkler's invitation.

The charm offensive worked. They said hadn't seen any military production. Sinn Fein councillor Gerry O hEara said: "We were given assurances that no product for military use would be manufactured at the plant."

Many ordinary people are strongly opposed to an arms manufacturer setting up shop in Derry. But not one of the main political parties is adopting a similarly principled stance.

Czech Republic

The revolution will be televised

SOME 50,000 protesters surrounded Czech Television in January to demand that its director Jiri Hodac resign. It was the biggest demonstration in Prague since 1989, when workers and students overthrew the Stalinist regime.

The mood was extremely militant. 'Go to the dustbin, Hodac' was one of the popular slogans. One politician who turned up started her speech by saying 'I am ashamed to be a politician' but she still got a frosty reception.'

The political establishment was so shaken by this resurgence of popular militancy that leading figures including President Vaclav Havel fell over each other to be seen to support the strike.

Clearly Jiri Hodac was equally shaken — he was taken to hospital suffering from nervous exhaustion.

A week later he resigned. Massive demonstrations had once again brought change — but this time against the free marketers who are trying to control Czech Television.

The protest began on Christmas Eve when journalists in the state-run television station occupied the newsrooms and began broadcasting their own programmes.

The occupation was in protest against the appointment of Jana Bobosikova as news editor.

Bobosikova is a hate-figure for the journalists because she sided with a former director of news who tried to 'reform' the station in 1998. 'Reform', as is so often the case, was a euphemism for laying-off as many workers as possible.

Linked

As well as this, Bobosikova is linked with right-wing politician, Vaclav Klaus, for whom she briefly worked as an advisor. The man who appointed her to the job of news editor, Jiri Hodac, is almost as unpopular, and equally corrupt.

When he was in charge of the newsroom, he fired an anchorman for embarrassing Vaclav Klaus in an interview — in other words, for doing his job as a journalist.

Klaus is an admirer of Margaret Thatcher and believes that everything has to be privatised. Although his party, the Civic Democrats, are officially in opposition, Klaus has agreed not to vote against the minority Social Democrat government, in return for legislation and appointments.

Klaus is expected to become the next president of the Czech Republic when Vaclav Havel resigns in 2003.

by PAUL MCCARTHY

He has promised to privatise the television station if elected.

It is no surprise then that journalists and other staff fear for their jobs and their strike is a blow against privatisation.

Why did so many people come out to demonstrate?

Partly because they oppose political control of what is supposed to be a free press. But it goes deeper than that.

The 'alliance' of the Social Democrats and Klaus' Civic Democrats has been the cause of further corruption in government appointments and legislation.

After the collapse of the old regime, many state run industries were privatised. The new managing directors were usually either ex-Communist Party apparatchiks or friends and supporters of the new government. These people are part of a new elite in Czech society.

Although the country has not fared as badly as Russia or some of the other East European states, the market has failed to live up to the expectations created by the Velvet Revolution.

There is still widespread unemployment in the region and many are angered at the fact that their services are deteriorating and the people running them — cronies of politicians — are making vast fortunes.

When protesters gathered in Prague in September for the IMF meeting, the media was filled with stories of how the Czechs had embraced the market and were appalled at the silly anarchists and students from the West who came to protest at neo-liberalism.

That 50,000 Czech people filled Wenceslas Square over Christmas to support a strike tells a different story.

Last year's revolution in Serbia against Milosovic has inspired people in the Czech Republic and beyond.

If general strikes and protests can topple one of Europe's most notorious dictators, it shows people how they can organise and win the struggles in their own countries.

Meanwhile the journalists and their supporters continue to occupy the station until other political appointees follow Hodac into early retirement.

INTEL

The announcement that Gateway is to let go 200 workers has thrown a spotlight on the activities of US multi-nationals in the computer industry. They are the main driving force behind the Celtic Tiger. But they also operate a vicious anti-union policy. This special Socialist Worker report on Intel shows why we now need a major unionisation drive at these plants.

IT IS 10 years since the multi-national giant Intel first settled down in Leixlip in North Kildare. This flagship plant received the highest level of grants from the Irish state and employs over 3000 workers.

Defenders of Intel will argue that its arrival heralded a new era for the Irish economy, which led to the booming Celtic Tiger. But there is another story to be told about Andy Grove's corporate empire.

The company relies heavily on contract labour, with nearly 30 per cent of its staff not directly employed by the company. Almost every machine in the plant has a maintenance crew to which Intel pays neither pensions nor holiday pay.

Overworked

Many Intel employees complain about being overworked.

"A technician works a 43 hour week on twelve hour shifts — but that is only the official hours. There are extra two-hour meetings every fortnight and you are not paid travelling time to come to them.

"The company divides workers into exempt and non-exempt staff. The exempt staff, mainly in white-collar grades, does not get paid overtime. Instead they get share options. A few years ago top managers made a fortune on these options but today they are worth very little.

"So you can find yourself working 45-50 hours for little extra pay" one Intel worker told *Socialist Worker*.

Like all anti-union firms, the company tries to set worker against worker.

"There is no automatic pay rise. Instead there is an individual pay review each year where you are supposed to be assessed by your own and other supervisors.

Every worker is ranked against others in their group. You are told whether you are 'performing better' or worse than the people you work with.

If you are performing poorly, you will get a zero percent rise.

An elaborate scheme of human resource management has attempted to disguise the friction that exists in any business between workers and bosses.

The company says it operates an 'open door policy' where you are supposed to be able to go to a Human Resources officer at any time over any issue.

"Nobody who has any cop on

Long hours need of a



goes. "You might get something in the short term but it will be held against you.

"You will face harassment from managers in the long term because you have no union to back you up."

Response

In the local paper in North Kildare a letter was printed in August in response to an advertisement taken out by Intel.

"Intel are not a charity and they certainly did not come to Leixlip to rejuvenate the local area," the letter reads.

"Like any multi-national they are

here to make a profit. And they have done well out of this country.

"Despite huge profits they have received the sort of tax breaks that whist the vast bulk of the tax bill is still paid by the PAYE sector.

"Intel also have access to a well-educated hard working and non-unionised labour force who have worked long hours to ensure the success of Intel — a much harder job than investing.

"Indeed if it proved more profitable for Intel to move elsewhere I have no doubt that Intel's 'commitment' to its workers and to Leixlip would be quickly forgotten."

Unionise

THE FUTURE seems far from certain for Intel in Ireland. They are committed to a major expansion of investment in their new Fab 24 plant but they have deferred hiring the extra workers.

They issued profit warnings before Christmas and reduced the price of their new Pentium 4 (P4) chip, which the company has been struggling to sell since its

Hours and in a union

Health risks from semi conductors

POTENTIAL cancer risks within the semiconductor manufacturing industry have been taken so seriously that they are being investigated in two separate studies.

The Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA) in the US and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in the UK are conducting research into the possible link between high levels of cancer and the semiconductor manufacturing industry.

Ex-employees from the National Semiconductors sites in both the UK and the US have led a campaign, which is attempting to sue the company.

Illnesses

They claim that members of their campaign developed cancers and other illnesses as a result of their work at the company's fabs in the UK and US.

The HSE's investigation will focus on a National Semiconductor site in Greenock Scotland.

Intel Ireland has always denied any allegations that their emissions cause any health risk for people living in the locality.

However concern has been raised at a number of meetings

in the area regarding the perceived high instances of cancer in the area.

Two local farmers, Mr Courtney and Mr Reid, have complained of an unusually high level of cattle deaths on their farms.

A Mr John Colgan an ex-Leixlip Town Commissioner and a well-known critic of Intel locally, lodged an appeal with An Bord Pleanala concerning Intel's most recent expansion.

According to Mr Colgan the area of North Kildare close to Intel has high levels of acidity in the air.

Pointing to an incident in February of last year when there was a malfunction in the acid gas scrubber in one of Intel's chimney stacks, Mr Colgan claimed that there was a rise in the acid level in the air of Leixlip during that period.

According to his figures the acid levels in the air of Lucan, Leixlip, Celbridge and Naas during the period 9th to 21st of February well exceeded the EU limit.

The issue of a possible health risk is far from resolved.

se before they put on the pressure

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... introduction in November.
... An estimated 30 percent of
... Intel's profits now come from its
... financial wing, mainly through
... speculation on global stock
... exchange.
... But with the implosion of the
... US stock market, Intel could be
... badly hit.
... If this happens there is no
... doubt that they will seek to take it
... out on their workers.
... Already Intel has announced
... that they want \$700 million
... dollars worth of savings in their
... global plants.
... "Their wage levels have fallen

... behind the going rate and so
... they are having problems hiring.
... But on top of that they don't want
... to hire. It means more forced
... overtime and more difficulties
... taking holidays.
... But things could get much
... worse.
... The sudden unexpected
... announcements of lay-offs at
... Gateway and Motorola show that
... US companies talk a lot about
... looking after their employees but
... when it comes to the crunch it
... means nothing.
... What is needed now is a
... determined unionisation drive at

... Intel and the other computer
... plants.
... Unions like the ATGWU who
... are not afraid to rock the boat
... should be hiring special organ-
... izers to win Intel workers to the
... union.
... Then they should set up car-
... vans in Leixlip and Lucan area
... and visit workers in their homes
... to put the case for the union.
... This is precisely what
... American unions have had to do
... recently.
... And it is time the same meth-
... ods were employed here.

what do socialists say?

Is the US economy entering recession?

THIS YEAR has begun with a spectacular reversal in the tone of the financial papers and journals. Up to recently all the talk was about a "new economy" after the US had set a record for continual growth.

The explanation was that new high-tech industries were changing the nature of production. The business cycle - that euphemism for the boom/slump cycle - was thought to be a thing of the past, capitalism was supposed to have entered an era of modest but sustainable growth.

Now the headlines are full of gloom and talk of recession.

The trigger for a spate of alarm was the announcement by Alan Greenspan of the U. S. Federal Reserve that interest rates were to be cut by half a percent. This move has only ever twice before, in 1989 and in 1998 during the Asian financial crisis.

It reflects a growing awareness of problems for big business in America. The markets have been suffering badly, hi-tech stocks have been hit particularly hard.

The Nasdaq is down by almost 45 percent from its peak last March. Sales of PC's fell 24 percent in December. Car sales fell about 9 percent. Construction spending has plunged. Unemployment-insurance claims rose sharply.

Recession

Many other statistics point in the same direction: the US economy is heading down. Morgan Stanley, the investment bankers, have just announced that the US has entered a recession.

Apologists for capitalism have lost the argument that it is a stable system. Now we are back into the territory of sharp financial shocks and recessions.

The latest developments are no surprise to Marxists, who never lost sight of the underlying problems with the US boom.

Firstly, much of the growth was based on mountainous borrowing. Not since the 1930's have American households held more debts than they can earn in income. In Sweden and Britain in the 1980's comparable levels of household debt led to a drop in consumer spending and sharp recessions.

For the US the picture is even bleaker as a lot of this household debt has been covered by stock market investment.

If share prices fall further the problems caused will be greater.

Secondly, the US has a world historic current account deficit. That is, they have to borrow heavily to cover their spending. This year borrowing is set to reach 4.5% percent of GDP. In the past few years it has not been hard to attract investment to cover this imbalance, but as profits falter and the dollar weakens the debt burden on the US will become heavier and heavier.

The growing problems for the US economy mean that the Celtic Tiger has a bumpy road ahead.

Growth

Since 1997, America's GDP growth has accounted for about a third of the world's growth. It has managed to help the world economy cope with the collapse of the Eastern European economies and the sluggish European and Japanese economies.

A recession in the US will hit all those countries that have been benefiting from the activities of its multinationals - but especially Ireland. The Celtic Tiger has a higher proportion of US investment per manufacturing worker than any other country in the EU.

Furthermore Irish companies exporting to the US will find their markets shrinking. The US currently takes about 15 percent of Irish exports — and is second highest only to Britain.

All European exports will suffer from a weakening dollar, but with Ireland being so dependent on external trade this effect will be felt particularly strongly.

Should the US financial system suffer from greater shocks, it goes without saying that stock markets will fall worldwide, making it harder for businesses everywhere to obtain capital.

As big US companies like Gateway announce job losses and Irish firms follow in their wake, we will hear the economists explain that there is no alternative.

It is up to socialists to point out that a system that periodically causes economic crisis and consequent hardships is absurd and out of control.

The first few weeks of the New Year have provided ample evidence that capitalism needs to be challenged.

by CONOR KOSTICK

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Tiger and
the myth of
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OUT
NOW

10 years after the Gulf War

The sanctions that strangle a people

The Gulf War began 17 January 1991. It was one of shortest wars in history.

It was supposed to show the importance of airpower in destroying armies without causing 'collateral damage' or civilian deaths.

"It was a war where information was part of the armoury. We were controlled by the military and allowed ourselves to be. An honourable few rebelled, most of us did what we were told" says journalist Maggie O'Kane in her documentary on the war *Riding the Storm: How to tell lies and win wars*.

In late 1990 George Bush proclaimed the inauguration of the "New World Order".

The Cold War had ended, changing fundamentally the structures of global politics. There was no more 'evil empire' as Reagan once described the USSR and East Bloc Satellites.

Described

But while the environment for US imperialism changed, the main goals remained the same. Foreign policy experts claimed that the US needed to maintain 'primacy'.

A 1990 Pentagon paper said the US would "establish and protect a new order" that accounts "sufficiently for the interests of the advanced industrial nations to keep them from challenging our leadership". It also needed a military dominance capable of "detering potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional role".

Military action would now be conducted under what Noam Chomsky called "the myth of humanitarian intervention". The Gulf War was the culmination of this New World Order.

Iraq has the second-largest proven oil reserves in the Middle East. Only Saudi Arabia holds more oil in a region that accounts for some 11 percent of the world's oil. As a result the US has long attempted to dominate the region, not out of concern for democracy but with the aim of controlling profits.

Oil is critical to the functioning of capitalism globally. Up until its invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Iraq proved useful to US interests and the Pentagon was quite happy to do business with Saddam Hussein, while he brutalised his population.

When he took power, for example, the CIA supplied him with lists of socialists who he murdered and tortured.

Believed

US support for Saddam Hussein grew towards the end of the Iran-Iraq war around 1987. The US believed that a victory for Iran would inspire revolutionary nationalist movements around the Middle East. So it armed Saddam Hussein and ensured he got access to \$7.3 billion in credit from Western government agencies. (The Irish government allowed him £150 million in credit to buy Larry Goodman's beef to feed his army).

All this changed with the invasion of Kuwait. Hussein hoped to grab its oil



A victim of smart bombing in Iraq and a US soldier in Kuwait

refineries to pay back his debts but the US saw him as getting too big for his boots. Overnight Saddam Hussein found himself transformed into a "new Hitler", the greatest living threat to world democracy.

During the war, the US bombed Iraq back to the state of a pre-industrial society. Their 'clean' or smart bombs were only supposed to hit designated targets but many missed their targets. The targets hit included water treatment plants, sewage treatment plants, electrical generating plants, and communication centres. The fact that the 22 million people of Iraq might be denied clean water was an acceptable consequence.

Despite the myth that it was the world's first bloodless war it left over 100,000 Iraqi soldiers dead, most of them buried alive. The remainder were slaughtered on the road to Basra as they fled in retreat.

At the end of the Gulf war, the Kurds and Shiites rose up in a democratic challenge to Saddam Hussein's regime. Yet the US government stood aside and watched as Hussein violently crushed the uprising.

"Our policy is to get rid of Saddam, not his regime," explained Richard Haass, Former Director of Middle East affairs on the National Security council.

Today the US government, as part of its program to overthrow Hussein, is funding a party that

seeks to restore the Iraqi monarchy.

Iraqi opposition leaders got the message. Leith Kubba, head of the London-based Iraqi Democratic reform Movement alleged that the US favours a military dictatorship, insisting that "changes in the regime must come from within, from people already in power".

In other words the US wants an iron fisted Iraqi junta without Saddam Hussein.

After the bombing campaign, the US imposed a sanctions campaign that still continues to this day. Food supplies, equipment that might restore the power grid, the water treatment plants and the telephones are all outlawed.

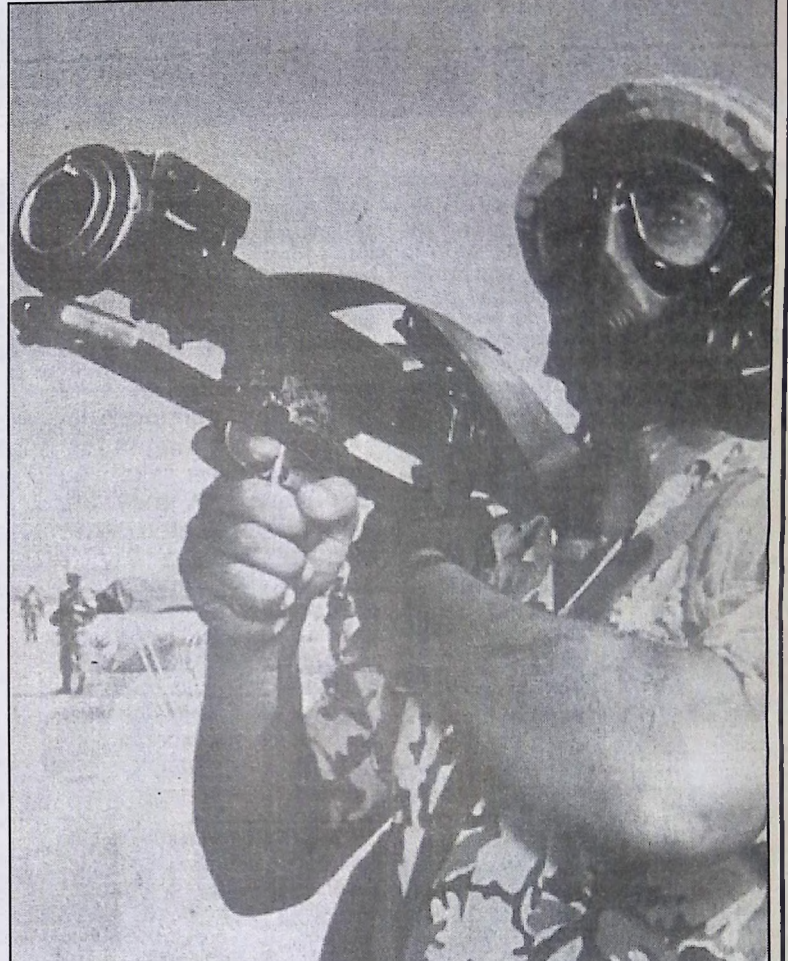
Banned

The sale of medical supplies, such as heart and kidney machines was outlawed, along with water pumps and agricultural supplies. Safety and fire equipment are also banned. The US government seems to think that Saddam Hussein might make 'weapons of mass destruction' from wheelbarrows.

In May 1996, US Secretary of State was asked on CBS 60 minutes if the death of more than half a million children was a price worth paying. "We think the price is worth it" she replied.

UNICEF reported that Iraq in 1990 had one of the healthiest and best-educated populations in the world. Its child mortality rate was one of the lowest. Yet today it is among the highest on earth.

UNICEF has also reported that more than 5,000 children under five have died on average every month in Iraq, in part



because of the "prolonged measures imposed by the Security Council and the effects of war" on the population.

Denis Halliday, who ran the UN oil-for-food program in Baghdad, until he realised that thousands of Iraqi children were dying every month because of sanctions, resigned his post with the declaration that "we are in the process of destroying an entire society. It is illegal and immoral."

Yet the effect of the sanctions has been precisely to shore up the strength of Hussein. The sanctions have devastated people and have driven them into a dependent relationship with the government.

As one Iraqi said "Any doubts I had about Saddam are gone... Now I want him to stand up to the US for taking away my power, my running water, and my daughter's childhood".

Hussein is certainly a tyrant, but the US continued to support equal or greater thugs, including Suharto in Indonesia, Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire and a long list of dictators in Latin America.

The sanctions is justified by claiming that Saddam Hussein could still endanger world peace. But this is pure hypocrisy.

The US itself possesses and keeps on alert more nuclear weapons than the rest of the world combined. Israel, a US ally, possesses more than 200 thermo-nuclear

weapons and has violated scores of UN mandates. Yet the US opposes all efforts to punish Israel for its invasions of neighbouring Arab countries or its murder of Palestinians.

Madeline Albright even admits the sanctions are not harming Saddam. But these sanctions are not about so much about hurting Saddam as they are about asserting US control in the region.

Until recently, US strategists believed that, at least temporarily, it was a good idea for the US to keep Iraq oil off the world market. Introducing Iraqi oil on the market could force down the price of oil, which would be harmful to energy producers, which are mostly US-based, and this would hurt profits.

Supplied

Secondly, France and Russia currently hold the inside track on oil development in Iraq, not the US-based majors. So this was another reason to block their oil supplies.

However this could change. James Akins, an old oil hand who is the former US ambassador to Saudi Arabia, recently said that when the price of oil gets up to \$30, Saddam will turn into Mother Teresa.

In the meantime, the destruction of Iraq through bombing and sanctions continued ten years after a war that was supposed to inaugurate a New World Order.

One recent visitor noted that Iraqi people speak about being bombed "as though they expected rain".

It is time to end this outrage.

in my view

Whitewashing the Blueshirts

RTE RECENTLY screened *Patriots to a Man: The Blueshirts and their Times* which tried to show that the uniformed thugs of the 1930s were patriots rather than fascists. It is a view that gets some support from the academic establishment.

Writing in the *Irish Times*, the revisionist historian Tom Garvin even claimed that the Blueshirts were, "at grass roots level, a free speech movement which saw Fianna Fail and the IRA as hostile to freedom of opinion"

The fascist nature of the Blueshirts has always been a huge source of embarrassment to Fine Gael supporters — because the party was formed directly from the Blueshirts.

One way of dealing with the issue has simply been to re-write history. This began with a book by the Fine Gael Senator Maurice Manning, claiming that the Blueshirts were decent farmers who were only responding to De Valera's extremism.

All of this is a complete myth. The Blueshirts never made any secret of their intention of crushing any form of democracy.

In 1932, De Valera and Fianna Fail were elected to government with a radical programme that resembles that of the present day programme of Sinn Fein.

Their opponents responded by forming an Army Comrades Association, which was originally led by T.F. O'Higgins. O'Higgins proclaimed that 'no country in the world needs order knocked into it as much as Ireland'.

The ACA hoped that the FF government would be quickly defeated in the Dail as it relied on Labour support. But when FF increased its support at a subsequent election, the ACA began to transform itself into a fascist organisation. From February 1933, it adopted a distinct badge, a uniform and its paper defined the newly named Blueshirts as 'a civilian corps d'elite'.

System

Its new leader, former chief of police Eoin O'Duffy, claimed that the 'present parliamentary system was English. The system he championed was close to the old Irish method of government. After it had been tried for, say, ten years he would give people an opportunity of voting for or against its acceptance'.

The Blueshirts were inspired by Hitler and Mussolini. The future Fine Gael Taoiseach, John A. Costello, even claimed that just as 'the Blackshirts were victorious in Italy, the Brownshirts were victorious in Germany ... the Blueshirts will be victorious in Ireland'.

In a direct carbon copy of the Mussolini's march on Rome, the Blueshirts planned a march on Dublin to seize power. But unlike in Italy they were faced down by De Valera's government.

The official Irish trade union movement saw the Blueshirts as a fascist threat. The report of the ICTU for 1943 noted that 'the future existence of the trade union and labour movement was in grave danger from the political party, Fine Gael, their propaganda being a facsimile of the ideology of fascist dictators on the Continent'.

True to their fascist outlook, the Blueshirts organised a contingent to fight for Franco's army, which sought to overthrow the democratically elected government of Spain.

The real forces, which defended free speech, were the masses of decent socialists and republicans who took on the Blueshirts and crushed them before they built the machine that Franco or Mussolini had established.

On 6th May 1934, 10,000 people answered the call of the Irish Trade Union Congress and marched in Dublin against the fascists.

Blueshirt rallies in Sligo, Limerick, Tralee, Dublin and Kilmallock were attacked by thousands of anti-fascists. The FF government used the Public Safety Act to arrest the anti-fascists involved.

Contrary to myths the protests were not organised centrally by the IRA. One of their leaders Seamus Twomey stated that 'the protests were spontaneous and that we ordered our volunteers not to take parts as units in these attacks'.

RTE and the academic myth makers like to disparage any mass action as 'mob rule'. So they play down the role of thousands of decent people in defeating the threat of fascism.

But it is a lesson that socialists should always remember — especially when the Celtic Tiger goes bust with all its residual bitterness.

by KIERAN ALLEN

television

Rebels break Trimble's heart

THE *DAILY Telegraph* is frothing at the mouth over the new BBC/RTE series *Rebel Heart*, written by Ronan Bennett. David Trimble has even asked the BBC to ban the drama, claiming it presented a "hopelessly one-sided" view of the history of Ireland.

The *Daily Telegraph*, describes Bennett as "a biased republican writer". It praises Paul Bew as a "non-unionist" scholar as he attacks the series, forgetting to mention he is an advisor and apologist for Trimble.

Conviction

Bennet is a socialist. In 1974, aged 18 he was convicted of the killing of an RUC officer in a no-jury, Diplock court on the sole evidence of one witness.

The conviction was swiftly overturned by the court of appeal.

Shortly after he left Northern Ireland, he associated with the Black Flag anarchists and was charged with conspiracy to cause explosions.

Once again he got off but as he says 'Some people have a hazy notion of what acquittal means'.

Trimble and the *Daily Telegraph* are attacking him because of this political background.

They have created a fuss over a part in the second episode when uniformed officers of the RIC (forerunners of the RUC) carry out a merciless execution of the McMahon family in Belfast.

The programme shifts by three years the date of the massacre for the sake of a dramatic effect. But the murder took place and it is the telling of that history at all that Trimble objects to.

Revolution

The series charts how the Irish state was created out of a revolution.

The series begins with the Easter Rising in 1916, when around 1,000 rebels took over the centre of Dublin on Easter Monday in a challenge to British occupation of Ireland.

It shows how the executions of the leaders of 1916 helped to spark off a wider rebellion that the British could not contain.



Making history

This is not just the history of a nation but a story of class struggle. In the programme James Connolly asks during the Easter Rising, "What makes you think an Irish boss is any better than a British one?"

But there are some problems with the programme: at times it seems just to be a cos-

tume drama with guns.

As the Dublin middle-class nationalist-republican hero, Ernie Coyne, and his former working-class Citizen Army friend O'Toole die at one another's hands in the first battle of the civil war, the effect is not really quite so tragic as Bennet would seem to want.

The love story ele-

ment is a bit trite and the acting occasionally ropery.

More importantly, the massive increase in working class struggle, including a general strike against military repression in Limerick in February 1919, that coincided with the war of independence is absent.

And despite concen-

trating on the North there was no mention of Protestant working class revolt in the North around the Engineers strike of 1919.

But anything that annoys Trimble this much can't be that bad.

— SEAN REED

book

Franz Fanon — anti-colonial fighter

FRANZ FANON'S relatively short life produced two strong books of anti-colonial revolutionary thought, *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth*.

Fanon was born in Martinique in 1925 and served in the French army during World War II.

He had been brought up to see himself as French, but his experience of racism called him to question this.

He started to study the effects of colonialism on psychology in *Black Skin, White Masks*. It is part manifesto, part analysis.

Fanon is particularly interested in the way

language is used to tie people to colonialism — both those it benefits and those it oppresses.

He became head of the psychiatry department, at Blida-Joinville Hospital, Algeria — where he fought to have the wards desegregated. Algeria was under French rule; in 1954, Fanon joined the Algerian liberation movement, becoming editor of its newspaper *El Moudjahid* in Tunis in 1956 (his articles were collected in *Towards the African Revolution*.)

The war to win Algeria's national independence from France from 1954 to 1962 was bitter, fought with savagery, and with torture and racism by the French.

In *The Wretched of*

the Earth, Fanon argues that to be free of imperialism an entirely new world must come into being.

The controls of the system run deep and so it requires a total revolution. But according to Fanon, true revolution can only come from the peasants of Africa.

Support

Fanon drew this conclusion because the French left had been unable to mobilize workers' support for the Algerian struggle for independence.

But he was also appalled with the greed and corruption of the leaders of the new African nations so he argued only the disposed of Africa could

lead a fight for liberation.

According to Fanon the peasants, least affected culturally and most oppressed by colonisation, were the most honest revolutionaries.

Yet, only six years after the Algerian war ended, French workers launched the biggest general strike in history in 1968.

Fanon's work was an inspiration to those fighting the system, in particular the Black Panthers.

But his political weakness meant that he could not link the fight against imperialism with the day to day struggles of workers.

Fanon, published by Granta, £40

—SIMON BASKETTER



**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 workers 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 here.

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PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS

Rank and File

'WE ARE TAKING BACK OUR UNIONS'

RANK AND file trade unionists from across the country are due to gather for a special conference on February 10th called Claiming Back our Unions.

The conference is organised by the Campaign against A Partnership Deal which spearheaded opposition to the last national pay deal.

Last February they warned that workers would loose out again if they did not have the right to enter pay claims at workplace level when they wanted to.

But the government ministers, union leaders and economists assured workers that there was no danger of inflation rising above three percent.

When it eventually went over 7 percent, the ICTU negotiators had to rush back to the bosses to ask for more. But they are so terrified of their own members that they dared not put the revised PPF Review to a democratic vote.

Overtaken

It is no wonder. The extra 2 percent pay rise is not due to be paid until 2001 — even though inflation has overtaken wages since last summer.

Employers will also be able to ask for more concessions for this pay rise - but workers are prohibited from taking any action to defend themselves.

"It shows how the union leaders have become so much out of touch" said conference organiser Brid Smith. "They see themselves as mangers of working class discontent. They are tied in with the government and the employers.

"This conference will try to co-ordinate the growing opposition to social partnership.

It will map out a road so that we can start taking our union back for the members.

"Certainly the richest in our society have benefited beyond their wildest dreams while fixed low wage increases and no strike clauses have seen the workers who created this extraordinary wealth fall way behind.

"It's time the Tiger roared for workers as well and democracy was restored to the trade union movement. That is why this conference is important for all trade union activists.

★ BRENDAN OGLE, ILDA Secretary

Rank and File Trade Union Conference Agenda:

11.00 am Registration
11.30 -12.30

The Celtic Tiger — How Workers Are Losing Out
-Introduction by Kieran Allen (Author of the *Celtic Tiger & the Myth of Social Partnership*)

Benchmarking & Performance Related Pay
Introduced by Maureen Watson — Executive Council Member (Personal Capacity) Educational Institute of Scotland
12.30 - 1.30

How We Break Through the Deal
Introduction by Pat Cahill — Member of Standing Committee, ASTI and George Whelan, Shop Steward Dublin Airport
1.30 - 2.30 Lunch Break
2.30 - 4.00

How We Build a Rank & File Movement?
Jimmy Kelly — ATGWU Convenor, Waterford Crystal
Owen McCormack — Chairperson Busworkers Action Group
Terry Kelleher, Activist Rank & File Group - CPSU
4.00 -5.00
Resolutions/Elections/ Sum - Up

"Partnership has delivered nothing to us. If fact we have taken a real decrease in take home pay with inflation. I believe that it is time the members took control of their unions and this conference is the first step in this process.

"Workers are entitled to their share of the Celtic Tiger. It shouldn't be all going to the fat cats."
★ PAT CAHILL, Standing Committee ASTI, personal capacity.

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Carolann Duggan - Waterford Branch SIPTU; Pat Cahill - Standing Executive Committee ASTI; Tom Hughes - Dublin South No. 2 Branch ASTI; Joe Fallon - Dublin Bus Shop Steward NBRU; Liam Griffin - Electronics Branch SIPTU; Dave McDonagh - Secretary Telecom Branch CPSU; Charlie Kavanagh - Bray Branch Committee SIPTU; Crea Ryder - General Secretary Candidate INTO; Marnie Holborow - President Education Branch SIPTU; John Finnie - President Docks Marine & Transport Branch SIPTU; Richie Brown - Crafts Negotiating Committee FLS/Team ATGWU; Eddie Conlon - Executive Member TUI; Dick Roche - Shop Steward Waterford No. 2 Branch TEEU; Jimmy Kelly - Convenor Waterford Crystal ATGWU; Catherine Boothman - Shop Steward State & Related Agencies Branch SIPTU; Róisín Cronin - Secretary Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Branch IMPACT; Peter Conlon - Shop Steward Scaffolding Society SIPTU; Kieran Allen - Shop Steward, Education Branch SIPTU; Marion Gibbons - Branch Committee PNA; Frank Lee - Shop Steward Local Authority Branch SIPTU; Eugene Kenny - Shop Steward Health Services Branch SIPTU; Frank Donegan - Shop Steward Education Branch SIPTU; Róisín Ryder - Dublin Technical Services Branch MSF; Deirdre Cronin - Dublin City North INTO; Michael Killeavy - Shop Steward Tullamore Branch SIPTU; John Clumo - Secretary Deep Sea Docks Waterford ATGWU; Charlie Nolan - No. 2 Public Sector Branch UCATT; Brendan Ogle - Sec-

retary ILDA; Brendan Begley - Shop Steward Education Branch SIPTU; Owen McCormack - Chairperson Busworkers Action Group NBRU; Derek Delaney - Shop Steward County Councils Branch SIPTU; Terry Kelleher - Executive Member CPSU; Tony Walsh - Chairperson Telecom Branch CPSU; Jo Tully - INO; Des Derwin - No. 2 Regional Committee SIPTU; Owen Gallagher - Vice Chairperson Bray Branch SIPTU; Colm Allen - Dublin DART NBRU; Eugene McDonagh - Busworkers Action Group NBRU; Joe Moore - President Cork Trades Council CWU; John Courtney - Vice President ILDA; David Field - Electronics Branch SIPTU; Tom Jones - Shop Steward Smurfits SIPTU; Iggy Clark - Drinks & Tobacco

Branch SIPTU; Cecil Crowley - Shop Steward Gnanbia ATGWU; ATGWU Branch No. 3/64; ATGWU Branch No. 3/111; Eamonn Lewsley - Shop Steward Cork SIPTU; Angela Piercy - Shop Steward Health Services Branch SIPTU; Una Ni Riain - Dublin City North Branch INTO; Helena McNeill - Shop Steward State Related Branch SIPTU; Hugh McCarthy - Shop Steward Inchicore ILDA; Albert McCready - Shop Steward & Regional Committee ATGWU; Kenny McLawrence - Shop Steward Waterford Branch SIPTU; George Whelan - Shop Steward Dublin Airport SIPTU; Jim Whelan Convenor Dublin Fire Brigade; Colm O Riain - Dublin City South INTO

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Address.....

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Union..... Position.....

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Return to: Campaign Against A Partnership Deal 105 O'Hogan Road Dublin 10. Tel (01) 878 8170

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 Kitchen Bar, 16 Victoria Square, near Commarket
- **BELFAST SOUTH:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Queens Students Union
- **BELFAST WEST**
West Belfast Branch meets Sliabh Rata Community Centre Falls Road, Monday 7:30pm.
- **CORK:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in O'Donoghue's Pub, Drawbridge St
- **DERRY:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Begg's Bar up stairs, Orford St.
- **DUNDALK:** Contact 01-872 2682 for details
- **DUN LAOGHAIRE:** Meets every Thursday 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, Parrell St
- **DUBLIN KILLBARRACK:** Phone 087 6235071
- **DUBLIN CABRA:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in

- Aughrim St Parish Hall, Prussia St
- **DUBLIN BALLYMUN:** Phone Kevin at 8622209
- **DUBLIN DUNDRUM:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Dundrum Family Recreation Centre
- **DUBLIN RIALTO:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in St. Andrews Community Centre, SCR
- **DUBLIN RATHMINES:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Tom Kelly flats community centre, Charlemont Street.
- **DUBLIN HAROLD'S X:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Innon the Park Harold's Cross
- **DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:** Phone Simon 087 6581455
- **DUBLIN TALLAGHT:** Meets every Thursday 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 087 6329511 for details
- **TRALEE:** Phone 087 6329511 for details
- **WATERFORD:** Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the ATGWU Hall, Keizer St.

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Refuse Charges

Right unite to push through bin charges

HOUSEHOLDERS in Dublin city will have to pay to get rid of their rubbish after Dublin Corporation pushed through refuse charges.

Houses supplied with a large wheelee bin now face a charge of £95 a year while householders getting a small wheelee bin will be charged £65 a year.

The charges were pushed through by Fianna Fail and Fine Gael with the support of the Greens. Disgracefully Labour councillors Anthony Creevy, Artane, Eamonn O'Brien Ballymun / Whitehall and

Sean Kenny of Donaghmede supported the motion allowing it to be passed by 25 to 22 votes.

The Labour Party made much play in the media about having removed the whip from the councillors.

In fact, the Labour Party did a deal with the right wing parties to ensure the charges went through.

In the hours running up to the meeting they were pushing for a pact to abstain on the vote.

When this failed three of their councillors voted for the charges.

Claimed

They claimed the reason was that Environment and Local Government Minister Noel Dempsey had threatened to suspend the Corporation if they failed to

agree the introduction of the charges.

But this doesn't explain why they gave in to the threat.

The fact that Labour have a pact with Fianna Fail to share the position of Lord Mayor may have something to do with the vote.

The bills are to be issued as soon as possible and payment is due by June 30.

Workers already pay tax to fund public services, and are now being forced to pay double taxation.

Business produces far more waste than householders but the Corporation gave into lobbying from the Small Firms Association and the Chamber of Commerce not to put up the commercial rate. The key to defeating this unjust tax is mass non-payment and protests.

This was how water

charges were defeated in the past.

Major campaigns against bin charges are already underway in Dun Laoghaire, Drogheda, Limerick and Cork.

Campaign

In Dun Laoghaire, which was the first of the four Dublin local authorities to implement waste charges last year, a mass campaign of non-payment has the refuse charges in trouble with over two thirds of people not paying.

A mass campaign of non-payment can defeat the charges in the Corporation area.

The Campaign Against Service Charges has organised a series of meetings and protests to get the non-payment campaign organised.

For information on the campaign in your area ring 087 6329511

Teachers

Solidarity grows with ASTI dispute

THE STRENGTH of ASTI's campaign for a 30 percent pay rise is having a major impact on the other two teachers unions.

In January, the government thought they had scuppered the dispute by getting the union into 'talks about talks with' a Labour Relations Commission, mediator Tom Pomphrett.

But they had not calculated for the anger that their decision to deduct teachers' wages for a work to rule had pro-

voked.

The deductions happened just before Christmas and were so indiscriminate that money was illegally taken from teachers who had not even been on the work to rule.

Compromise

In a shabby compromise deal, the government agreed to pay back the money but reserved its right to deduct it again if the teachers continued their campaign.

The ASTI's full time leadership were willing to accept this but the infor-

mal grassroots leadership won the 180 strong Central Executive Committee to reject it.

ASTI members were then all set to appeal to their fellow teachers at a special TUI congress due to be held on 27 January.

Early indications showed that a groundswell of support for ASTI was emerging.

Several resolutions appeared from TUI branches calling for a boycott of examinations and for the union to come out on the same days that the ASTI was striking.

The union leaders tried to rule these resolutions out of order but when they did not succeed they took the ultimate step and cancelled their own conference.

The moves shows that the leaders of the TUI are working closely with the government to defeat the ASTI. They see the teacher's strikes as a direct threat to the partnership programme.

As part of the recent pay review, ICTU gave the employers and the government a pledge that they would crack down hard on any industrial action.

The disgraceful moves in the TUI shows that this will mean undermining the very idea of union democracy itself.

Activists in TUI are now discussing holding an alternative rank and file conference to claim back their union.

They should also embark on a systematic campaign to remove an executive who have shown complete contempt for their own members.

INTO election

MEANWHILE election fever has gripped the primary teachers union as the INTO General Secretary, Joe O'Toole retires.

O'Toole began as a left winger but has ended up as an open admirer of the right wing Finance Minister, Charlie McCreevey.

shown no support for the ASTI.

The INTO leaders have not even condemned the decision to deduct wages from ASTI members even though primary teachers could similarly be penalised if they refused to cover for absent colleagues.

INTO can express their opposition to this state of affairs by nominating Crea Ryder to run for the post of General Secretary.

Crea Ryder has been a founding member of the rank and file group, Teachers United and is campaigning on a platform of opposition to performance related pay and full support for the ASTI. Nominations for the post of General Secretary take place in late January and early February.

Rewarded

He has been the main figure pushing 'benchmarking' for teachers and has been rewarded with the chair of a commission into the accountancy profession.

O'Toole's supporters want him replaced by a head office official, Catherine Byrne.

Byrne has backed all the partnership pay deals and has

Smurfits

SIPTU's

Sweetheart

deal

SIPTU leaders have concluded a sweetheart deal with the millionaire paper owner, Smurfit.

Smurfit has won a contract with News International to print the Irish edition of most of Murdoch's papers. These include the *Sunday Times* and *The Sun*.

Just as at Wapping a new greenfield site is being built near Kells, Co Meath where new work practices will be imposed.

But unlike Wapping, Smurfit is working with SIPTU to conclude a single union, sweetheart deal which rules out strike action.

The deal probably means a loss of jobs in both Belfast and Cork where Murdoch's paper were originally printed.

The Graphical Paper and Media Union is outraged because it has been cut out of its right to represent workers.

Once again the SIPTU leaders are helping to deny workers a right to join a union of their choice.

DART

Drivers' action gets company apology

DUBLIN DART drivers took untold abuse from the company and the media over the Christmas period when they refused to work their rest days in accordance with their new agreement with Irish Rail.

But now the company have issued the drivers with a two-page apology for attempting to force the drivers to work over and above a five-day week.

The company have

dramatically changed their tune due they say to a "misunderstanding" and are acknowledging that drivers can refuse to work rest days.

Tolerated

The company only apologised after the drivers had clearly told them that no disciplinary action against any driver would be tolerated and if they attempted this the DART would be stopped by industrial action.

One of the drivers told *Socialist Worker*, "We

regard this apology as completely insincere.

We had to take the flack from the media and the public and it is still going on.

Instead Irish Rail should have published a full apology in the media and our unions could have done much more to put the record straight."

The drivers have shown once again how to put manners on Irish Rail's attempts to change their work practices.

Ulster Bank

Bank backs off

Ulster Banks deputy chief executive, Paddy Mahon, has said that their scheme to pressurise workers to resign and re-apply for their old jobs on reduced rates is 'off the table' at least until 2004.

His statement follows huge votes

from staff both North and South of the border to resist the changes being brought in under the Horizon programme.

In response to the vote, a tribunal in Northern Ireland recommended that the bank retreat.

Workers however are still wary over plans to slim down staff and to re-enter the issue at a later date.

National Car Testers

Strike over shifts

SOME 40 SIPTU members at the Dublin National Car Testing Service plants are set to take strike action.

Their colleagues around the country are balloting to join them.

Management have attempted to change the working week at the three testing centres in Dublin from five day 8

hour shifts to four day 10 hour shifts. When workers refused to implement the changes they were suspended.

One worker told *Socialist Worker*. "Management just announced that they were changing the shift and when we said we wouldn't they suspended us."

The action involves more than just the shift changes.

In the centres there are serious concerns about health and safety.

"We are stuck in a cold room, which fills up with exhaust fumes.

About 400 cars a day are checked but there are more cars to test at the start of the year, but management simply expect us to work harder to keep pace, with no extra money." according to one car tester.

There are also reports from workers around the country that management are arrogant and intimidating.

Socialist Worker

inside

TEN YEARS SINCE THE GULF WAR:
END THE SANCTIONS page 8
BAN DEPLETED URANIUM! page 4

INSIDE INTEL:
Taking on the
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With league tables gone...

SAY NO TO A NEW 11+

MARTIN McGUINNESS has announced the scrapping of school league tables in Northern Ireland. This is a welcome move to abolish a rotten Tory plan to put schools into

competition with each other.

McGuinness should move now to abolish the 11 plus and all forms of selection and replace the grammar school system with a fully funded comprehensive system.

But there are growing fears that McGuinness will

duck the issue and simply move to update the selection procedure.

In January McGuinness approved plans for a new £20 million school in Strabane, which merges the existing three Catholic grammar and secondary schools.

McGuinness said "the new school will provide all pupils with the opportunity to achieve their full potential."

The new school will retain selection at 11, with 35 per cent of pupils being placed in a 'grammar stream'.

The school claims that selection will be made "using the 11-plus or any future replacement."

Expect

This shows the Catholic schools authorities expect that selection will outlive the 11 plus.

Last year McGuinness said that he wanted a decision that would be accepted by the whole of the Assembly.

David Trimble, together with Ian Paisley's DUP, immediately said they would defend the grammar school system.

McGuinness has said nothing since that shows he is prepared to challenge elitism in education.

Parents reject selection

THE REVIEW into post primary education has played down the case for comprehensive education. Nowhere does it promote research showing that children of all abilities do as well or better in a fully comprehensive system.

Despite this, local school meetings and surveys show the depth of opposition to any form of selection.

A survey in the Bogside and Creggan area of Derry

revealed that only 2 per cent of parents were in favour of keeping the 11 plus. Over 90 per cent were in favour of a comprehensive system.

A meeting of parents held by the West Belfast Partnership Board on 10 January, came out in favour of a completely comprehensive system.

One Belfast parent who spoke to *Socialist Worker*, said, "We had a meeting at the school last week. 40 people turned up. Only one wanted to keep the 11 plus. All the rest of us wanted it got rid off completely."

END THE CLASS DIVIDE IN THE CLASSROOM

THE GRAMMAR schools are mounting a concerted campaign to keep selection. They are raising the threat of wealthy parents setting up private schools, which would exclude poor children.

Disgracefully, the leader of the NASUWT teachers' union, Tom McKee, has backed them in this scare campaign even though his union has a policy of opposing selection.

The grammar school system divides children by class background. An Equal Opportunities Commission report shows that children from middle class and wealthy families are three times more likely to pass the 11 plus than children from working class families.

Children from the poorest backgrounds are seven times more likely to end up in secondary schools.

Wealth is the real divide. Better off families can afford to pay for extra tuition to help children pass

the 11 plus.

They are also much less likely to suffer from the numerous social and economic problems faced by children from deprived areas.

The Campaign Against Selection has announced plans to call a demonstration at Stormont in favour of comprehensive education, on Wednesday 18 April, bringing together with parents, community groups and trade unions.

For more details phone John Price on 92660011