

# **Socialist Worker**

**For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p**

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truth  
about  
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## **VICTORY ON DIVORCE**

# **Now fight to separate Church and State**

# WATER CHARGES: Court cases thrown out, now keep up the fight

**SOUTH** Dublin County Council has failed in its attempts to disconnect the water supply of 43 households in Firhouse, Tallaght and Templeogue.

The judge dismissed the first cases brought under the new legislation on the grounds that the Council had failed to prove that the people brought before the courts were "occupiers".

## Serious

The next court appearance now takes place on January 18th when the council will try again to get disconnection orders against non-payers.

Non-payers showed the



Council, and the courts how serious they are in their campaign to abolish the charges.

Hundreds of people from

all over Dublin mounted loud and angry pickets on Rathfarnham District Court. The crowd of over 500 included representatives

from the ATGWU and BATU as well as delegations from St Mary's Hospital in the Phoenix Park and Semper tyre factory in

Ballyfermot.

Protesters demanded that Labour and Democratic Left stop all sell-outs and make the rich pay.

## Message

Their message was clear—that the anti-water charges campaign won't stop until the charges are totally abolished.

At the moment councils all over the country are setting the new rate for 1996. Already people in Bray have been told that there will be a £7 increase in their bills.

The need to get organised and fight back is more evident than ever. We can't rely on the courts to keep the charges at bay. The unions must be actively involved in the campaign.

# 'Coalition widens rich-poor divide': Vincent De Paul

**THE VINCENT de Paul** have denounced the Coalition for their disgraceful policies towards the poor.

Instead of closing the gap between rich and poor the 'last Budget has in our opinion and from our experience actually widened the gap further' said Bill Cleary from the Society.

The charity organisation gave the example of a single long term unemployed person.

Since the last budget introduced by the Labour Minister Ruairi Quinn, they gained a miserly £78.27 a year.

But a person on more than £40,000 gained £688.

In the past the Labour Party often criticised the

Vincent de Paul for not being radical enough.

Now the policies of the Labour have sunk so low that even this moderate Catholic organisation is disgusted by their activities.

According to the Vincent de Paul 40% of Irish children live in households with too little money to keep up an acceptable standard of living.

Next time you hear De Rossa or Spring tell us that they stand for the poor in Irish society, remember that they have moved to the right of the Vincent de Paul.

## inside the system

### things they say

"WE have access to a lot of material and methods used in (Northern Ireland) by the British forces. We have not used one hundredth of those techniques in Nigeria in ensuring law and order are brought under control in Ogoniland"—Dauda Musa Komo, military governor of Ogoniland

"Ye're only a shower of wife-swapping sodomites"—Una Bean Mhic Mathuna of the No Campaign at the court in the RDS.

"And you're only an old bible basher—you're a lunatic."—Yes activist in reply.

# Rich get richer...

**CHIEF executives in firms with turnover of more than £150m have given themselves a 16 percent salary hike.**

While the bosses constantly tell

workers to tighten their belts, these CEOs now earn an average basic salary of £95,600. A quarter of these earned £117,000 or more.

Bosses in companies where turnover is £10 million secured a 28 percent pay rise in 1994/95. Even "or-

inary" managers got a rise of 6 percent. Inflation over the period was only three percent!!!

And even worse, the salary rises do not include bonuses, pension payments and other benefits—normally worth another one fifth!!

## Less food—more money

**THE European Union was once famous for jokes about food mountains and wine lakes. No more.**

There is a growing world food shortage. Worldwide grain and barley stocks are at their lowest ever level.

In 1987, there were 104 days supplies in store. Now there are only 53 days worth.

If an important crop fails somewhere in the world it could trigger a

crisis. But as stocks fall, money is rolling in for producers.

Prices are soaring to record levels. The poor are the market's victims of course. Rising prices mean poor countries will have to pay an extra £2 billion for the same amount of food.

## Poor pay, higher profits

**OUTPUT is rising in Northern Ireland but pay levels are falling as experts now predict the North will become the lowest wage economy in Europe.**

★ Bank of Ireland are making £1 million profits EVERY day.

In just six months, they made £192 million, a 15 percent rise on the same period last year.

So what excuse do the banks have to pay some of their workers less than £9,000 a year?

A report by the Trade Indemnity Plc shows that a typical female manufacturing worker in the North earns £30 less than her Scottish counterpart and £56 less than a worker in England doing the same job.

The report says that low wages are proving "a major draw for foreign companies wishing to gain entry to the lucrative EU market."

## Is this peacekeeping?

**REMEMBER** when we were told that the UN was sent into Somalia "to keep the peace between warring tribes"?

An insight into Western "peacekeeping" methods came in a Belgian court recently.

Seven Belgian soldiers were on trial over their activities while part of the UN "peacekeeping" force in Somalia two years ago.

A lieutenant admitted forcing two Somali children to dig their own graves before subjecting them to a mock execution.

In another case, the troops suspended children upside down above

## Number of the Beast

**Socialist Worker** readers anxious to help the forces of law and order will have noticed that the new Gardai confidential phone number contains the digits 666, is this an omen?

a crocodile infested river.

Even though the soldiers were found guilty, they were given suspended sentences of just a few days and all walked free from court.

# Prime suspect

**A rich lawyer was shocked to be thrown in jail as a suspected gangster on a recent visit to the US.**

Matthew McCloy, a director of the British Horseracing Board, was on his way to the world's richest horse race in New York.

The very white Mr McCloy stepped off the plane and when his name went

through an immigration computer it said he was a suspected black drug dealer gangster from Jamaica.

Despite protesting his innocence, he was hauled off to the cells and charged with assault, resisting arrest and disorderly conduct.

He was later released by embarrassed New York police

## VOTE RIGGING CLAIMS INVESTIGATED

**Fianna Fail could be up to their old tricks again.**

The Independent Appeals Board in University College Dublin are investigating allegations of election-rigging in student elections.

This follows claims that a number of students, including members of UCDs Kevin Barry Cumann of FF were involved in multiple voting, impersonation and ballot-box tampering during three elections this year.

Watch this space!!!

# Fighting gay-bashing in Derry

**OVER THE last few months there has been a significant increase in the number of people beaten up in Derry because they are gay.**

A number of gay groups in Derry have now got together and called a meeting to discuss what should be done.

Gay people are also facing major harassment from the RUC.

## ESAT PHONE SCANDAL

**TELECOM Eireann** has lodged a complaint against its competitor ESAT, with the Department of Transport, Energy and Communications.

ESAT lease 'dedicated lines' from the public network of Telecom Eireann at a very cheap rate to access their own customers. But it appears Telecom's competitors are breaking the rules and regulations by the use of a piece of equipment known as a 'router'.

But Telecom's bosses are implicated in ESAT's fiddle. They have told Telecom workers to ignore 'specifications tests' that monitor ESAT's use of the public network.

For ESAT this means a huge savings in costs which has been given the blessing of the Telecom bosses. They are clearly paying lip-service to their own notions of competition and ESAT are laughing all the way to the bank.

RUC officers have been going to known gay 'cruising' areas and entrapping gay men by appearing to chat them up before arresting them. At least two men have committed suicide as a result—one of them a policeman.

## Lurid

This kind of activity by the police and the lurid headlines that follow the prosecutions whip up prejudice against lesbians and gays and gives the green light to a minority of hardened bigots to attack and even kill them.

The 50 strong meeting that discussed these attacks decided to take some action.

As a result, the first ever gay rights march in Derry is to be held on Saturday 9th December—the day before international Human Rights day.

So far, the march has been sponsored by Foyle Friend, the Rainbow project, NIGRA, the SWP, Campaign for Decent Wages and the Derry Trades Council. Trade Unions and community groups are being approached for their support.

**we think**

# Bill Clinton is not a friend of ours

Bill Clinton's trip to Ireland was about nothing more than using the country as a gigantic stage for the campaign film for his re-election as US President.

Clinton wanted to woo the 40 million voters of Irish origin in the US.

He presides over a system where US workers are having to work longer and harder.

## Work

According to Juliet Schor in her book *The Overworked America*, "Americans now work an average of 164 hours more annually than 20 years ago.

"This amounts to about a month more at work per year."

It is precisely because he



has nothing to offer ordinary Americans, that he tries to pull out an ethnic vote by all sorts of gimmicks.

So the newsreel captured

him lighting up the darkness of Belfast or doing a John F Kennedy act by addressing crowds in College Green in Dublin.

But behind this farce there is also a more serious business at stake.

Clinton was presented as a man of peace who will help

solve the problems of Northern Ireland.

But Clinton is no peacemaker. He presides over the most powerful war machine in the world.

## Arms

Last year the US sold \$14.5 billion worth of arms and related technology to 141 countries.

Nor has he anything useful to say about Northern Ireland.

How could a man who presides over racist discrimination against black people have anything to say about ending the sectarianism of the North?

Clinton may seek to nudge Britain towards a settlement. But it is one that will set up the North as a happy hunting ground for US multi-nationals who seek the lowest of wages from a divided working class.

The tragedy is that people

who formerly opposed imperialism now happily go along with the image of Clinton the peacemaker.

Michael D Higgins used to denounce US policy in Nicaragua—yet he played the part of the stage Irishman, welcoming the great white hope.

Sinn Fein used to denounce imperialism—but their leading member Martin McGuinness spoke on a platform with Albert Reynolds under the heading 'Welcome President Clinton'.

## Idiocy

In a climate of idiocy, there is a need for the genuine voice of socialism to be heard.

That is why the Socialist Workers Party remains as implacably opposed to Clinton's visit as it was to Reagan's more than ten years ago.

# 'Transparency, no way —we're the bosses'

**THE SHARKS who hang out in the Irish Stock Exchange are up in arms.**

They are linked to the British Stock Exchange where the recent Greenbury report has recommended that they disclose the salaries of directors.

But the Irish rich are having none of it.

The Irish boss class love their secrecy.

While they can parade the figures that workers earn across the pages of the media, they are determined to hide the fat salaries that individual directors earn.

A confidential report from the Institute of Directors to the Irish Stock Ex-

change states that "inappropriate disclosure requirements would significantly affect the development of the stock market in Ireland".

## Tax Bill

Terrible things might happen.

# Gettys buy passports

**TWO MEMBERS of one of America's richest families have been granted an Irish passport.**

Mark and Christopher Getty are members of the notorious clan of oil millionaires.

They might, for example, have to pay their full tax bill.

Worse, workers might start to see through their hypocritical demands for 'sacrifice.'

So militant are the bosses about this issues that they plan to separate the Irish

They have no connection with this country—but they used some of their money to invest in an Irish company.

## Prevent

Meanwhile, the Coalition is pushing through a Refugee Bill which will

Stock Exchange from the British.

## Pleas

Despite 70 years of nationalist pleas in Ireland, this has never happened before.

But when they heard that

prevent political refugees coming to Ireland if they have stopped off in another EU country before arriving here.

If you are poor and persecuted by tyrants like those in Nigeria—there is no Irish welcome.

But if you have money and want to make more money by enjoying Ireland's easy going tax laws, it's all smiles and quick access to an Irish passport.

their incomes might be revealed, they moved to independence within weeks.

# Trial exposes PUP's 'socialist' credentials

**THE Progressive Unionist Party has spent the last year claiming to be socialist.**

Leading ex UVF men such as Billy Hutchinson and David Ervine have travelled the world arguing that 'they have a right to change.'

But a case that is currently before the Scottish High Court shows that some things stay the same.

On trial are six loyalists charged with "conspiracy to further the aims of the UVF" by

drug dealing and gun running. One of the accused is Lindsey Robb who also happens to be a leading member of the PUP.

## Talks

Earlier this year Robb, Hutchinson and Ervine were part of a PUP delegation which had talks with Michael Ancram.

The case shows that the PUP has nothing to do with socialism.

It still stands over the division between Catholic and Protestant workers.

# 'Abolish trial by jury'—senior judge

**A SENIOR Northern Ireland judge, Lord Justice McDermott, has recently come out in favour of the retention of the non-jury trials.**

He believes that ordinary people are not fit to decide on 'guilt' or 'innocence'. He argued that trials

accustomed to sitting in one place for more than five hours.

"I sense that more people are questioning the proposition that jury trial is fairer.. than trial by a judge seeking to do justice"

McDermott obviously doesn't trust ordinary people to come up with the right verdict.

He is used to the Diplock courts which last year returned a guilty verdict in 91% of cases!

**Year and a half waiting for door**

**FOR OVER a year and a half now Laura Kinsella of Ringsend has been pleading with Dublin corporation for a new door.**

The old one is rotting, with water seeping in under the bottom of it whenever it rains.

And it opens in rather than out which means that the large glass panels are constantly being broken accidentally.

The corporation have re-

fused to put in a door with smaller panes of glass or one which opens out.

They say that they will replace the old one but are adamant that the new one must be exactly like the first.

They don't appear to have a good explanation as to why.

**behind the headlines**

**Poor little princess**

**MILLIONS of people watched Princess Diana spill the beans on the royal family.**

The interview was like a real life soap opera. The Princess of Wales admitted on the British Broadcasting Corporation that she had had an affair. When asked about Captain James Hewitt she batted her eye lids and whispered she was in love with him. But more important than the titillating interview was the response to it.

Nicholas Soames, Tory MP and close personal friend of Prince Charles claimed that Di was in an advanced state of paranoia. This only helped to prove her point that the palace was ganging up on her.

The British media are having a field day and it seems, in general, are rooting for The Princess.

**But although it is gratifying to see Di with the help of the Paparazzi, pulling strips off her husband and his mates, she is certainly not an underdog.**

She is a Princess of the British Empire. Her husband owns half of Cornwall and gets millions in state hand outs. Her mother in law is the richest woman in the world. Diana herself recently spent £1 million on a holiday cottage in France.

*She is reputed to spend £3,000 a week on hair and beauty.*

'The Queen of Hearts played her ace' was how Nell McCafferty put it in the *Sunday Tribune*.

Nell seems to think, you poor thing, it must have been hell living with a bore like Charles.

**Purity**

She even romanced about the purity of Diana's lineage, pointing out that she has more pedigree than Prince Charles who is merely a Battenburg.

Nell McCafferty should understand better than anyone the legacy of British imperialism. It is utterly amazing how she can support Princess Diana simply because she is a woman.

But then this was precisely the sort of audience Diana was playing to when said that she was a 'strong woman' and that the palace had problems with that. I'm sure they did.

**The monarchy is founded on the sexist principle of male priority. She herself spoke of her 'relief' when her first child was a boy and how she had Harry 'as a backup'.**

When Charles and Diana first got married the media presented it as a fairy tale arrangement. Yet it was a marriage based on the coldest political calculation. Charles needed a future queen, he needed to provide heirs, he had to have a virgin bride and the whole sordid affair had to be presented as a triumph of true love.

*Diana may be now putting it up to certain camps within the establishment, but she is a major player in the Royal business.*

Despite a series of scandals she has been pretty useful to the Royal family who are too thick to realise that she is an asset to their business.

She may have been bitter about the royal's crude insensitivity to her post natal depression and bulimia. But of course they are insensitive—they are trained from birth to be insensitive.

Why else would Charles have been sent to a brutal school like Gordonstoun by his palpably brutal and insensitive father?

But she should not be supported or elevated simply because she has got a hard time from Charles and his groupies and most certainly not because she happens to be a woman.

**Diana has never questioned the idea that some people are 'born to rule'. She accepts that it is good for 'special people' to live in almost unimaginable wealth while others rot in poverty.**

She accepts the whole undemocratic principle of inherited wealth and power. She also wants a pyramid like class structure with her lot at the top and the rest of us down below.

Every time the red carpet is rolled out, or the loos re-furbished or school children lined up with Union Jacks for some meaningless royal visit by Diana or Charles, the whole edifice of class rule, exploitation and inequality is shored up.

That is why we should not shed any tears for her plight.

by CATHERINE LYONS

# The truth about the US President

**As Bill Clinton is feted by the media as a man of peace, here is the *Socialist Worker* guide to the real face of the leader of the world's greatest capitalist power.**

## Arms

**The US which Bill Clinton presides over is the greatest supplier of arms to the world.**

A US Congressional Research Report has shown that while there has been a slight decline in the global sale of weapons, the US share has continued to grow.

Of a total of \$20.4 billion of weapon sales to poorer countries in 1993, the US share was \$14.8 billion.

When Clinton talks about the 'leadership role' of the US, he really means the right to get the biggest profit from the weapons of destruction.

## Stoke

It is US weapons which help to stoke up war and destruction throughout the globe.

Clinton pretends to have brought peace to the Middle East. But Israel is the largest recipient of US arms in the world and Egypt is the second largest.

While Clinton talks of bringing 'freedom and justice' to the world, his generals in the Pentagon help to promote some of the worst forms of oppression across the world.

The third greatest recipient of US arms today is Turkey. A huge proportion of its budget has been taken up importing US battle tanks, combat aircraft and missile launchers.

The reason is that it is trying to crush the Kurdish population. This year, with full support from Clinton, the Turkish regime have destroyed more than 2,000 Kurdish village and turned 2 million people into refugees.



## Cuba

**Clinton has continued the policy of every other US President of trying to topple the Cuban regime.**

Although Cuba's claim to be socialist are bogus, its defiance of the wishes of US imperialism is an exam-

ple that the Pentagon wants to crush.

This is why Clinton has recently strengthened the 35 year old blockade against this little country.

## Ignored

The US has ignored all the feeble protests from the UN which has called on it to lift the illegal blockade.

Yet it launched the Gulf War on the claim that the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein did not obey UN resolutions.

## The death penalty

**When Clinton ran for the US Presidency he boasted**

**that while other candidates claimed to be tough on law and order he was the only one to sign an order for execution.**

As governor of Arkansas he sent a black disabled man to his death.

There are currently 3,000 prisoners on death row in America.

One of them is Brian Robertson who is scheduled for execution on 10 January 1996. His mother Bettie Robertson told *Socialist Worker* about her anger.

"They didn't find his fingerprints on the weapons or anything, so they just determined that because he was young black man from Texas who had a hard time of it, he should go to prison. I believe it is really a racial conviction.

"We live in a middle class mixed area and the person who was killed was an elderly white man.

"Brain's father was murdered in 1974 and they argued that Brian had a problem with that and wanted to retaliate.

"Brain's trial, which only lasted a week, was mainly looking at the problems he had in growing up—being hyperactive and this sort of thing.

"The question I ask is, why is it that the white man who murdered my husband only got 13 years (and he got off after 2 or 3 years) and here is my son who is convicted of a crime and he gets the death penalty"

"I sold my home to try and get a good lawyer for him and hired a private detective to get Brian off so this exhausted all the money I have. But I felt it was worth it to save my son's life.

"Yet he still got the death penalty and this has taken a toll on me and the other three boys."

## Letters

**Socialist Worker welcomes letters. Keep them reasonably short and send to Letters to the Editor, Socialist Worker, PO Box 1648 Dublin 8 or fax to (01) 872 3838**

# Why we need a drug clinic

**I am appalled at Cllr Sean Lyons campaign against the Blanchardstown Drugs Clinic.**

I was disgusted at the campaign's posters saying No HIV Clinic. It was a hor-

rible slur on people with HIV.

The facts are that the proposed clinic is a methadone clinic—so no other substances will be used in it.

Security at Blanchardstown hospital will make sure that there is

no drug pushing near the area.

## Exchange

Blanchardstown has already a drugs problem—so we need more and not less clinics.

A needle exchange would stop children contracting Hepatitis B while playing with contaminated needles that have been thrown away.

Despite the myths there is very little chance of contracting HIV from contami-

nated needles. The virus is very delicate and cannot survive in temperature lower than the human body.

Politicians like Sean Lyons are only trying to whip up fears to promote their right wing ideas.

□ LINDA, BLANCHARDSTOWN

# HUGE STRIKES AND DEMOS ROCK FRANCE

## 'If we fight and stand together we can win'

FRANCE is in the grip of revolt, with the biggest wave of strikes and protests for years rocking the Tory government.

"The government has declared war on the workers and students.

"But if we fight and stand together we can win".

So said Phillippe, one of the 100,000 demonstrators who brought Paris to a halt last Friday in a magnificent show of strength.

Across France well over five million public sector workers struck for the second time in a few weeks.

As well as the monster demonstration in Paris an impressive 50,000 turned out in the southern port of Marseilles. Tens of thousands marched in a score or more cities, from Toulouse and Lyon in the south to Rennes and Lille in the north.

Even the bosses' newspapers had to admit that over half a million took to the streets—although the real figure was much higher.

Friday 24th was a day of impressive strike action. Public transport halted. Ports were shut and striking rail workers disrupted the prestige Eurostar Channel Tunnel line.

Workers across the public sector, including council workers, teachers, hospital workers, postal workers and civil servants struck and marched.

Delegations from private industry joined them as did thousands of students who themselves have been striking, occupying and demonstrating.

Friday's protests were just one wave in a growing tide of revolt.

The next day saw tens of thousands march again through Paris on the biggest women's liberation demonstration for years.

Three days later saw another day of strikes by public sector workers, with huge demonstrations again taking to the streets across France.

The fight is on against the right-wing government's plan to push through savage attacks on the health service as well as social security and pensions.

And rail workers stayed out after Friday through until the start of the next week, striking against savage job and route cuts.

The workers' revolt coincides with the biggest student upheaval for years.

tens of thousands marched through most cities with around 40 colleges occupying or striking to demand more government money.

**PAUL  
McGARR'S  
eyewitness  
report from  
Paris**

A national student demonstration was set to march through Paris.

There is no doubt that this inspiring revolt has the power to beat the government. But it also faces obstacles familiar to those living elsewhere.

The anger in France is mixed with a lack of confidence rooted in years of defeats. And union leaders are desperate to limit the action.

The path the struggle follows in the coming weeks will depend much on how successful militants are in building on the rising anger and arguing for strike action beyond that already called.

Anger mounts as workers

NOVEMBER's march in Paris was a mixture of fury at the government and bosses, and a carnival mood among workers beginning to feel their power.

Across the city people smiled. Heads that on normal days are often bowed were lifted with new hope.

"We're going to kick your arse Juppe!" sang a group of nurses about the Tory prime minister.

As the protest passed down the fashionable Boulevard Haussmann, thousands of workers suddenly struck up the socialist anthem the International.

They marched past the well-heeled sitting over their business lunches in the smart streetside restaurants.

You could plainly see the fear and unease on the faces of the rich as the demonstration rolled past.

"We are so big and powerful. I am very, very happy today," said Remi, a teacher who was marching and dancing along with his workmates.

"For years the bosses have been getting more money and our public services and wages getting cut. We've had enough".

"The government says it doesn't have the money.



## Anger mounts as workers take to the streets

### 'Students, workers, solidarity'

STUDENTS JOINED November's march chanting "students, workers, solidarity" and were cheered and applauded by workers.

The student revolt in France is over exactly the same attacks that British students are facing.

"There are not enough books, or teachers. In lectures we have to sit on the floor" says Christelle, a student at Paris's Sorbonne university.

She has been elected to join a national action committee of delegates from all the colleges which is leading the struggle.

We should take it off the bosses."

#### Solidarity

The same feeling of solidarity was there on the demonstration among all those fighting the government.

"If the government doesn't listen after today we will need more strikes, says Patrick, a Paris

"The movement grew really quickly. A couple of weeks ago we could only get 50 students to a meeting now hundreds come and there is a really strong feeling."

The students are demanding more money for the colleges and more teachers.

#### United

"The attacks on students and on workers are all part of the same fight" says Christelle. "If we stand together we can win".

The movement has united black and white against their real enemies.

Metro driver.

"The government attacks mean we'll have to work 40 years instead of 37.5 years to qualify for a full pension he says.

"We work long enough already, and if we are forced to work longer there will be less jobs for young people".

"We are totally behind the students. We all have families and know the

problems students face".

And, in a near universal comment, he added, "They should use the money they waste on the nuclear bomb tests and give it to us".

#### Welfare

"This government is just out to smash up our public services and welfare system," said

Bruno is a business studies student at Evry University. "We are demanding equal treatment for foreign students who are discriminated against by the government and the police."

Stephanie is a student at the Censier University in Paris. "There is such a good feeling. People are discussing and wondering how to fight, how to organise, there are discussions about ideas, about everything.

"It all changed so suddenly. Many people are beginning to think they can change things. The more we do the more we think is possible!"

MarieFrance, a library worker. "We are going to stop them."

Her workmate Lisa added, "We are really badly paid, most of us get less than 600 a month and this government has the cheek to talk about public sector workers being privileged!"

The anger is about more than just the latest attacks. "People are angry

about everything," says Pierre a telecom worker. "In my workplace temporary contracts and job cuts and low wages are big issues."

Jean is a building worker in the CGT union federation which had the biggest contingent on the march.

"Today is brilliant. But we need more strikes. If we stand together, the workers and the students we can kick this government out!"

Any worker here will immediately recognise the problems facing French workers.

"Anne, a striking nurse, explains, "In the health service we've seen less and less money for nurses and care, but more and more for managers.

"This government is out to destroy the health service our parents fought for. We have to stop them".

Only six months ago the Tory Jacques Chirac was elected as president of France. Now he is the most hated ruler in decades.

# Divorce vote deals for bigots

*"IT WASN'T even about the right to re-marry, I just wanted to bury a relationship with my husband that has been dead since 1981.*

*"Only then can I look forward and choose what I want to do. I am absolutely delighted".*

That was Mary's reaction to the divorce referendum. No matter how small the margin, the bigots and the Bishops were beaten and it was a time to celebrate.

Angela had probably more reasons than most to be happy. Nearly twenty years ago her marriage broke down and she got an annulment from the Catholic Church.

Thinking her marriage was over she re-married in both the church and in the civil ceremony held afterwards.

But by 1986, she found herself up before the High Court on a charge of bigamy when her second marriage broke down.

For nearly a year she was pilloried by the courts until finally the matter was resolved by a High Court annulment.

She was a victim of Ireland's crazy laws which pretended that separations did not happen.

## Legal Limbo

Nearly 80,000 people were confined to a legal limbo by the ban on divorce.

Some of them had been part of abusive, violent marriages. The ban on divorce only encouraged some men to believe that they still 'owned' their wife.

For others the relationship split up fairly amicably. They just wanted the choice to marry again in the future.

The people voted to reject stupid irrelevant arguments about tax increases—and acknowledge that no Bishop or State should dictate how to run our lives.

They were sick of the hypocrisy of the Church who lecture about morality—but cover up for the most sickening forms of child abuse.

Even in the last week of the referendum it was revealed that a priest who was the nephew of Eamonn Casey was transferred from Limerick to his uncle's diocese in Galway for abusing children.

Some compensation was paid—but by now a clear pattern had emerged.

If you were a priest you got away with paying up money to keep your crimes quiet. It was only if you were a lay person were you sent for trial.

The vote on November 24th was a clear signal that people have enough of this hypocrisy. It was a vote to separate the church and state in the South.

## The bigots who do not like democracy

IMMEDIATELY after the result was announced, the bigots of the anti-divorce lobby showed their contempt for democracy.



Judge Rory O Hanlon said that 'According to the catechism of the Catholic Church, a grave offence had been committed against the natural law'.

He threatened to bring the whole issue back to the Supreme Court to get the referendum cancelled.

The bigots believe that they have a chance before the upper class judges.

They showed their contempt for ordinary people by claiming that their votes were bought by an incompetent government.

Yet they never sought an injunction to stop the referendum—before the voting started.

Their charge of undue pressure to influence the result is

pure hypocrisy.

They threw everything into a NO vote and lost. They started the campaign with Bishop Clifford claiming that divorce led to more car accidents and higher instances of smoking—and their lies just kept growing.

## Lined Up

In the last week of the campaign they even lined up the Pope to interfere in the referendum by calling for a NO vote.

Yet the Pope had never said anything publicly on the spate of child abuse scandals that his priests engaged in.

They organised a march in Dublin under the banner of a prayer rally where a US fundamentalist preacher whipped up the crowd by claiming that Satan was at work.

In all of this the Bishops worked far harder to pressure people than they did in 1986.

Their statement that divorces would be denied the sacraments, including extreme unction, was probably the greatest piece of blackmail ever attempted in an Irish vote.

When they complain now about the unfair result, they should be told to take a very long running jump.

## The sinister paymasters behind the No campaign

THE intervention of the far right Human Life International in the campaign was a sinister development.

Human Life International is run by a US priest Fr Paul Marx who was given free access to Irish schools in the 1980s.

He took around a dead fetus that had been preserved

in a jar to frighten Irish school boys and girls about abortion.

## Racist

Human Life International

also engages in racist propaganda.

Fr Marx has argued that the problem facing Europe is that white women are having too few children and will be 'out bred' by women from Islamic backgrounds.

At the end of the campaign O'Hanlon had admitted that



# slap in the face

## It's a class question

The *Sunday World* headline said it all. "The working class deliver the goods".

The working class estates of the major cities swung the YES vote. This represents a major change on who is for the 'liberal agenda' in Ireland.

In the past writers like John Waters and Joseph Lee claimed that the demand for change came from the liberal Dublin 4 set. They pretended that this area was out of sync with the 'real Ireland'.

But the most enthusiastic support for change in Irish society now comes from Dub-

lin 9, 11, 14—and in the working class areas of Waterford, Limerick, Cork and Galway.

While the liberals may have started to look for change in Irish society, it will be the working class who will carry through the battle.

### Restrictive

The restrictive nature of divorce now directly discriminates against workers.

The new article in the constitution specifies that people must make 'adequate material provision' before they can get a divorce.

This means that a big farmer

from Meath who voted No can more easily get a divorce than a working class voter from Darndale who voted YES.

The government is also disgracefully saying that the first divorce case will not happen until 1997.

The wealthy can still travel to America and get divorces easily and have them recognised in Ireland.

But working class people who delivered the YES vote still have to wait years.

Throughout the referendum the SWP campaigned for cheap, easy access to divorce. This class position is now more relevant than ever.

## WE THINK

THE DAIL parties who fought a cowardly campaign on divorce believe that the process of change in the South must now be stopped.

According to the *Irish Times* political correspondent, the government saw divorce as 'the final piece of the liberal agenda'.

The liberals who started off the process of change in Irish society now believe that it will promote instability if it is pushed further.

But the fight to separate the Church and state in the South is only starting.

There is no state education in Ireland as our primary schools are mainly run by parish priests.

Taxpayers pay for the cost of the school and the salaries of teachers—but the Bishops demand that the ethos of their church is pushed through subjects as diverse as the Irish language and even Maths.

Many voluntary hospitals are run by religious orders who ban operations such as sterilisation and vasectomies.

Sick patients are still forced to watch the Mass on televisions in their wards or put up with visits from the Legion of Mary.

Thousands of working class people are still forced to pay up to £600 to have an abortion in Britain when it could be provided in Ireland.

### Control

The absence of secular control over our schools and hospitals directly works against the interests of working class people.

In the past the Bishops aligned with elite groups of doctors to stop a fully free and comprehensive health service developing.

Today the religious operate a two tier health system with fast track entry for the rich in private hospitals—and long delays for the poor in public hospitals.

They have produced an education system which achieves high results for the upper class—and discards thousands of working class pupils as educational failures.

The battle to carry through the separation of Church and State will now shift from liberals to revolutionary socialists who are determined that the process does not stop.

In the battles ahead there is now a working class constituency who can be won to the demand for change.

That will provide a far more radical threat to Irish capitalism than the Dublin 4 liberals ever dreamed of.

# The feeble government campaign

The divorce referendum just passed by a whisker—but the main reason for the high NO vote was the appalling campaign ran by the government.

There was always bound to be a bedrock NO vote. The family has always been promoted as the key social unit in Ireland. Politicians have used the idea of the family as a reason for not building up proper social services. Women have been actively encouraged not to take up paid employment.

Although the number of married women in the labour force has risen dramatically in recent years, it still stands at 29%—the second lowest in Europe.

This allowed the NO campaigners to get a hearing for their argument that divorce is all about splitting a wage packet between two families.

### Liberalise

In most other countries divorce was made easily available in the 1960s. The ruling class felt confident that they could liberalise their societies and many working class people felt that they could have confidence in the future and wanted to expand their degree of personal freedom.

In Ireland, divorce debate came in the recession rid-

den 1980s and 1990s. In a world where the future is bleak, the ideal of the family is held up as a haven that can offer protection against an outside world.

This is also why the bigots could tap into a feeling of bitterness and despair that haunts many.

But none of this explains why support for divorce fell so dramatically—at a time when the Bishops were never so rocked by scandals.

Here the main responsibility lies in the weak and terrified government that started the referendum.

### Hitting Out

They thought it was enough to get a consensus in the Dail and that their voters would then follow like sheep.

They also believed that the campaign should be conducted quietly rather than hitting out at the Bishops. They expected the NO side to behave with the same gentlemanly politeness.

Labour and Democratic Left accepted these ideas completely. The DL campaign co-ordinator, Liz McManus told a public

meeting in Bray at the party had decided not to canvass as it was a difficult moral issue.

They even allowed one of their councillors Mick Billane to lead the anti-divorce campaign in Tallaght.

The Labour Party did little better. Throughout the whole campaign their posters managed to avoid using

the word divorce.

The parties in Dail Eireann did not want to take on the Bishops with any vigour because they knew the Church has been a rock for stability for Irish capitalism.

This is why they only wanted to nudge them aside rather than take them on.

Their tactics almost lost the vote for divorce.

## Join the Socialist Workers Party

"The Socialist Workers Party were more direct than the government. 'Let the Bishops look after their own families' its poster declared under a photo of Bishop Casey."

That was the verdict of the *Sunday Tribune*.

The SWP fought the campaign with a determination that was second to none. 30,000 leaflets and thousands of posters were produced.

Canvassing teams were organised in many working class areas.

We now appeal to all those who want to carry through the fight to separate Church and State to join our ranks. The battle has only started.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

- I want to join the SWP
- I want more information
- I want to receive \_\_\_\_\_ copies of *Socialist Worker* to sell each issue

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

racist propa- argued that ing Europe is en are haying n and will be men from Is- nds. he campaign, admitted that

one of the anti-divorce groups had spent £188,000 on their campaign.

Although they deny it, much of the money for their expensive postering campaign must have come from their sinister friends in Human Life International.

In Ireland, divorce debate came in the recession rid-

# Nigerian military murders activists but...

# Shell oiled the hangman's noose

**BEHIND THE murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa ordered by the Nigerian dictatorship lies oil, repression, the brutality of the market—and workers' resistance.**

It is a rebirth of this revolt that offers hope of change in Nigeria. Human rights activist Saro-Wiwa and eight others were condemned by a military appointed tribunal. There was no pretence of a proper trial, there was no appeal.

The regime has made it clear that it cares nothing for the storm of criticism from around the world.

The nine facing the gallows had campaigned against the exploitation of the Ogoni region of south east Nigeria.

Nigeria's economy is dominated by oil, providing 85 percent of foreign exchange earnings. The largest company is Shell, which controls almost half the oilfields.

Shell has just announced profits up 31 percent to £1.12 billion in just three months. The destruction of the lives and environment of the Nigerian people is one of the costs.

Shell has operated in the Niger delta since 1958, extracting almost £20 billion of oil from Ogoniland.

Spillages devastate huge areas. The slightest spark can set off fires which burn for days, killing people and destroying houses and crops.

It was this arrogant contempt for the Ogonis that saw Saro-Wiwa help set up the MOSOP protest moment.

## Pressure

Its first gathering in January 1993 saw 300,000 of the area's 500,000 population turn out to demonstrate support.

At that time the Nigerian regime was under pressure from strikes in many other areas. It wanted to demonstrate to the oil companies that it could "maintain order".

A leaked document revealed the military apparently discussing with Shell the funding of a special unit to suppress the Ogoni resistance.

It stated, "Shell operations are impossible unless ruthless military operations are undertaken". A squad aimed at "wasting targets, cutting across communities and leadership cadres, especially vocal individuals and groups" was recommended.

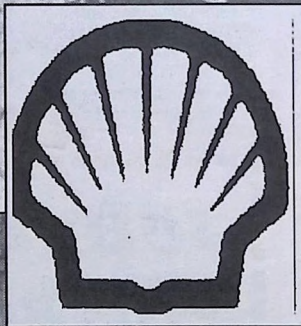
According to human rights organisations, around 2,000 people have been killed by the military.

When four Ogonis were mysteriously assassinated in 1994, Saro-Wiwa and other activists were immediately declared guilty by the regime.

Shell, refusing to protest, said it "cannot be expected to become involved in political matters".

The accused were held without access to lawyers or doctors for nine months. They were abused and shackled hand and foot.

by CHARLIE  
KIMBER and DAVE  
McDONAGH



## True colours

SHELL have distanced themselves from the hangings but showed their true colours in meetings with Ken Saro-Wiwa's brother.

Brian Anderson, the head of Shell Nigeria, told Dr Owens Saro-Wiwa he would only intervene to stop the executions if the Ogoni movement called off their protests against the oil company.



**Despite the country's huge resources, most Nigerians live in poverty. But workers have the power to cut off the profits of the rich**

## Mass strikes pinned down brutal regime

**NIGERIA IS Africa's most heavily populated country with 90 million inhabitants.**

Since independence from Britain in 1960, it has seen six successful coups and 25 years of military government.

But there have also been waves of strikes.

The last military dictator, General Babangida, was forced to speed up his proposed timetable for a hand over to civilian rule after a big general strike in 1988.

The presidential elections, eventually held in June 1993, were seen by most Nigerians as a farce—70 percent of people did not vote.

## Opponent

But when Babangida refused to accept a win for his opponent Moshood Abiola, it acted as a flash point for hatred of the government and years of falling living standards.

Strikes and demonstrations almost swept out the regime. Babangida was forced to step aside, although the present Abacha government is no more democratic.

It faced its biggest challenge last year when a huge strike by three million, headed by oil workers, paralysed large parts of the country.

At least two thirds of oil pro-

duction was halted. The government's flow of funds was cut off and splits deepened inside the ruling class over how to cope.

The action saw the beginnings of unity between workers of different ethnic backgrounds.

A shop steward told *Socialist Worker* at the time, "The exciting thing about the strike is how people have withstood everything the government has thrown against them and how it is developing day by day."

Another added, "This is not an industrial dispute, it is an insurrection. It is about who is going to run Nigeria and in whose interests."

In one instance port workers declared a shipment of food to be a "people's landing" and distributed it to strikers' children.

Students from the Delta State University, spurred on by the strikes, invaded the local broadcasting company and broadcast anti-military speeches.

But the union leaders were terrified of spreading the action and then called off the strikes just as they were growing larger.

They allowed Abacha to re-

## Guinness court the generals

**OIL IS not the only black liquid making profits in Nigeria. One of the companies which has made millions under the protection of Nigeria's military is Guinness.**

Guinness Nigeria was quoted as one of the country's top ten companies in 1993. Its workers earn only £40 to £50 per month along with free meals and a ration of beer.

Their bosses on the other hand enjoy a maximum tax rate of 25 per cent and live a pampered lifestyle complete with domestic servants.

Guinness workers in Ireland have every reason to make common cause with their fellow workers in Nigeria.

cover. He has jailed union leaders, democracy campaigners and closed down most of the press.

The ruling class is actively encouraging ethnic and regional differences hoping to fracture the opposition.

Such manoeuvres threaten to unleash a civil war like the one in Rwanda, except in a country 14 times larger.

But the country's economic and social crisis means there is always the chance of revolt breaking out again.

Nigeria, despite its immense resources, is the world's thirtieth poorest country.

Average income has fallen from £700 a year in 1980 to £185 a year today. One in five children die before they are five years old.

## Brazen

Yet brazen wealth sits side by side with the poverty. Hundreds of thousands live in shanty towns around the cities while the rich build mansions surrounded by razor wire and guards.

Half the population is illiterate but the wealthy hire private jets to take their children to exclusive European schools.

Last year £8,000 million of oil revenue was declared to have "gone missing", swallowed by the military elite and its business supporters.

This ruling class is every bit as hostile to the majority of Nigerians as the boardrooms of London, Paris and New York.

However, Nigeria's rulers are growing ever more desperate.

Foreign banks and governments are pressing for repayment of £25 billion debt.

"Bosses are uncertain how far they can push workers before strikes start again," reports one of Nigeria's tame newspapers.

Workers' resistance means that Abacha cannot guarantee a compliant workforce or deliver the profits the multinationals demand.

Earlier this year the president of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria said that industry "is in the fast lane to total collapse."

We need a storm of protest, to the Nigerian government and to Shell, demanding the immediate release of all political prisoners, free trade unions and political parties.

But the hope for real change lies in a renewal of workers' struggle.



## comment

# BEATLES REVIVAL: All you need is cash

by  
**EAMONN  
McCANN**

**THERE WAS** a time in the 1960's when people really believed that rock'n roll was revolutionary.

Mick Jagger was snarling out his credentials as a Street Fighting Man, Dylan was predicting that A Hard Rain's Gonna Fall and the Beatles had elevated social irreverence to an art form.

It was the shock waves from the youth quake epicentred in Liverpool which had most impact in Ireland.

With their ready wit, proletarian scouse accents and breezy disrespect for authority, the Beatles provided apt role models for masses of young people thoroughly pissed off with Irish "traditional values".

It helped, of course that the Four Fabs wrote brilliant songs and played them with bounce and verve and subtle harmonies. But for millions the attitude mattered just as much.

## Apple

Now the Beatles' management operation, Apple, is trying to recreate the magic of the early days. Well, the economic magic anyway.

Re-mastered records are on release, the mammoth documentary series has been sold to over a hundred "territories", books, bootlegs and videos are on offer everywhere.

In one of the biggest marketing campaigns ever mounted, more than a hundred thousand life-sized cardboard cut-outs of the Four have been delivered to "outlets" in the US alone.

Many ageing Beatles fans will feel vaguely cheated by all this.

Not just because the "new" single "Free as a Bird" is a dull countrified dirge with a plodding bass-line that sounds like Adam Clayton on Mogadon but because the ruthless, profit-oriented re-launch of the band seems to contradict what they represented years ago.

Apple was set up in 1967 as a visionary operation which would use money generated by the Beatles to fund projects conventional business wouldn't back.

To that extent, it was consciously anti-capitalist, it was a piece with the soft-left political positions which the band, particularly John Lennon, took up against war, for the environment, anti-racist, generally on the side of the oppressed.

At the same time, everybody around Apple was scornful of political ideas and political organisation.

When they talked about "building a party" they didn't have an ideological foundation in mind.

They gave the impression of believing that a new generation unencumbered by the past might waft its way to revolution on a wave of liberating songs and good inter-personal vibrations.

That concept of Apple

collapsed rather quickly, as hippies hired for having the right hair-style stole everything they could lay their hands on.

Since then, the company has operated quietly enough, keeping track of the Beatles' interests, ensuring that royalties were paid, negotiating franchises, keeping bootlegs off the market. And now it's back in the big-time.

The *Guardian* last month described Apple as having become "one of the most efficient money making machines in a notoriously merciless industry".

A former employee said that the company is "utterly feared within the music business".

One current executive says, "We have considerable resources, both financial and in terms of the Beatles' name, and we use it ruthlessly. Why not?"

"The point is to win the biggest market share possible for our product". He might have been talking about computer software, saloon cars, iron ore, anything.

## Dream

Asked about the new splurge of Beatles' projects, the veteran US rock critic, Griel Marcus, author of the "Mystery Train", referred to a "dream that died".

It's easy to see what he means. But "delusion" would have been a better word.

The notion that the world, or even our own little patch of it, can be changed through involvement in popular culture, on the basis of a feeling for freedom, without need to locate the source of social ills in the system of economic organisation, this notion can be attractive, for a time. But it won't work.

Even when promoted by brilliantly talented people, it leads not to the overthrow of it, but to involvement in the very system it had been intended to subvert.

Listening to Neil Aspinall, managing director of Apple since its foundation, talking today about "product development", "global marketing strategy" and "market share", one is reminded of the last paragraphs of Orwell's "Animal Farm" when the animals look in through the window of the farm-house from the pigs to the farmer and back again and realise that they can't tell the difference any more.

People who reckon that arts co-ops or "free radio" or environmental love-ins can change anything should remember—if the Beatles couldn't do it....

# PLAY: Playboy of the Western world

by **KIERAN  
ALLEN**

**WHEN *The Playboy of the Western World* was first staged at the Abbey there were riots by the sort of a crowd who Connolly called 'The Pope's Brass Band'.**

They claimed that Synge was attacking their image of a holy, green isle.

As it happens, they were right. *The Playboy* is a really subversive play.

The present production at the Abbey is well worth seeing.

The stage set and style of acting give a feel of Irish peasant life at the turn of the century.

## Hovering

At key moments in the play, the director Brian Brady, has a silent but watchful priest hovering around. He stands as a sort of symbol of the type of Ireland which Synge warned against in another of his plays, *The Well of Saints*.

The main character in *The Playboy*, Christy Mahon, becomes a hero in the Mayo village he visits because he has killed his father. As word of his great deed spread, the bold Christy takes on a new confidence in himself.

The weakling son becomes a great womaniser and athlete.

But how could a playwright turn a father-murderer into a hero?

Some critics have looked



to Greek legend or Synge's sense of the bizarre as an explanation.

## Cost

In reality, *The Playboy* drew its inspiration from Synge's observations of the type of Irish family that grew out of the famine.

One historian, K H

Connell, has described how in Ireland at the time "Marriage was likely to be contemplated not when a man needed a wife, but when the land needed a woman".

The cost of accumulating wealth in the countryside was a peculiar pattern of late marriages, large families and a brutalisation of many men

who saw their sons as little more than cheap labour for the farm.

The spirit of many young men was crushed as they waited for their fathers to pass on the land.

## Plight

As late as the 1940s a TD in Dail Eireann complained

## BOOK:

# A history of Church control

by **GORETTI  
HORGAN**

**WHEN POPE John Paul II made a plea to the Irish people to vote against divorce, he was following a long tradition whereby the Vatican has interfered in Ireland.**

In the past it was not the extremists of Youth Defence or Muintir na hEireann that invited the Vatican to intervene.

Dermot Keogh's recent book *Ireland and the Vatican 1922-60* shows that the Vatican was asked to interfere by the main political parties.

Keogh's book gives a hugely interesting look at how the Church-State partnership worked. It was a

clear case of 'you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours'.

In return for the state basing all legislation on Catholic teaching and allowing no trace of 'godless communism' in schools or hospitals, the Church co-operated in attacking all subversive ideas and activities—in ensuring that things stay the way they are.

## Extreme

De Valera took this relationship to its most extreme in his 1937 Constitution.

His Constitution was to be a Catholic one, not simply because of his religious devotion but because he needed to have Vatican approval for his proposals.

De Valera knew that his new Constitution would be passed by referendum only if the Church were to en-

dorse it.

It was intended to hinder a repetition of the land seizures and factory occupations of 1919-21, a part of Irish history which De Valera always feared would return.

So, the 1937 Constitution enshrined the 'special position' of the Catholic Church 'as guardian of the Faith professed by the great majority of the citizens'.

It made Catholic social teaching the basis of all legislation, particularly in relation to the family and personal relationships.

It also contained guarantees to private property which would criminalise the workers and landless labourers whose independent action during the War of Independence had helped bring to power Fianna Fail and the section of the boss class it represented.

Keogh shows how the influence of the Vatican and the Constitution was greater

than had previously been thought.

The Pope and his closest advisers were consulted on all the most controversial Articles.

In spite of the openly Catholic character of de Valera's Constitution, however, the Vatican was not entirely happy with it.

It did not go far enough for Pope Pius XI or for Cardinal Pacelli who was later to become Pius XII.

## Approval

A top civil servant was sent to Rome in April 1937 to get the general approval of the Pope and to 'get permission to phrase Article 3 so as to include the phrase "The State also recognises the other Christian Churches, namely Church of Ireland etc., as well as the Jewish Congregations and the other religious bodies existing in Eire at

about the plight of 'boys' in rural Ireland. The 'boys' were often aged 40!

Synge's play is a testimony to the dark side of the Irish traditional family so loved by today's bigots.

All forms of love are distorted and tarnished by the pressures to accumulate land. The Widow Quinn is presented by Synge as an independent, sexually active woman.

## Attracted

But although attracted to Christy, she is more than willing to see him marry Peegen Mike—provided he will give her a sheep walk through Peegen's farm after he becomes the co-owner.

Synge shows brilliantly how oppression can breed a desire to live on legend and myth. Mahon comes into Peegen's life more as the mythical father killer than as a man.

His reputation provides the promise of vibrancy which any tie to the crawling Sharn Keogh who can talk of nothing but priests and papal dispensations can never come near meeting.

Synge came from an Anglo-Irish background but with the perception of an 'outsider' he was able to instinctively grasp how the dreams of Irish nationalism could easily sink to the sectarian state that the South became.

This is why the bigots hated him at the start of the century—and why we should still applaud him at the century's end.

the time of the coming into operation of this Constitution".

The 'permission'—merely to recognise the other religions was never granted by the Pope and his advisors.

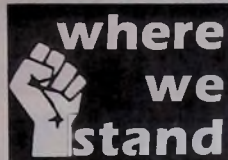
## Recognise

Walsh told Dublin that the Vatican could not approve the Constitution because 'there is only one Church, and Catholics should not formally recognise existence of any other'.

But however much the Pope might like to keep Ireland as the Catholic country of Europe, times have changed a lot since 1960, where Keogh's book finishes.

Today most Irish people, including practising Catholics, want to live in a society where people of all religions and none are recognised. There can be no return to the Ireland of 1922-60.

■ **Dermot Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican, the Politics of Diplomacy of Church-State Relations 1922-1960*, Cork University Press, 1995, £18.00**



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; the unions—

## CRISIS IN THE HOSPITALS

# Nurses' anger boils over

### MIDLANDS STRIKE

**NURSES** have taken industrial action over the terrible levels of understaffing in Midland hospitals.

At the end of November they held protests at Portlaoise, Tullamore and Mullingar hospitals and are now planning to step up their campaign if no satisfactory solution is found.

Staff levels at some of these hospitals are 40% less than equivalent hospitals elsewhere.

The result has been less patient care and high levels of stress for the nurses.

One nurse at the Mullingar hospital told *Socialist Worker* that "We have to do compulsory overtime."

"Sometimes there are no dinner breaks. Holidays have also been cancelled because of the dangerous low level of resources. You can imagine the stress that is all causing."

In Mullingar there is a neonatal ward but no staff have been provided to work it. Last year 50 premature births were treated there.

The action was organised by the Irish Nurses Organisation but got full support

### PSYCHIATRIC NURSES

**Nurses** showed their anger and militancy two weeks ago at a general meeting in St. Ita's psychiatric hospital in Dublin.

### NURSES CALL FOR ACTION

In Wexford last weekend the nursing convention of SIPTU passed an emergency motion calling for a "ballot for industrial action up to and including withdrawal of labour."

Talks between the SIPTU and the Department of Health broke down last month after the Government rejected improved pay terms for the nurses. Noel Dowling who is chief negotiator for the nurses said, "the stand nurses were taking would be a defining moment in the history of the profession in the state."

Many nurses believe that "it is no coincidence that low pay continues to prevail in one of the few professions where women employees are dominant."

All the signs are that the health cuts being imposed are set to worsen. Health Minister Noonan has already accepted a 5% reduction in his department from Quinn's next budget.

The anger and militancy that is being shown in the Midlands Hospitals, in St. Ita's and among SIPTU members could spill over into major industrial action in the Health Service in the next year. Nurses are traditionally considered "a soft touch" by the employers, but have been pushed to their limits and will flex their muscles against this Government to fight for improvements in the health service and for better pay and conditions.

from the nurses in SIPTU. The protests are a sign of the growing anger of nurses who have started to take ac-

tion across the country against the run down of our health services.

## Dunnes workers Xmas fight

**WORKERS** in Dunnes Stores have balloted for pickets on Sundays because of the company's refusal to pay the traditional treble time for Sunday Christmas Trading.

Already The Square in Tallaght and Dunnes in Rathmines have been picketed out on Sundays. 35 more stores will be picketed from early December.

One shop steward told *Socialist Worker*, "We know that Dunnes management are trying to undermine the union. They won't give us paid time off to do union courses. They won't meet with our officials and they are even threatening to do away with our noticeboards."

Dunnes Stores has still not paid up the 3% increase due under the PESP which was recommended by the Labour Court nearly a month ago.

And other employers around the country are beginning to take a leaf from the Dunnes bosses book.

Sunday trading pickets were placed on Penneys in Galway and Roches in Henry Street has balloted for Sunday pickets. These greedy bosses are also trying to break the traditional treble time pay for Sundays at Christmas.

One shop steward of the PNA, the nurses' union, told *Socialist Worker*, "About three times the numbers we expected turned up for the meeting and it was very militant."

The nurses told their union executive to go back and organise a plan for action."

According to one worker in St. Ita's, "The cuts in health mean much more dangerous conditions for patients and for staff."

"Already there is major overcrowding in the geriatric wards. This is a fire hazard and is completely unfair to the patients. What Noonan is doing is buying the same banger that the Tories sold and it doesn't work."

Nurses in psychiatric hospitals are angry that the government plans to make patient care more community based means that they will have to take serious cuts in pay to work in the community.

For a qualified nurse it could mean a pay cut of £2,300 a year.

The militancy of nurses in St. Ita's has forced the PNA union leaders to enter into discussions with other nursing unions. INO, SIPTU and IMPACT for a unified and planned campaign against cuts in the Health Service and to fight for decent pay and conditions.

### Refusing

Already the nurses have placed an embargo on taking in any more patients into lock-up wards. They are also refusing to carry out escort duties which is being done by the Gardai.

One nurse told *Socialist Worker*, "The Gardai don't always do this duty very humanely. We've had patients in with black eyes and bruising. They use handcuffs on them all the time. It's very degrading."

This is to try to force the Department of Health to realise that they mean business and will not accept any more cuts from Noonan's department.

## SWP branch meetings—all welcome

## WEEKEND OF SOCIALIST MEETINGS GREAT SUCCESS

# 250 attend Marxism '95

**MARXISM '95** was a big success for the Socialist Workers Party.

250 socialists came from all over the country to take part in more than 30 meetings that looked at how relevant socialist ideas are for today.

Many new members who had joined the SWP through the divorce campaign took part.

### Largest ever

The largest ever con-

tingent came from Belfast where the SWP has been doing systematic work around the colleges and on the fight to keep leisure centres open for working class people.

One new member who joined the SWP said, "it was really exciting."

"You learn so many things you had never heard about at school."

"It helped to give you the big picture which is so important when you are involved in day to day issues."

### Highlights

One of the main highlights of the weekend was a meeting on Church and State which turned into a celebration of the defeat of the Bishops in the referendum.



After the conference SWP members hit the streets with a new poster: *Hello Divorce; Bye, Bye Bigots.* £250 was immedi-

ately raised in a bucket collection to help cover the huge expenses run up during the divorce campaign.

Twenty people also

decided to join the organisation and meetings are being planned for new areas where the SWP has not been active before.

- BELFAST CENTRAL**  
Meets every Wednesday at 8pm in Penny Farthing Bar, Upper North Street
- BELFAST SOUTH**  
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Queens Students Union.
- CORK**  
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in An Spailpin Fanak opposite Beamish Brewery, South Main St.
- DERRY**  
Meets every Tuesday in Badgers Bar at 8pm
- BRAY**  
Meets every Monday at 8pm in Royal Hotel.
- DUBLIN**  
**BLANCHARDSTOWN**  
Contact national address for details.
- DUBLIN COOLOCK**  
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the Artane/Beaumont Family Recreation Centre, Kilmora Rd.
- DUBLIN CLONDALKIN**  
Contact 872 2682 for details.

- DUBLIN DRIMNAGH**  
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in the Bentley Pub, Drimnagh Road
- DUBLIN FINGLAS**  
Contact national address for details'
- DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL**  
Meets every Wednesday at 8pm in Conways, Parnell St.
- DUBLIN RATHMINES**  
Meets every Wednesday at 8pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond Street.

- DUBLIN PEARSE ST/ RINGSEND**  
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Trinity Inn, Pearse St.
- DUBLIN TALLAGHT**  
Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm, Tallaght Welfare Society, Tallaght Village.
- DUN LAOGHAIRE**  
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Smyths Pub.
- GALWAY**  
Meets every Thursday at 7.30pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square—contact national address for details.

★ There are *Socialist Worker* members in:  
ENNISKILLEN;  
COLERAINE; LURGAN;  
CAVAN; DONEGAL;  
NAAS; LIMERICK;  
KILKENNY; DUNDALK;  
BRAY; ATHLONE;  
DROGHEDA.  
If you would like to get in touch, contact our national office at (01) 872 2682, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

### JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

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

Name .....

Address.....

.....

Phone.....

send in your reports telephone: (01) 872 2682, fax: (01) 872 3838

## Lay-offs planned in Semperit

**SEMPERIT** tyre factory in Ballyfermot plan to lay off 81 workers in order to reduce production costs of its Dublin operation.

Semperit is a multi-national company with plants in Scotland, Portugal, Sweden and the Czech Republic.

The bosses claim that production costs in Dublin are out of line and must be reduced by 6.2% in 1996.

The plan is to reduce the workforce, keep the pay down and increase production by introducing new work practices.

### Profit

The company already owe the workforce the 3% local bargaining clause of PESP but say they are unable to pay.

But profits from the Ballyfermot plant are huge.

In 1993/94 Semperit cleared £6.5 million in Dublin alone. Now they claim that each factory has to compete with the other.

Unfortunately the union leaders appear to be swallowing the bosses' logic and are negotiating the job losses and cuts with management.

One of the workers in Ballyfermot told *Socialist Worker*, "We got a 'doom and gloom' session from management at the instigation of the unions.

"No questions were taken from the floor. They spewed out their line and said "Thank you gentlemen. End of session".

Semperit workers need to put up opposition to the union line.

This is just another example of the pure greed of the bosses who use the threat of closure and competition from other countries to make more and more profit from their workforce.

# Dockers protest at casual work

**OVER A** hundred dockers staged an angry protest recently outside the headquarters of the Dublin Port and Docks Board over casualisation in Dublin Port.

Most dockers are now employed on a casual basis.

This means they turn up

for work at 7 or 8 am every morning to see if there is work for them.

If they don't get work

they have to sign on for the day.

### Decline

The casualisation of employment in Dublin docks was ended in 1972 but re-introduced again in 1992

following a period of decline in Dublin Port.

During this period a large number of dockers were laid off with little payment and underfunded pensions. At the same time senior management were leaving with lump sums of over £100,000.

### Campaign

Michael Corcoran of the Marine Port & General Workers Union told *Socialist Worker*, "We met with Enda Connellan, the Chief Executive of the Dublin Port & Docks Authority.

"He told us he had no responsibility whatsoever towards these workers.

"We are meeting with Gilmore from the Govern-

ment and with the Chamber of Commerce.

"If we don't get any satisfaction from them we will have to step up this campaign. It's like 1913 conditions."

Dockers from Merseyside in England are visiting Dublin to build solidarity for their two month old struggle. 500 dockers were sacked after they had taken unofficial action in a protest over casualisation.

Already they have received tremendous support from workers in the US, Canada, Australia and Spain who are backing their work.

This is beginning to hit the company who are showing signs of the pain.

## Fight ESB's plan to slash jobs

**UNIONS** in the ESB are expected to begin balloting their members on the new plans for the service after negotiations which lasted a year.

Peter Cassells, General Secretary of the ICTU intervened in the negotiations after talks broke down a month ago. Cassells acted as 'mediator' between the two sides and has issued his recommendation.

Details of the outcome are patchy but it is clear that there will be opposition to the deal among large sections of the workforce.

*Socialist Worker* spoke to an ESB shop steward who is angry and disillusioned with the response from the trade union movement.

### Mediator

"Cassells was acting as a mediator between the two sides. Each union got two hours of a meeting with him and he was very quick to issue his recommendation. All he talks about is consensus, consensus, consensus.

"But we are very fearful that the deal is not all it's cracked up to be. Straight away members of the ESBOA and electricians will be excluded

from the 6% pay rise and that will be paid out in lump sums over three years. Even then it's not guaranteed that the lump sum in year 3 will be paid up. That depends on all the changes in work practices being implemented."

"What really needs to be talked about here is not just how good or bad the deal for the workers is but the bigger agenda as well. The ESB want to do away with 3,000 jobs in a country riddled with unemployment.

"Why should we turn the company upside down, privatise it and benefit the rich instead of ordinary people. They

are talking about a 5% hike in consumer prices straight away and up to 20% increases in two years for domestic users. But the costs will go down for commerce and industry."

### Resources

"We will have no guarantee that these will be decent jobs in the future. They want to use contractors all over the company, pay less wages and worsen conditions like pensions.

"Energy and water are natural resources and shouldn't be handed over to private capitalism. They belong to the people. And we will all end up paying for the rich to get richer. These are the issues the media don't talk about."

## Pub workers strike



**TWENTY** workers are on strike at a pub in Blanchardstown for the last month.

The owner of the Mountview Pub insists on paying low wages and refuses to pay extra for security.

The strikers have been subject to physical intimidation but morale remains high.

They have gotten tremendous support from the public who are boycotting the pub.

Local SWP members also toured around other pubs owned by the same manager to highlight their case.

## Students reject ban on politics

**Students** in the University of Ulster voted overwhelming to reject a proposal by the Students Union to ban political societies from the colleges.

The Students Union proposed to insert a clause in its own constitution banning political affiliates or organisations which had a "political element to their constitution".

When it was pointed out

that this would also include organisations like the GAA and some Christian groups the union dropped the mention of "political element" but continued with their attempt to ban political organisations.

This was clearly aimed at the Socialist Workers Stu-

dent Society and in places like Coleraine University they made no secret of intention to try to get rid of SWSS.

### Decisive

But socialist students campaigned energetically

against the union and the ban was decisively defeated.

The notion that students should not be political was rightly rejected and it is a clear victory against the anti-left student union bureaucrats.

## Belfast fight to save Leisure Centres

**WORKERS** in Belfast's Leisure Services are continuing their campaign against the City Council's plans to axe the service.

Council meetings are regularly picketed and shop stewards have been lobbying councillors from the SDLP and Alliance Parties to argue for a vote against the cuts.

### Demanded

The Shop Stewards committee for the Leisure Services have demanded that their unions call a city-wide ballot of all council workers for in-

dustrial action. One Shop Steward told *Socialist Worker*, "If the Council get away with cutting these services they will be after other areas like cleansing and parks.

"They want to save money on the backs of the workforce and at the expense of working class communities in Belfast. City wide industrial action in all the services would really show them where to get off."

## Firemen resist Social Welfare cuts

**RETAINER** firefighters all over the country are being hard hit by cuts in Social Welfare payments.

They are planning an important national demonstration outside the Social Welfare offices in Dublin if there is no progress made from talks involving SIPTU and officials at De Rossa's department.

*Socialist Worker* spoke to one of the representatives of the Retainer Firefighters Association.

"These cuts have hit many workers very badly for the last 10 or 11 months. I had one worker with me during the week who is taking home £51 per week for himself and his wife to live on.

"The bureaucrats at the Department of Social Welfare don't give a damn. They just push the pens and slash people's income.

"Our member earned £4,300 last year as a retained firefighter and has been penalised this year by a deduction of £41.00 a week. I just don't know how some of them live".

"This is a scandal. People are expected to live on low wages and still take more and more cuts. Firefighters will be on the streets if they don't get realistic change from the Government.

"As one of the firefighters put it, "Action will be the only thing that will make De Rossa reverse the cuts and give us a living income."

# Socialist Worker

inside:

**The truth about Bill Clinton**  
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**Mass strikes rock France**  
—pages 3 & 4

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

## Bruton & Major's deal offers nothing

# WORKERS' UNITY IS THE KEY

The road ahead

**JOHN Bruton and John Major have rushed through an agreement on Northern Ireland before Clinton's visit.**

But it will do nothing to end the problems of sectarianism in Northern Ireland. All they have done is to set up an international body to discuss whether the IRA should hand in its weapons and simultaneously started a new set of talks with the right wing parties who dominate Northern politics.

### Stall

The reality is that the whole issue of 'de-commissioning' is a red herring designed to stall any progress in the North.

If Bruton and Major really wanted peace, they would be

## Where will all-party talks lead?

MAJOR and Bruton have set the end of February for all-party talks.

They still disagree on the pre-condition of IRA disarmament—but even if they overcome this obstacle, what would all party talks achieve?

The strategy of both governments is to cobble together a settlement which keeps the North in the UK for the foreseeable future—but which allows the South a greater say in advancing the interests of the Catholic middle class.

Both governments are still happy to see Northern politics organised along communal lines rather than on the lines of class.

Their aim is to institutionalise sectarianism—not to abolish it.

looking at how all guns could be removed from the North. Instead they hide the

fact that:

■ Loyalists legally hold 140,000 licenced weapons.

Instead of a return to an old style Stormont, they want Hume—and even at some future time, Adams—to join Trimble in the management team of Northern capitalism.

Even if successful, their plans will make little difference to the lives of either Catholic or Protestant workers.

According to the *Wall St Journal* workers will continue to live in an 'economic mess' where 'some 70% of the are in low paying service jobs, meaning that the average male weekly earnings are 15% lower than the rest of the UK'

A settlement arrived at in all party talks would only guarantee a stability for the multi-nationals who could take advantage of these wages.

■ The number of British troops in the North have not dropped below the level they

were in 1992—even though there has been no armed campaign for over a year.

■ The RUC was allowed 300 plastic bullets this year alone.

■ The British intelligence service MI5 actively colluded in the importation of South African weaponry to the loyalist death squads.

### Prop Up

Bruton and Major want to put the activities of their security forces beyond any questions.

In doing so they help to prop up the right wing ideas of David Trimble and Ian Paisley who deny that there ever was any sectarianism at the heart of the Northern state.

Far from being a recipe for peace, this is an encouragement for continued low level sectarian conflict.

The ceasefires have been a gain for working class people. No section would now tolerate a return to armed struggle.

The peace of the last year has allowed thousands to glimpse the possibility of a different sort of politics.

In both Catholic and Protestant areas there is an open cynicism towards politicians who have used sectarianism to suppress talk of workers interests.

When groups of Catholic and Protestant workers fight together, they awaken an enthusiasm that stems from a powerful example.

But the desire for class unity also competes with the pull of ghetto politics. Every defeat raises the question, which 'side' will suffer most.

This is why the fight against sectarianism will need more than economic unity.

### Breaking

It requires the building of a minority in the working class who are willing to break with the old traditions of communal politics.

For Protestant workers it means breaking from loyalist politics which encourage superiority over Catholics.

For Catholic workers it means seeing that republicanism has come to a dead end when it has to appeal to right wingers like Bill Clinton and Fianna Fail.

That sort of unity will be forged when there is a force that sets itself the task of dismantling both sectarian states on this island and building a society fit for all workers.