

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

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British Tories want to let PARA KILLER GO FREE But political prisoners still locked up



His victim: Karen Reilly

THE BRITISH establishment is mounting a massive campaign to free the only British soldier who is currently in prison for murder.

Lee Clegg, from the notorious 3rd Para regiment, killed Karen Reilly in cold blood because she was the passenger in a car driven by a joyrider.

Now the tabloid press in Britain have turned Clegg into a hero and are demanding his release.

The campaign is being orches-

trated by the top brass of the British army and by sections of the Tory party.

Within days of the campaign, the British Home Secretary announced that he was "sympathetic" to pleas to let Clegg out.

Clegg's local Labour MP has been told that the soldier will be released "within weeks".

This is in stark contrast to the treatment of British and Irish prisoners who have been victims of miscarriages of justice. The Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four remained in prison for

seventeen years despite all the evidence of their innocence.

The campaigners for Clegg have never said anything about Winston Silcott, a black man wrongly convicted for the murder of a police officer—despite overwhelming evidence that he is innocent.

Jury

Instead the *Daily Mail* complained that Clegg was "denied a trial by jury".

Of course he was.

So were the tens of thousands of people sent to jail in Northern Ireland over the past 23 years.

The press protests about the fact that Clegg was up on a murder charge which carries life imprisonment.

But the British army stopped manslaughter charges against their soldiers in order to make it more difficult to convict them of the 350 killings they have carried out in Northern Ireland.



■ Turn to page two Para thug Clegg

Para murderer to be set free?

Continued from front page

Throughout this whole affair, the Irish government has hardly said a word.

They have expressed the usual "concern". But they have done nothing to point to the glaring contrast between the treatment of Clegg and others who have come before the courts.

Hundreds of political prisoners are currently in jail in Northern Ireland. They are all people who were convicted in non-jury courts. Some have been convicted on trumped-up charges.

The vast majority come from working-class backgrounds in Catholic and Protestant areas. Some fought injustice—others committed terrible deeds in a misguided belief that they were defending their country.

But if they had lived in a society that was not built around sectarianism and bigotry, few of them would be in prison.

These people should all be released from prison. If Private Lee Clegg is ever to be released from prison, it should only be as part of a general amnesty for all the prisoners caught up in the North's sectarian nightmare.

THE PARAS are the licensed killers of the British army who are encouraged to engage in utter brutality.

Clegg's regiment, 3rd Para, shot Argentinian prisoners in the Falklands War and cut off their ears to make trophies.

Lee Clegg would never have stood trial if it were not for a BBC programme *Rough Justice* that exposed the gruesome way 3rd Para acted in murdering Martin Peake and Karen Reilly.

Threat

The Paras claim that they opened fire because they feared their lives were under threat.

But the programme found a gypsy who saw one soldier hitting another on the leg in order to fake damage done by the joyriding car.

Clegg fired all four shots after the car had passed the checkpoint.

After the murders, the Paras made a mock up



model of the Astra car peppered with bullets. They put in a papier-mache head covered in red paint to depict Martin Peake.

They stuck up a caption "Vauxhall Astra, Built by Robots, Driven by Joyriders, Stopped by A Company."

The photographer who took a picture of the incident said the Paras were jumping up and down on the tables in celebration.

With friends like these...

THE SUPPORTERS of Lee Clegg include some of the most loathsome members of the British establishment.

Lord Denning: was the appeal judge who kept the Birmingham Six in prison because it would be an "appalling vista" to think

the police were lying. Lady Olga Maitland MP: is a Tory MP who formed "Families for Nuclear Deterrence" to demand more nuclear weapons.

She is for capital punishment—for everyone except the Paras

The Sun: this rag has so little respect for ordinary people

that it claimed that "Private Clegg is worth 100,000 Silcotts".

Li-Gen Sir Napier Crookenden: is a former Para officer who was asked to apologise to the relatives of Bloody Sunday victims and Karen Reilly's family. His reply was "Never!"

Murdered because they were poor

Martin Peake and Karen Reilly were murdered not just because they were Irish—but because they were working class and poor.

The British establishment have never had a problem with the likes of Terry Wogan or Conor Cruise O'Brien.

But they do not care about the execution of working-class people who do nothing more than joy-ride a car.

This is because the Tories despise the working people—whether they are in Britain, Ireland or anywhere else.

Like all rulers the British establishment will do everything to protect their hired thugs.

They want Clegg out of jail, so that the morale of brutes like the

Paras is maintained. The Irish establishment act no differently.

Heavy Gang

Not a single Irish policeman has ever been put behind bars for miscarriages of justice like the Nicky Kelly case where forced confessions were extracted by a Heavy Gang.

The sick campaign for Lee Clegg shows how much our rulers depend for their survival on organised violence.

Susan O'Keefe wins

WORLD IN Action journalist Susan O'Keefe has stood up to the Courts and won.

The state failed to provide any evidence that Susan O'Keefe was in contempt of court for not revealing her sources to the Beef Tribunal.

The state prosecutors brought a transcript of the Tribunal to the court but it was ruled inadmissible. They called a stenographer as a witness, who was not the one who had taken down Susan O'Keefe's statements.

It looked like the government wanted to loose the case.

The threat of protest action by journalists and an enormous public outcry if Susan O'Keefe had



been jailed must have weighed heavily on the minds of the state authorities.

The NUJ celebrated a "great day" and quite rightly declared the result of the case was a "victory" for a journalist's right to protect their sources.

But the state can still try to clamp down on those who reveal corruption at the top of society.

As it is, the case of Mary Canniffe shows that there is still a battle for freedom of the press in Ireland.

Mary is an *Irish Times*

journalist facing a libel action by former Abbey Life fund manager Graham O'Neil.

The court has demanded she name her sources, and quite rightly she has refused to reveal any names.

Again the principle of journalists being able to shed some light on the practices of the rich and powerful in Ireland is at stake.

For further information/messages of support contact NUJ, Liberty Hall, Dublin.

Equality: keep them all out...

A NEW directive from the Labour Court is compounding an insult to women who were driven out of the Irish Civil Service in the past.

Up to 1999, some of these women could return to the jobs they were banished from.

But now the Labour Court has closed off this tiny loophole.

Resign

And it has done this in the name of equality of treatment!

Women who worked for the Irish civil service in the past were forced to resign once they got married.

This horrible measure was introduced in 1956 and survived until 1973.

Thousands of Irish women were forced to conform to the ideal of the Irish constitution that a woman's place was in the home.

But under the Civil Service Regulation Act of 1956 a woman could re-

turn to the civil service if she became widowed or was "destitute."

In 1991, a married woman, Fionnula Moran, applied for her job back in the civil service.

She was told that unless she was widowed or could show evidence that she was not supported by a husband, she could not get her job back.

Quite rightly, she claimed that this represented a form of discrimination against her because she was not being treated the same as the small number of widowed women who could get back to work.

The Labour Court agreed that there was discrimination against Fionnula Moran.

But its way of bringing about equality was to stop all women getting their jobs back.

Contrary

Its directive stated that "the whole scheme for the reinstatement of some women in the civil service is discriminatory and contrary to the principle of equal treatment" and

Leaflet banned

THE BLESSINGTON Women's Group has been stopped from holding meetings in the local VEC school.

Their only "crime" was to distribute a leaflet called *An Unexpected Pregnancy*.

This leaflet is available in family planning centres, doctors' clinics and counsellors throughout the country.

It mentions all options—including abortion—which are available to women when they discover an unexpected pregnancy.

But a number of bigots on the local VEC believe that women have to be denied information. They want to enforce their anti-abortion moral code by keeping people in ignorance of what is available.

The real scandal is this censorship is happening more than a year after the Irish people voted in a referendum for a woman's right to information on abortion.

This government is still refusing to bring in legislation to copperfasten this right. Instead the Fine Gael Health Minister Noonan has let it be known that the Bill on abortion information "will take months".

Meanwhile, the Labour Party and Democratic Left sit idly by and let the scandal continue.

should be repealed.

The Department of Finance and the Revenue Commissioners are now telling widows who apply for their old jobs back that no new applications are being considered pending a High Court case on the issue.

In the meantime hundreds of widows are being denied a chance to get

back jobs they lost through past discrimination.

This government has talked a lot of ending discrimination against women.

But by their deeds do you know them.

The way it has treated these women is sick and scandalous.

Socialist Worker

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Budget surplus con

THE NEW Rainbow Coalition is trying to give the impression that it is a caring government and that it is going to cut taxes on PAYE workers.

But the facts tell a different story. Working class people have been paying one third more tax in the last four years.

Taxes on income—levy—have jumped by over a billion pounds. This has happened at a time when public serv-

ices have been cut to the bone.

Over 20,000 public sector jobs have been slashed.

Queues

The result has been longer queues in hospitals and overcrowded classrooms.

Ruairi Quinn's budget may give minor tax concessions.

The Labour Party and Democratic Left will pretend that it was their presence in the Coalition which won the concessions.

It was nothing of the sort. All they are doing is giving back a small amount of the huge tax

take they have squeezed from the PAYE sector.

One group who will hardly lose out are the employers. IBEC, the bosses' organisation, have been screaming that they cannot create jobs because they pay too much in PRSI.

But the Irish boss class are already one of the most pampered in Europe.

Many of them still pay only 10% Corporation profits tax.

They use schemes like the Business Expansion Schemes to get huge tax breaks.

Grants

They have been showered with state grants and EU money.

But despite all these hand-outs, they are more interested in redundancy programmes than job creation schemes.

Between 1989 and 1993, Irish bosses cre-

ated only 1,581 extra jobs.

The multi-nationals did a little better—but this was only after £1,500 million was handed out to industry.

Tax in Ireland has become a class question.

Workers pay too much in PAYE—because Irish bosses and their multi-national friends pay too little.

Quinn's budget will come nowhere near addressing that issue.



Holocaust survivor Frans Frison addressing the Anti Nazi League Auschwitz commemoration which was attended by 300 people in Dublin in January

PHOTO: JONATHON PRATSCHKE

Sex education

IRELAND'S BIGOTS are up in arms again. They think that Niamh Breathnach's plan to introduce sex education into Irish schools is an attack on the "moral fabric" of the country.

Fringe groups like the Christian Principles Party and Solidarity even claim that it is an attack on children's "innocence".

Maturing

But according to the teachers organisation, the INTO, "children are maturing much earlier. It is now quite common for girls to achieve puberty while still at primary school".

Children are also much more open to child abuse—in some cases from the very clerics that the

bigots love so much.

The real problem with Breathnach's sex education plan is that it makes major concessions to the Bishops.

■ sex education will only be given with large doses of lectures on "morality"—Catholic morality.

■ there is no guarantee that issues like contraception or gay sexuality will be discussed.

The Bishops are even demanding that sex education be given as part of a religion programme. So far Breathnach has not refused their request.

Teachers and parents should insist that Irish bishops, who have developed a record in hypocrisy that is second to none, should not control sex education in schools.

Time to build!

THE ENTRY of Democratic Left and the Labour Party into government has left a huge vacuum on the left.

While Spring and De Rossa are content to enjoy the Mercs and Perks of office, thousands of their

former supporters still want a fightback against poverty and Packard style bosses.

In the North, the ending of the armed conflict

has also brought a new desire for class politics.

In Derry, 500 people turned up at 10am on a Saturday morning to hear what Billy Hutchinson of the Progressive Unionist Party had to say about the concerns of Protestant workers.

When he talked about how working people of both communities had to fight the Tories together, he got great support. But when he talked about "being British" and defended the Northern state, he lost his audience.

The first step in filling the vacuum on the left has been to create a readership around a lively paper which speaks directly to those who want to fight back.

Here the new fortnightly *Socialist Worker* has made a great start.

■ Two hundred copies were sold at the Bloody Sunday commemorations in Derry.

■ 20 copies were sold outside the Packard plant and several workers took in *Socialist Worker* leaflets.

Good regular sales have been established in a number of workplaces around the country.

But behind the paper, there needs to be an expanding party. The Socialist Workers Movement is therefore launching a new recruitment drive to build up its membership.

New branches are being established in the Blanchardstown and Dunderum areas of Dublin.

Roots

Our aim is to build an organisation that starts to have real roots in working-class areas.

So far the recruitment drive has met with a good response.

■ Last week 3 people joined *Socialist Worker* at a meeting in the Lib-

erties; two joined at a meeting in Tallaght; one in Blanchardstown; 2 in Dun Laoghaire; 6 after anti-fascist commemorations in Dublin; two in Cork.

One person who joined said, "I have been reading the paper for some time. I am concerned about the rise of fascism in Europe. I don't want to see people scapegoated and agree we have to build an alternative"

A Packard worker who joined said, "I am furious about the deal that we were black-

mailed into accepting. *Socialist Worker* have constantly stood by those of us who wanted to reject it"

If you agree with the politics of this paper, then why not get active and organised.

Fill in the form below and be part of an organisation that will never be bought off by the Mercs and perks of office.

The Big Debate

'After the IRA ceasefire: What next?'

EAMONN McCANN (SWM) debates JOE AUSTIN (Sinn Fein)

Part of *Marxism 95*, a weekend of discussion and debate, Friday 17th & Saturday 18th February, Queens University, Belfast

Plus: Leading trade unionists debate 'Can trade unions defeat sectarianism' and Chris Bambery (SWP-Britain) on 'ANC, PLO, IRA: What's happening to national liberation movements?' plus more...

Order tickets NOW—first come first served—£4 (£2 unwaged) from PO Box 103 Belfast BT 15 2AB or PO Box 1648 Dublin 8

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inside the system

THINGS THEY SAY

"It's like what Riverdance did for Irish dancing; the purists may be shocked but the public are happy"—*Rom Massey on his discount funeral scheme.*

"It has not been established that very low doses (of radiation) are harmful—indeed there is evidence to suggest they could be beneficial"—*British Nuclear Fuel's propaganda supplement in the Sunday Tribune.*

"That is child abuse and I am opposed to it"—*Nora Bennis, leader of the right wing Solidarity on the new sex education programme for schools.*

Tories brutal arms trade

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL estimates 200,000 East Timorese have been slaughtered since Indonesia invaded 20 years ago.

Recently television showed pictures of protesting Indonesian workers being beaten by police.

Half of Indonesian workers receive less than the minimum wage of 80p per day.

It is a brutal dictatorship that should be isolated internationally. But it has many powerful friends in the West. Three of them are Unionist MPs. Cecil Walker, Roy Beggs and Jim Kilfedder went on a parliamentary junket to Indonesia in September.

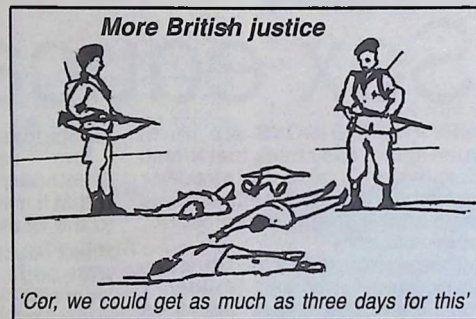
Kilfedder praised the regime and said

he "did not hear any complaints about any breach of civil rights". Beggs made similar comments.

The British Tory government has also given the Indonesian generals a helping hand. According to a Timorese exile, Elizabeth Exposto, British Hawk aircraft were used to "bomb mountain villages, forcing the people to flee from areas from where they had access to fresh water and fertile land."

The Tories claim that the aircraft were only supplied for "training purposes"

Next time you hear them talk about "de-commissioning weapons", remember the deadly arsenal they left behind in East Timor.



URGENT POLICE BUSINESS

PEOPLE passing the back of the Irish Times offices in Dublin's Fleet St. were recently confused by a hive of gardai activity.

At 1am, 7 squad cars 2 vans and 1 special branch car were pulled up outside. Speculation about their

★ DUBLINER Aoife Doyle recently contacted the Irish embassy in India looking for assistance.

Suffering from dysentery and having just been robbed she called the embassy looking for 12 rupees to buy water.

Money

According to Ms Doyle the ambassador Austin Gormley said "it isn't in my jurisdiction" to give out money.

12 rupees is the equivalent of 24p.

behind the headlines

by GORETTI HORGAN

Police, Provos and poverty

WHEN THE RUC called at the end of January for anyone with information about punishment beatings to come forward, they were trying to protect their own jobs.

Paramilitaries who carry out beatings are competition for the cops.

Long term unemployment and poverty have left working class areas full of young people with nothing to lose, seething with suppressed anger and alienation.

The result is a growing level of anti-social behaviour, burglaries, joy-riding and harassment of anyone who seems vulnerable.

What can be done to counteract this? The Tories are clear about it. Their response to anti-social behaviour is to punish it. That's why they need lots of well paid cops.

So what do people in Nationalist working class areas of the North do where the RUC are unacceptable?

That's where the alternative police, the Republican police, comes in. Sinn Fein activists say their advice centres are inundated with complaints about petty crime and people being terrorised in their homes.

Undoubtedly, there is community pressure on republicans to do something.

The problem is that the republican movement accepts the Tory analysis of crime and sees policing—its policing—as an answer.

But administration of severe beatings will not bring less crime.

In West Belfast, several young men have been kneecapped for joy-riding but it still goes on.

Even British army shootings of joy-riders have not stopped it from happening.

Projects aimed specially at young people, to get them off the streets and into car tracks, for example, have helped.

But these cost a lot of money and are always in danger of being cut.

In fact, youth clubs are being closed all over the North at a time when what is needed is imaginative, well-resourced clubs designed by young people themselves and giving them the kind of

space and activities they want.

As long as society offers young people nothing to look forward to, no reason to hold their heads up, there will continue to be anti-social behaviour.

An argument against republican policing doesn't mean abandoning working class people to suffer passively the effects of such behaviour.

The question of child abuse illustrates what we mean.

When the IRA actually killed a child abuser in Derry in December 1992, it was a very popular act. Only a handful of socialists and the man's family stood against it.

Yet, many child abusers have themselves been abused.

To break a cycle of abuse, children need help, counselling and support.

What is needed is not policing, but better resources.

Support

In most parts of the North, there is an eighteen month waiting list for initial counselling for abused children. In many areas, it is as long as three years.

But the services are being cut further. There is less money, not more, available.

Most victims get by with support from family and friends and build good and decent lives for themselves in spite of the abuse that stole away their childhood.

But some don't. With no access to helping services, they become locked in a cycle of abuse and end up abusers themselves.

What do we do with them?

Send in the boys with the baseball bats to punish them for the way society is organised?

Or do we put all the emphasis on building campaigns to defend the Health Service and the Social Services?

Do we police the problem or do we try to stop it happening in the future?

Richly deserved

MATTHEW Simmons who felt the weight of Eric Cantona's studs is a racist lout. Simmons, who called Cantona a "dirty French bastard" is a known British National Party supporter.

This is an ugly Nazi outfit which has been organising attacks on their opponents. Recent documents which were leaked to the press revealed that its terror outfit, Combat 18, told one Colin Ireland to "kill a queer or a nig-

ger or a Jew" to qualify for membership. Colin Ireland later murdered five gay men.

Simmons himself has taken part in Nazi exercises. He was also among a group of skinheads who attacked a South London anti racist meeting in 1993 screaming racist abuse.

Cantona may not have been soccer's cleanest player.

But this time he got the right man.

NO CHARITY AND NO MERCY

A LOCAL campaign in the Milltown area of Dublin has been attempting to stop the closure of their national school, St Annes.

The parents and the teachers have succeeded in getting a one year stay of execution for the school.

The nuns who own the school claimed that it had to close be-

cause of "falling numbers".

But this excuse is rejected by locals. Numbers of children are due to rise in the area in the future and they see nothing wrong with small schools.

Revealed

But now the real reason for the closure has been revealed.

The prime site on

which the school is situated is up for sale.

Auctioneers around Dublin are frothing at the mouth at the prospect of a deal which will net between £5 and £6 million.

By the way the nuns are known as the Sisters of Charity.

What was that old saying about the Sister of Mercy having no mercy and the Sister of Charity no ...?

Socialist Worker welcomes letters

PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

STOP THESE ATTACKS!

SINCE Christmas attacks on travellers have been continuing. In Wexford demonstrations have called for the removal of travellers from road-sides.

None of the politicians have spoken out for the Travellers. Instead they prop up a system that discriminates against them.

Travellers suffer from the racism and bigotry of a system that leaves them without basic facilities like running water and waste disposal.

Infant mortality rates among travellers are very high. Travellers live an average of 10 years less than the settled community. People should remember this before they attack travellers' right to stay in an area or complain of the dirt they leave around. Attacks on travellers are a form of racism and must be opposed.

ALAN KELLY, DUBLIN

Blind eye to murder

The Private Lee Clegg affair, which has not got half the media attention in this country that it should have, raises a number of questions.

First, you would presume that the Paras engaged in the kind of cover-up they usually pull whenever they shoot unarmed civilians (e.g. Bloody Sunday). If, despite this, the British "justice" system still could not find a way to let Clegg off the hook, he must really be guilty beyond doubt.

However, I will be very surprised if they don't bend the rules to make sure one of "their boys" gets off with no more than a slap on the wrist. You'd expect nothing more from a Tory government. But just as disgusting about this affair is the behaviour of Sinn Fein.

A couple of years ago, they would quite rightly have been raising ructions over an incident like this. Now however, they're within sniffing distance of a

seat at the negotiating table and nothing, not even the most glaring injustice, is going to divert them from that goal.

If and when the British release Clegg, there should be an outcry in the North.

But Sinn Fein will probably do their damndest to muzzle that outcry, in case it upsets their precious "peace process".

Turning a blind eye to murder is just their latest stop along the road of compromise.

Sinn Fein recently asked the SDLP for an electoral pact. Now, they're ignoring the Tories' endorsement of a shoot-to-kill policy. Sinn Fein is lying down with some rotten dogs, and it will wake up with some rotten fleas.

KIERAN GLENNON, DUBLIN



Mary Reilly at her daughter's funeral

Opportunities for socialists

AS a young socialist growing up in Ireland, I feel Ireland is coming to the crossroads of change. I feel there are many opportunities for revolutionary ideas to bear fruit.

But we could easily miss these passing chinks of opportunity. The Socialist Workers Movement has seriously matured with the appearance of the fortnightly paper.

But now we have to move with the paper. This means taking up arguments that people are discussing and using the

paper to organise political activity.

1995 could be the watershed in this country. People are desperate for fighters. They are fed up with the system pleasers like Democratic Left and the Labour Party.

In the Clondalkin area we have started to build links with people who want to fight back. Throughout January, we have been pushing our message—sometimes in terrible weather.

But we are also getting the feeling that revolutionary socialism is also coming in from the cold. Long live the revolution.

EUGENE KENNY, CLONDALKIN

around the world

FRANCE:

Socialist Party in trouble

FRANCE'S Socialist Party, the equivalent of Ireland's Labour Party, is choosing its candidate for the country's Presidential election in the spring.

But the choice is likely to be largely irrelevant. A first round of voting in the Presidential contest is due on 23 April, followed by a run off on 7 May between the two front runners.

The run off is almost certain to be a dismal choice between two rival right wing candidates, with the Socialists eliminated in the first round.

It is another bitter twist in the collapsing fortunes of the Socialist Party.

The outgoing president,

Francois Mitterrand, was elected as a Socialist Party candidate in 1981, ending 23 years of right-wing rule.

Forlorn

Workers and the poor hoped it would mark a

real change for the better.

In the factories workers drank champagne.

In Paris people danced and held parties in the streets.

Now Mitterrand is a forlorn and discredited figure and his Socialist party is in a state of collapse.

In parliamentary elections two years ago the Socialists were drummed out of office, their vote collapsing to just 19 per cent.

A coalition of the Right

took office, and the fortunes of the Socialist party went rapidly downhill.

Now it must choose between the former education minister Lionel Jospin and current party leader Henri Emmanuelli as presidential candidates.

Dashed

Neither has much chance of making it, both having been close allies of Mitterrand.

Jospin was party leader from 1981-1988.

That period saw all the hopes raised by Mitterrand's election dashed and turned to bitter disappointment.

While bosses and bankers shifted money out of the country Mitterrand and his party bowed to them rather than mobilise workers to fight for real change.

The government ditched all talk of reform and attacked workers.

Unemployment soared, wages were held down and the government im-

posed huge welfare cuts. Bosses and the rich did very nicely, but the results for ordinary people were grim.

Poverty Line

Unemployment has now reached over 3 million, and over two million people in France are now living below the official poverty line.

A key Jospin ally, Laurent Fabius, rightly blames the collapse of the Socialist Party support in recent years on the "wear

and tear of unemployment and disappointment".

The disillusionment that was created allowed racists and Nazis to gain a real foothold by turning the bitterness in French society against immigrants and France's Arab minority.

Now even the right is suffering from the disillusionment and frustration.

Even the most popular presidential candidate, the right-wing Eduard Balladur, only scrapes just over 25 per cent in the opinion polls.

Deals

He has already started to make deals with the fascist National Front in order to improve his chances of winning.

Whatever the outcome of the presidential election, two lessons are clear.

It is a grim reminder of what can happen when a Labour party gets elected on a promise to bring in reforms and then start attacking those who looked to them for hope.

But France also shows where the hope for real change lies. Right-wing Presidential Candidate Jacques Chirac recently warned the country risked an explosion of social discontent similar to the great 1968 student and workers' revolt.

France's right-wing government has been battered by waves of struggle.

Airport workers, students, and more recently, thousands of workers in the giant GEC-Alsthom empire fought back and forced the ruling class to retreat.

The soil which bred these struggles is still fertile, and whoever wins the presidential election, new revolts are likely to erupt from it in the months ahead.

Middle East:

Peace process fuels desperation

The Islamic extremist Jihad movement recently killed 19 Israeli soldiers and left 68 wounded in a suicide bombing mission.

Instead of explaining why this type of event happens, the press simply portrayed it as a threat to the peace process.

In fact, the bombing underlines just how little the PLO have won in the Israeli-Palestinian peace accord.

After the bombing Yitzhak Rabin, closed off the West Bank and Gaza strip. This means that 50,000 Palestinian workers are not able to get to their jobs inside Israel.

He has threatened to build a \$230m security fence between Israel and the West Bank. This would be built inside the Palestinian territories, enclosing the Israeli settlements still being constructed there.

The government has also announced plans to build 3,000 new homes for settlers inside the West Bank. This is a breach of their previous commitment to halt settlement building.

It is a clear message to the Palestinians which shows that the government has no intention of taking its promises seriously.

The Israeli government have also postponed the release of 5,500 Palestinian prisoners jailed in Israel.

The Palestinians have gained nothing from the peace process beyond the control that any town council might have over its area. Real economic and military power lies with the Israeli state.

Because of this, the PLO suffers daily losses



of public support as frustration with the peace accord means that people are turning to the Islamic militants. They are the only ones prepared

to light back. One of the suicide bombers, Anwar Sukar, had joined Islamic Jihad as a teenager because the movement promised a

holy war to liberate all of Palestine.

He was twice imprisoned by the Israelis in the notorious Ansar Three detention camp

and once shot in the legs. He had seen his mother beaten by Israeli soldiers.

He is just one example of the thousands who are

disillusioned with the meagre rewards of the peace process.

Urged on by the Israeli's, Arafat has turned to greater repression in order to control them.

His PLO police have been ordered to fire live ammunition at Islamic demonstrators.

Contempt

But then Israel showed its contempt for the PLO police when it killed a number of them after claiming that it mistook them for "terrorists".

The experience of Palestine shows the real dangers that face the Irish peace process.

One of the first people to welcome the Israeli-PLO deal was Gerry Adams who hailed it as a major step forward.

What is needed in the area is a socialist movement which opposes the racism of the Israeli state and fights for a democratic and secular Palestine where Jew and Arab can live in peace.

South Korea:

Regime launches crackdown on the Left

THE TRIAL has begun in South Korea of socialist Choi Il-bung, who faces serious charges under the country's national security law.

This denies freedom of expression to anyone opposing the government.

Human rights group Amnesty reports the law is routinely used "to detain people solely because they have leftist views."

Choi Il-bung is one of 36 members of the

International Socialists of South Korea who were arrested in police raids last year.

All are accused of "benefiting the enemy" — meaning North Korea.

Repression

In fact they are guilty of no more than associating with a socialist group that opposes repression in both Korea, North and South.

Choi was released from prison on Christ-

mas Eve 1993 after being jailed for two years under the same law for publishing socialist books.

Now he is accused of taking part in "agitation and propaganda to undermine the state power" because he attended a socialist meeting. His hearing began on 25 January and is set to resume on Wednesday 15 February.

The government and police are determined to jail Choi Il-bung and the others. But the au-

thorities are split, with a section worried about the impact of the trial on the "democratic" image the government is keen to promote abroad.

Petitioned

Judges in Pusan have suspended sentencing five other International Socialists and petitioned the country's Supreme Court to declare part of the National Security Law unconstitutional.

They point out it is normal for a democracy "to allow such freedom of expression".

The Committee to Defend South Korean Socialists plans to publish a statement calling for the release of Choi and the others in the influential New York Review of Books.

This will appear in South Korea and around the world.

This is the last chance for you to get your union/branch/

shop stewards committee/student's union or other organisation to sign and sponsor the statement before it appears.

Details from Committee to Defend South Korean Socialists, C/o P.O. box 1648, Dublin 8.

You can write to Choi Il-bung in prison: No. 136 Il-Bung Choi, An-yang Post Office Sascoham 35, Gyong gi do Eui wang-si, Republic of Korea 430-600.

Why police attack animal rights protesters

by DAMIEN McLOUGHLIN

DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST cruelty to animals in Britain have been met by terrible police brutality.

People of all ages were protesting against the export of calves to the Continent for their meat, known as veal. The animals were being exported in small wooden crates.

The media tried to show the demonstrators as instigators of the violence.

But the true facts of the demonstrations speak for themselves:

■ Most of the protesters were local people, and not "outsiders" or "trouble-makers".

In Brightlingsea, a Tory stronghold in Essex, a quarter of the town attended the protests.

■ On every single night of protests, the police turned out in full riot gear to cause the violence.

■ The police operations cost millions of pounds—money which should be spent on building hospitals, schools and houses in the impoverished small ports from where the animals are being shipped.

One protester, Shoreham resident Sharon said: "People peacefully sat down."

"The police then piled in, dragging people across the road, booting people."

Another man was dragged away by the police as he screamed: "They hit my 52 year old mother."

Big business makes £200 million a year from the live animal export trade. In Ireland, similar exporters are running scared that their methods of exporting will become the focus of attention.

Last October, the export from Ireland of cattle and sheep on-board ferries was banned following reports of cruelty to animals.

Ireland's live cattle trade is dominated by the Purcell brothers who are backers of the Fianna Fail party.

They export animals to North Africa—carrying them for over two weeks at sea in severely overcrowded conditions.

But in both Ireland and Britain, the animal rights movement has won support from some very right wing elements.

Tories such as Alan Clark believe that humans are 'vermin' and express sympathy for animals.

They protest at animals being caged in poor conditions—but ignore the humans who are locked up in prisons.

Unfortunately some

animal rights activists agree. Peter Singer, a founding father of the animal rights movement, says a dog deserves the right to life "at least as good, or better than" a retarded or senile human.

Socialists disagree. We are in favour of keeping cruelty to animals to a minimum. But the fight for human liberation has to come first.

If experimentation on animals is needed to find a cure for AIDS, and there is no other way but to use animals, then it should take place as humanely as possible.

And animal liberationists are wrong to put workers at risk, such as the Sealink ferry worker injured last year after a bomb attack on the company's head office.

Socialists are in favour of developing reliable, non-animal tests for the safety of items like washing powder.

But we are totally against multi-national drug companies using impoverished people instead of animals to test products.

This is not to offer a blanket defence of all that science does, as more than 95% of all the science funding around the world goes on military research.

But where science offers a hope of ending human suffering it has to be defended.

Denied

Diabetics, for example, should not be denied insulin, which is extracted from pigs, because of a claim that this animal has the same rights as a human being.

There are real conflicts between the needs of animals and human beings which it is pointless trying to hide.

But none of this needs to degenerate into the mindless cruelty which capitalism encourages.

A system that spends billions in weapons to destroy human life, will inevitably encourage brutality and violence against all living beings.

If you want to stop unnecessary cruelty to animals, then you have to fight for a world which puts the majority of people first.

Socialist Worker looks at

WORKING HEROES?

Almost immediately after the Combined Loyalist Command declared their cease-fire last October the world was treated to a flood of working class rhetoric.

It surprised many North and South. This was not the bitter boil of uncompromising bigotry.

It seemed Loyalists had woken up to the truth at last and working class people wanted to hear what they had to say. MICK DOYLE examines what lies behind the new developments within loyalism.

DAVID ERVINE, of the Progressive Unionist Party, has talked about being reared in a two-up-two-down with a po' under the bed and his father's overcoat thrown over him for a blanket.

He said sectarianism had

been built up to exercise control over ordinary people and that, "The days of doffing caps are over."

Billy Hutchinson said the PUP was a socialist party, that working class Protestants were treated as second class citizens and Catholics as third.

These were the hard men of Loyalism, the fighters and it seemed they were telling it like it is.

But this strain of class-consciousness isn't new.

Gusty Spence, the former leader of the Ulster Volunteer Force who was imprisoned for

murdering a Catholic barman, became an exponent of this type of left wing thinking.

"Bigotry is not only a state of mind in Northern Ireland, it is a closely cultured state of mind."

"It was people who held power who particularly cultured that state of mind."

"Those people who were the bastions, the pillars of society, carry a lot of responsibility for the bigotry."

The UDA had their left wing thinkers too: Tommy Herron, Glen Barr, Andy Tyrre.

This is not surprising. Working class Protestants are no different to working class people anywhere.

They are brought face to face with inequality every day of their lives.

Almost all Loyalist paramilitaries come from working class backgrounds and they and their political allies merely mirror the views of their communities when they talk about class.

Rhetoric

The recent flood of rhetoric says more about changing attitudes in Protestant areas than it does about the aims or convictions of these parties themselves.

Why has left wing rhetoric come to the fore now?

Firstly, the IRA cease-fire put paid to the lie that Loyalist violence was reactive.

They have killed over one thousand Catholics in the past



'Defending the community'

THE EMERGENCE of the PUP and UDP received a mixed reaction from established Unionist parties, none of it positive.

The most virulent attacks came from Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party. They accused them of being traitors.

The DUP sought the ear of the gunmen in the past but they have been completely marginalised by the Peace Process. They realise the newcomers pose a threat to a party that offered working class Protestants nothing but psalms, sermons and prejudice.

But despite these attacks, the PUP and the UDP cannot break out of the conservative tradition of loyalism. This is because they start from the belief that Protestant workers

have different interests to Catholic workers.

They want to represent their 'community' rather than the wider working class.

But this means accepting that they have to compete with workers in the Catholic community. This is the new type of sectarianism which the Tories will gloat over.

Advance

In the end, both the PUP and UDP believe that it is more important to defend the Northern state than advance the interests of the working class.

They still pride themselves on their history of defending it. They did all the fighting, killing and dying while the middle and upper classes did all the talking.

They talk about reforming the RUC, ignoring the fact that the RUC are unacceptable to many in their own communities.

They talk about keeping the minority in their hearts and minds, but three days before Christmas, and only a little over two months into their cease-fire, another Catholic, Noel Lynass, was beaten to death.

In the end the UDP and the PUP will do battle for votes with parties like the DUP. They will argue about who will win the sectarian scramble with Nationalists for the spoils expected to come from the Peace Process.

Nobody in the North, Catholic or Protestant, need settle for a sham form of socialism. There is a much deeper tradi-

tion inside the Protestant working class of fighting for socialism. But it has been based on a break from loyalism.

In 1932, the Revolutionary Workers Groups organised the Protestant and Catholic unemployed to fight together and take on the RUC.

In 1934 there were five branches of the Republican Congress in Belfast alone, four of them in Protestant areas. They had to contend with Nationalist and Loyalist bigotry but they genuinely attempted to unite Catholics and Protestants.

Every genuine shift to the left among the Protestant workers has reached out to Catholic workers. That is the tradition which needs to be built on today.



Leaders of

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CLASS



Leaders of the Ulster Democratic Party looking respectable outside Stormont

■ **UDP, THE Ulster Democratic Party** (originally Ulster Loyalist Democratic Party) was formed in 1981.

It was led by John McMichael. Although widely proclaimed as a man of peace, McMichael was Over-All Commander of the UDA.

He once criticised a committee set up to link groups from both communities because he felt there were, "too many Taigs." Involved in it.

■ **PUP The Progressive Unionist Party** was formed by Hugh Smyth, the current Lord Mayor

of Belfast, in 1979, out of alarm at the political development of the UDA.

By its own admission it has strong links with the UVF, an organisation responsible for some of the most horrific murders the province has ever seen.

A history of bigotry

THERE'S a long history of dissension amongst Protestants in Ulster but probably no better parallel to the present split exists than the formation of the Independent Orange Order.

It broke from the Orange Order in 1902 following decades of friction between workers and their political masters.

Although class issues were involved the breakaway faction was also sectarian.

It had an alliance with the Belfast Protestant Association, an organisation proud of its opposition to Papism, Nationalism and Socialism.

The Independent Or-

ange Order became more radicalised came when Lindsay Crawford took over the leadership.

He realised it was pointless to talk about advancing the cause of Protestant workers without trying to link it with a struggle for Catholic workers as well.

Break

He produced the Meagheramorne manifesto in 1905.

Its main theme was one of reconciliation and co-operation.

Despite the manifesto, the break with loyalism had not been carried through.

One of its signatories

was Tom Sloan.

Sloan talked about popular social issues but he had been a speaker for the BPA and had no real desire to break from Orangeism.

Although the IOO continued to grow initially, supporting the 1907 strike, it was constantly attacked by the old Orange Order. Eventually, disowned by Tom Sloan, it began to fade away.

But the seeds of its destruction were there from the beginning. Left wing politics can never fit into an Orange mould.

Orangeism and loyalism are based on a belief about the superiority of Protestants over Catholics.

what do socialists say?

Will there always be wars?

FAR FROM the end of the cold war ushering a new period of peace, there never has been a period when there was so much conflict.

The media have presented recent wars as the result of some irrational tribal instinct that is inherent in human beings.

In Bosnia, Serbs and Muslims are alleged to be so incompatible that their country must be divided on ethnic and religious lines to keep them apart.

The only solution it seems is to support strong states which can prevent these tribal passions getting out of hand. During the war in Chechnya, many commentators argued that if this little country won its independence the whole region would face the same fate as Bosnia. The logic was to support Yeltsin as the man who protected 'stability'.

Miseries

But wars, as precisely the case of Bosnia illustrates, have their roots not in ethnic differences but in the miseries that capitalism inflicts on people.

The roots of the Bosnia war go back to events in the former Yugoslavia just before the collapse of communism.

In 1989, the former Communist leaders were faced with a huge strike wave and revolt from below.

This was prompted by a collapse in the economy in which workers living standards fell through the floor.

These actions united working class people from all the religious and ethnic groups in Yugoslavia against the government.

In response the Serbian leader Milosovic whipped up Serbian nationalist

sentiment.

The Croatian leader Tudjman followed suit and led his country out of Yugoslavia. Serbian public employees were sacked from their jobs and the symbols and emblems of the Nazi Ustache were revived.

But each part of the former Yugoslavia consists of minorities from different religious backgrounds.

For hundreds of years the region has been fought over by the rival empires of Europe.

Where the Tsarist Russian empire dominated the religion was Russian Orthodox and the Cyrillic alphabet was used. Under Turkish domination the religion was Muslim. Where the Austro-Hungarian empire held sway Catholicism was the norm.

The great powers of Europe backed all these empires at different times and populations were forcibly moved from one area to another to establish footholds for the big powers.

The result is a history of massacres, atrocities and discrimination on religious lines.

If the divisions were not natural, neither were they inevitable.

When Tito ruled Yugoslavia from the end of the second world war until the mid eighties, there was a denial of workers rights.

But there was not a systematic oppression of any one nationality and ethnic divisions were not so prominent.

The economy was still expanding and the ruling elite did not have to split apart and fight each other over shrinking spoils.

The nasty civil war that has been raging in the area over the past four years is the result of the defeat of a united workers movement at the onset of the crisis and the continued meddling of outside powers.

The European Union vigorously backed Tudjman and Croatia hoping to exploit the new markets in that country. As the war raged Western powers tried to impose a division of Bosnia into religiously homogenous "cantons" where every city, town and village would have to declare itself "Serbian", "Croatian" or "Muslim".

Armies

This gave a further impetus to the civil war encouraging each side to grab as much land as possible before the Western armies came to police a settlement.

In short: the war was the result of a crisis of state capitalism. It arose directly from the attempt of former Communist leaders to cling onto power by whipping up ethnic strife.

This in turn gave the great powers a chance to meddle in the hope of turning the mess to their profitable advantage.

It was not the result of any instinctive tribalism in the mass of the population.

If there were a serious socialist movement in the area, it would try to link together the anti-war sentiment of thousands of people with the anger masses of workers feel at their collapsed living standards.

But so long as we live in a world dominated by the pursuit of profit people will be set against each other in bloody wars.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM ★ 65

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1905—Russia in revolution

'We want the eight hour day and a gun'

NINETY YEARS ago a great revolt shook one of the world's most brutal tyrannies.

The Russian Tsar, who held absolute power and allowed no voting, was confronted by a great movement.

The struggle for freedom lasted for nearly a year and started a series of revolution around the world. Workers learned new ways to fight and organise.

It all began in St. Petersburg, on the 9th January 1905, when 200,000 unarmed workers marched to the Tsar's palace with a petition begging for reforms. They were led by a priest Fr. Gapon and carried religious banners.

They hoped the Tsar, or Little Father as he was known, would come out to meet "his people". Instead the troops surrounding the palace opened fire. A thousand marchers were killed and over two thousand wounded.

The reaction to this Bloody Sunday shook Russian society to its very foundations.

Only two days before, a leading liberal journalist wrote "there is not yet a revolutionary people in Russia."

In "normal" times Russian workers drew from their miserable living and working conditions only a sense of hopelessness and apathy. Pogroms of Jews, often led by government officials, were a regular feature of life. Russian women had few rights. "I thought I saw two people," ran a proverb, "but it was only a man and his wife."

The declaration of war with Japan in 1904 was met with popular enthusiasm and socialists were marginalised. "Our party is seriously ill," wrote the Russian revolutionary leader Lenin, "and has lost a good half of its influence during the past year".

But capitalism has a way of undermining its own stability. By 1905 the war with Japan was lurching from disaster to defeat. Disillusionment about the war coincided with steadily worsening living conditions. Wages of even the best paid were falling by around 25 per cent.

The march to the Tsar's palace was triggered off by the sacking of four workers—union members—in St Petersburg. In the Putilov works 12,000 struck in sympathy. Within days 140,000 workers were out and it was decided to present a petition to the Tsar.

The massacre that followed was the signal for the outbreak of a series of mass strikes which spread over the whole of Russia. In a country where strikes were almost unknown, over a million workers went on strike.

Strikes that began for political demands rapidly broke up into numerous smaller strikes around local grievances.

The dynamic of the struggle was breaking down the wall between the purely economic and the purely political.

The deepening of the struggle was important for changing the ideas of the mass of people.

As the great German socialist Rosa Luxemburg put it, political education, "cannot be fulfilled by pamphlets and leaflets, but only by the living political school, by the fight and in the fight, in the continuous course of the revolution."

The influence of the struggle moved from the towns and cities to the coun-



Demonstration in 1905—the main banner reads: "Proletarians of all countries unite"

tryside. Thousands of vast landlord estates were attacked, the mansions burnt and the land distributed amongst the poor.

THE FERMENT spread to the army and navy. The sailors on the battleship *Potemkin* seized control of their ship and bombarded the forces sent against them.

The first strike wave from January to March was eventually beaten back.

But in September 1905 the strikes resumed when Moscow typesetters who were on piecework came out to demand payment for punctuation marks! The strike spread throughout Moscow.

Within two weeks the St. Petersburg typesetters struck in solidarity. The railway workers followed and the city's network ground to a halt. General strikes were declared in most cities.

On the 13th October, the Petersburg Workers Council or Soviet was formed. This brought together workers' representatives from all over the city. At its first meeting, it proclaimed a general strike. Their demands were for a constituent assembly, an end to censorship and freedom of organisation.

A terrified Tsar announced plans for a parliament. But it had no power and the mass of people were still not allowed to vote. The middle class liberals rejoiced. But Trotsky who was elected chairperson of the Soviet declared, "Everything has been given and nothing has been given".

He added that freedom and liberty are "never accomplished by a signature on a piece of parchment. Such things come

about on the street. They are realised in battle. They are settled by victory in the clash of people with the armoured forces of reaction".

Despite his intervention many had illusions in the Tsar's reforms and began returning to work. The workers council eventually voted for a return too. The strength of support for the Petersburg council was shown in the fact that all workers returned to work together.

BUT AS one revolutionary wave ebbed, another rose. At the end of October, the struggle for the eight hour day began.

Several major metal works began stopping work each day after eight hours.

The workers council voted to spread the action. Employers retaliated with a campaign of lockouts and thousands of militant workers were sacked. Again the workers council retreated but the struggle was not in vain.

Trotsky summed up the achievement. "We may not have won the eight hour day for the masses," he declared, "but we have certainly won the masses for the eight hour day. Henceforth the war cry—Eight hours and a gun—shall live in the heart of every Petersburg worker"

The experience of 1905 convinced workers that revolution, not piecemeal reform, was the only way to change society.

The events exposed the liberals who urged workers to accept crumbs from the Tsar's table and then backed repression. It was the 'dress rehearsal' for the 1917 revolution.

The workers' councils

THE WORKERS councils or soviets, were the most important innovation of the 1905 revolution.

They were made up of delegates from all workplaces in the city.

These delegates were elected and could be recalled if their workmates felt they were not representing their views properly. In this they were infinitely more democratic and accountable than any TD or MP elected today.

43 delegates attended the first meeting of the Petersburg workers council.

But as the strikes spread more and more workplaces sent their representatives. At its height there were 562 delegates representing some 200,000 workers.

The workers council had its own newspaper to counter the bosses' propaganda. It was not a debating forum but led the political strikes and demonstrations.

It armed workers and protected the population from terror.

But it was not just a glorified strike committee. In reality it acted as an alternative power to the Tsarist government.

Trotsky describes how "the soviet's premises were always crowded with petitioners and plaintiffs of every kind—mostly workers, domestic servants, shop assistants, peasants, sol-

diers and sailors."

They dropped in to ask if a rail strike was likely to break out during their journey. They applied for written exemptions from strikes. They asked for instructions on whether to strike or not. Latvians living in St. Petersburg appealed to the soviet to make a stand against the declaration of martial law in their home province. A letter from the countryside was addressed simply to "The Workers Government, Petersburg".

Because the council was leading the struggle and trying to bring it forward it fought against all potential divisions.

In a land where anti-Semitism was rife it was Trotsky, a Jew, that was elected chairman of the soviet.

When Tsarist officials began to organise pogroms the delegates to the soviet vowed to stop with guns any pogrom in Petersburg. Although elsewhere in Russia 4,000 were killed and over 10,000 injured, there was no pogrom in St. Petersburg.

Trotsky summed up the importance of the soviets, "just as the trade union is the rudimentary form of the united front in the economic struggle, so the soviet is the highest form of the united front under the conditions in which the proletariat enters the epoch of fighting for power."

comment

Sex shop comes to Limerick

by CATHY BERGIN

PEOPLE ARE having sex in Limerick and Nora Bennis is concerned.

Nora is saying prayers for the depraved fornicators.

For in Limerick they're not only now prey to the base urges of their lustful natures, they're being offered sex aids and enhancers to force them to engage in the shameful act.

A sex shop has opened in Limerick.

Nora Bennis is the Limerick housewife who set up Solidarity to speak for the "silent majority" and to represent the "best values for a happy, content, wholesome society".

Now I have no doubt that the sex shop that has opened in Limerick is probably a fairly seedy affair, and there is probably no shortage of soft porn among the vibrators and leather thongs which are on sale.

It's also none of my or anybody else's business what people get up to in their bedrooms.

Giggle

Yet there has been remarkably little response to Nora's prayer meetings outside the sex shop.

The usual voices of Irish liberalism haven't had much to say on the issue.

It seems the best thing liberals can do is to giggle at the absurdity of a group of Catholic fundamentalists saving the rosary outside the shop rather than to oppose them completely.

However I think this response masks a deeper worry, a nervousness about opening society to such an extent that Ireland has its own version of Soho, and a homegrown sex industry.

Surely we can fight for sexual rights and not have this sort of thing.

The first thing to note is that Nora Bennis and her cronies are not just a bunch of isolated loonies.

These are the people who would drag Ireland back to the 50s, probably the 1450s.

They want us to return to the good old days, when sex was never talked about.

This is the type of society where one in eight people claim to have experienced some form of child abuse in holy Ireland.

Solidarity, along with Youth Defence, Muintir na hEireann, Human Life Interna-

tional, and the Christian Solidarity Party, are part of a serious attempt to launch an offensive against the liberal tide.

At the moment they are not finding a wide audience, but who is to say—especially with the crisis in the Church—that they won't be able to prey on the despair and desperation many people are feeling at the moment.

We should never be frightened to take on the Catholic right, and we should not underestimate them.

That is why it is important to be clear about the issue of the sex shops.

There is nothing particularly wrong with sex aids, nothing shameful or nasty about sex toys.

Profiteers

It is also true that there is nothing intrinsically progressive about sexually explicit material which is produced by profiteers.

At its worst it is pretty degrading to women.

However, Nora and her chums are not worried about the quality of sexual material available to us.

They're against this material not because its demeaning to women, or distorted but because they're against any material that depicts sexual activity.

They want to ensure that sex is still experienced as dirty, forbidden and wrong, that it is still a source of guilt, frustration and despair.

When a society with a history of sexual repression as this country has, begins to open up, it's inevitable there will be many issues such as this that will emerge.

When you know who the enemy is, there is no reason to be reticent about where you stand.

The corrupters of sexual morality in this case are outside the shop praying, not inside browsing.

Sex is natural. Kneeling on a cold stoney ground in the winter time I'm not so sure about.

reviews

FILM

They're so veiny

Interview with the vampire reviewed by JOE CAROLAN

INTERVIEW with the Vampire is yet another Hollywood movie glorifying selfishness, and this time they want my sympathy for bloodsucking nosferatus who'd rip your jugular out for lunch.

There have already been countless reviews of the film giving you metaphoric spins about "the ultimate dysfunctional family" and the "latent bisexuality bubbling close to the surface".

But then again there is a lot of pretension associated with Niall Jordan films.

Hated

Personally I'd root for any minority hated by society and stereotyped by the church.

However, all of these vampires are wealthy aristocrats. Brad Pitt's character, Louis, is even a slave owner. Tom Cruises' vampire, Lestat, is a blood hungry parasite who would, for



Tom Cruise and Indra Ove in Interview with the Vampire

example, find a job as industrial relations manager on the board of Packard Electric.

The human characters in this film are merely incidental. "Food for the immortals" in Louis' words.

Hundreds of us give up

our throats and limbs so Louis and Lestat can wrestle with their guilt and swan round being asexually intriguing.

Draining

I'm sure this is a good way to be seductive, drain-

ing admirers of their last corpse.

In the end, the only vampire that made any lasting impression on me was the guy who charged me three pounds in to endure this dross.

Yeah, the ticket prices

have gone up again.

Go see it if you want, but you could better spend it on a beer, or better still, go see *Stargate*.

Us poor humans get to overthrow the parasite monster in that one!

BOOK

Getting it wrong on nationalism

JASON McELIGOTT reviews *Ancestral Voices: Religion and Nationalism in Modern Ireland*, by Conor Cruise O'Brien.

Poolbeg Press. IR£7.99

CONOR CRUISE O'Brien is no stranger to controversy, and his latest study of religion and nationalism in Ireland has certainly set the cat among the pigeons.

Ancestral Voices describes how the Catholic Church sided with the British empire until the mid-nineteenth century.

After they became worried about the rise of nationalism, they began to encourage a specifically Catholic nationalism.

This was in order to keep secular nationalism in check.

Despite occasional flashes of brilliance, *Ancestral Voices* is deeply flawed. How can we take seriously a book which claims that the 13 civilians shot dead on Bloody Sunday were throwing stones, and were in some way responsible for their own deaths?

But the main problem is that O'Brien is wrong to see Irish nationalism as inherently sectarian.

It has had its sectarian adherents, but it also has a history of anti-sectarianism: Can O'Brien really believe that the British nationalism he embraces is progressive? Despite the Provo's right-

wing politics, socialists have stood alongside them against the British army because we supported anybody fighting an imperialist power.

An example today would be the struggle of the Chechins against the Russians, which we support in spite of the politics of the Chechin leaders.

Hatched

O'Brien sees an IRA conspiracy behind every political development in the South. For example, he believes that the 1949 declaration of the Irish Republic was a plot hatched by Sean Mac Bride under the influence of the IRA.

In reality, the decision was taken without Mac Bride's knowledge by the "West Brit" Fine Gael Taoiseach, John A Costello.

For many people, O'Brien is to civil liberties what the Black and Tans were to community policing. Most notoriously, he helped draw up

Section 31 and set up the thuggish Garda "Heavy Gang", which framed Nicky Kelly (among others).

However, until the early 1970s the Cruiser was one of Ireland's leading left-wing intellectuals.

He argued vigorously for the Labour Party to recognise the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War.

His book *To Katanga and Back* was a brave exposure of the UN's "peace-keeping" operation in the Congo.

He spoke at the early Civil Rights protests in Northern Ireland and was involved in the campaign against the South African rugby team's visit in 1970.

He moved rapidly to the right in the early 1970s in reaction to the threat posed by the Provos to both states on this island.

He was unable to see that the Provo's campaign was a response to the injustices of the Northern state.

The central message of *Ancestral Voices* is that the Peace process is (yet another) IRA plot designed to push us to the verge of civil war.



Conor Cruise O'Brien—'IRA conspirator'

O'Brien does not understand that republicans are making their peace with the system in the same way that every party in the Dail from Fianna Fail to the Worker's Party has done.

Radical

Once upon a time the Republican leadership talked about radical social change. Now they see photo-calls in America as the way forward.

It is the Dublin government, and not as O'Brien would have us believe, Gerry Adams, which setting the direction of the peace process.

At most the peace process will bring Big Mac jobs, recognition of the Irish language, and cosmetic changes to the RUC.

It will neither address the sectarian nature of the state, nor do away with the poverty which underpins sectarianism.

The Republican leadership, much like Arafat's PLO, will increasingly find itself opposed to those impatient for real change.

They have exchanged the cul de sac of armed struggle, only to be led along the road to nowhere by crooks like Bruton, Clinton and

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 SWM 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 SWM aims to build such a party in Ireland.

news & reports—politics; the unions—

Packard workers 'put through hell'



Packard Electric boss David Schramm

THE HUGE media focus on the Packard Electric plant has completely disappeared.

All the politicians who expressed "concern" for the workers have gone very quiet.

But now Packard workers are being put through hell by one of the most brutal companies in Ireland.

Socialist Worker talked to workers about the new conditions at the Tallaght plant.

"There's work coming in from all over the place.

"I don't know what they were talking about", according to one co-ordinator on the factory

floor.

When supervisors asked for more workers to be taken on Manager Peter Hunter refused.

Promised

There are still over 50 workers, laid off since last year, who were promised their jobs back when production picked up but are being left to rot on the dole.

There is now massive confusion in the factory on how the unpaid "banked" hours will be used by the company.

It seems management plan to use unpaid hours to compensate for any lates or illnesses in the plant.

In the first week of implementing the deal, management have been harassing workers for absenteeism and timekeeping.

A new starting time of 7.30am could effect up to 100 workers who live long distances from the factory and others who have to re-organise child-minding arrangements.

Many workers feel they did not know what they were voting for.

"It's just getting worse and worse. 90% of us hate the place.

"And just to cheer us up management removed all benches from the floor so nobody can take the weight off their feet when the lines are down".

Workers at Packard have

suffered a set-back from which they can recover—particularly if they maintain their union organisation and stand together to make sure the company does not "come back for more" in the months ahead.

The General Motors corporation which owns Packard is an enormously wealthy and profitable organisation.

But its profits come from the sweat of workers in Tallaght and other subsidiaries around the world.

This means that workers are in a position to hit them where it hurts, in their pockets.

Packard is another example of the craziness of the profit system and of the crying need to build a socialist alternative.

Tallaght hospital

Bricklayers strike over broken promise

THE BUILDING of the long-promised Tallaght hospital has been halted by strike action.

Brick layers at the site had been promised bonus payments by management for particularly complicated brick work.

Management refused to pay the bonus, claiming they had only given a verbal agreement to the workers.

The brick layers who are members of BATU placed pickets on the site on Monday January 23rd.

Almost all the rest of the workers at the site refused to pass the pickets. After the first week on

strike, two scabs broke the picket line.

Management dug in their heels and refused to negotiate with the union. They are also resorting to intimidatory tactics. A car with two managers sits opposite the picket all day.

The bosses are trying to get an injunction against the pickets. They will hope to use these managers as 'witnesses'.

The strikers' union, BATU, has started organising collections in support of the Tallaght strikers. This is an important strike that needs to be won to put manners on Ireland's building bosses.

Auschwitz commemoration

OVER 300 people attended the Anti Nazi League's torchlight commemoration in Dublin to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. 60 people also turned up in Cork in pouring rain.

Franz Frisson, the main speaker at the Dublin commemoration, survived the horrors of Buchenwald concentration camp:

"One day the SS guards took us to the railway siding. We saw open coal lorries—and the heads of prisoners peeping over the edges. They'd been travelling for days through the Polish winter.

"And in the lorries the floor was covered with hard snow, and trampled into the snow were the naked bodies of those

who hadn't survived the journey..."

Today fascists exploit unemployment poverty and despair to scapegoat the same groups as Hitler did. Susie Byrne from the Lesbian and Gay Network said that neo-Nazis are ganging up to kill gay men in Berlin, and fascists go queer-bashing in London.

Banned

Michael Collins, representing the Travelling Community, told the meeting how "Travellers are still not allowed into pubs, hairdressers, shops, and even buses in Ireland today".

The Anti Nazi League were congratulated by Asher Benson of Dublin's Jewish community for holding the commemora-

tion and for their record of standing up to fascist attempts to organise in Ireland.

Opposition to fascism has been shown throughout Europe.

The day after Berlusconi was elected in Italy, 200,000 anti-fascists and trade unionists marched in Milan. In Belgium, where the fascist Vlaams Blok has gained up to 25 per cent in elections, 100,000 people marched against fascism. Last year a 150,000-strong "Rage against Racism" carnival was held in London.

None of this happens without organisation, which is why anti-fascists around the world should join movements like the Anti Nazi League. Never Again should the world witness another fascist holocaust.

SWM branch meetings—all welcome

BELFAST CENTRAL

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm—contact national address for details of venue

Wednesday 8th February

Why Socialists don't stand for National Anthems

Wednesday 15th February

Marxism and the Oppressed

BELFAST SOUTH

Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm—contact national address for details of venue

Thursday 9th February

Should the Political prisoners be released?

Thursday 16th February

What is revolution?

CORK

Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in the Anchor Inn, Georges Quay

Thursday 9th February

Is Human Nature a barrier to Socialism?

Thursday 16th February

How can we win the Divorce Referendum?

DERRY

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm—contact national address for details of venue

Tuesday 7th February

Class Struggle in America

Tuesday 14th February

Can we save Allanglavin Hospital

DUBLIN BLANCHARDSTOWN

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm—contact national address for details of venue

Wednesday 8th February:

The Politics of Socialist Workers Movement

Wednesday 15th February:

Fighting for women's liberation

DUBLIN CLONDALKIN

Meets every second

Tuesday at 8.00pm—contact national address for details of venue

Tuesday 7th February

Do Prisons Solve Crime?

DUBLIN DRIMNAGH

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Half Way House

Tuesday 7th February

Auschwitz 50 years on—Why did it happen?

Tuesday 14th February

The Russian Revolution of 1905

DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in the Parnell Mooney, Parnell Street

Wednesday 8th February

The Revolutionary ideas of Frederick Engels

Wednesday 15th February

Islamic Fundamentalism

DUBLIN PHIBSBORO

Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm—contact national address for details of venue

Thursday 9th February

The Russian Revolution of 1905

Thursday 16th February

Northern Ireland—Should

the Prisoners be released?

DUBLIN RATHMINES

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in the Junction Pub, Kevin Street/Wexford Street

Wednesday 8th February

PUBLIC MEETING

Auschwitz 50 years on—Why did it happen?

Wednesday 15th February

Can there be a Revolution in Ireland?

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL

Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse St.

Thursday 9th February

Northern Ireland—Should the prisoners be released?

Thursday 16th February

Can workers fight the Multi Nationals?

DUBLIN TALLAGHT

Meets every other Tuesday at 8.00pm—contact national address for details of venue

Tuesday 14th February Northern Ireland—Should the Prisoners be released?

DUN LAOGHAIRE

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Purty Kitchen

Tuesday 7th February

Northern Ireland—Should the Prisoners be Released?

Tuesday 14th February

The Russian Revolution of 1905

MAYNOOTH

Meets every Tuesday at 6.00pm in Maynooth University, Class Hall B

NEWRY

Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm—contact national address for details of venue

WATERFORD

Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in the ATGWU Hall, Keyser St

Thursday 9th February

Northern Ireland—Should the Prisoners be Released?

Thursday 16th February

The Nolans Transport Strike Anniversary

Workers and the Law

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.....

Waterford

Latvian sit-in brings victory

Anger erupts at Shorts

THE SIT-IN on board a Latvian ship in Waterford harbour has finally ended in a victory for the 27 sailors.

The crew of the *m.v. Vyborskij* were only getting the average Latvian rate of less than £60 each per week for the job.

This was despite Waterford Harbour Board's own contract which says the con-

tractor should pay the going rate for Waterford port.

The crew had won an improved rate after a sit-in in early January but the contractors reneged on this deal and the dispute resumed. Attempts were made to iso-

late the sailors by moving the ship out into an estuary and mobilising Gardai in case of "trouble".

Local harbour bosses were prepared to let the Latvian crew rot. John Clancy, the General Manager of the port said the low wages paid on the *m.v. Vyborskij* were none of his

business.

And another board member, Dr Tom Brennan—a life long Labour Party member said Third World wages were not his concern.

But there was a massive outpouring of support by working class people in the city. Many people gave their support on Waterford Local Radio.



Socialist Worker picket supporting Latvian sailors

Organise

There is a strong tradition in Waterford of supporting sailors from other countries—in the past local workers helped to organise Pakistani seamen in the port.

As a result of local support including a protest by the SWM and negotiations by SIPTU, the Latvian crew won a promise of US\$20,000 when their dredging contract is completed.

Socialists and workers in Waterford Glass had organised food parcels and a small boat to go out to the sailors

on the night a settlement was reached.

The sailors had been hoping for more money but the outcome was definitely a victory.

The lessons of this brilliant action by the sailors and show of solidarity by local people will not be lost in Waterford.

It proves that the employ-

ers can be beaten in their attempts to undermine workers by recruiting cheap labour from Eastern Europe. Port bosses in the South East have been trying to do this for a number of years.

The victory also shows that workers can overcome national divisions and stand up for each other against the boss class.

ANGER has erupted at Shorts in Belfast over the company's attempts to impose a pay freeze and introduce new working conditions.

The unions had submitted a claim for a 4 per cent pay increase but Shorts management told shop stewards to accept a pay freeze and cuts in overtime payments.

The workforce at Shorts are rightly infuriated at the pay increase given to Shorts President Roy McNulty—his pay trebled last year to £394,000 plus bonuses. The average worker in Shorts earns around £12,000 per year. Shorts made a profit of £33 million last year.

One MSF member said: "People have been disillusioned and demoralised for a long time because of endless redundancies and there is certainly a mood of anger now."

"After the increase McNulty got we should be entitled to at least 4 per cent. There's a lot of anger beneath the surface in Shorts and this could be an issue where that anger explodes."

The unions at Shorts now need to organise a ballot calling for strike action if Shorts refuse to concede.

Ormeau bakery

TWO HUNDRED workers at Belfast's Ormeau Bakery will be faced with the dole queue if management's plans for redundancies go ahead.

This amounts to one third of the total workforce.

Unions at the bakery should organise resistance to the bosses' plans, which include attacks on working conditions and practices.

SECURICOR

SECURICOR management are paving the way for an offensive after withdrawing union rights for 400 workers.

The GMB is balloting its members for industrial action because of the bosses' decision.

Management hope to weaken any resistance to lay-offs that they want to push through as a result of the ceasefire.

Securicor workers are amongst the lowest paid in Northern Ireland and have to work extensive overtime to make up their pay.

The ballot for industrial

action also includes over 100 security workers at Belfast's international airport. Strike

action could seriously disrupt flights and force the bosses to back down.

C.P.S.U.

WORKERS IN the Department of Agriculture—all members of the Civil and Public Service Union—have won 31 immediate promotions and a commitment to make all temporary posts permanent as soon as upcoming interviews are completed.

The offer came as the workers—all members of

the Civil and Public Service Union—were due to take action in local offices around the country.

A union representative in Agriculture told *Socialist Worker* that the victory was "an indication of what the CPSU can do when the members strongly back one another".

IRISH AVIATION

CLERICAL workers look set to take action over promotions and pay in the Irish Aviation Authority on January 30th.

The Irish Aviation Authority is a semi-state company that controls air traffic.

When it was set up a year ago, promotion opportunities for staff in the Department of Transport, Communications and En-

ergy were worsened.

The IAA promised to introduce a new system for promoting clerical workers, but the CPSU claims little has happened so far.

Strike notice was given to the company in late January, and the unions intend to picket the main airports.

The strike on 30 January is to be followed by work to rule.

SEMESTERISATION:

Students get organised

STUDENTS IN Galway's university and Dublin's UCD will be holding major protests in February against the introduction of "semesterisation".

Both colleges want to introduce semesters to expand on a "pack them in and churn them out" policy.

Queens and Limerick Universities have already gone over to semesters rather than three terms. It has massively increased students' and lecturers' stress.

Exams are held immediately after Xmas. "That means real pressure for both first years, who've got exams while they're still settling in, and mature students trying to look after their families over Xmas and study at the same time" said the deputy president of Queen's Stu-

dents Union, Lynn Carvill.

Donal, a UCD student, said: "It won't suit the vast majority of departments, most of them are against it."

"Staff only heard about it when they found a circular on their desks saying 'semesterisation will be introduced in 1995' - there was no staff consultation."

Saving money

Semesterisation is all about saving the colleges money.

British colleges went over to semesters last year and have dragged thousands more students through the system while the Tories are cutting funds and grants. It is a system of "fast track degrees" where an extra semester is

introduced in Summer and the degree is completed within two years.

During the summer while students study for exams, colleges can also rent empty lecture theatres to big business conferences. Students in University College Galway and in Galway's RTC will be holding a day of action on 9th February. UCD's student union is planning lecture boycotts and a demonstration for 10 February.

All students should support this boycott and force the college authorities to re-think their plans.

The 10,000-strong student demo on November 17 was only a hint of the anger students feel. They are ready to fight back, and it's up to activists in the colleges to organise that anger NOW.

Facts the statistics hide

"RECORDS for strike days lost for 1994 may be the lowest since official figures began to be compiled in 1923".

Anybody who is puzzled by this can be forgiven if the first thing that springs to mind is TEAM and Irish Steel.

According to the CSO these were not strikes—so they do not figure in the statistics.

The fact remains, however, that the TEAM dis-

pute represented a major workers resistance to the bosses plans.

The Central Statistics Office also does not take account of strikes which last less than 24 hours.

So the many brief stoppages by baggage handlers at Dublin Airport are also excluded from the figures.

Neither does the CSO take account of days lost through "lay-offs".

The real picture which the statistics hide is that we are entering a period of massive unrest in industry.

TEAM Aer Lingus

SHOP STEWARDS at Team were deliberately excluded from a meeting arranged between management and trade union officials in late January.

When the meeting was present and refused to leave. Their reason was that the issues being discussed concerned their jobs.

"We have a right to know when it concerns our jobs. We had no intention of leaving" was how one steward described the position. The four stewards were asked several times to leave the room and refused even after union officials took them to one side to reassure them. Management and union officials then decided to abandon the meeting.

Shop floor organisation at TEAM is essential to secure the future for workers conditions and to make sure they are not forced to take more cutbacks. Fair play to the TEAM rank and file.

Knightingales

WORKERS AT Knightingales shop have come out on strike after the dismissal of a new employee.

The woman concerned was employed on a 12 week probationary period and there were no complaints.

On the thirteenth week she was given a weeks notice for apparent irregularities on the

till performance.

No verbal or written warnings had been given before this.

This is not the only issue in the dispute.

Refused

The workers were told that they would be given a pay rise after their probationary period.

Most of them were

due the rise on December 17th.

But they are still waiting.

Over the last two weeks the company has repeatedly refused to enter into talks.

One manager has said that they don't recognise the union.

Collections should be organised around the city's shops to help win this strike.

CATHAL BRUGHA ST. OCCUPIES

HUNDREDS OF students in Cathal Brugha St. recently occupied their reception hall in protest over worsening conditions.

Since coming back in October, they have endured equipment shortages and constant locker break-ins. Things came to a head when college authorities, instead of providing secure lockers and cameras, put forward a permanent I.D. card scheme.

No one was to be allowed in or out of the college unless they had their tag.

"Hardly a week goes by without lockers being broken into" said Dave O'Connor, a student from Cathal Brugha. "The crunch came on January 25th, when seven were broken into in one morning. It was the second time one girl's locker had been broken into this year."

"Equipment shortages are at breaking point. There's only one laser printer available for the whole college, and it's permanently broken down."

"The roof in the Common Room is falling to bits, permanently leaking. The authorities have to fix it".

On top of all this, the canteen closes at 2pm, and the range of food available, in a college of catering, is limited. DITSU student leaders were forced into militant action, with more and more students agreeing that strike action and occupations are the only way to make the college authorities treat demands seriously.

As a result the college authorities conceded to all demands after half a day of action. This is the second

time that DIT management has been beaten by occupations. Fellow students in Aungier St. won increased access to equipment in November after a militant occupation that spilled onto the street.

Students in other colleges

should learn the lesson from DIT.

One occupation is worth weeks of negotiations, and upcoming days of action in UCD. UCG and Galway RTC should follow Cathal Brugha's example—Occupy!

Students, Resistance & Revolution Weekend Conference

Trinity College Dublin, Friday 24th & Saturday 25th February, Cost: £2.00

Highlights:

How do we get socialism? Democratic left debates Eamonn McCann (SWM)

Why is Africa in crisis?—Manny Tanoy (African socialist)

Can there be a socialist revolution?

Tickets, programmes, etc from: PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

ORGANISED BY SOCIALIST WORKER STUDENT SOCIETY

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

inside

The 'new' Loyalists
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Student Unions must fight

COLLEGES IN CRISIS

IRELAND's colleges are in a state of near crisis—and anger amongst the student body is beginning to boil over.

Students in Cathal Brugha St in Dublin occupied their college after they were told to wear name tags to allow the college management cut back on security.

In UCD, UCG and Galway RTC major days of action are planned over new proposals for "semesterisation"—which means cramming in more students and increasing the exam pressure on them. (See Reports Page 11)

Over the last ten years student numbers in Ireland have doubled. But successive governments have not been putting in the money to pay for the expansion.

The Higher Education Authority claims that a £12,000 grant is needed for every additional place in a college. But the state has only been providing an extra £1,993.

Our rulers are trying to produce a skilled and modern workforce on a budget that would make Scrooge look like Santa Claus.

The result is that thousands of students are using campuses that were designed for a few hundred. In Carlow RTC 2,000 students have to depend on a 45 seat library.

In the Post Leaving Cert colleges students are studying in places that are like secondary schools. Often there are no decent libraries, canteens of equipment.

The crisis in education increased dramatically after plans were drawn up for

which serviced Larry Goodman and ignored his tax evasion schemes.

'Units'

SKC told the college authorities that they had to become obsessed with "unit costs"—how many "units" they could squeeze in for the

minimum funding. The colleges that get extra money from the government are those which get more sardines into the sardine can.

SKC also told the colleges that they had to operate like good capitalists and become profit making machines.

Instead of taking educa-

tion seriously the colleges are looking at every area of student life to see how they can make money from students.

Food is no longer provided at a reduced cost in the canteens. Big firms run them and the college authorities get a cut.

Businessmen are even muscling in on the entertainment services to squeeze more money out of students.

In a capitalist society everything is about money. Our rulers do not care much for the quality of education or about people expanding and developing their minds. They just want more square pegs in square holes. As long as they balance the books they are happy.

The fight against overcrowding in the colleges has to be part of a fight for a better society—one where human need rather than profit dictates where resources are spent.

Abolish these fees!

THE GOVERNMENT are hesitating again over abolishing fees. Proinsias de Rossa the leader of Democratic Left is reported to oppose their abolition.

The scandal is that Ireland has the highest fee level in Europe. The people who want to keep these fees are those who defend privilege in Ireland.

At the moment 52% of students are from Farmer, Professional or

Managerial backgrounds. But only one in every 200 students come from an unskilled manual working class background.

The daughters and sons of thousands of PAYE workers cannot go to college because of the fees.

No eighteen or nineteen year old should have to be dependent on their parents for whether they get an education or not.

The fees should be scrapped immediately and paid for by taxing the rich.

FOR A FIGHTING STUDENT UNION

LAST November USI organised one of the biggest marches in Ireland in recent times.

Tens of thousands of students took to the streets to protest at what was happening in the colleges.

Capitalists companies like Heiniken tried to cash in by 'sponsoring' the protest. It was just an advertising ploy to in-

crease their profits from students.

The only people it fooled where the press who tried to claim that the new generation of students were not militant or political like the good old days of the 1960s.

It is absolute nonsense. Students today are more aware of what is going on. They are less willing to put up with crap.

The tragedy has been

that USI did nothing to build on the protests on November 17th.

Instead of marching to the Dáil, it led students on a merry trip around Dublin.

Mobilise

Instead of following up the protests by occupations in local colleges it did nothing.

The student union in many colleges have be-

come a group of hacks who talk to themselves and do little to mobilise students. They pretend to be non-political—but in some colleges they are Fianna Fail supporters who are desperate to stop any militancy.

The students unions need to be changed into fighting organisations. There should be regular assemblies where students can air their grievances.



PHOTO: GARY O'BRIEN

College authorities should be told that if they continue the policy of overcrowding, they are going to face occupations and protests.

To do that we need to have a militant fighting union—one that is not frightened of politics but says openly that it is against the capitalist ethos in education.

Students who are interested in bringing about some real change should get to the Socialist Worker Student Society conference on *Students, Resistance and Revolution* in Trinity College on February. Accommodation is provided in Dublin. Write to us for full details of the programme.