

Socialist Worker

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Zoe's profits mean death on the sites

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p

Solidarity price £1

Courtrooms decide rape victim's fate...

IT'S A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

Deprived of education

Ballyfermot in Dublin is being left behind when it comes to education. A study by Ballyfermot Partnership found that:

- Eleven percent of children in the area leave school early, compared to a national average of three percent;
- One in six local secondary school students are in remedial classes;
- Cherry Orchard and Gallanstown have very few pre-school places;
- Only a tiny minority of students at Ballyfermot Senior College are from the area. Out of 1,330 students at the college, only 66 are from the Dublin 10 postal district in which Ballyfermot is situated.

There is huge poverty in Ballyfermot but the area only hits the headlines over incidents like the Gallanstown riots two years ago.

RADICAL RUAIRI

WHO SAYS Ruairi Quinn's not a radical? One of his first demands on becoming leader of the Labour Party was to call for the Dail's Xmas holidays to be slashed.

The Dail will be shut until late January but Quinn says "every other worker will be back to work early in the New Year".

Quinn is obviously looking for ways to restore Labour's left wing image after their drubbing in the presidential election.

It will take a bit more than cutting TD's holidays though. Taxing the rich, a £5 an hour minimum wage and jailing Charles Haughey would do for starters Ruairi!

Permanently ripping us off

A RECENT courtroom battle, although settled out of court after three days, gives some insight into the life of the Irish rich.

Irish Permanent plc were claiming that a number of transactions by the society's former chief executive, Dr Edmund Farrell, were "devices to extract money" from the society for himself.

In 1975 Farrell was appointed head of the company by the board because it was the last request of his father—the previous managing director—before his death.

Farrell ran the society just like his father before him, as his own personal fiefdom.

The new X-case...

Bigots manipulate rape victim's family

THE RIGHT wing fundamentalists of Youth Defence have sunk to a new low with their manipulation of the family of the 13-year old rape victim.

Before Youth Defence intervened, the girl's parents favoured her having an abortion. On Morning Ireland her father stated:

"We would definitely like this child to have an abortion, and if it's the will of God that we have to go against the Catholic church, then against it we'll go."

But at nine o'clock that night the bigots arrived at the two caravans occupied by the traveller family.

They showed the parents and children a number of photographs of what they called "babies that died in America".

This is the most disgusting example yet of how Youth Defence use their collection of horror photos.

The photos are normally displayed on the streets in an attempt to make women feel guilty about having abortions.

Youth Defence claim they are only thinking of the best interests of the rape victim.

But this "concern" for victims

Youth Defence's 'concern' for victims of child abuse was absent when the group opposed the Stay Safe programme in schools, which is designed to combat abuse.

of child abuse was absent when the group opposed the Stay Safe programme in schools, which is designed to combat abuse.

Their opposition to divorce and contraception shows that Youth Defence want to roll back any gains made by women in the past decade. Their concern is not to defend the 'right to life' but to smash women's rights.



No concern for poverty

THE POVERTY of the 13-year old rape victim's family has brought home to many people the horrific conditions in which many travellers live.

There are almost 4,000 traveller families in Ireland, of whom over 1,000 live on the side of the road with no facilities.

Two thirds of Dublin's 700 traveller families have no electricity.

Ninety five percent of trav-

ellers die before the age of fifty five and babies die at a rate three times the national figure.

Bigots like Peter Scully and Youth Defence have never campaigned for the right to proper halting sites for travellers.

Championed

They have championed the rights of the 'unborn' while ignoring the conditions endured by thousands of born children.

Yet as soon as they heard a traveller girl was going to have an abortion, out came the cheque books to "persuade" her parents to stop her.

Marie Vernon of SPUC dismissed the family's poverty saying "that's just money business" and offering to adopt the child herself!

Members of Youth Defence have now taken the other children in the girl's family 'into care'.

But what will they do about the thousands of other traveller families on the roadside?

Or the lone parents up and down this country who have to survive on benefits as low as £74 a week?

Absolutely nothing!

The bigots' are not concerned with ending poverty.

They simply want to shove their twisted morality down our throats.

In fact their real attitude to travellers was shown when members of Youth Defence started shouting "knacker" at pro-choice campaigners in Dublin recently!

Contract

The Irish Permanent claimed that Farrell was given a 33 year contract so that he was entitled to hold his position until 2012.

This could be terminated by either side with 6-months notice.

A clause stated that the Irish Permanent could terminate the contract only if it agreed to pay Farrell an annual annuity equal to his salary until 2012.

In the 1980s a panic started among the board of directors about what would happen if this was revealed to the public, and members, after the introduction of new disclosure legislation.

Salary

It was agreed to reduce his salary from £160,000 to £60,000, and he would be compensated with a payment of £1.38 million without public disclosure.

This money was to be paid into a secret trust in the Isle of Man in a complicated tax avoidance manoeuvre.

This scheme was not followed through fully because the board was paranoid that information would get into the public domain.

Farrell sold his Foxrock house to the Irish Permanent for £275,000.

The society undertook £450,000 worth of renovation on the house and then sold it back for the original price.

The house is now reckoned to be worth over £2 million.

All this went on while the IP was a non-profit making organisation, dedicated to supplying finance to its members for buying houses.

Albert's Moonie Blues

ALBERT Reynolds has been abducted by the Moonies.

The former Taoiseach claims he did not know a keynote speech he was making in America was for the religious cult, but he cannot back out because of a contract he signed.

The cult's leader, Sun Myung Moon, believes the key to world peace lay in recognising that people's sexual organs are owned by their marital partners. De Valera would be proud!

Spreading low-fat lies

CAN'T believe it's not butter?

Well don't believe it's fat-free either, is the conclusion of the latest study into margarine.

In a bid to raise profits, food companies have put millions into marketing

certain products as "low fat".

In the case of margarine this may turn out to be a dangerous lie.

Solid

The study by Dr Walter Willett, a Harvard University nutritionist, shows

that cheap solid margarine contains high levels of what is known as "trans fat".

Dr Willett says this appears to be the "worst type of fat" and that this is not known by most customers.

Cheap solid margarine

contains 17 percent trans fat while softer versions have slightly less.

Low fat spreads may also contain the fat in large proportions.

Trans fat raises the level of bad cholesterol and reduces good cholesterol, increasing the risk of heart attacks.

what we think

13 years old, raped and harried by the Courts... The reality behind 'post-liberal Ireland'

HOW COULD the courts and the politicians have spent weeks discussing whether a 13 year old girl who was raped should be forced into becoming a mother?

In any decent society, this tragic case would have been dealt with immediately. But in Ireland in 1997, the girl became entangled in ridiculous laws which allowed the state to discuss her future. If she had come from a wealthy family, she would have been flown over to Britain to have an abortion in a private clinic.

She might have found the space to recover from the hurt and pain inflicted by the rape. It is only because she is poor that she found herself at the mercy of the Irish state.

And that state is hypocritical when it comes to abortion. Each year at least 5,000 Irish women travel to Britain for an abortion. Ireland is no different to any other industrial society.

Marched

Unwanted pregnancies happen and women from widely differing viewpoints feel they cannot go through with them.

No bishop or bigot who wants to debate when life begins has a right to tell those women how they must live their lives.

In 1992, tens of thousands of Irish people recognised that. They marched to insist that a 14 year old rape victim be allowed to travel to Britain for an abortion.

They forced the Supreme Court to accept that a woman who is suicidal has a right to terminate her pregnancy.

However, while the movement in 1992 was strong

enough to win the principle of abortion, it could not get it implemented.

Instead the issue was thrown back onto the laps of the politicians in Dail Eireann who have delayed and bent over backwards to appease the right wing in Irish society.

They promised to legislate on the 'substantive issue' after a referendum to restrict access to abortion was defeated in 1992 and then did nothing.

Scandalously, Labour and Democratic Left went along with this abject hypocrisy.

This is why we have had to witness the barbarism of parliament and the court debating whether a 13 year old rape victim should be compelled to be a mother.

Convinced

Worse, however, is to come if we do not start to organise. The vote for Mary McAleese and Dana has convinced the Fianna Fail leadership that they should accede to the demand of SPUC and Youth Defence for a new referendum.

If it happens, this referendum will be a deliberate attempt to roll back the principle that was established in the Supreme Court judgement of 1992.

This is the reality behind the talk of a 'post-liberal Ireland'.

But they can be defeated. There are more people in Ireland today who are consciously pro-choice than there were in 1992.

There are more women who have joined the labour force and feel they have every right to control their own bodies.

Between 1991 and 1996 more Irish women joined the labour force than all of the previous twenty years.

What is needed is a militant pro-choice movement that fights to turn back the drift to the right.

LABOUR:



Hello Mr Blair, Goodbye workers

"The working class on which Labour has traditionally relied for support has changed unalterably over the past 25 years and in its fractured state no longer provides the

building blocks for a formidable movement."

So says Pat Upton TD, the voice of New Labour under Ruairi Quinn in a recent letter to the *Irish Times*.

Instead of learning from their mistakes during the Adi Roche Presidential campaign, the Labour Party looks set to compound them.

Ruairi Quinn wants to model himself on Tony Blair and become even more 'moderate'.

But Labour is missing out on a central element of Tony Blair's success—seventeen years of Tory rule.

Most opinion polls show that on major issues related to privatisation, the health service or a minimum wage the British population are to the left of Tony Blair.

Condition

A majority of British workers still support him—but on condition that he eventually delivers on their expectations.

When he does not, there will be major confrontations.

Quinn already has a massive history of betrayal behind him.

His first budget as Minister for Finance cut the taxes on the rich and even the *Sunday Business Post*

dubbed it "a bourgeois budget".

The crisis in Ireland's weak and puny Labour Party can only be set to continue.

There are tens of thousands of workers today who want to see a minimum wage of £5 an hour, who want to tax the rich and see corrupt politicians in jail.

Network

But their voice will not be heard from Labour.

It is now up to socialists to connect these aspirations to a force that argues for revolutionary change in Ireland.

The first step in that is building a network around a paper like *Socialist Worker*.

A socialist paper can spread the mood of resistance and outline the steps that can win.

This is why we urge all our supporters to take at least five copies of the paper into their workplace and college to help build the network that will replace New Labour and establish a fighting workers' party.

**Will you take
Socialist
Worker
to five
people?**



Do you know friends, workmates or fellow students who might like to read *Socialist Worker*?

Socialist Worker is the number one socialist paper carrying socialist arguments and news of struggles.

Why not help it get a bigger circulation and spread socialist ideas further? Take 5 copies and see if you can sell them. You only pay for copies you actually sell.

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Cheques/POs payable to Socialist Worker
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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH SOUTH KOREAN SOCIALIST

How the Asian Tiger came crashing down

SOUTH KOREA, the largest of the "Asian Tiger" economies, is in the grip of a ferocious economic crisis.

The stock market has fallen to its lowest level for five years. Five of the top 30 giant corporations (chaebols) which dominate the economy have gone bust.

The crisis could dwarf the financial collapse which has hit Thailand, Indonesia and other south east Asian countries recently.

Some experts believe it could tip Japan, the second largest economy in the world, into recession and precipitate a global slowdown.

The South Korean ruling pro-business party is splintering in the run up to elections for the president of the country in December.

Workers' anger, which exploded in mass strikes in January of this year, is rising.

This is the country Tanaiste and PD leader Mary Harney hailed as a model for Ireland to follow.

Most politicians and commentators thought countries like South Korea offered a magical route to permanent high levels of economic growth.

Socialist Worker talked to HYUN, a South Korean socialist, about the end of this "South Korean miracle".

What has been the impact of the economic crisis?

"IT IS not just economic experts talking about the crisis. They said a few months ago that it was just a dip.

"Now every newspaper and every news programme has a lead story on the crisis. It is discussed in every home, in every pub and in every workplace.

"The mass of people see something is deeply wrong. The bankruptcies have caused a very big psychological impact. People knew that Hanbo steel maker, the first company to go bust, was very corrupt.

"Most people thought its collapse was a one off.

"Kia motors, South Korea's second largest car maker, is the largest corporation to go down so far.

"Kia was held up as a model of good management. One year ago all the bosses said we should copy Kia. The bankruptcy has caused a huge shock.

"Kia borrowed a massive amount of money to finance expansion. When it went down it threatened to bring down top banks as well.

"In 1992 there was a mild recession in South Korea.

"A number of middling corporations went bankrupt but the banks could manage the bad debt.

"The situation is much more serious today. The government has had to step in with special loans to the banks to keep them afloat.

"It even had to break with its ideology of privatisation and take over the running of Kia-effectively nationalisation.

"It is shocking for everybody and it has created a scare in the financial markets. Any sign or rumour of a company having a minor financial problem, even if it is making profits, leads to the banks clamping down on their credit.

"That is leading to bankruptcies of even profitable companies. So the crisis gets

worse. It's complete madness.

"The bankruptcies have hit far more workers than just those who work at the affected companies.

"For example, many customers ordered goods from a major retailer, Haitai, and paid in advance.

"But when they went to pick them up a couple of days later they found all the branches were closed because the company had filed for bankruptcy that morning."

How has the workers' movement developed since the mass strikes in January?

"THE LEVEL of anger is still very high.

"The government of President Kim Young Sam deferred implementing the labour law making it easier to sack workers on account of the mass strikes.



"The level of anger after January's mass strikes is still very high"

"Now he has just railroaded them through.

"The strikes had the potential to destroy the labour law and break the back of President Kim Young Sam's authoritarian regime.

But the trade union leaders were able to contain workers' anger. Different sections of workers were called on strike at different times. The strikes were kept largely passive.

"In the summer there was a wage dispute. Union leaders were able to convince the workers that it was not possible to win big wage increases and maintain jobs.

"Workers said we will defend jobs rather than win higher wages.

"The employers were not that confident. They were still in therapy from the mass strikes. So they offered wage increases which were not that bad.

"Now the economic crisis means the situation is getting worse for workers.

They are looking for change and are getting more angry.

"One indication of that is the fact that all the politicians, including the ruling party, feel forced to talk the language of reform.

"There have been a number of corruption cases involving top businessmen and politicians, including

President Kim Young Sam's son who was sent to prison.

"They showed the public that only the few are making money and controlling and running the society."

What impact has the crisis had in the run up to December's presidential elections?

"THE ECONOMIC crisis is causing sharp splits among bosses and within the regime.

"President Kim Young Sam was elected in 1992 as the first civilian president for

three decades.

"He was popular even though he was a candidate for the New Korea Party, the core of which generals set up under the military dictatorship.

"Now Kim Young Sam, the New Korea Party and its new presidential candidate, LEE HOI CHANG, are deeply unpopular.

"A lot of mainstream papers say the decline started in August when there was the scandal of Lee Hoi Chang's son dodging the draft.

"But that merely sped up the decline in popularity. The January mass strikes turned workers away from the ruling party.

"Now a section of the New Korea Party has split away and formed the New National Party. The New National Party is fielding its own candidate.

"President Kim Young Sam has now resigned from the ruling party.

"This really is the thieves falling out.

"The front runner for president is KIM DAE JUNG. He was a democracy campaigner during the 1970s and 1980s.

"The military regime sentenced him

to death, commuted to life imprisonment in 1980 following the Kwanguju uprising" (see box).

Visiting

"Kim Dae Jung has moved to the right. He has even chosen the man who was prime minister when he was sentenced to death to be his running mate.

"But he is also visiting trade union offices to try and get workers on his side.

"The Federation of Korean Trade Unions, the state trade union federation set up in the 1950s, was very close to endorsing him for president.

"The Korea Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) is a semi-legal trade union federation.

"The chairperson of the KCTU, KWON YOUNG GIL, is standing in the election.

"It is a step forward that there is a candidate who is connected to the trade unions. But we are saying the campaign should focus on raising workers' confidence, not appealing for middle class support which is what Kwon wants.

"Whoever wins the election in December there will be a big gap between the free market policies they follow and workers' hopes for a bet-

HISTORY FACTFILE

1953 KOREA was partitioned between the pro-Russian North and pro-US South after a war between client states of the superpowers which claimed four million Korean lives.

1961 GENERAL Park Chung Hee seized power. The military regime held down workers, directed investment in the economy and targeted export markets.

1980 THE military, with the connivance of US advisers, killed 1,000 workers and students when it suppressed the Kwanguju pro-democracy rebellion.

1987 A WAVE of strikes shook the regime. The generals called elections to try to win wider support for the government. Roh Tae Woo won and was forced to ease some restrictions on political activity and to allow wages to rise.

1993 KIM Young Sam became president but, despite his promises, kept the repressive laws of the military era. Socialists were thrown in jail.

1997 MASS strikes, economic crisis and collapse of the ruling party.



President Kim Young Sam's son under arrest for bribery

Are the Provos about to split?

THE LEADERSHIP of Sinn Fein is attempting to play down the split led by IRA members in South Armagh and Louth. But it is clearly worried.

In a move designed to appease the dissidents Sinn Fein, councillor Francie Molloy told a meeting in Armagh last week. "If the talks fail, the IRA could go back to what it knows best."

So far the dissidents have lost the initiative after a promised appearance of a sister of dead hunger striker Bobby Sands to present their views failed to materialise.

But it is the gap between the expectations sown by the Sinn Fein leadership and the reality of the peace process that is fuelling the splits.

Talking

For the past year Sinn Fein leaders have been talking as if a united Ireland was inevitably about to happen in 15 or 20 years' time.

But significantly the

The unarmed strategy was based on cobbling together a coalition with the SDLP and Fianna Fail based on a 'nationalist consensus'

emphasis was on the British and Irish governments being the "engines of change".

The strategy being followed by Adams flows from the failure of the IRA's armed struggle.

In an internal document circulated in 1994, the ceasefire was based on a recognition that "republicans at this time and on their own do not have the strength to achieve the end goal".

The unarmed strategy was based on cobbling together a coalition with the SDLP and Fianna Fail based on a "nationalist consensus".

Yet, the illusions in the SDLP and Fianna Fail are misplaced. SDLP and Fianna Fail are only interested in an internal settlement in the North which gives the Catholic middle class some recognition but leaves the state intact.

At the SDLP conference on 15 November, there were explicit calls from the platform for Sinn Fein to recognise that a united Ireland is an unrealistic demand.

Obvious

Despite obvious signs that the SDLP and Fianna Fail are not pursuing a united Ireland as a "realistic" goal, Sinn Fein's alliance with them is forcing the republicans to turn its back on radical change.

Gerry Adams' backing of Mary McAleese, who stands for pushing back the "liberal agenda" in the South, is one indication of this.

So too is the open support being offered by Sinn Fein in the South to the minority Fianna Fail government.

The main aim of the Sinn Fein leaders today is to re-position their party so that they can win support from the growing Catholic middle class and replace the SDLP as the main Catholic party.

But as they go further down this road, many of their supporters will ask if this is a sufficient reward for the sacrifices of the last two decades.



■ Adams and McGuinness—playing down the split

The socialist alternative

THE MODERN republican movement grew out of the revolt against the Northern state in Catholic working class areas in the late 1960s and early 1970's.

Catholic areas suffered massive levels of poverty, unemployment and bad housing.

The source of the problem was the sectarian state run by the Unionist Party.

The solution offered by the Provisionals was to force the British out and destroy the

Northern State, by a return to the armed struggle.

"Getting rid of the border" was seen as the first step to addressing unemployment and poverty.

During the years of armed struggle, the Provos could occasionally refer to the "32 county socialist republic" they hoped for after the British were forced out.

But today the emphasis has shifted to an "equality agenda" which centres around demands for Irish language schools, Irish

flags and creating neutral spaces in public buildings.

Issues

Catholics have every right to win these issues but they hardly address the enormous poverty suffered by working class people.

By contrast the struggles which are emerging over the continuing attacks on public spending by Labour, against student fees and privatisation of the civil service, offer the potential for building unity

among working class Protestants and Catholics.

Such struggles point in the direction of challenging the British government and the bosses in the North.

They also hold out the possibility of breaking down sectarianism and winning Protestants away from loyalism.

Republican politics, which puts the emphasis on cultural symbols and recognition of different allegiances, points in the opposite direction.

Repeating mistakes of the seventies

THE dissidents inside the IRA criticised the acceptance of the Mitchell Principles, which commit the IRA to giving up the armed struggle.

But beyond that, they have no strategy to take the republicans forward.

Up to now the main republican opponents of the peace process have come from Republican Sinn Fein.

This grouping is attempting to return to traditional republican values.

Openly

Often this has meant embracing more openly right wing politics.

Instead of talking about any social change, RSF puts its emphasis on re-

gional and local governments.

One of their solutions to unemployment, for example, is to advocate "national conscription".

Like their counterparts in Sinn Fein, they have little difficulty in keeping links with right wing Irish Americans.

Although they may gain a support by seeming to criticise the new direction being taken by Sinn Fein, IRA dissidents and RSF will also seek their own accommodation with capitalism.

In the seventies, for example, the RSF leader Ruairi O Bradaigh attempted to pursue the same sort of strategy that Gerry Adams is pursuing today.

Far from offering a way out of the dilemma of republicanism, they are simply offering a re-run.

in brief

★ **THE NORTH'S 'justice' system** has shown very clearly whose side it's on over the past few weeks.

Lurgan republican Colin Duffy (29) has been arrested three times on charges of assaulting police officers as part of what his solicitor calls an organised campaign of RUC harassment.

Duffy was first re-arrested only days after he had been released from jail after the RUC tried unsuccessfully to connect him with the killing of two policemen.

Before that the RUC tried to frame Colin Duffy on another murder charge where the main witness was a loyalist gun runner.

His latest arrest in mid-November prompted riots in Armagh and Lurgan.

Duffy's appalling treatment contrasts sharply with the dropping of charges against two men accused of murdering Portadown Catholic Robert Hamill in April.

This means that out of six initial suspects only one is now left to appear before a court and he may well be let off.

★ **THE LABOUR** government wants to charge some of the most vulnerable people in society up to £10 a day for their care services.

People using home helps or day care facilities will soon have to pay. They will be means-tested and charged if they have an income of over £102 a week.

A spokesperson for the North-West Community Network said: "This includes people receiving Income Support, the

Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance."

These scandalous proposals will condemn many old people to a life of even greater misery. Labour says it has to

bring in the charges because it is short of money.

But this was not in evidence when Princess Anne opened a £23 million RUC station in Derry in November.

★ **STRESS** at work damages workers' mental health and causes between 30 percent and 40 percent of all sick leave, according to the Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health.

And for every day lost to disputes, 30 working days are lost to stress, NIAMH says.

A simple solution: let's up the strikes and fight for better pay and conditions

Socialist Worker guarantees that management will wear the only stressed out faces around.

PEADAR O'GRADY: Victory as charges are thrown out

THE District Court has thrown out charges under the Public Order Act that were brought against Dr Peadar O'Grady, the former election candidate of the Socialist Workers Party in the Dublin South East Constituency.

This is a small, but important victory for socialists.

This case has established that the Public Order Act cannot be used to prevent election meetings.

Dr O'Grady was arrested because he spoke out about corruption at an election meeting held outside the Rathmines Shopping Centre.

He was told by a Garda that "he could not say things like that".

On the same day that he was speaking, Bertie Ahern had a street in Ennis closed off while he made a speech.

Yet no one called him "offensive" or "frantic".

The Peadar O'Grady case has also established that the Gardaí must produce witnesses to show that any behaviour is considered "offensive"—they cannot simply rely on their own judgement.

In a fully democratic society these type of charges would not even be considered.

Yet in Ireland today, this outrageous prosecution had to be resisted.

The trial of Dr O'Grady was in reality a political trial of the Socialist Workers Party as a whole. It was an attempt to intimidate the party from openly exposing the political establishment. But it failed.

In order to cover up these political manoeuvres, the DPP also attempted to prosecute Dr Peadar O'Grady for assaulting a police officer inside his own station in broad daylight.

There is a long history of making charges against political activists. It was claimed, for example, that the reason why Nicky Kelly, from the infamous Sallins train robbery case, was beaten black and blue inside a station was that he too "had assaulted a policeman".

Reprimand

Once again, the charges of assault and of disorderly behaviour were dropped against Peadar O'Grady.

In the end he was only told to pay £200 into the court poor box as a reprimand for his behaviour in the police station.

If there was real justice, it should have been the police officers who were tried.

They openly admitted that they refused to take a statement of complaint against Peadar, claiming that he was in no fit state to make such a complaint.

When police officers can get away with these lame excuses, it makes a mockery of our sup-



■ Peadar O'Grady

posed right to decent treatment in a police station.

The SWP had little expectation that justice was going to be meted out by a district court judge.

Judges are chosen by the political establishment. Their power rests on the muscle of the police force.

Few of them ever contemplate the "appalling vista" that the boys in blue might be lying through their teeth.

Given all this, the fact that Dr O'Grady walked free from five charges placed against him by the DPP is a stunning victory.

The SWP is under no doubt

that Dr O'Grady only got off because of the massive public pressure that built up in his support.

Thousands of trade unionists signed petitions, passed resolutions and donated to his legal defence campaign.

Several important unions backed a demonstration in his support in September.

Without this support from the broader labour movement, the case could have gone the other way.

The SWP openly expresses its thanks to all those trade unionists who came to our defence.

It is now high time that those involved in organised corruption be tried rather than those to attempt to expose it.

If the DPP had shown a fraction of the same enthusiasm in prosecuting Charles J Haughey and Michael Lowry for tax evasion their cases would have been heard long ago.

Instead we have had to witness the disgraceful spectacle of Haughey turning up for the inauguration of Mary McAleese.

There should also be a full scale inquiry into the individuals who ran the Ansbacher Account which organised political bribery and tax evasion.

However, little progress will be made on these issues until the organised strength of workers is brought to bear on the political establishment.

The lies of the media

IF YOU got a different impression of the outcome of the case, it may have been because you were reading the official press.

In a scurrilous report, the *Irish Times* ran a story that selectively quoted police evidence in an attempt to smear Dr O'Grady—even though he got off.

Despite Dr O'Grady walking free from four important charges, it ran the headline "Dail candidate guilty—but charge struck out".

Some months ago the same paper deliberately leaked the name of Dr O'Grady's workplace—even though that had never been mentioned in court.

This time around, the *Irish Times* failed to report vital items of evidence which showed:

■ That the police had refused to accept a complaint from Dr O'Grady about his treatment at the station.

■ That property was taken from Dr O'Grady which was not returned.

■ That the judge had to publicly reprimand the police for disobeying his instruction not to confer with witnesses who had already given their testimony.

■ That the police could produce no eyewitness who was a passer-by to claim that Dr O'Grady was being offensive.

■ That several glaring contradictions emerged between the police officers—even though they had six months to prepare their case.

Instead the court report was turned into a PR exercise for police officers who want to retail the most salacious bits of evidence in an attempt to smear a person who got off.

It is clear that papers like the *Irish Times* are at the service of the establishment.

To get the facts, make sure you get *Socialist Worker*.

PEADAR O'GRADY DEFENCE CAMPAIGN
Victory Social
Friday 19th December, Plough Bar (upsairs),
Marlboro St Dublin, 8.00pm, Tickets £4.00
All proceeds to Legal Defence Campaign

by COLM O RIAIN

'YOU CAN make profits
but not from their

Death

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

"YOU CAN make profits from the sweat of workers but not from their blood and lives". This is what Judge Peter Kelly told Liam Carroll, the boss of Zoe Developments.

A 22 year old Mayo man, James Masterson, had just been killed on a Zoe Development site in Dublin's Charlotte Quay.

This is the third death on Zoe sites since 1991. During that time Zoe had been successfully prosecuted on 12 occasions for safety offenses.

More than half the 6,000 new apartments built in Dublin during the building boom of the past six years have been Zoe developments.

Zoe boss Liam Carroll snapped up derelict sites near the quays and developed apartment blocks using the cheapest techniques and corner-cutting to finish on time.

The tiny apartments were designed to barely cover the regulations.

For example the staircases were so narrow it was impossible to get a single bed into an upstairs apartment. It had to be brought in by a crane.

Most of these one-bedroomed flats are bought by landlords letting to tenants at high rents. These "investors" can make a killing. Some apartments have risen in value by 50 percent in three years.

But the workers who built them risked their lives and limbs.

In evidence to the High Court Health and Safety Authority inspector Vincent McGauren said he found numerous violations on Zoe's Charlotte Quay sites.

These included a failure to provide a safe way of getting in and out of the sites, no preventative measures to stop injury by falling materials, a lack of fencing around pits and openings, inadequate scaffolding and untested and unexamined lifting gear.

But for the workers at Zoe and other building sites, these indictments are only a small part of what is happening on the building sites of the Celtic Tiger.



■ Zoe's site at Charlotte Quay where James Masterson was killed

Why two kids w a father for Chr

PAT, a Zoe worker, spoke to *Socialist Worker*:

"We were all appalled by the death of Jim Masterson. Jim was a roof cladder. He fell 25 feet onto a concrete staircase.

He fell through a large hole in the roof that is to be a skylight.

It should have been guarded to stop people falling through. Instead it was only covered in a sheet of polythene. His death was the result of total negligence by Zoe.

If the basic safety measures

were in place his two kids have a father for Christmas.

Conditions generally palling but the Zoe emp to buy workers when th wrong.

A man fell off a scaff months ago, again no guards and rails. He was injured. Carroll says "Don't report it, I'll fix it you right."

Even now, things are li ter. Just today I saw a cra ing bricks. Not of a pal properly secured, just on

Scams that rip off the workers

SUB-CONTRACTING is one of the scams used to deprive construction workers of their rights.

John told us how it undermines conditions.

The big fraud in the industry is the RCTIs or sub-contractors. This replaced the C45 self-employed and was supposed to stop the abuse.

To be a genuine sub-contractor you must provide your own materials, have a fixed place of business, have insurance and a VAT number.

But men are forced to be classed as RCT1 sub-contractors when they are really just work-

ers without rights.

Sean agrees: Up to 15 perc are forced to work

Basically the e you to be classed

tractor so he do provide safety e

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only bricklayers v contractors". S

brickies fought manded to be tak

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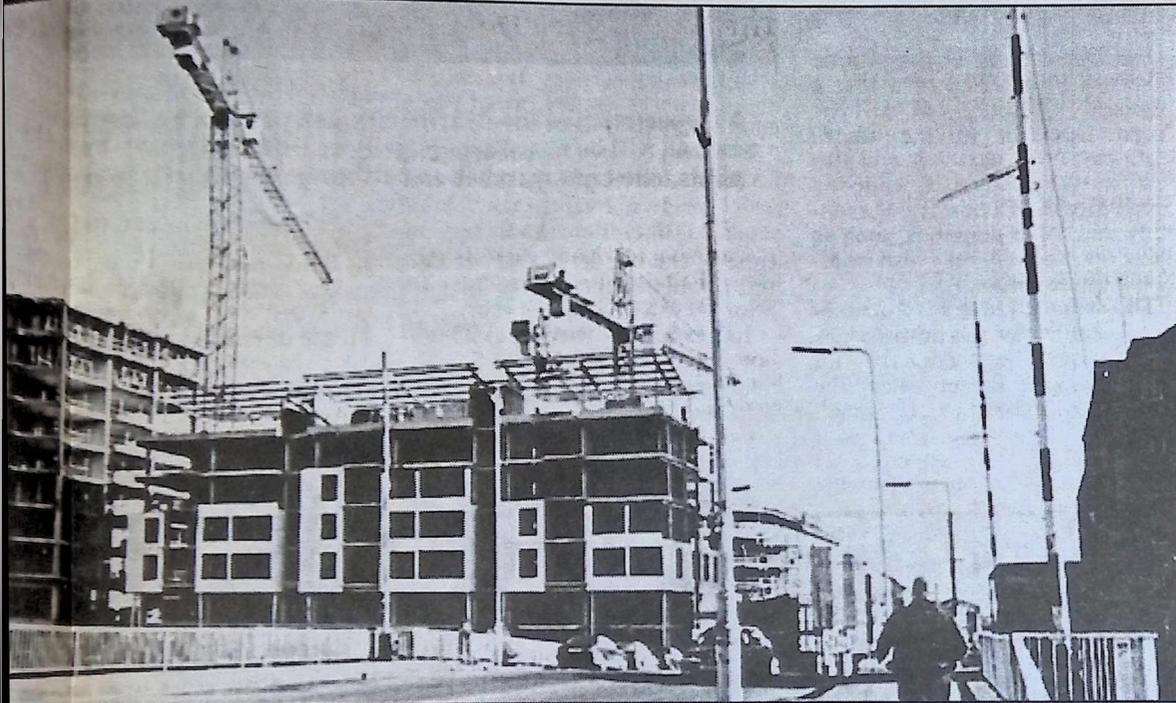
Court the eventual

the hourly rate fo

employ direct

profits from the sweat of workers
 their blood and lives'—Judge Peter Kelly

on the sites



How the building bosses get away with murder

THE BUILDING bosses risking death on their sites know that the maximum fine for causing an accident is only £1,500.

In 1990, Charles Whelan from Offaly was killed on a Zoe site when a crane collapsed and fell on top of him. Zoe was convicted of five breaches of the safety laws but fines totalling only £1,400 were imposed.

In 1994, John Pullen from Clondalkin fell thirty feet to his death on a Zoe site. But again the company was fined only £1,250 for three convictions under the safety laws.

The boom in the Celtic Tiger means employers are willing to put up with these fines rather than introduce proper safety measures.

According to the chairperson of the Health and Safety Authority, hotels can be built in Dublin today in less than six months. The companies who order them are even taking in booking before the building is completed.

Builders are rushing the jobs and not worrying about fines for breaches of safety.

The bosses' organisation, the Construction Industry Federation is encouraging this state of affairs. They have hired a legal team to get injunctions against workers who try to protest against the system of subcontracting.

And it was the CIF who provided a safety service to Zoe—even though the company refused to recognise elected safety reps from its own staff.

Meanwhile, the Fianna Fail Minister for Justice, who prattles on about "zero tolerance" is turning a blind eye.

There is no talk about "getting tough" with the building bosses because many of them give big donations to the Fianna Fail party.

Meanwhile more workers will die on the sites unless strong, effective union organisation is established.

Is won't have Christmas

...his two kids would
 ...er for Christmas.
 ...s generally are ap-
 ... the Zoe empire tries
 ...rkers when things go
 ...ll off a scaffold a few
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 ...port it. I'll fix it. I'll see
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 ...day I'm
 ...s. Now it's
 ...secure!

of plywood.
 That could have given way and sent bricks raining down on people below.
 Zoe is not the only rotten apple. At the Sisks sites where I've worked the canteens are savage. It's revolting to try and eat your meal there.
 I've worked in sites in places like Lucan building a housing scheme. You're out in a field with no shelter, no canteen, no toilet.
 You sit on bricks to eat your meal, if it rains you try and find shelter under scaffolding.

TAKING RISKS FOR PROFIT

Dave told *Socialist Worker* about some cost-cutting tricks used by employers like Zoe.

Dangerous scaffolding is a big problem. A qualified scaffolder will hold certificates from FAS. You need to know what you're doing when erecting scaffolding to make it safe.
 But during the summer the sub-contractors sack the qualified men and recruit students to work cheaply on sites erecting scaffolding. No wonder there's collapsing scaffolding.

Union action can win!

The death of Jim Masterson prompted workers on Zoe sites to threaten strike action on all Zoe sites.

Pat takes up the story:
 After three deaths we said enough is enough. We contacted Eric Fleming of the SIPTU construction branch and together we called a shut down of all Zoe sites from the Monday morning.

This did the trick. Over the weekend Carroll contacted the union wanting to do a deal.

What we won from that was important in its own right but more important for what we could do if we really organised the sites with 100 percent trade unionism.

He was forced to concede the election of a Health and Safety Rep from the workforce. Zoe has always been anti-union and now he's having to deal with unionised workers.

He promised improvements in the basic safety conditions. He also promised flushing lavatories, not the chemical portaloos and canteen facilities.

We need a big unionisation drive around the sites. And SIPTU needs to have a big recruitment drive among the general operatives.

It's time we began to organise for decent safety and conditions throughout the construction industry.

Socialist Worker is your paper

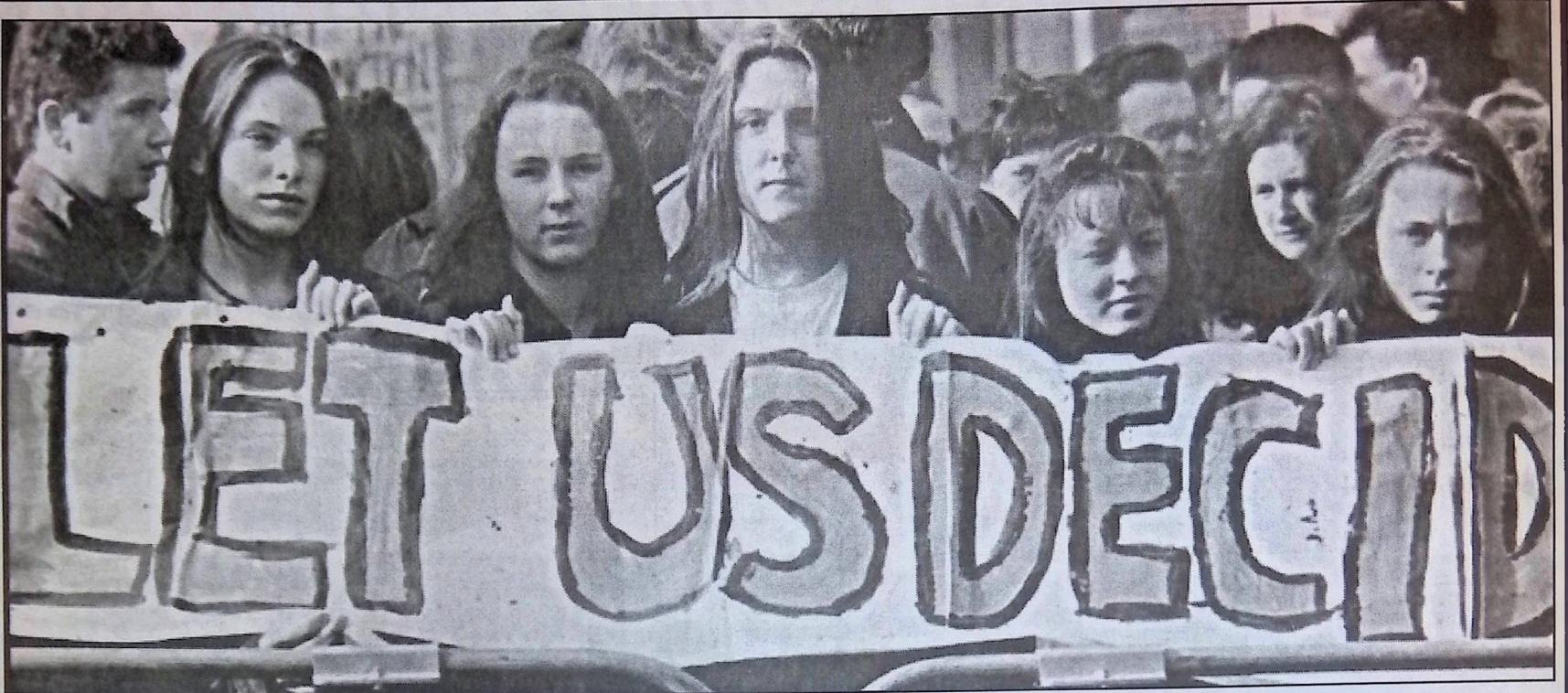
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ABORTION:



Why it's a woman's right to choose

by GORETTI HORGAN

The case of the 13 year old pregnant as a result of rape has brought the issue of abortion back into the headlines.

But difficult, even tragic circumstances causing women to seek an abortion is an everyday reality for women in Ireland, North as well as South. About 20 women leave this island every day to terminate pregnancies in Britain.

According to British government figures, around 5,000 women from the South and 2,000 from the North, have abortions there every year. That's 40 women a week from the North, 100 women a week from the South.

In the thirty years since abortion was legalised in Britain, at least 150,000 Irish women - perhaps more—have terminated pregnancies there. For all of them it was a difficult, even tragic, time.

For well-off women who go to London regularly, it need not be so difficult. They have the money, no one is surprised at them heading off on a trip and they know their way around the airports and tube stations.

For working class women, however, the lengths to which some have to go in order to get the money together, the lies they are forced to tell employers and family can make the journey a distressing one.

It is impossible to talk about abortion anywhere in the world without talking about social class. In Ireland, this is particularly so.

Take the case of the 13 year old rape victim. It was the background she came from that meant her family couldn't just bring her off to England themselves to have the pregnancy terminated.

The EHB, and therefore the state, would have to pay and that created legal problems.

It was because she comes from the most marginalised part of the working class that the identity of her family was not protected. Photos of her poverty ridden home were published in the press.

And it was this publicity that led Youth Defence to her family's door with their lurid magnified photographs of aborted foetuses.

They set up a fund to provide pre and post natal care for the pregnant raped child. But post natal care lasts only three to four months and bringing a child into the world is a lifetime commitment.

Where will Youth Defence be when the girl is 16 or 17, looking for a babysitter to let her do the things that 16/17 year olds do?

Did Youth Defence show her parents photographs of what continuing the pregnancy could do to a child's body?

Did they show them photographs of the panic and terror that a child would feel in labour? Or the agony that giving birth could cause to a 13 year old whose bones are still not fully grown?

If the girl herself wanted to continue the pregnancy, she should, of course have every material and financial assistance to allow her as decent a teenage life as possible under the circumstances.

This would mean considerably more money than lone parents' benefit, plus full-time child care to allow her finish her schooling.

It is worth noting that others who have been in her situation and gone ahead with the pregnancy have received little or no extra help from the state.

But if she didn't want to continue the pregnancy only a savage society would compel her to bring to term a pregnancy which is the result of a brutal violation of her most personal core.

Of course, the foetus is a potential human being, but its life cannot be compared in any way to that of the 13 years

old carrying it. Even people who are personally against abortion can see that this is the case.

Caller after caller to radio chat shows said "I'm totally against abortion but I think it's only fair in this case that she be allowed one".

This is an example of people acknowledging that there is a fundamental difference between the personhood of the pregnant girl and the potential personhood of the foetus.

It points to the fallacy of the anti-abortionist argument that it is about "killing

that 300,000 women die every year from backstreet abortions. Why do they do it?

They do it because what makes us human, what distinguishes us from animals, is our ability to control and shape the world around us, our environment, even our bodies.

If we have epilepsy, we take anti-convulsants; if a kidney malfunctions, we use dialysis machines, or transplants. If we are short or long sighted we do not have to suffer the consequences, we go and get glasses.

So it is that women seek to control their lives, their bodies. If they fall pregnant and feel that to continue the pregnancy would wreck their lives, they do what it is human to do and try to take some

control back.

One of the biggest changes in Irish society over the last twenty years has been the huge numbers of women going to work outside the home.

It is the developments in the technology of reproduction which has allowed them to do this.

Contraception, especially the pill, has allowed women to plan when they have babies to fit in with the rest of their lives.

Assisted conception, like artificial insemination and in vitro fertilisation (IVF) can help women who have difficulties getting pregnant.

Abortion is very much the last resort for women faced with an unwanted pregnancy. But is an option for more and more women here.

The extent to which a woman can have access to all these things is, however, dependent on the class she is from.

While things have improved considerably in relation to family planning, IVF is available only to very well off women who can get thousands of pounds together. It is not available at all to lesbian couples or single women.

Abortion is available only to those able to get £400-£500 together.

Many working class women, especially those living on benefits or low pay, simply cannot get the money together and are forced to continue unwanted pregnancies.

The fight for abortion rights in Ireland has always been part of a wider battle to break this country away from the culture of the fifties.

No one should forget what that meant. Hypocritical priests ordering parents to turn their pregnant daughters out onto the street.

Single pregnant women locked in mother and child homes, like the Magdalen Laundries where they were used as slave labour and their children sold off for adoption to wealthy Americans.

Only the zealots of Youth Defence and Family & Life want to go back to that.

People are beginning to face up to the fact that women have always had abortions. Rich women had them safely in the clean beds of private clinics while working class women risked death with backstreet or self-induced abortions.

But, anti-abortionists only started to shout about it when working class women started to have safe abortions too.

Women will always try to end intolerable pregnancies.

The question is whether only rich women will be able to have them safely.

This is why socialists argue that whatever people's personal views on abortion, they should support a woman's right to choose abortion free on the health service.

Where will Youth Defence be when the girl is 16 or 17, looking for a babysitter to let her do the things that 16/17 year olds do? Did Youth Defence show her parents photographs of what continuing the pregnancy could do to a child's body?

human life"

No matter how great anyone's dependence on other people, it is not in any way similar to that of the foetus.

If a parent doesn't want to look after their disabled child, for example, others can do so.

But a woman cannot give a foetus to some one else to turn it into a baby. Only she, only her body, can turn the foetus into a baby.

That is a totally unique relationship and one which should never be forced on a woman, still less a child.

Women have always gone to great lengths to terminate pregnancies, even risking their lives in backstreet abortions.

The World Health Organisation estimates

behind the headlines

US threatens another Gulf war for oil

THE UNITED States is flexing its military muscles again. Last month it tried to persuade us that it was sending a fleet to the Middle East to protect everyone from Saddam Hussein's deadly biological weapons.

In reality, Iraq is a broken country where tens of thousands of people have died of starvation as a result of sanctions imposed by the UN.

The real interest of the US in the region is oil. The Gulf War in 1990 clearly demonstrates this.

The crusade launched against Saddam Hussein after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait was claimed to be for the restoration of Kuwaiti democracy and national independence, and to defend Saudi Arabia from Iraqi aggression.

But the emirate of Kuwait was never a democracy. Only 60,000 of its 1.9 million people—and not one woman—are allowed to vote. The sham parliament is regularly dissolved on the whim of the ruling al-Sabah family.

In one of the world's richest countries, three-fifths of the population—the 'guest workers'—aren't even allowed to own a house.

Repression

Saudi Arabia has no elections either and its laws are often made by royal decree. Any opposition meets with brutal repression.

The regime discriminates against a large Shiite population in the oil rich Eastern region. Imprisonment without trial, solitary confinement, flogging, beheadings, and torture are routine. The position of woman is one of the most oppressive in the world. In law, the evidence of two women counts for that of one man.

But Saudi Arabia contains one quarter of the world's oil resources, so the West turns a blind eye to the nature of the regime and backs it to the hilt.

Today Clinton denounces Saddam Hussein as a brutal thug. But he is a thug that the Western powers created because they worked with him closely during the eighties.

They saw the revolution which overthrew the Shah of Iran as a major blow for American interests. Saddam's 1980 invasion of Iran made him the darling of the Western powers.

During the Iran-Iraq war, German companies supplied him with materials for chemical weapons to eliminate his Kurdish opponents.

US Presidents author-

US Presidents authorised the sale of \$1.5 billion in high technology equipment that was used by Iraq for chemical and nuclear facilities. They also supplied Saddam with \$50 billion worth of arms during the war.

ised the sale of \$1.5 billion in high technology equipment that was used by Iraq for chemical and nuclear facilities. They also supplied Saddam with \$50 billion worth of arms during the war.

Then at the end of the war they suddenly stopped financing Saddam leaving him with huge debts. His solution was to invade Kuwait to gain control over its oil to meet his bills.

It was only then that George Bush suddenly labelled Saddam the 'new Hitler'. The US bosses magazine *Business Week* summed it up simply "Oil is worth going to war for".

It was a brutally honest statement of the real motives behind US foreign policy. Sixty percent of the West's oil supplies come through the Gulf because it is by far the cheapest to extract, at a cost per barrel about one twelfth of US oil.

Huge multinationals like Shell, Exxon, BP, Mobil, and Texaco make billions of dollars profits each year from the oil.

This explains the massive hypocrisy of US foreign policy in the region.

Although it is supposed to oppose invasions, it backed Israel's invasion of the Lebanon in 1996 when 400,000 had to flee their homes.

The US still supports the Turkish state's brutal war against the Kurds, which has cost over 20,000 lives and displaced over 2 million Kurdish people in the last 13 years.

This is why every time the US fleet sails into the Middle East, it is always to protect the interests of the oil barons rather than the cause of democracy.

—KEVIN KENNY

film

Crime and corruption in the American dream

LA Confidential reviewed by EMER MALONEY

HOLLYWOOD's latest blockbuster, *LA Confidential*, has been attracting large audiences throughout the country and for once the attention is deserved.

The film, based on a book by James Ellroy, is set in the tradition of American detective writers such as Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett.

Guy Pearce plays the uncompromising and extremely moral hero—this time not a detective but a cop—who is driven in his quest to find and punish "the guy that gets away with it", by that he means the big criminal who's protected by his position in society.

The backdrop to *LA Confidential* is the city itself and the American Dream—as interpreted by advertisements.

It's a place, we're told, where "every working man can have his own house and in every house there's a happy American family".

But despite the propaganda the city stinks.

Crime and corruption is rife and everyone is its victim—the poor Black people and Hispanics who are routinely framed for crimes they don't commit, the young women and men who come in search of fame and end up as prostitutes, often "cut" (subjected to plastic surgery) to look like the stars of the big screen.

The film's focus is the LA Police Department, "a great force in a great city" according to one billboard.

Guy Pearce, who's entered the force with high ideals, soon finds the department plays a major role



in the dirty goings on of the city.

Interrupt

Early in the film we see the police interrupt their

Christmas celebrations to beat up a group of Hispanics who've been arrested for little reason.

But that's nothing compared to what comes later. *LA Confidential* does

have its weaknesses, the plot runs out of steam at the very end, as if the director, having uncovered the corruption, can't deal with its implications.

A decent female role

would also have made a difference.

In this the director could have learnt something from the films he's imitating.

The character Lauren Bacall plays in *The Big Sleep* may have been heavily stylised but she was able to tout a gun and give as good as she got when it came to dialogue.

Classic

The same can't be said for *LA Confidential*.

The film is set in the fifties. It's stylised and dramatic in the way the classic detective movies of that era are.

One can't help wondering what the same story would have been like with the Nineties as the backdrop.

But in a city which just five years ago witnessed the brutal police beating of Rodney King, and the riots that ensued, that would probably have been too much for Hollywood and the American establishment to bear.

It would seem not much has changed in forty-five years.

exhibition

Celebrating alienation with wallpaper

THE NEW exhibition of Andy Warhol's work in the Irish Museum of Modern Art gives a selection of his art from 1956-86.

The exhibition is a disgusting celebration of human alienation.

Andy Warhol was the doyen of the pop art movement of the 50s and 60s in the US, which took for its

subjects objects from daily life.

Process

He shot to fame by portraying Campbell's Condensed Soup cans, dollar bills, Coca Cola bottles, as well as images of Marilyn Monroe, Elvis and Jackie Kennedy.

These images were often silk-screened, a mechanical

process which allowed them to be endlessly repeated.

His work is a combination of the garish and the mundane. But it is mostly just inane. Here are some examples of what's on show in this exhibition.

There is a room covered with cow wallpaper (repeated pink cow-heads on

a yellow background).

There is a Chairman Mao wallpaper room, a display consisting of a pile of Heinz Tomato Ketchup boxes. There are pictures of electric chairs and of dollar signs.

The only interesting thing is a room of inflated silver pillows which float around like clouds through the use of fans.

But this is more than made up for by two rooms and a corridor showing sixteen pictures of guns, all called either Gun or Guns.

The content of the work—and the mass-production technique used in much of it—is a glorification of the commodification of life and culture.

Warhol holds up the cheap crap which workers are forced to mass-produce under capitalism as an object of culture and veneration.

His work has all the appeal of a Mars bar wrapper—with no Mars bar.

Andy Warhol (Works 56-86) exhibition at IMMA until 22 Mar 98.

—KEVIN KENNY

video

Songs of Freedom

THE BEST of the latest bunch of video releases is *Carla's Song* directed by Ken Loach.

Carla is a Nicaraguan refugee in Glasgow who receives a torrent of abuse from a bus inspector until George, the bus driver, comes to her rescue.

George, played by the excellent Robert Carlyle, soon finds the shoe on the other foot when he becomes the stranger in Carla's home country, Nicaragua. She however is transformed from a frightened refugee into a proud fighter.

William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* brings the

"star crossed, lovers" into the 1990s. Verona becomes Verona beach and the Montagues and Capulets become corrupt warring business families.

The film sticks to the original script with the narrator transformed into a CNN newscaster. Watch out for Pete Postlewaite as the beatnik priest who marries the pair.

Love in the face of prejudice is also the theme of the Australian film, *Angel Baby*. John Lynch and Jacqueline Mackenzie play two out-patients from a mental hospital who fight to maintain their relationship in the face of official disapproval.

John Lynch also features in *Some Mothers Son*. Play-

ing the part of H-Block hunger striker Bobby Sands.

The film shows the huge support the H-Block protesters received despite the propaganda war unleashed against them.

Stereotype

But despite its strengths the film never fully breaks from the stereo type of young IRA members as "misguided martyrs" who treat Sands as a messiah.

Nothing Personal completes a John Lynch Hatrick, with Lynch as a Catholic going into "enemy territory" where he is captured by loyalist thugs.

Unfortunately the continuing violence is blamed

on working class killers who are "addicted" to bloodshed. This results in a pessimistic portrayal of Protestants and Catholics continually at each others throats with little hope of a solution.

The English Patient tells the story of a group of people drawn together by the horrors of the Second World War.

The British media hailed this as the greatest British Oscar winner, despite its international cast and production team.

The patriotic euphoria completely missed the point of a movie whose central message is that jingoism only brings havoc in its wake.

—DAVE McDONAGH



Workers create all the wealth in capitalist society. A new society can only be constructed when they collectively seize control of that wealth and plan its production and distribution.

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be reformed out of existence. Parliament cannot be used to end the system.

The courts army and police are there to defend the interests of the capitalist class not to run society in a neutral fashion.

To destroy capitalism, workers need to smash the state and create a workers' state based on workers' councils.

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST:

The SWP welcomed the break-up of the USSR and the end of the East European dictatorships. These states were not socialist but were run by a state-capitalist class.

We are against the domination of the globe by imperialist powers and we oppose their wars. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women.

We stand for: free contraception and free, legalised abortion and the right to divorce; the complete separation of church and state, an end to church control over schools and hospitals; an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians; an end to racism and anti-traveller bigotry.

We argue for working class unity in the fight against oppression.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH:

Northern Ireland is a sectarian state, propped up by the British Army. Catholic workers are systematically discriminated against by the state. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers weakens the whole working class.

Workers' unity can only be won and maintained in a fight to smash both the Northern and Southern states.

We stand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. Violence will only end when workers unite in the fight for a workers' republic.

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT:

Trade unions exist to defend workers' interests. But the union leaders' role is to negotiate with capitalism—not to end it.

We support the leaders when they fight but oppose them when they betray workers. We stand for independent rank and file action.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY:

To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party. This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system. The SWP aims to build such a party in Ireland.

Local Authority and Health Boards

35,000 WORKERS BALLOT FOR STRIKE

'We demand a £27 a week rise'

WORKERS throughout the health boards and local authorities have balloted overwhelmingly for strike action.

By a huge ballot of 20 to one, 3,000 craft workers have set their sights on winning a £27 a week wage rise.

General workers in SIPTU have also voted to pursue a relativity claim with the craftworkers if they win. This would amount to a £22 a week rise.

These are the biggest claims that have been submitted by the trade union movement in years.

If they win they could spark off a major wages movement throughout the private sector. It could be the spark that brings workers into a fight to get a real share of the Celtic Tiger.

Automatic

The craft workers claim is based on an 'analogue agreement' that dates back to 1979. Under this system, craft workers were supposed to get an automatic rise based on the average of eighteen other employments.

But over the years the local authorities and health boards have deliberately allowed them to fall behind.

On some occasions they have claimed inability to pay and then not paid the proper back money.

"I reckon we are about £1,500 a year behind. It also looks like the union was not getting the correct figures from the employers.

But now is the time to fight. There is a shortage of skills in Ireland at the moment".

"The economists tell us that when beans are scarce, the price must rise. When skilled

labour is scarce, the wages must also go up," one UCATT activist told *Socialist Worker*.

The strike is due to start on December 1st but there is some possibility that the Labour Court could intervene at the last moment.

Arguing

However many militants are now arguing for the strike to go ahead.

As John put it, "Even if we are on our own, the system would start to grind to a halt in a few weeks. The trucks need maintenance and so rubbish could soon start to pile up."

"But there are also a lot of general operatives who want to respect the picket. If we got a real lead from the union leaders, this fight could end in victory in a few days."

Tell the SIPTU leaders that we want an all-out

General workers in SIPTU have balloted overwhelmingly to come out on strike. But there are already conflicting signals from the union leadership.

Before the ballot, the newly elected Vice Presi-

dent of SIPTU Des Geraghty stated in a press release that his members were being balloted on "support for the craft workers in their dispute to have the analogue agreement honoured" and to maintain an 80% pay relativity with them.

Pickets

But subsequently right wing officials have argued that SIPTU members in Dublin should not respect the craft workers pickets.

They claim that only non-Dublin local authority and health workers have a direct relativity with the

crafts and that the Industrial Relations Act precludes them giving support to the craft workers in Dublin.

But this is just nonsense. If a general worker in Cork corporation won a £22 a week rise, why wouldn't a Dublin corporation worker be able to follow suit?

In reality, a section of the SIPTU leadership are trying to play on the old divisions between craft and general workers.

These divisions only grew up because of the ICTU picketing system which encouraged different workers to pass each

others pickets.

But now is the best time to overcome these divisions in a fight from which everyone can gain.

Movement

Some union leaders are terrified that this massive wage movement is going to break Partnership 2000.

They are stalling and shadow boxing to keep their cosy relationship going with the employers.

But if the rank and file get organised, they can demand an all-out shut down of the health boards and local authorities.

How to organise

Union organisation in some sections of the craft unions has gone rusty. The last strike of craft workers in Dublin corporation, for example, was in 1974.

It is vital that a fighting machine is pulled together quickly to win this battle.

■ Union militants should press for mass meetings to discuss the conduct of the strike. It should not be left in the hands of officials who have not led a battle in decades.

■ Strike committees should be elected across cities and in local depots.

■ Flying pickets need to be organised to shut down key units as quickly as possible.

■ Once the strike starts, there should be no return to work until the rank and file have balloted on the terms.

Telecom

CPSU members in Telecom Eireann could deliver a major blow to plans for an Employee Share Ownership Scheme (ESOP).

They are being ballotted to withdraw their union from talks on the share option because it involves major concessions by staff.

The proposal contains—among other things—a 5.3 percent pension contribution, thousands of job losses and longer working hours.

The deal would effectively give Telecom a blank cheque to slash conditions over the next fifteen years.

Unbelievably, these proposals are being put forward by the union lead-

ers!

If the CPSU pulls out, it will be a signal to the larger Communication Workers Union that something rotten is going on at the top of their union.

CPSU members in Telecom should vote to withdraw from the talks but a campaign is needed across all the unions to put an end to this ridiculous proposal.

News from the SWP

OVER 300 people attended the Marxism '97 conference of the SWP. It was one of the liveliest in recent years and reflected a real thirst for radical ideas. After the event 14 people joined the SWP.

Immediately after the conference, SWP members were active in organising protests against the intervention of the courts in the case of a 13 year old rape victim.

A street meeting was held in Dublin and hundreds of signatories were gathered for petitions.

Seven people joined the SWP afterwards.

In the colleges, SWP members went around the canteens and addressed lectures to call for support for a major picket on the Dáil.

Scandal

The scandal over the 13 year old has shown why there is a need for a socialist party that stands well to the left of the Labour Party.

A major process of radicalisation is starting in the wider working class movement.

Thousands of people

agree with slogans raised by socialists which call for taxes on the rich, jail for corrupt politicians, a £5 an hour minimum wage but they remain to be convinced of the idea of revolutionary change.

This is why it is so crucial that every socialist is taking a minimum of five papers around to their friends and workmates.

A network of regular buyers of *Socialist Worker* will provide a powerful base for taking initiatives and winning support.

SWP branch meetings

BELFAST
Meets every Thurs contact 8722682 for details

CORK
Meets every Weds at 8pm in Dennehy's Pub, Commarket St.

DERRY
Meets every Tues in Badgers Bar at 8pm

DUN LAOGHAIRE
Meets every Tues at 8pm in Christian Institute.

ENNISKILLEN
Meets every fortnight Contact national address for details

GALWAY
Meets every Thursday at 7.30pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square

MAYNOOTH
Meets every Wednesday Arts Block Maynooth college

WATERFORD
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in ATGWU Hall, Keyser St.

DUBLIN NORTH-WEST
Meets every Tuesday at 8:30pm in The Snug, Dorset St.

DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm Contact 8722682 for details

DUBLIN DRIMNAGH
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in the Black Forge (formerly the Bentley), Drimnagh Rd

DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL
Meets every Wed at 8:30pm in Conways, Parnell St.

DUBLIN RATHMINES
Meets every Wed at 8.30pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond St.

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL
Meets every Thur at 8pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse St.

DUBLIN TALLAGHT/CLONDALKIN
Meets Monday at 8pm in the Steering Wheel, Clondalkin

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

JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

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

Name

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news & reports— politics; the unions
 send in your reports: telephone (01) 872 2682, fax: (01) 872 3838

Cramptons

High Court bans brickies' picket

BRICK LAYERS at the Cramptons site in Dublin City University have been deprived of their right to picket by a court injunction.

The nine bricklayers, members of BATU, had been block laying on the site for several months.

During the summer the workers struck when they were told they were employed by an unregistered sub-contractor.

A temporary settlement was reached with the bricklayers working for sub-contractor MJ Lambe.

Recently a non union sub-contractor, Colm Murphy, replaced the workers.

The bricklayers demanded the main contractor, Cramptons, take them on to finish the work they had started. When Cramptons refused, they balloted for strike action.

But the employers—backed

Draconian judgements like these flow from the Industrial Relations Act modelled on Thatcher's legislation in Britain.

up by the Construction Industry Federation lawyers—brought an action in the High Courts and Judge Laffoy granted them an injunction forbidding the workers the right to picket to save their jobs.

The judge used the precedent of the Nolans judgement, de-

spite the fact that this case is subject of an appeal.

In the Nolans case, SIPTU was sued for massive damages over an attempt by union workers in Nolans Transport in Wexford to secure recognition.

The bosses claimed the ballot was not conducted correctly—a claim vigorously denied by the Nolans workers. But the Court accepted Nolan's word above that of the workers.

Claimed

In the Crampton case the employers claimed the ballot was illegal because two workers for Colm Murphy were not balloted. One was not a union member and the other was so far behind in dues that his membership had lapsed.

Taking the company side Judge Laffoy ruled that because they stand to lose penalty payments if the job is not completed on time she must ban the picketing.

The decision is to be appealed but in the meantime the workers are prevented from even discussing the dispute.

Draconian judgements like these flow from the Industrial Relations Act modelled on Thatcher's legislation in Britain.

It was introduced with the agreement of ICTU leaders in return for a "partnership" Programme for National Recovery.

As the working class movement revives this act will have to be beaten and workers will need to defy anti trade union judgements like this.

Boxmore

This is how to unionise

WORKERS in the Lurgan Boxmore plant have joined the GPMU union after a magnificent campaign of organising by fellow workers from the Belfast Boxmore plant.

The Lurgan plant had been paying workers between £30 and £40 less than their counterparts in Belfast.

Management had tried to play one plant off against the other and issued veiled threats of running down production in Belfast.

Argument

Four stewards from the Belfast plant travelled to Lurgan and leafleted the workers to carry the argument for why they needed a union.

All fifty workers at the plant joined but management refused to recognise the union.

The workers responded by taking a ballot for action but the officials of GPMU refused to implement it.

Management then offered to recognise the TGWU as a representative body for the staff but the workers in Lurgan insisted on their right to choose their own union and also to remain in the same organisation as their Belfast comrades.

Eventually the company was forced to back down and accept the GPMU.

This victory happened because of the initiative of the rank and file.

As one of the stewards said, "We unionise the plant by old style trade union methods. It shows that it is possible to unionise multi-nationals. We should now try to get a representative union organisation that goes across the various Boxmore plants in Ireland."

Avonmore-Waterford

Bosses destroy 300 jobs

AVONMORE-WATERFORD Group have a secret plan to destroy 300 jobs in Dublin.

Following the takeover of Waterford Foods by Avonmore earlier in the year, management is involved in a major rationalisation. But the company made a promise to workers of no compulsory redundancies.

Workers were asked to vote to accept the new arrangements even before a White Paper detailing the company's plans had been published.

But in a gaffe Tanaiste Mary Harney let slip that the company planned to shut down the Premier Dairy plant in Rathfarnham, Dublin and transfer production.

Workers in Dublin will be offered the choice of

going on the dole or moving to Kilkenny!

The Finglas plant shut earlier this year and transferred to Rathfarnham.

One SIPTU member in Premier Rathfarnham told

Socialist Worker:

"The company have their eye on the Rathfarnham site worth £15 million and the pension fund worth another £15 million. With the £10

million from a sale of the Finglas site this would pay their redundancy bill.

"But we won't let them close the plant. The workers here will fight to keep it open and save our jobs."

CPSU

THE RECENT Gerster decision in the European Court could benefit thousands of job-sharers.

The Court ruled that deducting service from part time workers is discriminatory, since the vast majority of such workers are women.

Ninety seven percent of job-sharers here are women with young children.

The lack of affordable childcare means that many women are under pressure to take the option. This equality ruling should therefore be welcomed.

But it has created problems in the CPSU where many fulltime workers could lose out on expected promotions if job-sharers go ahead of them on seniority.

The government is delaying upgrades

due under the new pay deal for fear of legal action from job-sharers.

But the CPSU should demand that Gerster be implemented in full, with extra promotions for people who are already expecting them.

Demanding extra promotions is the only way to prevent this issue from dividing the union.

Coats Viyella

COATS VIYELLA, the clothing company which recently suspended workers in Derry for wearing poppies, has decided to close its Saracen's factory in Lurgan with the loss of 500 jobs.

The closure announcement came after divisions between Catholic and Protestant workers had been stoked up over the poppy issue.

Production targets at the Lurgan plant

had been gradually reduced to make the factory seem inefficient and people there were becoming anxious.

Two weeks ago their worst fears were confirmed when they were given 90 days notice of closure.

This was after the union and the Industrial Development Board had drawn up a plan to save the factory.

Workers are particularly bitter after they learnt that Coats Viyella closed down

because they found cheaper labour in Morocco.

The workers are represented by the GMB union but although its general secretary, John Edmonds blasted the decision to close, they have not so far advocated that the workers take any action.

The Coats Viyella workers, however should consider occupying the plant to stop the management moving their equipment out of the area.

Dunnes Stores

THE THREAT of industrial action by shopworkers in Dunnes Stores has forced the company to offer concessions.

Staff are in the process of balloting on selective industrial action.

This follows the refusal of Dunnes Stores to pay treble time to long standing staff for working the four Sundays before Christmas.

Since 1994 staff are on three different payments for Xmas Sundays.

All those that have joined the company since that date are on time and a half for the Sundays.

Others are on double time.

But staff still working in stores that were open on Sundays three years ago

are due to receive treble time.

Last year the company refused to pay the agreed treble time to those entitled to it and closed the stores on Sundays before Xmas.

The Labour Court recommended the store pay all workers double time and give those who previously received treble time days off in lieu.

The company rejected the finding but facing industrial action have offered an extra holiday to the long standing staff and a week and a half Xmas bonus.

Department of Arts and Heritage

STAFF AT the Department of Arts and Heritage have staged two walkouts over health and safety in their building in St Stephen's Green, Dublin.

Up to 100 staff looked set to stop work on 24 November in offices affected by building work which has been taking place since May of this year.

The staff objected to noise, dust and fumes but

finding alternative accommodation.

A noise and dust survey in September said it was unlikely that dust levels would have health implications.

Complaints

But the findings were based on a single day's study and ignored complaints by staff of headaches and breathing disorders.

One worker told *Socialist Worker* that the report was a "whitewash" and

that staff "did not expect any different".

The Health and Safety Authority also visited the building.

They found inadequate ventilation and ladders blocking fire exits—even though they were being used to install fire alarms!

About 80 members of CPSU, IMPACT, PSEU, SIPTU—and even the managers' union AHCS—walked out on 13 November and went to the department head office in Mespil Road.

The staff joined National Museum workers who were also picketing.

Protesting

As one worker remarked, "it says something about management's attitude when you have two sets of workers protesting at head office at the same time".

Within one hour of this walkout the Secretary General of Arts and Heritage, Tadhg O hEalaithe,

Peadar O'Grady Defence Campaign
Victory Social
Friday 19th December, Plough Bar
(upsairs), Marlboro St Dublin,
8.00pm, Tickets £4.00
All proceeds to Legal Defence Campaign

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—PAGE 5

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AFTER JAPAN BANK CRASH: Slump looms for world economy

'It could trigger a full scale global depression the like of which has not been seen since the 1930s'
—The Guardian

SEVERAL banks have crashed in Japan and already there is talk of a world wide recession.

Prominent economists are warning of a "full scale global depression which has not been seen since the 1930s."

The crisis began some months ago when a number of countries in South East Asia faced severe economic difficulties.

These "Asian Tigers" were once hailed as the success stories of capitalism, proof that the free market could work.

But now the economy of South Korea is virtually bankrupt.

Lay-offs

It has had to call in the International Monetary Fund to request a multi-billion dollar loan. Huge lay-offs are now expected.

This has caused immediate difficulties for Japan which is the main exporter to South East Asia.

Its own economy has

been in near recession since the early nineties.

Major banks have resorted to all sorts of scams to hide their real level of debt.

But the growing recession has meant that the scale of the debt has reached sky high proportions.

After the Yamaichi collapse the banking system in Japan is now as shaky as a house of cards.

HOW THE CRISIS CAN SPREAD

HERE ARE three ways in which this crisis can spread throughout the rest of the world.

■**TRADE:** As the recession spreads in Asia,

countries that export to the area won't be able to sell their goods.

Moreover as the Asian countries devalue their currencies,

they will be able to sell their goods cheaper on the European markets, provoking a new round of re-structuring and cost-cutting.

■**CAPITAL FLIGHT:** Japanese investment throughout the US and Europe could be recalled to prop up its banking system.

This could provoke a major industrial and financial crisis.

Japanese banks, for example, hold a quarter of foreign debt holdings in the US.

■**BANKING CRISIS:** The world's banks are beyond the control of any one government.

Each day a trillion dollars—the whole amount produced in Britain in a year—passes around the world's stock exchanges.

If more banks crash in Japan, which is the second largest economy in the world, it will cause chaos throughout the world.

THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

THE BANKING crash in Japan show that capitalism is fragile and chaotic.

The success stories of yesterday can suddenly turn into the slumps of tomorrow.

Few would worry if this affected just a tiny number of rich investors.

But millions of workers across the world will lose their jobs, face reduced pensions and suffer more

cuts in health and education services in a new recession.

Anyone who thinks the market is efficient should count the cost of this waste.

In recent years, Labour leaders like Tony Blair and Ruarri Quinn have claimed that the market can be made to work.

Blair has even praised the "success story" of the Asian Tigers.

But recent events show that the market is out of control and can no longer be regulated.

Challenged

The only force that can take on this madness is the organised power of workers.

French truck drivers, South Korean trade unionists, American workers in UPS have all challenged the logic of the

market and won.

The workers' movement across the world is reviving and becoming more radical.

It is now up to socialists to show there is an alternative to the market.

That has to be one based on workers control of production, on democratic debate on how the resources of society can be used to benefit all, on the possibility of planning for human need.

How the Asian Tiger came crashing down—page 4