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Government blow Protest to disabled rights

THE NEW Employ-ment Equality Bill says employers will only have to recruit disabled workers if the costs of provid-ing facilities are

"nominal". The Bill does not define what "nominal" means, but no doubt bosses will use it as a loophole to keep disa-bled people out of the workforce

Disabled people are far more likely to be unem-ployed than the able-bod-

ied. The Irish Wheelchair As-sociation surveyed its members in 1993 and found that 72.5 percent were unemployed, 19 per-

"Even though I don't consider my-self to be old, the years are slipping away in terms of finding a job like so-called normal people.

"I have hopes and dreams for the

cent worked from home and only 8.5 percent went out to work. Lack of workplace and transport facilities are ma-jor reasons for these sta-

THREE QUARTERS AGREE BUDGET WAS...

bonanza for the rich

Champagne Charlie's

Fianna Fail and the PDs have reintroduced a modi fied equality bill after the Supreme Court declared "unconstituthe last one tional".

Where are the jobs? I have never future, and don't see why I, or any person with a disability, should have times bitter that I have nothing to settle for anything less. Show for myself.

"I feel if nothing is done that I will still be doing courses to fill in time in ten year's time.

-Extract from a submission to the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities.

The judges showed what side they are on when they said the legislation would undermine the em-

would undermine the em-ployers right to property! The only part of the bill they upheld was the guar-antee of church control of schools—the very section questioned by President Robinson! Labour's Mervyn Taylor introduced that bill. The fail-ure of Labour and Demo-cratic Left to stand up to the bishops and the bosses has allowed Fianna Fail to bring in an even weaker equality bill.

mobile masts

A NATIONAL campaign has been launched to stop the erection of mobile phone masts near residential areas.

Esat Digiphone have followed Eircell by building a network of masts around the

country. Esat boss Denis O'Brien is a Fine Gael supporter who was awarded a mobile phone licence by then FG minister Michael Lowry.

The mobile sector is proving extremely lucrative for the own-ers of the companies but ordinary people are suffering as a result.

Several people living near mobile phone masts have reported sore throats, constant thirst, headaches and exhaustion.

Others report mild electric shocks when touching metal parts of cars in the vicinity of masts.

The Minister for Public Enterprise, Mary O'Rourke, is now planning to enforce "co-location" of masts.

Erecting

This means new antennae will be placed on existing masts instead of erecting new ones.

This will coincide with the award of the third mobile licence.

The new company will operate a system like the BT Orange system which pro-duces even stronger signals than Eircell or Esat.

Campaigners are demanding that instead of "co-loca-tion", masts should be relocated away from where people live.

Local militancy has prevented masts being erected in working class areas.

In the Blanchardstown area of Dublin, locals successfully threat-ened to boycott a supermarket which had agreed to allow a mast on those load mast on their land.

A national campaign could prevent masts being built in residen-tial areas in other parts

mainly benefited the rich. They were right. McCreevy announced £517 million in tax cuts but the biggest gains went to the wealthy: The Minister slashed the standard rate of capi-tal gains tax from 40 percent to 20 percent. The budget cuts the tax on corporation profits by four percent giving a bo-nanza to the rich at twice the rate of the previous

budget. The ESRI estimates that pre-tax profits have been increasing at the rate

THREE OUARTERS of people in a recent

Irish Times MRBI survey believed that Fi-nance Minister Charlie McCreevy,s budget

of 12 percent. The tax cuts mean profits after tax will increase by 19 percent. High earners on £45,000 and upwards will get tax cuts of over £1,000

a year. Those on £100,000 plus will benefit from £2,000

tax cuts and people on in-comes of over £200,000 will gain by over £4,000. Someone on £60,000 will get almost £40 a

week extra. Contrast this with the

The single person's tax free allowances will now amount to £3,950 and the

amount to £3,950 and the married allowances will total £7,100. A married couple with one earner will be brought into the tax net at pay rates of only £4 an hour and will immedi hour and will immediately pay tax at 40 percent.

■A single worker on £13,950—less than 80 percent of the average male industrial wage will pay the top rate of

The lowest paid work-



■McCreevy

ers—on £7,000 a year— will only gain by £3 or £4 a week depending on PRSI payments.

The unemployed and long term ill will only get £3 a week extra while pensioners get only £5 extra

Old age pensioners will have to make ends meet on £83 a week.

Most of these increases will not be made until

Child benefit will only increase by 35p a week for the first child and this will not be applied until September.

Growth

The budget makes it clear that the politicians have no intention of allowing workers to gain from the Celtic Tiger

During the 1980s we were constantly told to "tighten our belts" and the

economy would grow. But now that there is record growth the belt is barely being loosened for the workers who have cre-ated all the wealth.

Equal pay victory only a start



THE EQUAL pay award to four women workers (pictured above) in the Civil Aviation Authority at Shan-non is an important victory but real equality is still a

long way off. The four CPSU members were awarded back pay of £100,000 each when the Labour Court declared that their em-

ployers were wrong to pay them less than male radio operators. The Civil Aviation Au-thority and the Depart-ment of Transport even

Cartoons Two of the women were left without work to do for six months in 1993 and sexist cartoons of "women trying to be men" were displayed in their office. But this case is only the tip of the iceberg. Despite almost 25 years of equal pay legislation in the South, women's average hourly earnings are only 72 percent of the male in-dustrial rate. There has been a recent in the workforce but pay levels and job opportuni-ties for women are still ap-palling.

The Irish Mirror "celebrated" the equal pay victory in the Aviation Authority with the disgraceful headline "AIR GIRLS WIN RECORD SEX PAYOUT". If a national newspaper can use such sex-ism to trivialise women's rights, it's no won-der we have a long battle ahead to win equal pay.

While Labour Court victories are welcome, only militant struggle can bring the real gains that are needed.

childcare facilities and this prevents many women getting the training which is supposed to result in a job. Lack of childcare re-sults in women spending more time outside the workforce than men, which partly accounts for their lower average earn-ings. ings. Thousands of women in the Civil Service and the Health Boards opt for job sharing in order to raise young children. Because of the high cost of private creches, job sharing is concentrated in the lowest paid grades. ings

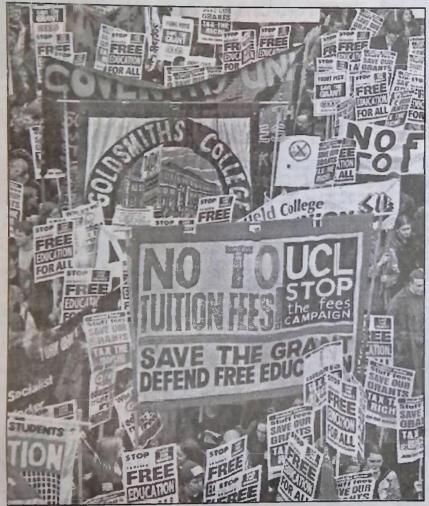
paid grades. Many jobs are predomi-nantly female, which means the workers can-not directly compare their wages with men. Scandal-ously, the government's new version of the Em-ployment Equality Bill ously, the government Em-new version of the Em-ployment Equality Bill leaves out a clause allow-ing these women to use hy-pothetical male compara-tors in other jobs.

Lack of childcare is a major reason. Ireland has the lowest level of childcare in Europe. FAS training centres have no childcare facilities and this

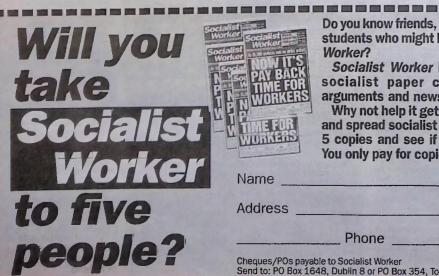
tors in other jobs. But while women still suffer inequality, they are also increasingly involved in trade unions. The Dunnes' strikes and Nurses' disputes over the past two years brought thousands of women into the unions.

what we think

TAX THE RICH an hour mum



-we need to build on them this year. I ast year's student demonstrations against fees



THE DAY after Charlie McCreevy unveiled his budget, share prices on the Dublin Stock Exchange jumped by £1

change jumped by £1 billion pounds. The rich could not contain their joy at the handouts. And they know that the budget is only the start of many more tax concessions. During recent European Un-ion discussions, the Irish gov-ernment was attacked by Bel-gium and Germany for allow-ing companies in the Interna-tional Financial Services Cen-tre to pay only a 10% tax rate on their profits. Their complaint is that Ire-investment by introducing spe-cial tax concessions. The Irish establishment's answer is to 2u all taxes on profits to 12% by 2005. The budgets over the next few years will therefore see con-tinual reductions in taxes on the rich.

students who might like to read Socialist

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.

Worker?

Phone

land, which make over a mil-lion pounds a day, will eventu-ally be paying a lower rate of any be paying a lower rate of tax than a young teenager who works in a fast food restaurant. Labcur, Democratic Left and the ICTU union leaders have gone along with this disgrace-ful approach.

The AIB and the Bank of Ire-

Curs

They accept the logic of the market and argue that Ireland has to be "competitive". They supported low wage rises in the past—and so have no difficulty with tax cuts today. But cutting taxes for the rich means there is less money for schools and hospitals. It means that PAYE workers carry the full burden of paying for run down social services. Instead of competing against Instead of competing against other European workers, we should be joining in the move-ment to tax the rich and estab-

lish a minimum wage. We have far more in com-

mon with French truck drivers who won a £5 an hour mini-

mon With French truck divers who won a £5 an hour mini-mum wage through a magnifi-cent strike than we have with the Irish rich and their multina-tional friends. In the New Year, the Mini-mum Wage Commission which was set up by Mary Harney will produce its report. It does not contain a single trade union representative and we can ex-pect nothing from it. Workers have to look to their own efforts to achieve the £5 an hour minimum wage. We need a national stoppage of the whole trade union movement to enforce this demand on this right wing government. **EIPASS THIS MOTION:** This union branch believes

This union branch believes that the Celtic Tiger has brought few rewards for the workers who produced it. We call for the immediate introduction of a £5 an hour minimum wage

minimum wage. We call on the ICTU to or-

ganise a national stoppage in support of this demand.

The North: What sort of settlem

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_____ Do you know friends, workmates or fellow

Issues that were left buried for years during the conflict, such as the call for legalisation of abortion, have come to the surface. But as the deadline for a

But as the deadline for a possible settlement comes closer, the bigots will seek to raise sectarian tensions to a new pitch. The challenge facing social-ists is to transform the mood for workers unity that exists today into a solid political ex-pression.

today into a solid political expression. This has to start from an understanding that a settlement to the Northern conflict can never come from negotiations with Tory dinosaurs like David Trimble. Unity has to be forged from below through a growing politicised class outlook. This is why socialists argue that Protestant workers need to break from a loyalist tradition which has looked on Catholics as inferior while Catholic workers need to see through the sham that they belong in the sham that they belong in the same camp as Mary McAleese, Fianna Fail or Bill Clinton. Our aim is to fight for a socialist ireland that is built on the destruction of both sectarian states that grew out of partition.

news of the world German students fight education cuts

STUDENTS IN Germany were continuing to organise mass resistance to the conservative gov-ernment's attacks on higher education.

Before Xmas students from all over Germany were due to travel to the seat of government, Bonn, to demonstrate against Chancellor Kohl.

Special trains and coaches were laid on from around the country to transport protesters. The march was to coincide

with a summit meeting be-tween the government's edu-cation minister and heads of

Germany's 16 states. The summit was to discuss introducing the market into

Introducing the market into higher education. This includes plans to re-strict university places by tightening up on student loans. "raising the productiv-ity" of students and lecturers, allowing more corporate sponsorship of courses and cutting funding. At the beginning of the stu-dent protests Chancellor Kohl tried to make himself sound

tried to make himself sound sympathetic to the students' demands.

But students have hardened their attitude and are begin-ning to take up the slogan, "Kohl Must Go".

There is much discussion about how the student move-ment must be more radical.

ment must be more radical. The German magazine Der Spiegel reported that a student at a meeting in Berlin was given a standing ovation for demanding, "We should take our protests to where the rich people live." Students' anger was intensified by the an-nouncement that Kohl had agreed spending billions of pounds on the Eurofighter. The movement reached a

The movement reached a new peak when students at around 112 universities and colleges struck, saying they would continue until the 18 December demonstration.

Blockaded

Students blockaded buildings and threw up picket lines at many universities. Mass meetings of thou-

sands of students decided to continue action. In Munich 4.000 students held an off

4.000 students held an off campus meeting and decided to continue their blockade. In Leipzig in the cast a meeting of 6,000 voted to con-tinue their action. In Frankfurt students lifted their blockade, but 4,000 then marched to the unemployment office in the city centre. Students in Cologne also lifted their blockade last week, but then some of them decided to march into the city centre.

to march into the city centre. They broke through police lines, marched into the railway

station and occupied the rail-way tracks.

Strike

There are also signs that the militancy is spreading to school students. In Berlin students in 17 schools came out on strike to join a 20,000 strong demonstration.

Commentators are linking the student movement with the

mass radicalisation of students in 1968.

One Green newspaper car-ried a key article headed, "A Generation of Strikers". It argued that the student movement had the character

of a revolt against the estab-lished political parties. "Do the politicians need stones thrown at them to make them understand what is happening?" the article asked.

The student action, itself inspired by workers' struggles over the past couple of years, is feeding into general discontent with the government and its pro-market policies.

Struggle

Zimbabwe General strike

During a student demon-stration in Berlin some univer-sity workers and building workers joined the march.

makes Mugabe climb down

Local workers in the giant IG Metall trade union voted to support students, saying that the government policy was directed at students from underset fortilise workers' families.

workers' families. A right wing think tank last weekend published a survey which signalled the continued radical shift in workers' con-

sciousness. It asked whether people felt they lived in a society where



has been uncovered. It shows why the Liverpool dockers, who had scabbing outfit Drake International used against them, have so much support from waterfront workers abroad.

abroad. The scandal crupted after the International Transport Workers Federation (the umbrella body for dockers' unions worldwide) threat-ened to impose a worldwide shipping ban on the United Arab Emirates port of Dubai. They are backing the

They are backing the claim of the Maritime Union of Australia that the Australian Tory government was involved in putting together a paramilitary waterfront "strike force" to bust dockers' unions. It found that serving

Australian military person-nel were amongst recruits being trained.

Private shipping compa-nies, the Tory government and the right wing Farmers' Federation were all involved. OVER 20,000 workers marched through the Bolivian capital, La Paz, last month as a one day general strike shut down much of the country's industry and government offices.

The protest was called against a government imposed rise in fuel prices, which has caused bus fares to rise by 100 percent. Milton Gomez, leader of the main Baluci

the main Bolivian union federation, said, "This enormous rise demands a tough response from Bolivian workers. We cannot accept further rises in the cost of living."

PUBLIC sector workers in Angola, southern Africa, were preparing for strikes this week if the government reneged on its promise to pay outstanding salaries. Public sector workers have not been paid for at least the last four months. The workers' messure on

The workers' pressure on the government is a hopeful sign in a country torn apart by two decades of civil war.



Brazil: 10,000 Volkswagen workers in Sao Paulo voted last month to reject cuts in pay and hours.

tax is going ahead. Home affairs minister Dumiso Dabengwa told parliament that if there were more protests, "Work-ers should know that if they stretch police patience too far they would not hesitate to shoot them."

Response

The success of the strike and Mugabe's response has fuelled criticism of the gov-ernment and made many workers more confident that they can win. A series of human rights

But union leaders have

tried hard to prevent fur-ther strikes and want to "cool down" workers. The British Labour gov-

TURKEY: PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS HIT BACK

WORKERS HIT BACK TURKEY'S conservative led government was hit by a mas-sive public sector workers' strike before Xmas just six months since coming to office. Public sector unions reckoned that one million workers had participated in the strike which shut down train serv-ices and hospitals across the country. Around 100 schools in Istanbul were closed down as 4,000 public sector workers including teachers, nurses and council employees marched through the capital. Public sector workers are angry that, although infla-tion is running at 95.8 percent, they have been offered only a 30 percent pay rise in the first half of 1998. They were also striking against proposed government legislation to attack the unions, including the right to strike.

came out.

A member of Socialist

"It was rapidly becoming the biggest mass protest ever experienced in this country.

taken back.

After the strike the gov-ernment withdrew a planned 5 percent increase in taxes on fuel and electric-

An increase in income tax had been dropped earlier.

THE GOVERNMENT of Zimbabwe in southern Africa has been forced to make some concessions after it was rocked

by a massive gen-eral strike last month. Workers' solid response to the call for ac-tion shocked President Mugabe and also union leaders.

Much of the country stopped as hundreds of thousands of workers

Mugabe then sent riot police to attack a planned demonstration.

A member of Socialist Worker's sister organisation in Zimbabwe says, "Thou-sands and thousands of workers poured into Africa Unity Square, which is next to parliament, on the morn-ing of the strike.

"The government pan-icked and ordered the po-lice to teargas workers.

"This repression fol-lowed a big propaganda campaign that workers should not go on strike be-cause they were allying themselves with the white farmers who are angry about their land being taken back.

"However, workers ig-nored this and came out in masses. There were running battles in the streets of the capital, Harare."

ity charges.

However, a rise in sales

and church bodies have joined the denunciation of Mugabe.

ernment did criticise Mugabe last month—but not for attacking workers. Instead Baroness Symons, a former union leader and now foreign of-fice minister renoached fice minister, reproached the Zimbabwean govern-ment for its plans to take back land from white farmIt is a further sign of the breakdown of the "social part-nership" that bosses and trade union leaders used to boast of.

workers' and bosses' interests were the same, or whether they thought it was character-ised by class struggle. The majority of people, 44 percent, believed there was a class struggle, twice as many as in the 1980s.

Riots flare as RUC backs Orange bigots

The RUC are just as sectarian as they were in 1969 celebration of "Protestant

culture" ignores the mes-sage they always give of no concessions to Catho-

The march came at a

time of serious crisis within the Orange Or-

demo

lics.

WIDESPREAD rioting erupted in Derry on 13 December in protest at the RUC sealing off the town for the Apprentice Boy's Lundy parade.

The Bogside Residents Group had called a coun-ter protest for "national-ist rights" after the Ap-prentice Boys refused to negotiate over the route of the merch the march

A similar Apprentice Boys march on 12 August saw drunken marchers attack bystanders in the city centre and shout taunts about the 1993 Halloween massacre in Greysteel,

outside Derry. One of the banners on the Lundy Day march read "CCM 3rd Batt.

The RUC moved early on Saturday morning to close the city centre to prevent the counter-pro-test.

Attacked

The Richmond shop-The Richmond shop-ping centre was closed, locking in many shoppers, who were attacked by RUC dog handlers. "It was incredible," said one person who was caught in the shoreing control

the shopping centre. "They just pulled down the shutters locking eve-ryone in and then set the dogs on people."

Now Blair

attacks

disabled

benefits

A crowd of over a thou-and gathered to protest in Shipquay Street and riot-ing quickly spread and carried on late into the night. The RUC, backed up by

D

British Army reinforce-ments, fired over 160

eltas AROUND 60 prochoice demonstrators confronted a march by Youth for Truth in Belfast city centre on 13 December.

cember. What was been billed as a "candle-light vigil for the unborn" was dis-rupted by a noisy coun-ter protest chanting "Not the church, not the state, women must decide their fate". Abortion is unavailable in the North and over 2000 women are forced to travel abortion, at their own ex-pense.

abortion, at their own ex-pense. Linda, one of the organ-isers of the Alliance for Choice counter-demon-stration, said, "We just couldn't let these people get away with it. "The bigots say they want to keep abortion out of Northern Ireland. But abortion is a fact of life here.

we've been petitioning for the last few weeks for

Afterwards many peo-ple in Derry stated that the RUC had not changed since the first conflict in **Pro-Choice**

plastic bullets.

latest ceasefire.

The riots were the big-est since the start of the

the right to choose and hundreds of women have told us their experiences of having had to travel to England, borrowing hun-dreds of pounds and hav-ing to lie to friends and workmette.

workmates. "Abortion is a difficult enough choice without these bigots shouting about 'murderers'."

Youth for Truth is a new group, modelled on Youth Defence in the South, set up to campaign against the

Labour government's policy to extend the 1967 Abortion Act to Northern Ireland.

It also showed that there

is no such thing as a non-sectarian Orange march.

'Culture'

The notion that the Apprentice Boys march is a

1969

foetuses in city centres throughout the North. The RUC stopped the pro-choice demonstrators from marching and ar-rested one man who was taking photos. He was later released. Paul, one of the pro-choice counter-protestors, said "I'm glad we took a stand on this. But so far Labour has But so far Labour has refused to extend the act, claiming that politicians in the North are against it. Mo Mowlam said raising the issue of abortion "would not be useful during the neare talks." on this. "It was important that the pro-choice argument was heard loud and clear."

However, the anti-abor-tion bigots have seized the opportunity to parade their gruesome photos of aborted

Sweatshop Ennis ĪN

GILBERT Tunney Exhausts is an Enniskillen engineering firm which doesn't just make ex-hausts for cars, it also exhausts its workers.

Its workers. A month ago, Tunney decided that his workers were taking it too easy so he cut breaks to 10 minutes in the morning and just 15 minutes in the afternoon for dinner. Workers were also stressed out by a management who bawled and shouted at them.

AFTER HIS assault on lone parent benefits, Tony Blair is preparing more betrayals. His latest attack is on

the disabled. Disability Living Allow-ance is paid at three rates to those with a physical incapacity or a mental ill-

'Waste'

The money is sup-posed to be used to cook meals or look after them-selves in a proper man-

ner. But Blair and Harman think that the two billion pounds paid to over two In November of last year Steven, a 23 year old Liverpudlian living and working in Enniskillen, had an illness in his family so he took some days off.

off. On Friday 28th November he was threatened with the sack. Steve re-plied in unparliamentary language and was discharged. Two days later, having failed to find another job, he hung himself. Sweatshops are the reality behind Blair's policies.

the unthinkable."

the unthinkable." Now he proposes an "in-tegrity review" for all those claiming DLA. The review of all claims takes place in March. "It has become almost impossible for mothers with severely disabled chil-dren to claim DLA but even that is not enough for Blair, who calls himself a Christian socialist", says one disability activist in Enniskillen. "Blair and his wife enjoy an income of between \$300,000 and £350,000 per annum. Rather than tax the wealthy they expect the

A week previously, 300 members of the hardline Spirit of Drumcree group occupied the groups head-quarters in Belfast, accusing the leadership of selling out because they backed down from holding a number of parades

during the summer. The crisis is set to continue, fuelled by the widespread opposition to Or-ange marches on the streets and a decline in support among Protestants for the empty bigotry of Orangeism.

Derry and Limavady Seagate fears

WORKERS AT Seagate in Derry and Limavady are fearful for their future.

Even before the closure of the Clonmel plant, Seagate managers announced that plans for a second factory in Derry had been put on hold and that the plant in Springtown would be closed for a week over Christmas for retooling

Would be closed for a week over Christmas for retooling. Workers were called to a meeting in early December and told that they would have to take a week out of next year's holiday for the shutdown over Christmas. "We were given no option," one of the workers said. "A lot of us were relying on the extra shifts. "Now we have to pay for the time off our-selves."

selves.

There are rumours that another US firm has developed a method of producing the same computer parts in half the time and worries that Seagate will be forced out of the market. The Springtown plant exports computer parts, mainly to assembly plants in Malaysia. The collapse of the South East Asian econo-mies leady based on new technologies is

mies, largely based on new technologies, is ominous for Seagate workers.

Seagate has taken millions in IDB grants and has been promoted as a model

for inward investment by local politicians like John Hume.

Tony Blair visited the Springtown factory on his first visit to Derry earlier this year. Seagate is notorious in Derry for being the

Seagate is notorious in Derry for being the first major non-union company in the city. They openly tell workers in job interviews that they refuse to recognise trade unions. Workers at Seagate need to heed the warn-ing from Clonmel. Last year Seagate manag-ers assured Clonmel workers there was no passibility of alcourse.

Possibility of closure. They said the same in Derry last month. In July the Clonmel factory closed for retooling, just like the Springtown plant. The politicians who have promoted partner-ship with Seagate will be no help if a closure

is announced. Now is the time for Seagate workers to ordanise a union.



million disabled and long-term ill is a waste of

money. Instead Blair has urged Labour members to "think

Witchhunt in Hollywood

Chief anti-communist witchhunter Sen Joe McCarthy The legacy of **McCarthyism**

In September, the largest union in America, the AFL-CIO finally removed its rule banning members of the Com-munist Party (CP) from

holding union office. Shortly after, the Screen Actors Guild and the Direc-tors Guild formally apolo-gised to the scores of Holly-wood actors, writers and di-rectors unbe ware blackliter rectors who were blacklisted during the anti-communist witchhunt of the 1950s.

These actions are long overdue

due. Those who were witchhunted out of Hollywood lost their ca-reers decades ago, and workers chased out of their unions and

workplaces are now retired. In fact, many of the victims of McCarthyism—the period named after chief witchhunter, Sen. Joe McCarthy, are dead.

But the impact of McCarthyism lives on.

It is the main reason why the socialist movement—which played such a central role in building the unions in America in the 1930s—was completely marginalised two decades later.

Infiltrated

The central theme of McCarthyism was that commu-nists had infiltrated everywhere, from the factory floor to the up-permost echelons of government

The wild accusations were the wild accusations were designed to terrorise anyone even vaguely associated with the left. Democrats as well as Repub-

Democrats as well as kepuo-licans helped to create paranoia. Democratic President Harry Truman instituted the Loyalty Act in 1947, forcing 8 million government workers to sign anti-Communist oaths to keep their Communist oaths to keep their jobs and allowing the FBI to in-vestigate more than 2 million

vestigate more than 2 million federal workers. The witchhunt reached the point of hysteria in 1950 after Joe McCarthy made a speech claiming that he held a piece of paper with a list of 205 card-car-rying Communists who worked for the U.S. State Department. The piece of nance was in all rying Communists who worked for the U.S. State Department. The piece of paper was, in all likelihood, blank.

likelihood, blank. During the witchhunt, which lasted from the mid-1940s until the late 1950s, thousands of peo-ple were investigated, lost their jobs, were fined, were sent to prison or were deported—for such "crimes" as at some point having signed a petition or at-tended a CP meeting.

The hysteria reached ludious proportions. Politicians in Texas debated a

bill that would have made being

bill that would have made being a CP member punishable by the death penalty. They relented and decided on a 20-year prison sen-tence and a \$20,000 fine. In Indiana, public officials decided that *Robin Hood* was subversive literature and re-moved all copies from the shelves of school libraries. The centerpieces of the witchhunt were hearings con-ducted by the House Un-Ameri-can Activities Committee (HUAC) and Senate hearings chaired by McCarthy. The McCarthy inquisition was a show trial, intended to make an example of anyone who was called before the committee or was tried in court for allegedly being a communist. It was for this reason and no other that Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were executed on ture 10 1953

Rosenberg were executed on June 19,1953. Accused of allegedly passing on atomic secrets to the USSR evidence—the Rosenbergs in-sisted on their innocence and re-fused to strike a deal.

"Our case is being used as a camouflage to paralyse outspo-ken progressives and stifle criti-cism of the drive to atomic war". Julius wrote in a letter to Ethel while both were imprisoned at Sing Sing in New York.

Celebrities

HUAC targeted Hollywood celebrities because they were guaranteed to get lots of public-ity. Some well-known Hollywood

liberals, such as filmmaker Elia Kazan, became informers and "named names" of communists

they knew. Others, however, stood up to

Others, however, stood up to the anti-communists. Lionel Sander said he couldn't name any Commu-nists, but he could name "a group of fanatics trying to un-dermine the Constitution." Black singer Paul Robeson answered HUAC investigators who asked him why he did not go back to Russia: "Because... my people died to build this country, and I am going to stay here and have a part of it, just like you." Unfortunately, too few people stood up to anti-communism in

stood up to anti-communism in the 1950s.

That would have been the way for the socialist movement to defend itself.

defend itself. It is no exaggeration to say that McCarthyism nearly de-stroyed the left in the U.S. That was its purpose. But one thing McCarthyism could not destroy was the ideas inside people's heads. That is why, 40 years later, socialism is not dead, and the left is experiencing a revival

is experiencing a revival. by SHARON SMITH

Goba W

THE WORLD is facing a major change of climate.

This year, for exam-ple, parts of Africa have faced devastating floods due to the effects of an exceptionally warm Pacific cur-rent, named El Nino.

Nearly two thousand Somalis have died in the worst

flooding in fifty years. The UN World Food Programme has had to set up a special task force after early estimates showed that 27 million people across Africa might be at risk from the

changes brought by El Nino. But many climate scientists believe that this may only be a foretaste of what is to come. The

foretaste of what's to conter the cause of this growing threat is global warming. Rising levels of certain gases—above all carbon diox-ide—are the chief cause. These gases in the atmosphere act like the glass in a greenhouse. They allow heat from the sun to enter but not leave but not leave.

Floods

As a result the earth's tem-

perature is rising. The long term effects of this rise could be dramatic and unpredictable

One scenario, for example, predicts a melting of polar ice caps which in turn causes the sea levels to rise.

This could lead to many low lying countries from Holland to Bangladesh facing devastating

Another scenario sees shifting weather patterns bringing a new ice age to north west Eu-

floods

벐

rope. Many fertile areas of the

world could then become arid

8

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1

deserts. No one knows exactly which of these effects will happen but almost everyone agrees the ef-fect will be dramatic.

The increase in carbon dioxide is caused by emissions from industry, power stations and cars

The solution is therefore simple: to curb and cut the amount

pumped into the The problem market cannot need for a plan sponse to the cl

of car on d

All talk and LAST MONTH's global Butil is by no

climate conference in Kvoto seems destined to follow previous sum-mits which promised action but delivered little.

In 1988 the Toronto confer-ence called for a 20 percent cut in carbon dioxide emissions. But US emissions continued to

rise. Five years ago the world's

leaders met again at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. The US pledged to at least peg carbon dioxide emissions at their 1990 levels by the year 2000.

2000. But instead they will have risen by 14 percent by the new millenium. The 1997 summit in the Japanese city of Kyoto heard that scientists believed that a minimum cut of 15 per cent in memissions was necessary over the next 13 years. But those responsible for the bulk of the world's carbon di-oxide emissions refuse to take

the most elementary measures. By far the biggest culprit is the US, which accounts for a quarter of all the world's car-bon dioxide emissions. Europe comes next with around a fifth.

As sea levels rise is this the shape of the future?

around a fifth. All the world's leaders say they want to do something about the problem. But their actions prove oth-

erwise

At the Kyoto conference the US spent most of its time try-ing to resist any definite targets

for cutting emissions and de-manding more stringent re-strictions on developing coun-tries.

Warning

The US stance is not because it rulers do not understand the problem. Indeed. US vice-president Al

Gore is the author of a well known book warning of the impact of global warming. Their refusal to act stems

from the way they put the in-terests of US big business before any other. The EU leaders who claimed

The EU leaders who claimed to be more concerned for the environment than the Ameri-cans bowed to pressure from the European chemical giants. They insisted that HFCs-implicated in loss of the Ozone layer—be excluded from re-ductions. In the end the conference

In the end the conference agreed to a cut of an average 5.2 percent over 15 years.

even his water col will not be US Congress an e into e

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ng a ch nsport market transport

Insig

car CI NEARLY A quarter of carbon dioxever before.

ide emissions come from motor cars. Car exhausts are the most rapidly growing source of green-house gases.

But the run down of public transport has meant that many people have no alternative but to use their car to travel to work.

Those railway lines that have sur-vived outside of the main corridors are falling apart with 50 year old rails caus-ing derailments. Even Dublin's proposed Luas tram lines have been stalled. Yet despite all the emissions of car-bon monoxide and the growing levels of asthma caused by exhaust fumes, people are moving slower now than

The^{US} insist which allows growth in emis fall in Russia

One study quicker to get horse and tram is with a car to

Instead of run quent public tri economics of this

to predor

US Senators

that evi

SOCIALIST WORKER PAGE SEVEN





of abon dioxide being into the atmosphere. The roblem is that the free n dioxcannot cope with the e climate change

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But it is by no means certain that even this cut will be made.

Insisted

The US insisted on a loophole which allows it to trade its growth in emissions against a fall of the trade its decimated

economy. CS senators threatened that US this watered down proto-even will not be ratified by the col will the color will US congress and therefore will US tore into effect.



owed that it was und London with a the last century as it

ng a cheap and fre-isport system, the market have come transport policy.

is progress the problem?

MANY GREENS claim that economic growth is the cause of environmental crisis and that the future of the planet can only be saved by cutting consumption. But it is not the standard of living of

working class people that it the root of the

problem. Safe, clean industrial processes exist. The problem is that big business interests will not pay the cost of implementing them. It is the profits of the rich not the consumption of the mass of people that is polluting the environ-

the mass of people that is polating that the ment. An official Dutch report claims that carbon dioxide emissions can be cut by 80 per cent over fifty years without stunting the growth of the economy. If currently available technology was exploited, improved design of cars with more efficient engines and lightweight construction would cut emissions by a third with no loss of performance or comfort.

or comfort. Even using fossil fuels like oil, coal and peat, power station efficiency could be doubled to 60 percent using existing technologies such as "combined cycle" gas turbines. If the environmental costs of using dirty tech-nologies to produce power were taken into ac-count, investment in alternative methods like wind power would become quickly viable. But all of this will mean challenging the madness of the market and replacing it with a system based on planning and workers control.

SR actio

A KEY body lobbying at the Kyoto conference and in Washington has been the Global Climate Coalition.

Despite what its name suggests this is not a group of environmentalists. It was set up in 1989 by some of the world's biggest oil, gas,

car and heavy industry companies. These include oil giants Shell and Texaco, the Ford motor company and the US National Mining Association.

They have used all their influ-

ence to prevent any move to force them to cut the huge amounts of carbon dioxide they and their products pump into the atmos-

when accused of doing more than anyone else to block any ef-fective deal in Kyoto, John Grasser of the Global Climate Coalition boasted, "We regard this as an honour, "What we are doing is buying time for our in-dustries by holding up these

They argue that any action to control greenhouse gases will lead to higher taxes and job losses in the US.

Their real fear is that action to force them to clean up their act would cut into their profits.

To make sure their profits are defended at the expense of the environment, the bosses of some of the world's most polluting industries have spent huge sums in bribes political parties and politicians

The Global Climate Coalition gave over \$50 million to Clinton's Democratic Party and the opposition Republican Party in the US.

It also spent \$13 million on a television advertising campaign in the US claiming that climate change was not a problem and nothing needed to be done.

Big businesses are prepared to endanger the global climate to satisfy their lust for ever more profit

Questions on Marxism as Lenin rant?

TIMEWATCH on BBC2 recently claimed it was going to "expose the real Lenin from his secret files".

But the so called revelations were nothing new to anyone who has seriously studied the man

The programme told how Lenin had an affair with another Bolshevik, inessa Armand. But this was not a well kept se-cret. Lenin's wife. Krupskaya, knew about it and after their deaths wanted them to be bur-

ied together. The programme "ex-posed" details known to socialists for decades, yet drew none of the ob-vious conclusions from some of the facts.

It showed there was an assassination attempt on Lenin's life, yet did not conclude that this indicated an important threat to the revolution and had to be coun-

was that the Provisional Government could not bring the peace and im-proved conditions that workers wanted. Work-ers themselves would have to take power. The cry, "All power to the Soviets!" was taken up. Lenin's leadership was vital to this becomtered. The discovery that Krupskaya and other leading Bolsheviks were utterly opposed to Len-in's body being incarcer-ated in the mausoleum led no commentator to deduce that there were political tensions with Stalin.

Stalin. The only really new information was that Lenin suffered from a long term illness-hardly the stuff of hatchet jobs. But the programme's experts were desperate to claim that this infor-mation proved conclu-

mation proved conclu-sively that Lenin's lead-ership led directly to Sta-lin's concentration

lin's concentration camps. The thrust of the pro-gramme mirrored all the right wing ideas that great leaders make his-tory by themselves. Yet the horror of the First World War had driven millions to deeper hatred of the Tsar. The Bolshevik Party

Name

Addr

was cutting with that mood and the slogan "Peace, Land and Bread" expressed Rus-Lenin was proved right. The insurrection of October 1917 led by the Bolsheviks gave birth to a society unmatched in its democracy. It abolished legislation oppressing women and gave sian workers' desire for fundamental change in

society. Soviets (workers' councils) had emerged as organisations uniting workers across many workplaces as the Tsar-

ist empire collapsed. They grew to become the real power in the country and a challenge to the Provisional Gov-ernment which ruled in

Vital

In the months be-tween February and Oc-tober, the Bolsheviks won enough respect and influence in the Soviets

to secure a majority in Petrograd and Moscow. The key argument was that the Provisional

was vital to this becom-

was vital to this becom-ing a reality. He fought against the caution of long standing Bolshevik Party mem-bers and argued they had to seize the time.

A decisive turning point had been reached-it was either forward to

a workers' government or to an orgy of blood-shed as the old order re-established its rule.

Lenin's insistence over the October insur-

rection was not about a personal power trip. A workers' government was the most demo-

cratic and rational way of

running society. Lenin also knew that

a revolution in Russia

could ignite the spirit of revolt that existed around Europe. In turn

Russia, an economically backward country, would need the support of

name only

astated by war. Only months after the First World War. Russia was plunged into a civil war that brought more

revolutions elsewhere to

survive. Lenin was proved

gays. Workers ran society in

the interests of the many, not the greed of the few, in a country dev-

chaos The Bolsheviks had to take measures to defend that revolution.

that revolution. And the decimation of industry by the civil war also meant the decimation of the working class that made the revolution. Even so, Russia in 1922 was still a world apart from the regime Stalin set up after Len-in's death.

Stain set up after Len-in's death. Stalin could only con-solidate his rule by mur-dering every single one of Lenin's group of col-lobacter.

laborators. There is a river of blood between what Lenin and Stalin stood for

But for right wing commentators to concede this they would have to accept that 1917 was a

mass uprising led by a workers' party. They dare not admit that, so Lenin must be tarred as a bloodthirsty maniac who duped an entire population.

entire population. The programme did reveal something of value. The political disa-greements between Sta-lin and Lenin meant his Last Testament was a warning not to trust

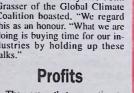
warning not to trust Stalin and it stated that he should no longer hold a position of influence.

This is not new infor-mation either, but it is still useful for socialists to know today.

by HELEN SHOOTER

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Fifty years ago, founded in war... Israel: Ihe nlack state

by **KEVIN** KENNY

IFTY YEARS ago, in 1948, the State of Is-rael was founded. Many people are still sympathetic to that state because of the Holocaust, when six million Jews were system-atically slaughtered by the Nazis during the Second World War.

The founders of Israel claim that they took over a 'land without people for a people without land'

But the reality is that Palestine was populated for centuries by a thriving Arab society.

They were only removed through a campaign of terror, racism and US dollars

At its foundation Israel ethnically eansed three-quarters of a million Palestinians from their homeland.

The 'terrorists' that Israel and the US want to put to death today are often the sons and daughters of those same dispossessed Palestinians.

Israel's political philosophy is usu-ally described as 'Zionism'.

This is a partly religious and partly historical idea that the world's Jewish population has a claim on that part of the territory of the Middle East.

Zionism originated as a political movement among Jewish people after the outbreak of anti-Semitism in late 19th century Europe, especially the pogroms incited by the Tsars of Rus-sia. But it was not the only response to reciem racism.

A large socialist movement existed among Jews with parties like the Bund in Russia and Poland arguing for Jews and non-Jews to fight together against racism.

The 120,000 Jews who had arrived in Palestine by 1930 were a tiny mi-nority compared to the more than 3 million Jews who had quit by the late 1920's for America—the real 'prom-ised land' for most Jews.

Political Zionism maintained that while Jews were a minority amongst a non-Jewish population they would always be persecuted.

It advocated mass Jewish emigration to a region where they could establish an exclusively Jewish state.

In 1896 Theodore Herzl, a Zionist leader, argued that the movement should win the approval of one of the Great Powers to acquire the territory on which to found their new state.



Zionist settlers occupy more Arab land

He claimed that Zionism was 'a co-Inial idea' and courted Germany and Turkey under whose influence Pales-tine happened to be. After WW1 Britain controlled Pal-

estine. Zionists convinced it to make a commitment to the establishment of 'a commitment to the establishment of 'a national home for the Jewish people', arguing that 'a Jewish Palestine would be a safeguard to England in particular in respect to the Suez Canal'—the main sea route connecting Britain to many of its key imperial possessions.

British-approved Jewish immigra-tion into Palestine stepped up rapidly.

Zionist settlers in turn helped the British put the boot in on the anti-co-lonial movement of the native Arab population, especially during the Pal-estinian general strike of 1936, which was followed by a two-year long uprising.

WW2 meant a boom for the exclusive Zionist economy.

When the war ended British power was on the wane and the US became the main player in the region.

Oil was the key to US designs in the Middle East as the richest oil fields lay in the area.

The strategy of the Zionists was to re-position themselves to offer a bul-wark against radical Arab nationalist movements which might threaten US economic interests in the area.

N 1947 a UN plan was drawn up to partition Pal-estine. The Jews who had grown to 30 percent of the population and owned only 6 percent of the land were granted 55 percent of Palestine.

The partition agreement soon be-came a legal figleaf which triggered the Zionist hijack of Palestine.

Terror on an enormous scale was

Terror on an enormous scale was used as a political weapon to enforce the take-over. In April 1948, soldiers of the Irgun, a particularly fanatical Zionist militia commanded by Menachem Begin—a twice-elected prime minister of Is-rael—descended on the Palestinian vil-lage of Deir Yassin and butchered 254 women, children and old men while the young Arab men worked in the fields.

(Deir Yassin is now called Givat Shaul Beth. In 1980, what was left of the ruins of Deir Yassin was bulldozed and made into a settlement of Ortho-dox Jews. The streets were named after the Irgun terror units that had mas-sacred the Palestinians)

On the 21 April in Haifa the Zion-ists rolled barrel bombs, which were casts filled with gasoline and dynamite, down the narrow alleys which crashed creating an inferno of flames and explosions. Zionist loudspeakers broad-

cast 'horror recordings' which filled the cast norror recordings' which filled the air with shrieks and anguished moans of Arab women, interrupted in Arabic with calls to: "Flee for your lives! The Jews are using poisoned gas and atomic weapons!" As the Palestinians fled Haifa only one phrase trembled on their lips: 'Deir Yassin, Deir Yassin'

These tactics were repeated through-out the country and three-quarters of a million Palestinians fled their homeland.

On 14 May Ben-Gurion proclaimed the state of Israel in the territories un-der Zionist control. Just eleven minutes later President Truman recognised the new state.

The next day Arab countries bound together in the Arab League "invaded" the new state

Zionists make much of this 'war of independence'

The truth is the Arab League mus-tered a grand total of 15,000 men. The Zionists had 30,000 fully mobilised regular troops, at least 32,000 second-line troops, plus 15,000 settlement po-lice and several thousand in the Irgun. The ruling feudal families of the re-

gion had no stomach for a fight. King Abdullah of Trans-Jordan re-ceived the Zionist Golda Meir as soon as the 'war' began. He was happy to take part in the carve-up of the remains of Palestine by annexing the West Bank.

HE racism at the heart of the Israeli state is enshrined in its 'Law of Return' which endows automatic Israeli citizenship for any Jew from any country who wants to live in Israel.

Non-Jews are excluded - especially the former Palestinian inhabitants. They have been condemned, ever since the hijack of their country, to the poverty and squalor of shanty towns throughout the Middle East.

Today Israel is the largest recipient fourth in the world. It is ranked fourth in the world's military league. It has engaged in war in every decade since its foundation—in 1956, 1967, 1973, and 1982.

Its 1982 invasion of Lebanon left over 20,000 dead when Israel bombed refugee camps and West Beirut to ru-

When it invaded the Lebanon again in 1996, 400,000 had to flee their homes.

One hundred sheltering civilians were massacred in the UN camp at Qana but the US prevented the UN from condemning it.

Israel assists the US by itself arm-ing some of the world's most bloodi-est dictatorships—when even the US has felt too embarrassed to do so.

By 1980, for example, no less than 35 percent of Israel's arms exports were going to the brutal apartheid regime in South Africa, despite a UN imposed mandatory embargo on arms sales to the regime

Israel is a ruthless outpost for West-ern domination of the Middle East.

It has turned a previously persecuted people into a tool of imperialism.

The main opposition to the state of Israel came from Palestine Liberation Organisation which was formed to fight the occupation of Arab lands and cre-ate a Palestinian state.

But the PLO did not challenge the conservative Arab governments which verbally oppose Israel but also help to prop it up much in the same way that Fianna Fail in Ireland props up parti-tion tion.

By accepting the Oslo 'peace' ac-cords the PLO effectively has made itself a collaborator with the Israelis and has settled for a mini-state on the West Bank that is little more than a glorified county council ..

Today the only power that can undo the racist settlement of 1948 is the huge Arab working class in the region.

It alone has an interest in challeng-ing both Israel and the surrounding conservative Arab regimes.

It alone can create a secular Pales-tine where Jew and Arab can live with equal rights.

behind the headlines FRANCIS STUART DEBATE: No hiding place for collaborators

LATE LAST year a motion to the artists organisation, Aosdana, calling for the resignation of the writer Francis Stuart, was heavily defeated.

was heavily defeated. Many might feel that this was a debate inside an irrelevant organisation that was set up more for the glorification of Charles Haughey than for the benefit of struggling artists. But it is important because it touched on a strong streak of anti-semitism that ran through Irish society which has never been recognised. Francis Stuart is no ordinary writer. In 1939 when thousands were trying to flee from Nazi Germany, Stuart voluntarily went to Berlin where he remained until the end of the war. It has been suggested that he was just a teacher on English literature, that he made a few radio broadcasts but did not indulge in Nazi propaganda.

'Reliable'

The truth is very different. Stuart's enthusiasm for the regime was recognised by the German ambassa-dor in Dublin.

He reported to Berlin that Stuart "was a genuine friend of contemporary Germany, a very good repre-sentative of Irish nationalism and very reliable." Stuart helped the Nazi secret service in their at-tempts to establish links with the IRA. He made eighty

Stlaft helped the Nazi secret service in their at-tempts to establish links with the IRA. He made eighty broadcasts from Germany and they clearly show his support for the Nazis. On February 6th 1943, for example, he praised the Germany army attacks on Stalingrad and stated he was "glad to be living among such people, glad to be here in a country that can produce such men". On February 4th 1942, he talked of the "financial spider web" with which Britain had entangled Europe before the war and claimed that it was "largely Lon-don Jews who figure in the dealings". In a recent *Irish Times* column Fintan O'Toole op-posed the idea of expelling Stuart from Aosdana by arguing that as a writer Stuart had "engaged in the consequences of his actions". But there is little evidence of this. In his autobio-graphical novel, *Blacklist, Section H*, the hero H de-fends his decision to go to Germany saying that, "It was hard to explain that his first responsibility ... was not towards the victims of organised injustice ... but in defence of the indefensible and in questioning the unquestionable". Far from engaging in the consequences of his ac-tions, this sounds more like reveiling in them.

unquestionable". Far from engaging in the consequences of his ac-tions, this sounds more like revelling in them. Stuart was able to return to Ireland after the war without facing major condemnation because the Irish establishment itself was anti-semitic. The recent RTE documentary "No more Blooms" has graphically depicted the scale of this racism. Hundreds of Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi persecu-tion were refused entry visas to Ireland. Even representations by the Fianna Fail TD, Robert Briscoe, on behalf of his aunt were refused. She later died in a Nazi death camp.

Refugees

The Irish government used the argument if more Jewish refugees were allowed in, it would encourage

anti-semitism. They are trying to use the same argument with refu-

In reality, anti-semitism was stoked up by the estab-lishment itself. Charles Bewley, the Irish Ambassador to Berlin during the war, was an open Nazi sympa-

He reported that "Jewish emigrants in countries in which they have been permitted to enter have created grave moral scandals and are a source of corruption

grave moral scandals and are a source of corruption among whom they live". The Fine Gael TD Oliver Flanagan, declared in a Dail Debate that "as bees are to honey, Jews are to money". Flanagan remained a respected member of Fine Gael right up to the seventies. The threatened bombing of Rome evoked more of a response from De Valera than the treatment of Jews. Even after the war, when the full horrors of the Holo-caust were revealed, obstacles were raised to the bringing of Jewish refugee children to Ireland. Yet, a top Croatian Nazi, Andrna Artuvitch, wanted for war crimes entered Ireland with the help of the Franciscans. A year later he went to the US on Irish identify papers.

identity papers. Throwing Stuart out of an organisation set up to represent the arts would help unravel the history of anti-semitism in Ireland.

The house he grew up in was interested in politics and literature and by the time he was six years old, -PAT BYRNE

magazines New title but same old story

by HASSAN MAHAMDALLIE

IF YOU go into any newsagent you hit a wall of magazines aimed at young men or the "lads" market.

TELL Forey-Photeat

Spank Me. Vicari

inssed in Spacel

CARMER

ELECTRA BLOWS A FUSE 612

"lads" m Minogue.

on the lob!

These magazines all have a picture of a "sexy babe" which you are en-couraged to put on your

bedroom wall. This is the boom area in publishing. On one level their success is

fairly straightforward. Despite the ironic stance, they sell because they contain "girlie" photos that used to be confined to the top shelf.

Seedy

Last month's Loaded

Last month's Loaded featured ex page three model turned Live TV pre-senter Kirsten Imrie. The interview is an excuse for some typically seedy pho-tographs. The magazines attempt to make sexism main-stream and acceptable, which is a backward step for men as well as women. There is very little here but plain old sexist rubbish dressed up as "new laddism". Maxim even has

by SINEAD **KENNEDY**

BRENDAN Behan is one of the most colourful but misunder-

stood characters of Irish literature.

He has a caricature image of a "drunken artist" and even a stage Irishman.

But Behan was always larger than the myths that surrounded him.

He was a man of deep political conviction, a com-mitted and self professed

mitted and sell professed socialist. Michael O'Sullivan's new biography is an attempt to get to grips with Behan the man, to discover the face behind the numerous maske

masks. Brendan Behan was born in 1923 to a deeply political working class family. His mother Kathleen was a committed socialist and his father Stephan a vet-eran republican.

Politics

sex. They have endless sex surveys and interviews with women, supposedly about "what they want". But these magazines at-tempt to hide this by being "modern" and "outraa "Class of 98" pin up cal-endar with undressed "lads" models like Danni These new magazines rely heavily on sex to sell. They prey on young men's insecurity about

book

Brendan Behan the

committed fighter

geous" so young men don't have to feel embarrassed about getting the magazine out in a college bar or on the tube.

narke smith

But a topless picture of a model from one of these magazines on a bedroom

or workplace wall is just as offensive, unacceptable and sexist as a page three

1111

and sexist as a page three or porn pin up. These magazines play on the humdrum lives that most young men lead. They suggest that if you buy enough of the adver-tised commodities and adopt a laddish attitude, you will be a success and get your girl. Alongside Nike shoes, fancy bottled beers and af-tershave, there are adverts for pricey watches and clothes, many of which would be out of the reach of most readers. The city office clerk or

The city office clerk or manual worker can't af-ford these—even if they were desirable. It is all just a glossy fantasy.

just a glossy fantasy. The magazines exploit the damage, distortions and alienation that capital-ist society inflicts on men and their sexuality. They are more likely to instil a sense of inferiority or failure than confidence. How can anyone possibly match up to the images peddled? What is revolting about these magazines is the vi-sion they offer. It is a nar-row, demeaning idea of how men are supposed to regard themselves and women.

Image

Intage It is about material wealth and individual gain. *Loaded* especially has a Thatcherite image – a bul-lying stockbroker type. The pits of an advertis-ing campaign in *Loaded* must be this: a picture of topless twins with the slo-gan. "When it came to the satisfied until he'd got his bands on two that were exactly alike." What are they selling? Twigiets. That's not just sick, that's sad.



Behan was familiar with tenced by a Dublin military court to fourteen years for the attempted murder of

Behan was familiar with everything from Dickens to Max. The joined the Fianna, the youth organisation of the houth organisation of the substance of the second was arised and sent to for young offenders when the was sixteen years old. Behan spent three years in Borstal and then re-turned to Dublin where he was again arrested six months later.

Throughout his work there is a growing disillu-sionment with republican politics and an increasing shift to socialism. *The Quare Fellow* epito-mises Behan's best work.

These experiences formed the basis of his most famous writings including *The Hostage, Borstal Boy* and *The Quare Fellow.*

Shift

message that 'Labour must wai'. Behan mocks the aristo-fratic pretensions of the vere more interested in pre-serving their own self inter-est than in addressing the inequalities in Irish society. When Behan returned to Irreland from Bostral a friendly official waved him though customs with the words, "It must be great to be free, Brendan". His terse reply was "It must". It summed up every-thing that Behan stood for.

The play is a damning in-dictment of the penal sys-tem. But the audience is also faced with the harsh reality that for the old lag Dunlavin, conditions are so harsh in the outside world that he is better off in prison.

that he is better off in prison. Behan writings exposed De Valera's Ireland. His socialist politics al-lowed him to recognise the decay of republicanism. He knew that national lib-eration was always bound to ring hollow unless there was a change in the struc-ture of society. In his play, *The Hostage* the character Pat speaks for all who were disap-pointed with de Valera's message that 'Labour must wait'.



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FOR REVOLUTION, NOT ent system cannot led out of

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FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST: AND WEST: SWP welcomed the (-up of the USSR and nd of the East pean dictatorships. e states were not list but were run by a capitalist class. re against the nation of the globe by rialist powers and we se their wars. We are e right of all nations, and West, to self-mination. FOR AN END TO ALL

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RTY: RTY: win socialism socialists ed to organise in a volutionary party. This rty needs to argue ainst right-wing ideas and overthrowing the stem The SWP aims to

JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

If you want to join the Socialist Workers

Party, fill in this form and send it to: PO

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Name

Phone.....

Address.....

OLGA ANISIMOVA IS ONE OF HUNDREDS OF REFUGEES FACING IMMEDIATE DEPORTATION 'They won't even let me state my case

OLGA Anisimova had to flee Moldova be-cause of ethnic conflict. Olga had originally come from Siberia but found the hatred

against Russians in Moldova frightening. "It wasn't Bosnia but it was war. There was fighting, shooting in the streets. Once I was entering an elevator to our house when a man attacked we ha around the streets of the street street street was entering an elevator to our house when a man attacked we have street stree house when a man attacked me. He sprayed tear gas in my face and shouted "go home you Russian pig..." Her daughter Elena was re-fused admission to a local state run school because she had a Russian name. Olga decided to flee this persecution and eventually

came to Ireland. She had hoped to make a new life for herself as a refu-

gee once she got a chance to prove why her life might be in danger if she returned to Moldova.

Ignored But Olga Anisimova is not

getting a chance to present her case for refugee status. Instead she has become the first refu-

gee that is facing immediate deportation from this country. An important test case in the Supreme Court has ruled

the Supreme Court has roled that no one can apply for asy-lum if they set foot in any other European Union coun-try before coming here. Many people had originally hailed the Refugee Act of the last government as a 'progres-sive piece of legislation' ignor-ing the fact that it contained

ing the fact that it contained the provision of the Dublin Convention on immigration in

Europe. This disgraceful agreement specifies that applications for asylum can only be heard in

When refugees are sent back to countries like Britain or France, they can in turn be deported to their country of origin if the government there consider them safe. The British government, for example, considers Nigeria

safe The bureaucrats at the De-partment of Justice recently ordered Gardai and customs

officers to stop any black peo-ple at the Irish borders to de-

nand passports. Now they have found a new way of expelling refu-gees in order to stop Ireland becoming a multi-cultural society.



Defend refugees

O'Donoghue in opposition

"Experience abroad has shown that the

money. I totally agree with the observations

use of fast track

procedures save neither time nor

and criticisms of Amnesty International in that respect"—John O'Donoghue TD 19

October 1995.

EVERY socialist should defend the right of refugees to come to Ireland. In the past, many Irish republicans and left wingers had to flee this country because of formal and informal persecu-

tion. While John O Donoghue makes great play over the big rise in refugees coming here, the reality is that Europe as a whole only accepts 6% of the world's 20 million refugees. Most refugees have to flee to countries which are far poorer than Ireland. No one should fall for the argument that refugees steal Irish houses or cause Irish people to be deprived of social welfare.

steal Irish houses or cause Irish people to be deprive of social welfare. Local authority house building has been cut in half and this, combined with the escalating property crisis, is causing the housing shortage. Right wing government always try to target poor groups like lone parents or refugees to claim they are 'sponging'. But the real spongers are big business who insist that they must have a 12% rate of tax on their profits.

who insist that they must have a take their profits. Although refugees have been excluded from employment, it is vital that cases of deportation are raised throughout the broader labour movement. It is only by standing against racist injustice that the working class movement as a whole grows politically.

deportation The Department of Justice has also drawn up new rules

for the processing of applications for refugee status. Socialist Workerhas obtained a copy of these regulations which promise to pro-duce fast track proce-

asylum can only be heard in the first European country where a refugee arrives. Olga's tragedy was that her flight from Moldova first stopped in Britain: there are no direct flights to Ireland. The Irish government are now planning to use this rul-ing to the full to clear the coun-try of virtually all refugees. dures. In reality, they give officials at the Depart-ment of Justice a free hand to prevent refugees settling here. Department of Justice officials can now decide if a refugee has made "a manifestly unfounded" application and deport them straight away with

A fast track to

them straight away with-out any hearing. Among the grounds for a "manifestly un-founded" application

Failure to admit to having false papers.

But many refugees have to travel with false papers and few will ad-

mit to the first official they meet that they are not in order. Many withholding of 'rel-evant information'.

But only department of-ficials can decide what is relevant and what is not. Failure to give sufficient details clearly.

But there is no automatic right to an inter-preter in the new rules. Even if a refugees passes all these hurdles, they can still be de-ported on the grounds of 'national security'.

SWP News from ne

As the new year begins the world is facing the prsopect of large-scale crisis. In South East Asia and Japan a massive cri-

sis is hitting as a number of banks go bust after the collapse

bust after the collapse of the giant Yamaichi financial house, which left billions in debts. Respectable commen-tators in the financial pages of the Sunday pa-pers are now openly taik-ing of the prospect of a 1930s type slump spread-ing throughout the world. But masses of working class people are not pre-pared to be made to pay the price for the looming crisis in the profit system. Since the French gen-eral strike of two years ago workers across the conti-

nent and beyond have fought to defend their pen-sions, wages and social welfare conditions.

There is growing anger and radicalism not just among minorities but more

among minorities but more and more in the heart of the working class. In Ireland three quarters of those polled character-ised McCreevy's budget as a budget for the rich. A similar proportion sup-ported the right of the girl in the "C-Case" to go to England to have an abor-tion.

England to have tion. The Celtic Tiger is ex-tremely fragile and if the world economy moves into slump as seems more and more likely the small Irish economy must surely follow. Socialists who argue

that there has to be an al-ternative to the crazy market system can counter this influence and encour-age workers to fight to victory

BELFAST

MAYNOOTH

tory. But this can only really happen if socialists are or-ganised and active in the unions, workplaces, com-munities and estates.

munities and estates. Our fortnightly paper Socialist Worker is invalu-able for carrying socialist arguments and news of struggies into the working class movement. We are encouraging every mem-ber and supporter to take five copies to sell regularly to those around them. The SWP invites you to become an active member of the Socialist Workers Party in the New Year.

SWP branch meetings ATGWU Hall, Keyser St. Meets every Thurs 8pm contact 8722682 for details DUBLIN NORTH-WEST Meets every Tuesday at 8:30pm in The Snug, Dorset St. CORK Meets every Weds at 8pm in Dennehy's Pub, Cornmarket St. in The Snup, Dorset St. DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK Meets every Tuesday at 8:30pm ArtaneBearnount Recreation Centre opp Artance Castle 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.pm in C'Connells Pub, Richmond St. DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL DERRY Meets every Tues in Badgers Bar at 8pm DUN LAOGHAIRE Meets every Tues at 8pm in Christian Institue. ENNISKILLEN Meets every fortnight Contact national address for details GALWAY Meets every Thursday at 7.30pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL Meets every Thur at 8pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse St. Meets every Thursday at6.30pm Class Hall D Arts Maynooth DUBLIN TALLAGHT/ CLONDALKIN Meets Monday at 8pm in the Steering Wheel, Clondalkin WATERFORD Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Meets every mulsuay at opin in <u>Steering Wineel, Uonument</u> There are Socialist Workermembers in: COLERAINE; LURGAN; CAVAN; DONEGAL; NAAS; KILKENNY; DUNDALK; ATHLONE; DROGHEDA If you would like to get in bouch, contact our national office at (01) 872 2682, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

news & reports— politics; the unions send in your reports: telephone (01) 872 2682, fax: (01) 872 3838 ger at Seagate closure LAST MONTH's announcement of the closure of Seagate's mei

Clonmel plant, with the loss of 1,400 jobs, sent shock waves through the town.

down

workers.

It also shows how fragile the Celtic Tiger economy which has been built on the computer industry really is.

John told Socialist Worker;

John told Socialist Worker: "We knew something was go-ing on for the last few weeks. Equipment was being moved. But to hear your job was gone on the television was a slap in the face."

Announcing the closure to

Announcing the closure to the media before the workers are told is typical of the com-pany's attitude. Mary, an operator with the company for two years, says: "The company would not en-tertain a union. If we had a un-ion here we would be in a stronger position." For Seagate, which makes

For Seagate, which makes components for computers, the workers are just "unit costs". The market for com-nuter products how the computer products has not ex-panded as quickly as the Seagate bosses anticipated and now they want to sack workers around the world.

Another computer firm, AST, owned by Korean giant Samsung, is downsizing in the wake of the crisis of the South rean economy. The IDA has showered the

multinationals with grants. Non-union Intel received over

CAROLANN Duggan

has entered the race

for General Secre-

tary of SIPTU after a

magnificent branch

meeting in Waterford nominated her.

up to the special meeting to discuss the nomina-

Normally these meeting are attended by a handful of activists who toe the

ion. SIPTU head office, for ex-

ample, are currently trying to split up the left wing Educa-tion branch because it has become a thorn in their side. John McDonald is one of the key officials for the Cork region

Both McDonald and

Both McDonald and Hayes are active supporters of Partnership 2000. Carolann Duggan is argu-ing that SIPTU needs to call a special conference to dis-cuss its involvement in Part-nership 2000. The Waterford Branch

line of the officials.

tions

Over a hundred turned

£26 million and Seagate came next with £16 million. John says: "The loss of 1,400 jobs will devastate the town. When Digital left and 350 jobs were destroyed it hit the town were head the town very badly. "There are adverts in the canteen now for five techni-cians in Fermoy and two somewhere else. For the 1,000 L'A operators the prospects of work are very slim indeed." But workers at Seagate should not take this lying down. They should look seriously at resisting the closure and de-manding that this company pay full compensation to the

jobs for a number of years. In Rank's Flour Mill, a workers' occupation forced the British multi-national to pay higher redundancy pay-

The local trades council should organise a march

Reports from inside the nent were so worried by the leaflet, advertising the meet-ing that they put back arrangements for wage payments un-til 8 pm on the night of the meeting.

their company to the Danish multi-na-tional FLS. The privatisation is being pushed by the Fianna Fail/ Progressive Democrat governmen

WORKERS at TEAM are outraged by the

attempts to sell off

FLS has an aerospace division based in Britain but oth erwise it trades in chemicals and concrete.

Its aerospace section is smaller than TEAM and em-ploys less people. It is also losing more money than TEAM. Its main reason for trying to buy out TEAM is to remove a competitor from the market FLS has a notorious repu-

tation for employing cheap la-bour when it can. It has pub-licly admitted to using child la-bour in its cement factories in Burma

None of this, however, con None of this, however, con-cerns Aer Lingus management. They want to dispose of TEAM any way they can and do not care who the buyer is. With TEAM out of the way, they believe that it will become easier to privatise the whole air-line itself.

line itself. Many workers received "let-ters of comfort" from Aer Lingus when they first moved over to TEAM. These guaranteed job secu-rity and the same conditions as Aer Lingus workers. Selling off the company is a way of get.

Act Engage workers, octained of the company is a way of get-ting out of these guarantees. "The press have been giving the impression that TEAM workers are being offered £32,000 each to accept the take-over

tion' was imposed on the

The bosses can still find excuses for not going ahead with the full hearing but the injunction stays in place.

As one bricklayer put it, As one bricklayer put it, "The full case is supposed to be heard in January but they could string it out until the site is nearly finished. It shows what side the law is really on."

The Bricklayers Union been given the backing of the Dublin Trades Council to

shows that it is possible to organise effective strike ac-This is a good start but what is also needed is a policy of defiance.

O'Brien's off licences

WORKERS at O'Brien's off licences, which has ten outlets in Dublin and Wicklow, have recently joined the Mandate union. The owners at first refused to recognise or meet with the union. But after a ballot for strike action, they were soon forced to change

But after a ballot for strike action, they were soon force as the their minds. At a meeting between O'Brien's and Mandate officials a package was drawn up which gave workers some improvements. These included: an increase in holiday pay from fifteen to 20 days. Dayment of time and a third for Sunday work. Dublic holidays to be paid at double time. A number of workers voted against accepting the package as they thought that far more could have been won. But the unions have still shown that they can get results. Now is the time to build up the organisation in order to press for more changes.

TEAM Aer Lingus Resistance to privatisation grows

But this is a lie. This figure only applies to top manage-ment. The most that a worker

ment, the most that a worker can receive is one year's sal-ary", one TEAM shop steward told *Socialist Worker*. "But many will not be get-ting this as the offer is for two weeks for every year's service un to serve years. up to seven years. "One of the sickest things

"One of the sickest things about the offer is the way it dis-criminates against older work-ers. There are penalty clauses in it for anyone over 55." The central issue, however, is privatisation, which can only be a prelude to further attacks on the TEAM workers. In the run up to Christmas, management put extra pressure on workers by writing an indi-vidual letter to every home. The unions however have instructed their members to ignore the company's offer.

company's offer. The response to this instruc-tion has been virtually unani-mous and now the take-over deal with FLS has been put back

back. This provides an important breathing space for TEAM workers—but industrial action will be needed in the New Year to ward off the continuing threat of privatisation



RAIL WORKERS at Cork's Kent station have won an impor-tant victory. Forty workers staged a lightning strike after trumped up disciplinary charges were laid against a freight worker.

were laid against a freight worker. His local boss threatened to have him fired if he didn't sign an admission of misconduct. This boss is known as the "Bully Boy" among workers in the sta-tion. The twenty four hour stop-page on Saturday, December the 12th, cut services to and from Dublin, Limerick and Kerry, as well as local services. Because of this tremendous solidarity all the charges against the worker were dropped. Such a result gives us a glimpse of what can be achieved when con-fident militant action is taken.

Saracens

AFTER THE closure of the Saracens factory in Lurgan, lo-cal trade unionists set up a Save our Saracens campaign. They organised a public meet-ing which representatives of the representatives of the same set of the Wa-erfront concert hall in Belfast where Coats Viyella was holding a capeting campaign outside Marks and Spencers—one of Coats Viyella's largest clients. When word of this reached management, redundancy pay-ments were raised and extended to include everyone in the fac-tory.

After that, however, the SOS campaign fizzled out. The customer boycott cam-paign was in fact a poor proposal which did not inspire confidence. What was needed was a more militant strategy that proposed occupation of the plant. That les-son should be learnt for the fu-ture.



Carolann Duggan

Line of the officials. Carolann received over ninety votes while her ri-vals, Brendan Hayes and John McDonald received Committee of the union has already endorsed this call. Union leaders like Des Geraghty have argued that the recent budget breached the spirit of Partnership 2000 by giving so many concessions to the wealthy. But he has not proposed doing anything concrete about it. only seven and eight reonly seven and eight ic spectively. The two other candidates are part of the establishment of the union. Brendan Hayes has been the regional secretary in Dub-lin where he has presided over a regime that has tried to break militancy in the un-ion

about it.

about it. In a previous election Carolann Duggan was the first person to advocate a na-tional minimum wage of £5

an hour

This has now become the official policy of most unions. But again the issue is what should be done to win it. While others believe that quiet lobbying is the way to achieve this demand, Carolann Duggan is advocat-ing a national stoppage to enforce the minimum wage.

The FF/PD government

has not even appointed a un-ion representative to the com-mission that has been set up to investigate the issue.

lann D

Budget

In January SIPTU branches are supposed to convene special meetings to discuss nominations for the discuss nominations for the post of General Secretary. All members are entitled to attend these meetings—al-though often little notifica-

tion is given. Anyone who wants to see change in SIPTU should try to get to these meetings.

Citybus

HUNDREDS of Citybus drivers in Belfast staged an unofficial strike in December after a colleague was injured in a petrol bomb attack.

attack. Each Citybus depot was picketed. Drivers also pick-eted the main Ulsterbus de-pot, stopping all buses. At a mass meeting at the

At a mass meeting at the Europa bus depot, hundreds of workers complained that supervisors had threatened to stand down drivers who re-fused to take buses out, de-spite reports of rioting. They rejected union lead-ers' promises of negotiations and demanded that the man-ager of Translink. Frank

firmed when the damaged bus was towed down to the mass picket. "Look at that", said one. "No screens, no ra-dio, nothing." The drivers voted to sus-pend all night-time services on the routes affected. Unfortunately, their de-Unfortunately, their de-mands for increased security were diverted by a union of-fer to place a reward for the person who threw the petrol

and demanded that the man-ager of Translink, Frank Clegg, address them. Clegg was regularly inter-rupted by drivers complain-ing that nothing was being



Union leaders like Des

Policy

workers. Seagate have got very valu-able assets in this plant. They should be told that they will not be moving them out of the country until work-ers are satisfied they have ful-filled their obligations. In several closures in the past, workers occupied their plants and won important vicplants and won important victories. In Clondalkin Paper Mills in Dublin an occupation saved SIPTU election for General Secretary

45 Seagate bosses addressing workers in the canteen through the town to demon-

chall

strate the strength of support for a fightback by the Seagate Twenty people attended a Socialist Workers Party meet-ing in Clonmel on the Seagate closure.

B

Cramptons

BRICKLAYERS con-tinue to be banned from picketing Crampton's site in Dublin City Uni-versity because of the notorious Industrial Re-lations Act.

Workers at a new exten-sion to DCU voted for action when they were told that they were being employed by a sub-contractor, rather than

by Cramptons. The building bosses are using sub-contractors to get

done about security. One of the drivers said,

"We need protection. We're being sent out with no screens, no radios to call for help. "Buses are getting stoned all the time.

all the time. "We get paid £206.44 a week and we're under con-

stant stress. Enough is enough, we want action now." Drivers anger was con-firmed when the damaged

laws.

pany

driver

tion on the buses.

took the union to court with an absurd claim that the vote for action had not been con-ducted properly.

This is the exact same tac-tic that Nolan's transport used to defeat a strike against low pay in their haulage com-

An 'interlocutory injunc-

omb which injured the

But the drivers action

0an's

out of their obligations to pay

Crampton workers by the High Court. This means that they can-not picket until their full case is heard again. proper rates and even to avoid the health and safety Crampton's, however,

launch a major campaign against the Industrial Rela-tions Act.

PAGE TWELVE SOCIALIST WORKER





The BLAIR govern-ment cut benefits to single parents in December despite widespread opposition from Labour MPs and Labour voters. The cuts will rob lone parents of up to £11 a week

from next year. Labour claims that the cuts are necessary to encourage single parents to get work. But the legislation was planned by the Tories before the last election. When Labour was in opposition, the Social Security Minister, Harriet Harman, was to-tally opposed to the cut. "The abolition (of one parent benefit) will make

working lone parents worse off and discourage work amongst this group". Harman said in No-

vember 1996. Now she claims that

the cut is one of the "hard choices" Labour has to make to stick to the Tory

make to stick to the fory spending limits. An unprecedented 47 Labour MPs voted against the legislation, despite the threat of being expelled from the Labour Party. One of the rebel MPs

AnnClwyd, from South



What are Blair's women MPs doing for single mothers?

Wales, explained why she

Wales, explained why she voted against. "In the Cynon Valley there are 1,500 lone par-ents, 234 job vacanacies and 14.6 per cent out of work. Just where are the jobs coming from?"

Poverty

The cuts in benefit are a punative attack on sin-

a punative attack on sin-gle parents. They are modelled on Bill Clinton's Welfare to Work policies which have driven thousands of lone parents into poverty in the US.

Sinead, a single mother on nappies and everything else she needs.

from Newtonabbey, spoke to Socialist Worker about "I have nothing left for myself at the end of the what the cuts will mean. "I was horrified when I heard about it. I work and get family credit but if I stop work it looks like I'll week "Labour is just acting like the Tories all over

be on a lower rate and the place I work in is up for sale at the moment." "The way they talk

about lone parents really annoys me. It's hard enough as it is. "I work 20 to 25 hours a week. It costs me £36 a week for childcare for my daughter and the rest goes

again.

don't know how they ex-pect people with children below school age to get by

"It seems like there is nobody to stick up for working class people. There's so much that the government could be do-

ing. "They could put more money into childcare. I

Announced

Labour announced plans for after school childcare clubs as part of the Welfare to Work package. This should have been a

step in the right direction. But it has not been backed up by resources.

The £300 million it was allocated from the Na-tional lottery will work out at just £1.15 a week per child.

The rest will have to be paid for by parents.

SOCIALISTS will shed no tears over the killing of Billy Wright. He appears to have been killed by the Republi-can splinter group the INLA. Billy Wright was Commander in Chief of the Loyalist Volunteer Force, the most vicious of the Loyalist murder games.

Loyalist murder gangs. Wright, known as "King Rat", ordered the murders of dozens of people simply for being

murders of dozens of people simply for being Catholics. In the end Wright was convicted of threatening to kill a Protestant woman neighbour. Wright was the product of the sectarian poison at the heart of the Northern Ireland state. But his killing will not remove any of the poi-son of sectarianism from Northern Ireland. Already other thugs have been found to fill his shoes. Within hours of his death they attempted a mas-sacre of Catholic teenagers in a disco near Dungannon.

Dungannon. The attempt misfired but they managed to kill a

But this isn't the work of a few isolated thugs, "Respectable" politicians kept up regular con-tacts with Wright.

Last year the then MP for Mid Ulster. Rev William McCrea of the DUP, was happy to share a platform with Wright in Portadown. David Trimble conferred

with him too. As tensions mount the

As tensions mount the ceasefires are in danger. Working class people across the North reject any return to bloodshed. It is working class people from both communities that have borne the brunt of three dec-adae of war. ades of war

The talks process however offers no end to sectarianism.

offers no end to sectarianism. Instead any "settlement" will keep Catholic and Protestant workers competing with each other for low paid jobs and de-clining social resources-repre-sented by middle class politi-cians from "their community". The employers in Northern Ireland are the real beneficiar-ies of the divisions within the working class. Northern Ireland has the worst housing and low-est wages in these islands. What is needed now more than ever is a politics that unites working class Catholics and Protestants against the sectar-ian structures of the state and the sectarian politicians. The trade unitons in the North should organise a mass

North should organise a mass demonstration to show the re-vulsion of workers at the rise of sectarian tension-and follow up by mounting a real fight against low pay and poverty.

WHERE IS NEW ABOUR GOIN

THE CUTS to lone parent benefits are a watershed

THE CUTS to lone parent benefits are a watershed for the Blair government. Labour was elected on a wave of opposition to the Tories cuts in education, the health service and the welfare state. But Labour is now ignoring its supporters. Over 60 per cent of Labour voters opposed the lone parent ben-efit cuts in a Guardian poll taken the day before the vote. Despite this, Blair intends to continue Tory spend-ing limits which will mean attacks on the poor. La-bour refuses to tax the rich in Britain. Labour's own Post-master General, Geoffrey Robinson, who is in charge of collecting tax, has millions in off-shore tax havens.

Labour is now threatening to cut disability and sick-ness benefits, targetting some of the most deprived in Society.

The revolt by Labour MPs is a reflection of the much deeper opposition that exists throughout Britain to these policies. But it can't be left to MPs alone. Ken Livingstone, who has acted as a spokesperson for the left, says it might take 18 months for the left to grow. We can't wait that long. If the Labour MPs, along with trade union lead-ers, had organised massive demonstrations against the cuts, Blair would have been forced to back down. But they see parliament as the main focus of change. Most MP's will be tied by loyalty to the Labour Party. The potential for that opposition to grow outside parliament will increase over the next year. The gov-ernment still has to get the legislation for student fees through parliament next year. Now is the time to increase the pressure on Blair. But it will mean organising that opposition from be-low, mobilising massive demonstrations to force Blair to back down.