

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p

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Solidarity price £1

NO BLOOD

FOR OIL!



No to war in the Gulf

Welcome to Cayman Ireland

IRELAND has become the Cayman Islands of Western Europe. Foreign investors are using the Irish Financial Services Centre to hide their wealth from their own tax authorities.

The *Economist* and *Time* magazine carry numerous ads from Irish companies offering to register new companies here for as little as £225.

The internet is also used to advertise this

service.

Chartered Offshore Services, based in Waterford, tells potential clients: "Rule number one..."

"Do not use an incorporation agent in your country as this creates a file on your offshore identity in your own country. This is not wise."

Directors

The "company formation firms" supply lists of company names and lists of directors.

Ireland is the chosen location for tax dodgers because it is the only country in the EU which allows non-residential companies to register without paying tax.

The main condition is that the firms in question do not trade here.

This means that non-residential firms pay no tax at all on condition that they do not create jobs!

The main benefits of the operation go to accountancy firms, company formation firms, solicitors

and banks.

Between them they make £40 to £60 million a year from the scam.

The affair shows up the government's racist propaganda about refugees using the internet before coming here to "scrounge".

While poorer immigrants are threatened with deportation, wealthy foreigners can access the internet to find out about the latest tax scams.

Disabled left in poverty

EIGHTY PERCENT of disabled people are unemployed, according to a report published by the National Rehabilitation Board last week.

More than one-third of people with disabilities have to borrow to pay for everyday costs and rely on care from family and friends to survive.

If they are working, they are on very low incomes and pay high transport costs, because they cannot get on to buses or

trains. "The self-esteem and health of many suffer because of the indignity of poverty", says the report.

These findings should come as no surprise to the current government which decided to give the miserly sum of £3 million to the disabled this year, as compared to £20 million for the restructuring of Croke Park.

It is insulting to think a sports stadium was prioritised over ordinary people's needs.

Dublin pickets over masts

THE GOVERNMENT have arranged a conference on Friday 6 March "to allay public concerns" about the siting of mobile phone masts.

Campaigners against the masts will protest outside Dublin Castle, the conference venue, from 9am onwards.

We know from the record of the speakers that the conference is an attempted whitewash", campaign organiser Colette O'Connell told *Socialist Worker*.

The government argues that Eircell and Esat Digifone's microwave emissions are lower than the "relevant international guidelines".

This refers to the guidelines of the ICNIRP, a group of international self-appointed scientists with strong ties to industry and the military.

Evidence

But a wealth of scientific evidence shows that microwave radiation affects health at levels thousands of times lower than the current ICNIRP standards.

The politicians have given Eircell and Esat Digifone exemptions from the planning laws to facilitate the erection of microwave transmitters.

In the early 1990s Eircell were allowed six months to put down concrete foundations for masts anywhere they wished. This has resulted in many masts being erected literally feet away from people's homes.

New planning regulations allow for the siting of up to twelve transmitters on existing masts without the need for planning.

"Government and big business are hand in glove pushing these profitable commercial operations," says Colette O'Connell.

Fianna Fail's plan to close refugee centre

THE EASTERN Health Board and the Department of Justice are planning to close down an important refugee centre in St James Hospital in Dublin.

They want to downgrade the facilities and place the service under the care of the Department of Justice at offices in Mount Street.

If any other health service was moved to the Department of Justice, there would be an outrage.

Cover up

But Fianna Fail are trying to cover up their disgraceful move by claiming that it is designed to prevent 'fraud'.

The Refugee Centre in St James currently provides an important health service to between forty and sixty refugees a day.

They receive primary health care and screening as well as social and financial assistance.

The centre has a staff of doctors, welfare officers and



translators.

The centre is also well placed as many refugees live

in inner city hostels, B and Bs and bedsits near the hospital. Many asylum seekers com-

ing to Ireland have often been starving for weeks before their arrival.

They may have stowed away on cargo ships where they face risks from rats and serious infections. Others have been tortured.

The centre in St James has done a good job in dealing with these problems because it has been able to use on-site X ray facilities and infectious diseases investigation procedures.

None of these facilities will be available in the Mount St offices.

The move is part of the silent vendetta Justice Minister John O'Donoghue is pursuing against refugees.

Deportations

As well as drawing up plans for deportations he is now cutting back on medical facilities.

While Fianna Fail's friends get away with tax evasion through Ansbacher accounts, money is being saved by not treating half starved refugees or torture victims.

Death of Unionists' racist friend



TONY BLAIR described the late Enoch Powell as "one of the great figures of 20th century British politics".

But Powell was a rabid racist. In his notorious "rivers of blood" speech in Birmingham in April 1968, Powell described black children as "grinning picaninies" and predicted a "race war" unless the number of blacks was reduced.

The speech encouraged a wave of racism. Suddenly it was respectable to publicly attack black people.

In the 1970s both Labour and Tory governments reduced black immigration to a trickle. But by 1985 Enoch Powell was arguing for the repatriation of thousands of blacks from Britain.

During this period, Powell was a prominent member of the Ulster Unionist Party. He held a unionist seat in South Down from 1974 until 1987.

It shows the extent of the unionists' bigotry that they were happy to consort with one of British politics most rabid racists.

ALL THAT GLITTERS...

IF YOU have any doubts about the madness of the market then take a look at what is happening to the world's silver resources.

One man, US billionaire Warren Buffett, now has 20 percent of the world's entire silver supply.

Buffett's company, Berkshire Hathaway, has just bought up £550 million worth of the precious metal and says he will hold onto it for as long as he can.

It is likely to cause a "silver famine" on the world's market.

Buffett's silver hoard has driven the price of silver to its highest level in nine years. Last month the price rose 22 percent on the London silver market.

Silver

But Buffett says he hasn't actually got the silver. Speculators sold Buffett silver they don't have in the hope of finding some and making a killing. No doubt workers mining

silver across the world will be made to work harder to keep up with the demand.

At some point Buffett will release his silver onto the market and the price will plummet and depress the market.

It could go horribly wrong for Buffett.

In 1980 Texas oilman Nelson Bunker Hunt bought up masses of silver, using borrowed money.

The market plunged, bankrupting the Hunts who then were bailed out by the US Federal Reserve Bank.

Dunnes Stores security goes through the roof

A STORE detective has been awarded damages in court after she fell through a ceiling at Dunnes Stores' Stephen's Green shopping centre branch.

Apparently, the unfortunate woman was crawling around the space between the roof and the ceiling above the ladies clothing

department on a "surveillance mission" when the ceiling collapsed and she fell into the ladies dressing room.

Dunnes Stores have denied the detective was spying on customers but they've refused to comment on their staff surveillance operations.

It just goes to show, it can be tough at the top.

what we think

Stop the bombing of Iraq NO BLOOD FOR OIL

THE US government is threatening Iraq with a full scale bombardment that will bring death to many.

Contrary to the myth, there are no 'surgical strikes' or 'precision bombs'.

After the last Gulf War a senior US military source was forced to admit that 70 percent of bombs missed their military targets.

Destruction

Clinton claims that the war is necessary to 'remove weapons of mass destruction'.

He has received the full backing of Tony Blair who has thrown Sinn Fein out of the peace talks because of their 'support for violence'.

But the motives of Clinton and Blair have little to do with maintaining world peace.

The US wants to show it is the world's biggest superpower and that it can force any regime to respect its wishes.

Its aim is to protect the interests of American companies in the Middle East, which is the home to 40 percent of the world's oil reserves.

By hyping up the fears of 'biological weapons', the Pentagon is developing a new justification for keeping its huge arms industry after the ending of the Cold War.

Countries like Russia, France and China are reluctant to see US power strengthened.

Since the first Gulf War in 1991, the divisions and splits between

the imperialist powers has grown.

One *Guardian* journalist who was an enthusiastic backer of the last Gulf War put it well when he wrote that, "the American squeeze is as much on Russia, France and China and the big Arab states as on Israel itself".

Contracts

The US knows that France and Russia are signing contracts with Iraq for their oil.

They are worried that new pipelines may be built through Iran to undercut US suppliers. By asserting their military domination the US hopes to build its economic power.

This is why we need to make our voices heard to stop this brutal and bloody war.

Black and white unite and fight



Anti-deportation protest at the Dail earlier this month

AINE NI Chonail's message of racist hate is meeting major opposition. 250 people marched in protest at her speaking in UCC.

When a motion in support of her views was put to a vote, she could not get

one person to back her.

In Maynooth, 200 protesters marched on a hotel where she was scheduled to speak but management assured demonstrators that they had not let the room out to her.

No one should fall

for the argument that Ni Chonail's views are being suppressed.

Not only has she appeared on the *Late Late Show* but she has been invited to speak in at least three colleges.

Right wing journalists and cynical stu-

dent politicians have tried to boost their ratings by having her appear as a 'sensation'.

Anti-racists have every right to voice their indignation against a woman who says that black and white cannot live peacefully together.

The fear that haunts the western rulers

IN 1991, the US was able to stitch together a coalition of 21 countries. It included a number of Arab countries and so the US could claim that it was not operating like an old style colonial power.

Not any more. Even the normally compliant Saudi Arabia is refusing

to allow the US to use military bases. Egypt, which sent troops to join the US led coalition in the Gulf War, has now condemned their actions.

Reaction

The most pro-American regimes are terrified of the reaction of their own people.

The Arab population has watched with growing anger as the Israeli

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has reduced the Middle East peace process to an utter farce.

Yet while Saddam Hussein is attacked because of his defiance of 'the international community', the US has done nothing to stop Israel occupying Palestinian lands and building more settlements.

This is why a war with Iraq could trigger huge opposition to Western domination of the Middle East.

The blood soaked US victory of 1991 will be far harder to repeat and Clinton could even be forced into a shameful retreat.

Many have recently argued US imperialism can never ever be beaten. But it is untrue.

The Vietnam war proved that 'superpowers' are not invincible. And even in 1993, ill equipped gunmen in Somalia managed to humiliate a huge US force.

The great fear of the Western rulers is that this can happen again.

Behind all the might of US weapons, the great fear of the 'Vietnam syndrome' still haunts its rulers.

Socialists have a duty to build a powerful anti-war movement to help ensure this fear becomes a reality,

BUILD ANTI-WAR DEMOS

The Irish government has refused to condemn the US actions in the Gulf. Despite claims to neutrality it allowed US warplanes to refuel at Shannon in 1991.

This is why we need a large anti-war movement that says loud and clear 'no blood for oil'.

Already the Afri organisation and peace groups in Belfast have

staged pickets on the US embassy.

Now the re-launched No to War in the Gulf Campaign is calling on people to protest outside the US embassy in Dublin and US consulate in Belfast at 6-30 on the evening after any bombardment.

Everyone should try to organise protests in their areas to express their outrage at politicians who parade as peacemakers in Northern Ireland and warmongers elsewhere.

Will you take

Socialist Worker

to five people?

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news of the world

Israel dashes Mid East peace hopes

by **MIKE SIMONS**

ISRAELI prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu delivered a rebuff to his country's paymaster, US president Bill Clinton.

Clinton had summoned Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to Washington in a desperate effort to keep the Middle East peace process on track.

But Netanyahu's determination to destroy the peace process was plain.

Netanyahu's intransigence comes against deepening splits in Israeli society that were highlighted by the general strike, called by the Histadut trade union federation, last December.

The strike was provoked by Netanyahu's finance minister Yaakov Neeman, a founder of the fanatical Gush Emunim settler movement and a hard line monetarist who launched an attack on pensions, health and welfare.

The 700,000 strong general strike which followed shut down government buildings, banks, airports and even the stock exchange, and forced the government to withdraw its attack on pensions.

However, this defeat did not stop the determination to slash wages and social benefits.

When foreign minister David Levy threatened to resign over the cuts, Neeman responded by saying Israeli's unemployed should do the jobs currently occupied by migrant labour from Thailand.

Replaced

Thai workers replaced Palestinian labourers and their pay is far below the legal level for Israeli workers.

When Levy did resign Netanyahu was left absolutely dependent on the votes of the small extreme right wing and religious parties whose every demand for houses, schools etc, was met.

Netanyahu claimed these concessions did not undermine his budget, but he spent every penny in the reserves to pay off his coalition allies.

Around 100,000 Israeli students demonstrated last month and clashed with police over the handouts to Jewish fundamentalists.

Splits and discontent seen on the picket line and on the streets



■ An Iraqi woman arms herself for the conflict

in recent weeks are evident everywhere.

Conflict between secular Israelis and fundamentalist Jews trying to forcibly impose observance of the sabbath is getting increasingly bitter.

The main political parties are as split as the country itself.

Netanyahu faces constant plotting within his Likud party, and the opposition Labour party is fractured by rivalry between the current leader, Ehud Barak, and the man he ousted, Shimon Peres.

As Israel approaches May's 50th anniversary of its founding, what then does the future hold? It is wishful thinking to see the

recent strikes and student unrest as a sign that the mass of the Israeli working class was moving towards some sort of unity with the Palestinians.

These struggles were a challenge to the government but not to the state itself.

Israel has been hit by such conflicts before and the main beneficiaries were right wing parties like Likud.

Disappointed

This time round parties even further to the right are expecting to pick up disappointed Likud supporters. And Labour's attitude to the Palestinians is as brutal and unyielding as the current govern-

ment's.

The sight of Israel divided against itself is important for those who have argued that the country does not represent all Jews and that the creation of a Jewish state was not the answer to anti-Semitism.

In the short term, however, a divided Israel does not bring peace in the Middle East any closer.

We will see greater repression of the Palestinians.

Discontent in Israel may offer a little space in which some Israeli workers begin to develop some socialist, internationalist politics, but it will be a long slow process.

Meanwhile, the Middle East remains drenched in blood.

INDONESIAN troops opened fire on demonstrators at the weekend, killing five people, as protests over food price rises spread across the country.

More than 20 towns in the world's fourth most populous country have seen riots and protests in the last fortnight.

The spark for the unrest has been soaring food prices on the back of the huge economic crisis that has gripped the country since the currency collapsed before Christmas.

Indonesia's dictator, President Suharto, has vowed to crush protest by force-and will use British supplied weapons to do so.

Many of the riots have been directed at businesses owned by the country's Chinese minority.

Most of the 5 percent of the population who are Chinese are not wealthy.

But a high proportion of businesses are owned by a tiny minority of wealthy Chinese.

This has allowed some forces to encourage protests to take on an anti-Chinese character.

But some are clear who the target should be. "In fact we all blame the government," one rioter told journalists last week. We have to hope that such sentiments focus the protests on the real enemy.



round up

NIGERIAN TROOPS have launched a full scale military assault on neighbouring Sierra Leone, aimed at installing a government of Nigeria's liking.

Nigeria's rulers claim they want to restore democracy in Sierra Leone, yet they ruthlessly crush all opposition in their own country. Just two years ago they hanged Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other democracy campaigners.

There has not been a word of protest from Bill Clinton or Tony Blair at Nigeria's military action. That silence may have something to do with Western oil companies like Shell making millions from oil deals with the Nigerian regime.

SOUTH KOREA'S government has succeeded in getting new labour laws making it easier to sack workers through parliament.

It was able to do so after the leaders of the formerly illegal KCTU union federation called off a planned general strike.

The bosses' Financial Times is still worried that "labour unrest could erupt in the coming months".

One tragic sign of the depths of bitterness among workers came last week when Choi Dae Jin, a 40 year old shipyard worker, killed himself in protest at the new laws. His suicide note read, "If the labour reform law is passed, just imagine how businesses will harass workers."

GREECE'S BLAIR style government could be planning a major confrontation with workers.

"We are prepared to have a long strike. If we win it will, like the 1985 British miners strike, be the definitive clash," says economy minister Yannis Papantoniou.

The government plans an attack on workers' organisation on Olympic Airways, the national airline. It is seeking to use an attack on the airline workers to undermine workers resistance to wider attacks.

The move comes as the government faces more unrest, with farmers blockading roads around the country at the weekend.

Those protests are over the government's hardline stance in a long running fight over agricultural subsidies.

FRANCE'S NAZI National Front got the right kind of welcome when it held a rally in the city of Rouen last Friday. Some 10,000 people joined a protest march against the rally.

The Nazi rally was addressed by National Front deputy leader Bruno MUGret as the party began its campaign for important regional elections due next month where it hopes to score significant gains.

behind the headlines

The failure of power sharing

AS SINN Fein are excluded from the peace talks, the remaining parties will discuss items such as the establishment of a Northern Ireland Assembly.

For many nationalists it can only bring back memories of when the Unionist Party used to maintain a one-party state from 1921 until its collapse in 1972.

Catholics under the Stormont regime faced horrendous discrimination electorally, in terms of housing, and at the hands of a sectarian paramilitary police force.

But the SDLP, which favours a new internal assembly, claims it would be different this time. Deputy leader Seamus Mallon said: "What is on offer is the opportunity to create a body which would give nationalists, for the first time, a share of the executive power in the North of Ireland. It would be something absolutely new".

Yet there is nothing new about a power-sharing assembly with nationalists having executive powers. In 1973, following the collapse of the Stormont regime, the SDLP entered just such a power-sharing executive with the Unionist Party and the Alliance.

Stormont crumbled when Catholics' anger exploded over internment and in the wake of Bloody Sunday in 1972. The British government drew up the Sunningdale agreement in response, with a power-sharing executive in place of the old Stormont parliament.

Treachery

The executive lasted five months until it collapsed in the face of the 1974 loyalist Ulster Workers' Council strike, led by Ian Paisley and other right-wing unionists who opposed any agreement with Catholics and accused the Unionist Party leaders of treachery.

The British Army and RUC stood by as loyalist thugs blocked roads and intimidated anyone going to work. The UWC strike was accompanied by UDA bombs in Dublin and Monaghan in April 1974 which killed 33 people.

Paisley and former Home Affairs Minister William Craig led monster marches to Stormont. The British government gave in and the power-sharing experiment collapsed.

The UWC revolt overshadows the real nature of the power-sharing executive.

It was an attempt to put a non-sectarian face on a state which was built on sectarianism.

This meant two things: continued repression of the revolt in Catholic areas and re-establishing the rule of law.

Internment without trial continued. The SDLP, which had resigned from Stormont over internment now joined a government headed by Brian Faulkner who had introduced it in the first place.

The executive also passed viciously anti-working class policies. One of the few acts of the Sunningdale parliament was the "Recovery of Debts" Act, passed by Austin Currie of the SDLP.

Thousands had gone on a rent and rates strike over internment and Bloody Sunday. Housing Minister Austin Currie increased the amount which could be deducted from strikers' social security benefits and introduced a punishment charge of 25p per week.

Sunningdale included a Council of Ireland with southern Irish ministers, which the SDLP claimed was a bridge to a united Ireland. Ironically Sinn Fein uses exactly the same argument about North-South bodies today.

Yet Unionist leader Brian Faulkner claimed that the Council of Ireland preserved the Union since it implied a recognition of a separate Northern state by Dublin.

This is exactly the same debate that is taking place today.

A modern power-sharing arrangement, even with North-South bodies, could neither address the in-built sectarianism of the Northern state nor the real problems faced by working class people in the North.

Opportunity

Seamus Mallon of the SDLP says: "There is an opportunity for nationalists to have power over the things which affect their lives - education, agriculture and roads."

He does not mention the 3,000 Orange marches that trample on nationalists' rights every year. The sectarian RUC will stay in place. Nor is there a mention of welfare cuts or the North's low wages. Any new assembly would still be run by upper and middle class politicians in their own interests and those of the North's bosses. A reheated Sunningdale, even with eventual Sinn Fein representation, offers nothing to Protestant or Catholic workers.

'Thugs killed my brother under the nose of the RUC'

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

ON A railway bridge in Portadown in big letters is painted "LVF—No Taigs Here".

This very visible, public threat is a sample of the sectarian poison that this town contains.

The thugs who painted this slogan have been allowed to operate with impunity in Portadown.

Last year the Catholic Church in the nearby village of Mullavilly was finally burnt to the ground.

Before that, a Catholic Community Hall was burnt, and before that again a school.

The priest's house was also fire-bombed. The bungalow that replaced it also suffered attack.

In April last year a loyalist mob murdered Robert Hamill while the RUC looked on.

Reaction to that murder has brought to the surface the deep sectarianism that runs through the town once dubbed "the Alabama of the North".

Socialist Worker spoke to Robert's sister Diane Hamill.

Attacked

She described how Robert returned home with a small group of men and women from a dancehall at about 1.30 am.

"Robert and his friends had to cross the main street in Portadown to get home.

"There was a group of 30 fellas standing across the road.

"They shouted abuse and then attacked Robert.

"Just a few yards away an RUC jeep was stopped at Woodhouse St.

"It was obvious from the direction that Robert and his friend had come, that they were going home from a dancehall frequented by Catholics.

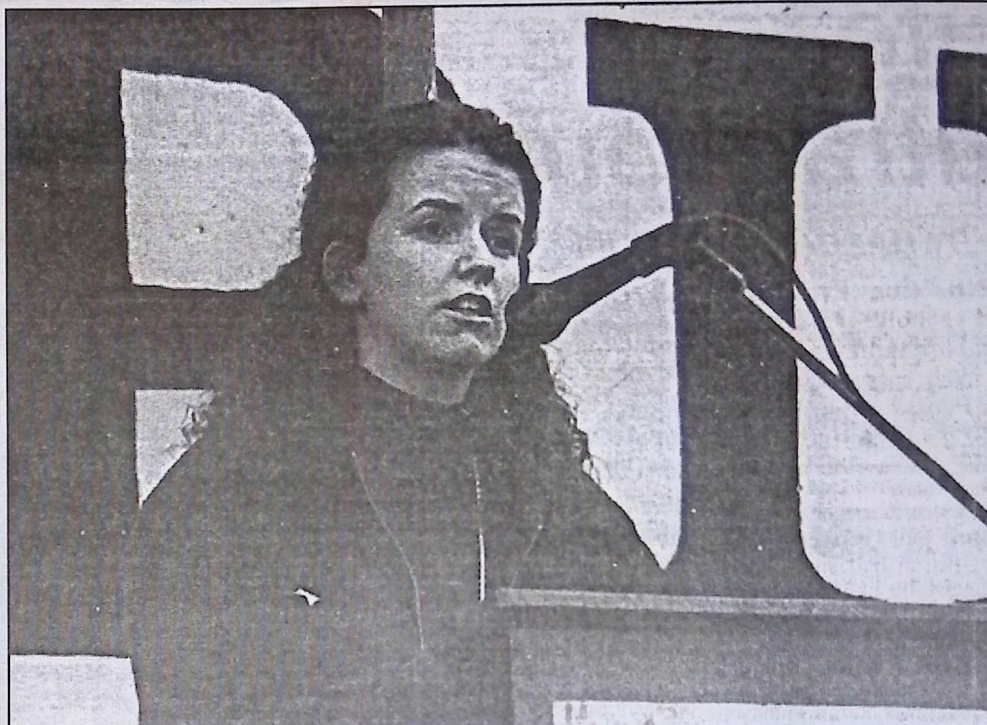
"The gang pulled Robert to the ground and began kicking and beating him.

"They were jumping on him shouting 'Die, you Fenian bastard!'"

The RUC jeep made no attempt to stop the attack although a woman from Robert's group was screaming and hammering on the jeep for the RUC men to do something.

"There was no way they could not have noticed.

"This was happening 15 yards from where the po-



■ Diane Hamill addressing the Bloody Sunday rally in Derry last month

lice truck stood.

"They deliberately chose to let the attack go ahead."

As the attack continued Robert sustained serious

head injuries.

It was only when the ambulance arrived that Robert Hamill received any help.

Only then did the RUC

men step out of their vehicle.

"They could have fired a shot in the air to warn the attackers. Instead they just watched him being

beaten and kicked."

Robert Hamill was taken to the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast and died from his injuries 12 days later.

Why the RUC cover up?

THE HAMILL family are most upset about the behaviour of the police.

"There's a lot of questions we want answers to: Why did the police not intervene? Had the gang been tipped off by the police?"

"Earlier the police were warned there was a threatening gang at that corner. The RUC jeep truck moved into position. We are afraid there may have been police collusion."

Gang

The family point out that the presence of the police truck did not seem to worry the loyalist gang. They seemed to know they had a free hand to beat up a Catholic without the RUC interfering.

"The RUC put out three contradictory statements. At first it claimed there had been a fight between two rival factions.

"Some days later they issued a statement saying they had tried to intervene but were beaten back.

"This is completely untrue. They did not get out of the RUC jeep during the incident. They did not try to intervene.

"Several days later the RUC finally admitted

Robert had been the victim of an unprovoked sectarian attack."

That the police spent days lying about the incident strengthens the suspicion that they were happy to see loyalist thugs attack innocent Catholics.

After 13 days the police eventually arrested and charged six men with the murder.

But the delay in taking action meant that vital forensic evidence was lost. Clothing and shoes, if taken away at the time of

the incident, could provide decisive clues as to the culprits and allow a successful prosecution.

Instead the police dropped charges against all but one of those arrested "for lack of evidence".

The Hamill family wonder why there was such a delay in making arrests when the police witnessed the whole incident?

The suspicion remains that the police who knew the gang members personally had tipped them off to dispose of clothing.

"We have written to RUC chief Constable Flanagan. He gave us no satisfaction. We wrote to and saw Mo Mowlan but we feel she gave us the brush-off.

Portadown is a very divided town. There are only four pubs where Catholics can feel safe.

It is not the majority of Protestants that Catholics fear but the minority of hardened bigots who — with the connivance of the RUC — can make the running.

They even took away the flowers...

DIANE described the atmosphere during the crisis over a banned Orange parade in nearby Drumcree in 1995.

"There was a real feeling of fear. The police banned the parade but then gave in. We saw the loyalist gangs with the RUC, laughing together.

"After Robert was murdered last year, we put flowers around the area where he was killed. They were always taken down and removed."

Diane is reluctant to describe the abuse and threats that continue to be thrown at her.

But the Hamill family are determined to expose the truth behind Robert's murder.

"We have had no real answers and we don't want this cover up to continue. Remember Robert was murdered under the eyes of the RUC.

"We want an international public inquiry to get to the bottom of this and we are trying to mount a private prosecution of the police involved." They have appealed for funds to fight this issue.

■ The Robert Hamill Justice Fund, Bank of Ireland, Portadown, Sort Code: 90 23 54, Account Number 26672139

The madness of the slump

ECONOMIC commentators and politicians from Mary Harney to Tony Blair used to point to the explosive growth of the Asian Tiger economies (South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Indonesia) as proof of the success of the "free market".

But the scale of their economic collapse has shattered those arguments.

Their fashionable excuse now is that the region has suffered from "crony capitalism" — or endemic corruption. But that wasn't a problem before. And if this was the cause of the collapse, then the Irish economy must be in real trouble!

What commentators fail to mention is that all capitalist economies go through phases of booms and slumps. The market is anarchic and uncoordinated.

When the economy seems to be going well, individual companies scramble to make ambitious investments. They draw up plans for selling huge amounts of goods without coordinating supplies of resources and labour.

But this often causes chaos. Companies borrow in the expectation of big sales. With the slightest mishap, they find themselves over-extended and their bankruptcies cause a ripple effect. The result is that today's success story can be tomorrow's write-off.

Wreckage

The Far Eastern Economic Review describes the wreckage of the Indonesian economy, the world's fourth most populous nation with 202 million people:

"Annual per capita income is now down from \$1,200 to \$300. Stock market capitalisation is down from \$118 billion to \$17 billion. Only 22 of Indonesia's 286 publicly listed companies are considered insolvent."

As much as 80% of corporate Indonesia is technically bankrupt.

The rupiah has lost 80% of its value in the last six months. Huge chunks of the economy have ground to a halt: stores and travel agencies are closing, construction projects halted; and car sales have plummeted by as much as 70%. The number of new unemployed is already rising above 6 million.

Firms are unable to pay seasonal bonuses required by law. The worst drought in decades (blamed on El Nino) has delayed and destroyed harvests. Rural incomes have been slashed. In the Irian Jaya province, 800 people are reported to have died of famine and malaria.

Yet under the IMF \$43 billion "rescue package" subsidies on basic commodities have been removed. This means that the price of rice has more than doubled.

The rulers of the region are terrified at the prospect of social and political unrest. Indonesia's urban growing un-

Annual per capita income is now down from \$1,200 to \$300. Stock market capitalisation is down from \$118 billion to \$17 billion. Only 22 of Indonesia's 286 publicly listed companies are considered insolvent. As much as 80% of corporate Indonesia is technically bankrupt.

employed are reluctant to return to their villages. Emigration is being constricted by crackdowns on illegal workers in Saudi Arabia and Malaysia. Without these safety valves food riots have already begun.

The response of the ruling class to this social crisis shows what can happen in Europe in the future. The governments of the Asian Tigers have embarked on a deliberate strategy to stir up ethnic differences and religious tensions to divert anger from themselves.

Migrant workers are particularly vulnerable scapegoats. For example, in January, Malaysia threatened it would be deporting half of its two million foreign workers, mostly Indonesians.

Over seven million Asians work outside their own country. Two million immigrants leave home legally every year, and there are probably just as many illegal immigrants.

Malaysia relied heavily on imported labour to fuel the rapid growth in the economy over the last 10 years, with employers exploiting their often illegal status to pay low wages. But now the rulers want to use the same workers as scapegoats.

Of course immigrants are not the problem. They have and could continue to make a huge contribution to these societies.

The means of producing the things that people desperately need still exist — the factories, mines, dockyards, fields — and there are as many workers capable of labouring on them as before.

It is the crazy system we live under which stops the unemployed working in the closed down industries.

The only hope of ending the nightmare is for workers and poor, "foreign" and "native" to fight back.

Fortunately the workers in countries like South Korea have a tremendous record of union militancy. The challenge now is to match that militancy with the politics that points to an alternative to capitalism

by KEVIN KENNY

As Iraq crisis mounts Blair and Clinton Using lies to prepare

THE US and Britain say they are going to war with Iraq to prevent Saddam Hussein building "weapons of mass destruction."

But this is sheer hypocrisy. The US and Britain have enough chemical, biological and nuclear weapons to destroy the planet several times over.

The US still possesses 8,000 nuclear warheads and refuses to dismantle them.

It has also refused to sign up to any treaty that involves independent inspection of their biological weapons facilities.

The US has also used terrible chemical weapons with deadly effect. It devastated Vietnam with the chemical Agent Orange. Even after the war was long ended environmentalists complained about defoliation and decay.

Far from Iraq offering a threat to the Western powers, it has been Western colonialism which has used these weapons on Iraq in the past.

In the 1920s, the British empire used poison gas to crush a rebellion against their rule in Iraq.

Winston Churchill declared, "I am strongly in favour of using poison gas against uncivilised tribes".

Today the Western powers are still the biggest suppliers of biological and chemical weapons to their "allies".

In 1983, the then US Vice President George Bush forced a motion through the House of Representatives on renewing chemical and biological weapons production.

Last year, George Tenet the director of the CIA told the US Senate that 20 countries has received these weapons. He only names three "rogue states"—Iraq, Iran, and Syria. The rest included important US allies:

■ Israel developed its chemical weapons programme in the 1970s. It espouses a near official racism against Palestinians.

■ Saudi Arabia— this brutal dictatorship uses torture and mutilation to terrorise its own population. Unlike Iraq it has the ballistic missiles to fire these weapons.

■ Egypt used phosgene gas in the 1960s. Today it backs US policies in the Middle East.

■ South Korea is a Western ally which remains in an official state of war with its neighbour North Korea.

Their sick hypocrisy

THE US uses lies and propaganda to prepare its population for war.

During the last Gulf War, US president George Bush declared that Iraq was only months away from building nuclear weapons. But it was later discovered that Iraq had scarcely any uranium.

In 1991, it was claimed that Iraqi soldiers who occupied Kuwait threw premature babies out of incubator machines in order to bring the machines back to Iraq. This again was a LIE.

Propoganda

Now Blair and Clinton are claiming that Iraq has 200 tonnes of VX nerve gas and 8,400 tonnes of the biological weapon anthrax. This is supposed to be enough to wipe out the population of the planet. But the propoganda does not tell us:

■ That VX disperses quickly in the atmosphere. Even if Saddam had the nerve gas, he would have to deliver it intact to a concentrated area.

When the west backed Saddam

ANYONE who opposed the Gulf War in 1991 was denounced by media figures like Gay Byrne as "pro-Saddam".

But they don't mention how Saddam Hussein was built up by the West and used as an instrument of their policy for many years.

■ Saddam seized power in 1963 in Iraq. He destroyed a regime that had the support of the Iraqi Communist Parties — which was one of the biggest left wing parties in the Middle East.

Although his Ba'ath party used the

■ That the International Institute for Strategic Studies says that Iraq has no missiles for dropping the weapons. Unlike the US it has no cruise missiles that could disperse the weapons over a wide area.

■ Anthrax is very difficult to use as a weapon. It is a biological disease carried by cattle and sheep. Ninety percent of the bacteria is likely to disperse when it is dropped by an exploding missile.

■ Daylight kills anthrax and penicillin destroys it. The idea that Britain, the US or Iraq are at risk from these weapons is a myth. Iraq never possessed a weapon that could get further than 300 miles.

Responding to the idea that Iraqi secret agents plan to poison Western water supplies, the International Institute for Strategic Studies noted that:

"Reservoirs are purified with chemicals that would destroy all but the hardest biological warfare agents, and the dilution factor alone would render most established agents ineffective."

rhetoric of Arab nationalism, the US saw him as a useful ally against left wing forces threatening Western control of oil.

The CIA even gave the new regime lists of socialists to hunt down.

■ In 1980, Saddam Hussein invaded Iran with the full backing of the US. They saw him as a useful ally to contain the radical Islamic regime of Ayatollah Khomeini.

The major Western powers all supplied him with weapons to wage war. In Britain the Scott Inquiry showed that despite their lies Tory Ministers knew about the arms exports to Iraq.

Even the Irish government introduced a special scheme to help the Goodman company to supply beef to Iraqi troops.

Poison

French, German and British companies supplied Saddam Hussein with the materials to make poison gas which was first used against Iranian troops and then against Iraqi Kurds in the town of Halabja.

Right up to ten years ago, the US supplied anthrax to Saddam Hussein.

■ In 1987, when it seemed that Iran might win the war, the US intervened directly in support of Saddam. US planes destroyed Iranian oil installations and shot down a civilian airliner, killing over 400 Iranian passengers.

■ Saddam Hussein's war effort meant that he built up huge debts. His invasion of Kuwait in 1990 was designed to gain greater control of oil to help pay back these debts to the Western powers.

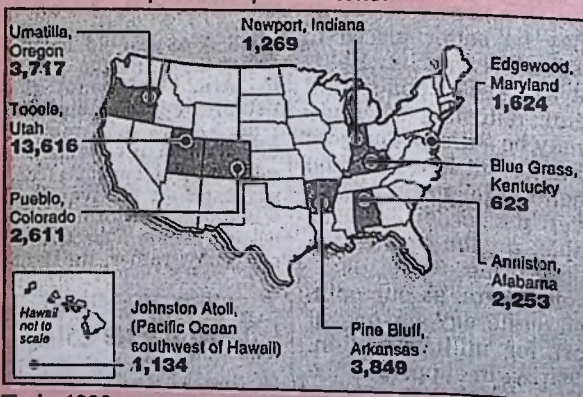
Saddam was so friendly with the Western powers that he believed they would turn a blind eye to his activities.

But Kuwait has major investments in the Western banking system and always broke Arab sanctions on supplying oil to the West.

So it was only by directly threatening the interests of his masters in the West, that Saddam became the great enemy.

America's chemical arsenal

Chemical weapon stockpiles in tons:



■ In 1986, strains of anthrax, clostridium pertogens, secretly paid for by the Iraqi military, were shipped to the university of Bagdad with the full approval of the US commerce department

■ Iraq ordered 39 ton growth media from both British and Swiss firms in 1987/88, enough to produce 4tons of bacteria

■ Dr Rhihab Taha Iraq's chief chemical weapons scientist was trained by Britain.

A US soldier stands on

They caused damage

THE US and Britain use "force" to destroy Iraq's weapons making ties.

But how can they admit they don't know where these weapons are? Are they going if they did, how would they destroy the biological weapons to civilian causing huge destruction to the US? The reality is that the US wants to hide the truth.

Explosives

During the last Gulf War, the US dropped 88,500 tons of explosives on Iraq.

A Lieutenant in the US said it, "I saw the things going awesome. There were things you saw from World War II. That's what it looks like."

Clinton are... prepare for war



Soldiers over the remains of an Iraqi conscript in the last Gulf War

call it collateral

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A victim of smart bombs

After the war, it was revealed that only a small fraction of the 'precision bombs' hit their real targets. Many of the rest murdered Iraqi civilians, including hundreds of people who shel-

tered in a bunker in Baghdad. In all 100,000 Iraqis died in the last Gulf War. The Western powers called the civilians who died 'collateral damage'.

Off the hook

WE ARE told that action must be taken against Iraq because Saddam is not complying with UN resolutions.

But the US and Britain turns a blind eye when its allies violate UN resolutions.

Israel has repeatedly been told to give up territories it has conquered. But it still occupies part of Lebanon, Jordan and is building settlements on the occupied West Bank.

Indonesia has been condemned by the UN for invading East Timor in 1975. But it still occupies this country and has killed a third of the entire population.

Despite their concern for UN resolutions, Britain and the US remain the largest arms suppliers of Israel and Indonesia.

What do socialists say?

The Communist Manifesto: 150 years on

THE Communist Manifesto, the most powerful revolutionary pamphlet in history, was published a hundred and fifty years ago this month.

The authors, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels had committed themselves to revolutionary socialism a few years earlier.

They had turned to a secret communist society, the League of the Just, and won it over to being an open revolutionary party with the aim of "the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the rule of the proletariat, the abolition of the old, bourgeois society based on class antagonisms and the foundation of a new society without classes and without private property."

It was to explain the ideas behind the organisation, now renamed the Communist League, that Marx and Engels wrote the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.

The first, and most critical, argument in the pamphlet is that "the history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggle."

Taught

Although we are usually taught that history is made by great individuals—kings and queens, intellectuals, politicians—Marx and Engels wanted to emphasise that the actions of individuals take place under particular social conditions.

In all societies since the development of agriculture and cities a few thousand years ago, production has been based on a division between a privileged exploiting class and an exploited class.

There may be very sophisticated structures and gradations of social rank in a particular epoch, but ultimately the ability of people to develop culture or conduct wars and political battles depends on the extraction of wealth from the exploited class.

As new ways of producing emerge to challenge the position of established ruling classes, the key developments in history emerge from the conflict between the rising class and its privileged opponents.

This conflict says the *Manifesto* "each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes."

The powerful point of this argument was to show that modern, bourgeois (or capitalist) society was not the end of the process.

Capitalism, just like earlier epochs, depended on exploitation, now through the labour of workers rather than the earlier cruder forms of class rule over slaves or peasants.

The *Manifesto* spends a few vivid pages in describing the emergence of capitalism and the powerful changes it has brought to the planet.

It describes how the different regions and varieties of society are rapidly broken down, with production and populations being drawn into a vast, centralised, world system.

"The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together."

But like the sorcerer unable to control the powers of the hell, capitalism is a system which races towards disaster.

The blind pursuit of profit, drives capitalists into dramatic conflict with one another, leading to tremendous commercial crises, wars and barbarism.

The passages in the *Manifesto* about capitalism, despite being written a hundred and fifty years ago, have incredible freshness.

In contrast to the variety of theories which suggest that capitalism is a stable and natural end to human history, Marx and Engel's view is the only one that makes sense of a world experiencing instability, financial crisis and war.

Most importantly of all, the *Manifesto* argues that in the creation of a world working class, capitalism has brought into being its own grave-digger.

Although workers are divided by competition with one another, the *Manifesto* points out that they are also concentrated into greater and greater numbers.

The struggles of workers brings temporary gains, but more importantly creates a sense of class unity and consciousness.

It is with the prospect of crises for capitalist society, and of workers uniting in a revolution to take power, that Marx and Engels saw the hope for humanity moving forwards.

The fact that workers are a collective class and that capitalism has created an abundance of wealth, means that a classless society is no longer a dream. What the *Communist Manifesto* does, above all else, is to give the goal of socialism a scientific and historical basis.

by CONOR KOSTICK

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The hidden history of Irish fascism

by SIMON BASKETTER

COULD IRELAND ever produce a serious racist or even fascist movement? Media commentators have dismissed the protests over Aine Ni Chonail's anti-immigrant party as over the top.

They argue that 'extremism' can never take root here.

It is certainly true that despite all the publicity she has received, Ni Chonail's organisation is very weak. And while her views are openly racist, she has not so far attempted to espouse a Nazi ideology. But Irish history shows genuine fascist movements can grow here.

In the early thirties the Blueshirt movement had a membership of 50,000. TDs sat in the Dail wearing the Blueshirt and one of them, John A Costello, the future leader of Fine Gael proclaimed that as "the Blackshirts were victorious in Italy, the Brownshirts were victorious in Germany .. the Blueshirts will be victorious in Ireland".

They had the support of key establishment figures such as WB Yeats who wrote their anthem.

Yet a recent book by Mike Cronin *The Blueshirts and Irish Politics* claims they were not fascist.

This follows a long tradition of academic writing on the subject. Joseph Lee, for example, made the absurd argument that fascism was too intellectually demanding for the "buffoonery" of the Blueshirts. Maurice Manning also dismissed the idea that they were fascist—although as a Fine Gael Senator he had more reason than most to do so.

Yet the evidence shows that this is simply a cover up.

AFTER Fianna Fail came to power in 1932 groups of ex Free State officers, who feared revenge for their role in the civil war, organised themselves into the Army Comrades Association.

They quickly moved from a right-wing mutual benefit society to a fascist organisation.

One of their spokespersons the Cumman na nGaedheal TD, TF O' Higgins argued that "no country in the world needs order knocked into it as much as Ireland".

After Eoin O'Duffy was dismissed as Garda commissioner in 1933, he immediately joined the Blueshirts and became their main leader.

Two months after Hitler had come to power in Germany, the Army Comrades Association adopted the Blueshirt as uniform, changed its name to the National Guard, took up the Hitlerite Salute, and devised a corporatist programme. Membership was confined to 'Christians of Irish birth'.

Capitalising on the frustrations of the wealthy farmers and traders, who were feeling the effect of the Fianna Fail's Economic War with Britain, the fascist movement grew quickly, using the smoke screen of anti-communism to try and topple Fianna Fail.

The Blueshirts were an organised group of violent strike breakers. Their rules included a members' task as helping to effectively prevent strikes.

They openly stated that their aim was to abolish any form of democracy. O



Fascist Blueshirt rally in 1933

Duffy stated that "the present parliamentary system was English. The system he championed was close to the old Irish method of government. After it had been tried for, say, ten years he would give people an opportunity for voting for or against its acceptance."

Despite all this it is sometimes argued that the Blueshirts weren't fascist because they weren't anti-semitic. Yet anti-semitism is not always the key feature for fascist organisations. Mussolini's organisation, for example, did not primarily focus on Jewish people.

In any event the Blueshirts were anti-semitic. Jews were forbidden to join the organisation. The paper of the Blueshirts *The United Irishman* made frequent references to international Jewry and attacked "godless and Jewish bolshevism".

Cronin argues that because the Blueshirts followed Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* 1930 they could not be fascist. But again this is absurd. This encyclical was written when the Catholic Church was at its most right wing—as it was making peace with the Mussolini regime. The document was the basis of the social thinking of Dolfuss's Nazi regime in Austria as well as the fascist movements in Norway and Belgium.

Like the fascist movements across Europe the Blueshirts combined intimidation on the streets with a corporatist platform which wanted to replace unions with joint employer-union associa-

tions for each industry. Army Comrades Association attacked and broke up socialist meetings in Cork and Galway. They set up a Catholic Able Bodied Mens Association which sought to get jobs for their supporters. While the ex-Garda commissioner O Duffy organised public rallies, James Hogan a Professor in UCC produced articles outlining the Communist threat.

His book *Could Ireland become Communist?* was the mainstay of the movement. It drew on detailed informa-

In response to this mobilisation Fianna Fail banned the march, and O Duffy was forced to call it off. After the failed march O'Duffy regrouped and joined up with Cumman na nGaedheal and the wealthy farmers Centre Party to launch a new party: Fine Gael.

Ever since Ireland's second largest party—and their supporters in the academic establishment—have tried to hide its fascist origins.

As the Blueshirts tried to rally support around the country opposition grew from

workers. When the Blueshirts held a meeting in Dublin 4,000 protested. The following day the ICTU called a national demonstration against the Blueshirts and over 10,000 people attended.

In a declaration against fascism, the ICTU leaders declared that "the future existence of trade union and labour movement was in grave danger from the political party, Fine Gael, their propaganda being a facsimile of the ideology of fascist dictators on the Continent."

Wherever the Blueshirts organised they were met with opposition. In the first week of September, for instance, there were demonstrations in Limerick, Offaly, Dublin, Cork, Dingle and Galway. At a meeting in Tralee a crowd got close to the potential Fuhrer of Ireland and attacked him with a hammer.

The atmosphere was such the Blueshirts complained to the Minister for Justice that it had become unsafe for the Blueshirt to be worn on the street. Market holders on Moore street in Dublin

would attack any Blueshirts who attempted to go there.

The Gardai protected Fine Gael meetings and the republican and socialist protesters were arrested.

By the end of the year military tribunals had prosecuted three times as many opponents of fascism as Blueshirts.

Opposition to fascism was largely spontaneous. The ICTU leaders argued that the task of dealing with the Blueshirts should be left to the state. The Labour Party supported the establishment of Military Tribunals and their leader Tom Johnson condemned anti-fascists as "thugs and rioters". The IRA leadership ordered their units not to take part in the attacks on the Blueshirts.

Yet by the end of 1934 the Fine Gael alliance fell apart. The class that had spawned the Blueshirts discovered that fascism was unnecessary to safeguard the interests of the rich. De Valera's Fianna Fail used popular anti imperialist rhetoric but made sure that Ireland was made safe for capitalism. The Blueshirts had failed to detach small business men and farmers from republicanism and Fianna Fail.

O Duffy eventually took seven hundred followers to Spain to fight on the side of the Fascists. They managed only to get into a fight with some of Franco's troops—which they lost—and came home in disgrace.

The Blueshirts offer two lessons for us today. First that in a period of political crisis the forces of the right can form around fascist ideas, and second that Ireland has a tradition of standing up to fascism that we should make every effort to uphold.

Wherever the Blueshirts organised they were met with opposition. In the first week of September, for instance, there were demonstrations in Limerick, Offaly, Dublin, Cork, Dingle and Galway. At a meeting in Tralee a crowd got close to the potential Fuhrer of Ireland and attacked him with a hammer

As the Blueshirts grew in confidence they attempted to hold a March on Dublin in August 1933. This was modelled on Mussolini's March on Rome which brought his fascist squads to power.

But the Blueshirts had over-estimated their base of support. Republicans and socialists blocked all the roads into Dublin and the train stations were occupied to prevent O Duffy's attempt at a coup.

Why are suicides on the rise?

NEARLY A thousand people turned up at a meeting on suicide in Cork organised by Aware at the end of last year. It was a striking testimony to the growing concern about the issue.

The trends in suicide are indeed alarming. On average one person kills themselves each day in Ireland. When it comes to men aged between 15 and 24, suicide becomes the second most common cause of death.

Since 1990, there has been a 400% increase in the number of suicides among young men.

That massive increase could in part be put down to a growing willingness to record suicidal deaths. The terrible shame that was once attached to suicide is thankfully decreasing.

The stigma around suicide was created by the church. The church pronounced it an act of the devil as early as 452. The common notion was that our bodies were not our own but rather life was given to us as a gift by God.

In an account from Fulbecke in 1601, he describes how "the suicide is drawn by a horse to the place of punishment and shame, where he is hanged on a gibbet and none may take the body down but the authority of the magistrate."

It was only the French Revolution which ended the practice of confiscating a suicide's property.

But such attitudes are not just a thing of the distant past. As recently as 1969 a teenager was birched in the Isle of Man for attempting suicide, and in Ireland the offence for suicide was only abolished in 1993.

Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist in the last century was one of the first to research suicide.

He argued that it was caused by people having no social roots. The individual needed to be surrounded by traditional institutions such as the church and family to restrain their passions and desires:

"Irrespective of any external regulatory force our capacity for feeling is in itself an insatiable and bottomless abyss," he wrote.

Revolution

Durkheim was right to argue that although suicide is a highly individual act it has deep social causes. He showed, for example, that in times of revolution and social upheaval the rate of suicide declined.

In Northern Ireland, for example the rate of suicide halved between 1969 and 1971—just as it fell during the 1848 revolutions.

But Durkheim's conservatism led him to focus on repression and religion as a means of dealing with it. "Not without reason therefore have so many religions dwelt on the advantages and moral value of poverty. It is actually the best school for teaching self-restraint," he noted.

But recent evidence shows that economic fac-

61 out of 100,000 male labourers between the ages of 25 and 49 kill themselves, six times the number of white collar workers from the same age group. The reality is that suicide affects the poor most.

tors rather than the decline in religion have a greater effect on the suicide rate.

The recent report of the National Task Force on Suicide showed that the suicide rate is highest where unemployment and low participation in education are greatest.

Interestingly enough no connection was made between suicide and a drop in religious practice.

Suicide rates in rural areas where religious practice is more constant are higher than in urban areas where it is falling.

In an article published last month, the French sociologist Louis Chauvel also noted that "61 out of 100,000 male labourers between the ages of 25 and 49 kill themselves, six times the number of white collar workers from the same age group."

The reality is that suicide affects the poor most.

But while suicide may be more concentrated among the working class, the shallowness of modern capitalist culture means that it is not confined to this group.

Capitalism, by its nature, can lead individuals to a sense of isolation and pointlessness. This is what Marx termed "alienation".

But you are more likely to be alienated from society if you are forced to live on inadequate unemployment benefit or low wages in a society that insists that times have never been so good.

The root of many problems is the material reality around us.

More suicides could be avoided if people had proper working conditions, wages and housing.

Without those basics, peace of mind is hard to come by.

Still more suicides could be prevented if people felt they had a genuine control over their lives.

Hundred years since the birth of Brecht Revolution in the theatre

BERTOLT BRECHT is the greatest playwright of the twentieth century.

He was born in Augsburg on 10th February 1898 and served in a military hospital during the first world war.

The horrors he witnessed turned him into a revolutionary socialist for the rest of his life.

From the satirical operas, *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahogany* and *The Threepenny Opera*, to his propaganda plays for outside of theatres, Brecht intertwined politics and art.

Communism

He was forced to leave Germany when the Nazis came to power and then driven out of the USA by the McCarthyite witch-hunt. He was attacked because of his communism in the west and Stalinists were uneasy with his Marxism.

He argued that a truly Marxist drama must avoid the old advice of Aristotle that the audience should be made to believe that what they are witnessing on stage is really happening.

Instead of being pulled into the emotions of great

figures like Hamlet, the audience had to be critical. That way they would understand that history was not based on feelings which never changed.

Brecht's epic theatre is based on detachment. It tries to make the audience realise that what they see is not an illusion of reality, but a scientific look at behaviour in a changing world.

Its purpose is to convince in an open and honest way.

This approach allowed Brecht to deal with complex ideas and emotions on stage in a way previous theatre could never manage.

It also allowed him to produce great drama. *Mother Courage and Her Children* brilliantly looks at the trauma and chaos of war.

In *The Life of Galileo* Brecht showed why Galileo's simple discovery that the earth went around the sun was so subversive.

The *Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* is a satire of Hitler's rise to power set in pre-war Chicago. By showing the Nazis as gangsters he attacks not just fascism but American capitalism.

film

Knocked out by the Boxer

The Boxer should have been a good film, coming from the fine director Jim Sheridan and good actors like Daniel Day Lewis and Brian Cox. But it's disappointing in a number of ways.

The film is set in West Belfast in 1994 during the IRA ceasefire. The central character, played by Daniel Day Lewis is a disillusioned IRA man who attempts to rebuild his life after 14 years in prison.

Before the current peace process, portraying the IRA in film was straightforward. They were shown as unthinking sadistic killers.

But this is no longer possible as the IRA attempts to make its peace with the system.

This is reflected in films such as *The Devil's Own* where Brad Pitt plays an IRA man who's a human figure caught up in circumstances not of his making.

Jim Sheridan's film reflects the current uncertainty about which way the IRA will go.

The IRA Chief of Staff who recognises the futility of the armed struggle is portrayed as a rational human being and a loving father.

But another IRA leader who believes that the peace process is a sell-out is pre-

sented as a psychopathic killer.

The message is that anyone who challenges the state must be unhinged.

The disillusioned republican played by Daniel Day Lewis longs for something better than just communal politics.

But there is a problem with this. He accepts equipment for his boxing club from the community relations wing of the RUC.

The RUC seem to be caught between two hostile tribes—rather than the instruments of sectarianism they are.

Unite

Overall the film conveys an impression of Belfast where there are two tribes who can never unite. In one scene at a boxing match, one group of spectators have their faces painted in red, white and blue while the others are painted in green, white and orange.

Significantly, Belfast's boxing fraternity have denounced this scene as absurd, disgusting and embarrassing.

The Boxer forgets that many people in Belfast spend eight hours a day working, talking and joking with each other. Of course sectarianism exists - but there is also a mood for class unity that demands a response.

—SEAN MCVEIGH



■ Bertolt Brecht

music

Karan Casey's radical message

WATCH out for the Irish singer Karan Casey, who has just toured Ireland and is currently on tour in America.

She is a singer with strong political views, who plays with the traditional band *Solas* and released a solo album *Songlines* last year.

Political

It includes a range of political songs such as the feisty rendition of the 'Ballad of Accounting' written by Ewan McColl about the grounding down of people and their rights:

"Did you ever question the setup/ Did you stand aside and let 'em choose/ While you took second best... And never



Karan Casey

make a fight/ And never make a fight."

Casey also sings ballads of struggle such as 'The World Turned Upside Down' about the radical group, the Diggers, who demanded that land be held in common during the English Civil War.

It is sung with full drumming accompani-

ment reminiscent of the battle field.

There are lots of other songs to choose from on this album such as 'She is like the Swallow' about a woman's induced miscarriage or 'Shamrock Shore' about emigration.

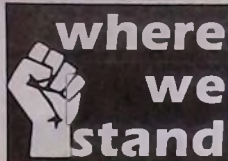
Casey does not stop short at the songs to communicate the political message.

Injustice

At a recent gig in Temple Bar she wore a Róisín McAliskey T-shirt and spoke to the audience about the injustice of the case.

If you can't get to the next gig, *Songlines* is well worth listening to, and is released on the Shanachie label.

by CAOIMHE NÍ LOCHLAINN



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

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

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

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

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

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST

The SWP welcomed the break-up of the USSR and the end of the East European dictatorships. These states were not socialist but were run by a state-capitalist class. We are against the domination of the globe by imperialist powers and we oppose their wars. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

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

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

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

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

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

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

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

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

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

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

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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

Ryanair

How to fight for union recognition

"WE WILL not let an arrogant brat beat us" said Des Geraghty, the Vice President of SIPTU at a demonstration outside Ryanair recently.

The arrogant brat is Michael O'Leary, the chief executive who is organising the scabbing operation. O'Leary received £17 million when the company was floated on the stock exchange.

Union

But he is denying poorly paid workers the right to be represented by a union.

"The management are trying to intimidate us. One fellow had a manager on the telephone to him for four and a half hours. They have brought us down in a van to be lectured by managers. One of them even said that we were too thick to understand what the strike was about," a Ryanair worker told *Socialist Worker*.

Scabs have been flown in from Britain and a free lunch bar service has been opened for them.

Ryanair workers have worse conditions than their counterparts in Aer Lingus and Servisair.

"They don't even give us proper clothes. We need decent gortex rainproof clothing. But they took this back off us and gave us flimsy material instead."

The company operates a bonus system that penalises workers heavily for being sick.

"We earn around £13,600 a year—but that includes an attendance bonus of £106 a month. If you are sick for just one day, you loose that amount. If you are unlucky enough to be sick on the 31st

of any month and the first of the next month, you loose £212."

Throughout the dispute IBEC the employers' organisation has supported Ryanair's "right" not to recognise a union. Yet for the last

decade union leaders have assured workers that IBEC was a "social partner".

Now many trade unionists are saying that if their "partners" do not even recognise their right to exist—maybe it's time for a divorce.

SIPTU should pull out all the stops

IF DES GERAGHTY and the SIPTU leadership want to defeat the arrogant brats at Ryanair, they are going to have to shift tactics.

After the first month of the dispute ten of the fifty strikers were intimidated back to work.

Ryanair have taken the gloves off and are fighting with everything they've got.

Publicity

But SIPTU has concentrated mainly on a publicity war. Up to recently, the strikes at Ryanair lasted only three hours.

"It meant that when we went back to work, we

faced greater intimidation from management. I think it is now time that we went on an all out strike. The issue has brought to a crunch."

An all-out picket on Ryanair premises would mean that oil for the planes would not be delivered.

Postal workers could refuse to deliver mail. Within days the company would grind to a standstill.

"SIPTU is a powerful union in this airport. The air traffic controllers are members, so are the Aer Rianta workers. The union should be instructing its members not to touch anything to do with Ryanair.

"We should close down the airport to show we mean business," a striker told *Socialist Worker*.



Workers protesting at Ryanair



THE stakes are high in the Ryanair dispute.

According to the *Irish Times*, it is becoming a "testcase" as "the number of companies choosing to by pass unions continues to increase"

There are now two clear strategies on how to win the battle for union recognition.

One is the methods pursued by BATU at the IJM joinery in Monaghan.

Here the union em-

barked on a campaign of full scale solidarity and threatened outright blacking of the company.

This militant and determined approach brought the company to its knees. (See report Page 11)

The other approach is being pursued by SIPTU at Ryanair.

Here the union is mounting a publicity campaign to persuade the government to bring in a law to put sanctions on companies that do not recognise unions.

But even if such a law was introduced, it would also compel unions to give up even more of their legal rights to strike action.

In reality, Fianna Fail has no intention of bringing in such a law.

Irish industry is now more dependent than ever on US multi-national who demand a "free hand" in dealing with their workers.

That means that the only way to win is to fight like BATU fought in Monaghan.

Ryanair should be blacked

by the whole of SIPTU. The government should be told that it will face a total close down of Dublin airport unless it puts Ryanair under pressure.

This might mean defying sections of the Industrial Relations Act.

It might even mean taking some hostility from the newspapers barons.

But the fight at IJM in Monaghan proves that 'old style' militancy is the only way to compel employers to recognise unions.

News from the SWP

AS THE political radicalisation grows in Ireland, the SWP is embarking on a major period of expansion.

Two extra branches have been formed in February af-

ter the Belfast and Rathmines branch split in two.

The key to the present situation is an understanding that many people are looking for big ideas how alternatives to capitalism and how it can be won.

40 people, for example, turned up a very successful meeting in Belfast to debate the legacy of Che Guevara.

But it is not just passive ideas that many want. Ideas need to be linked to action to help change the world.

Nearly 200 people attended an Anti-Nazi League picket at the Dail to protest at Fianna Fail's policies on deportations.

SWP needs to fight and work alongside the hundreds of people who are coming in to politics for the first time.

But in the course of those struggles many ideas are thrown up—some clear and determined, others which reflect confusion and past isolation.

A socialist paper is vital

in this situation. It tries to link the immediate struggles to the wider traditions of Marxism.

This is why we are encouraging every new recruit to take five papers to their friends and workmates on a regular basis.

The days when socialists remained isolated from

choice or design are over. Instead every active socialist has to put themselves at the centre of a network where they engage and debate with people through the paper, *Socialist Worker*.

Over the last two weeks 2 people joined SWP in Cork, 1 in Galway, 10 in Belfast and 20 in Dublin

OUT NOW: Refugees are welcome here, The case against immigration controls by DEIRDRE CRONIN, available £2.00 from SW paper sellers and branch bookstalls plus 50p postage from SW Books, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8



SWP branch meetings

- BELFAST CENTRAL** Meets every Thurs 8pm, Garrick Bar, Chichester Street.
- BELFAST SOUTH** Meets every Weds at 7:30pm, Rickshaws, University Street
- CORK** Meets every Weds at 8pm in Dennehy's Pub, Commarket St.
- DERRY** Meets every Tues in Badgers Bar at 8pm
- DUN LAOGHAIRE** Meets every Tues at 8pm in Christian Institute.
- ENNISKILLEN** Meets every fortnight Contact national address for details
- GALWAY** Meets every Thursday at 7:30pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square
- MAYNOOTH** Meets every Thursday at 6:30pm Class Hall D Arts Maynooth college
- WATERFORD** Meets every Thursday at 8pm in
- ATGWU Hall, Keyser St.**
- DUBLIN NORTH-WEST** Meets every Tuesday at 8:30pm in The Snug, Dorset St.
- DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK** Meets every Tuesday at 8:30pm Artane/Bearmount Recreation Centre opp Artane 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 LOWER** Meets every Wed at 8pm in O'Connells Pub, Richmond St.
- DUBLIN RATHMINES UPPER** Meets every Thurs at 8pm in O'Connells Pub, Richmond St.
- DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL** Meets every Thur at 8pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse St.
- DUBLIN TALLAGHT/CLONDALKIN** Meets Monday at 8pm in the Steering Wheel, Clondalkin

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

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ATGWU

Slander to stop victory of rank and file candidate in ATGWU election

AGAINST all-odds, Jimmy Kelly, the convener of Waterford Glass won an election to the main elected position in the ATGWU.

Jimmy campaigned on a rank and file ticket and argued that the union had to become a fighting union that stood up for its members rather than just pass left wing resolutions.

But now a deliberate slander has been stirred up by the TGWU Executive to prevent him taking office.

In a story that was leaked to Murdoch's *Sunday Times*, supporters of Jimmy Kelly have been accused of ballot rigging.

After a complaint from his rival, Norman Kearns, Jimmy Kelly's election has been deemed invalid and a new election is due to be held.

The accusations relate to the conduct of the ballot at the Waterford Glass factory.

Here union activists ran a raffle to get their members to return their ballots on time.

Instead of sending back individual envelopes, the ballot papers, enclosed in their original envelopes, were sent in one package from the factory.

The signatures of individual workers were placed outside the envelopes and no attempt was made to examine how they voted.

A small number of additional ballots without envelopes were included for the consideration of the returning officers.

This method of ballot had been used several times before and no one raised the slightest query.

The election for the overall General Secretary, Bill Morris was conducted in this fashion.

As was the election for a former Irish Executive member Al McCready conducted this way.

Complaints

The complaints about the ballot procedure were not raised by the independent election commission which oversaw the ballot—but by the union's NEC.

This is the same NEC which has gone along with Bill Morris' attack on the Liverpool dockers—which Jimmy Kelly featured prominently in his literature.

Throughout the election campaign, the vast majority of union officials were mobilised to campaign against Jimmy Kelly.

He was denied a request for a list of shop stewards that he could personally canvass.

Now when he finally wins the ballot, the union bureaucracy are attempting to stage a witch-hunt to prevent him taking his seat.

ATGWU members should protest loudly at this abuse of union democracy.

Cramptons

BRICKLAYERS have escalated their action against Cramptons in a dispute over the use of sub-contractors. The action is in complete defiance of the Industrial Relations Act.

Cramptons got rid of nearly all their direct employees and now use site engineers to hire sub-contractors. David Crampton, the owner of the firm, is reputed to have said that a building firm can now be run from a phone box.

Sub-contracting means that companies do not have to pay for holidays, wet time or pensions. Wet time can amount to £7 an hour.

Picketing

Two major sites of Cramptons in Clonskeagh and Dublin City University have been virtually shut down after sustained picketing from rank and file building workers.

"They have had to lay off 20 shuttering carpenters and 17 steelfixers. The sites are at a virtual standstill. We have stopped them laying large amounts of concrete and they are now up against deadlines", one picket told *Socialist Worker*.

Each day over ten bricklayers have set up pickets on the sites in a magnificent display

Arvon Mines

TONY O'REILLY junior is trying to break a strike by SIPTU members at Arcon Mines in Galmoy, Co Kilkenny.

O'Reilly, as boss of Arcon, says the workers will not get the same rates as Tara Mines workers. But the workers are determined to press their claim for a 100 percent pay increase.

Even by official figures this would bring their pay from £16,000 to £32,000—which is still £4,000 less than miners at Tara.

If the Galmoy miners win it will be a fantastic victory against the pay restraint imposed by Partnership 2000.

Solidarity is beginning to come in from other groups of workers in the South East.

The Waterford branch of SIPTU has donated £200 and there are plans for regular collections in other local factories.

Send messages of support to SIPTU, Patrick St, Kilkenny.

of defiance against the Industrial Relations Act.

So far the Gardaí have not moved against the pickets and seem to be under orders to defuse the situation.

They are clearly terrified of a major escalation of the dispute throughout the building industry.

"So far no attempt has been made to jail any worker but you have to remember things can change. The postal workers were on strike for 19 weeks back in 1979 and it was only in the last few weeks that

the Gardaí baton charged them. We have to stay on our guard", one BATU member told *Socialist Worker*.

"Up to now the strike has been unofficial. But this may need to change in the future.

Backing

"The union should throw its full backing behind the strike. They say that the union assets might be seized. But we are the union—and its own contributions that make it.

"If this strike was official

SIPTU

Campaign launch for Carolann Duggan

CAROLANN DUGGAN launched her campaign for General Secretary of SIPTU at a meeting in Dublin on 14 February.

Following her strong showing in the elections for President and Vice President, Carolann is once more the

only shop floor worker standing for the position.

She is challenging two fulltime officials, John McDonald and Brendan Hayes.

At the Dublin meeting Carolann laid the basis for a network of shop stewards around the country to help her fight the election.

The high vote for Carolann in previous SIPTU elections shows the level of anger at the failure of partnership.

The Celtic Tiger has brought huge profits for the rich but workers are still tied to wage restraint under Partnership 2000.

The anger has begun to erupt into struggles by building workers, zinc miners and others. Two of the main strikes at the moment involve SIPTU members at Ryanair and Arcon Mines.

These battles could reinvigorate the whole trade union movement. But the workers have to overcome a bureaucracy which is unwilling to mount a serious fight and which hides behind the Industrial Relations Act.

Carolann is a member of the Socialist Workers Party. She argues that SIPTU "needs a few more people who will follow in the footsteps of Connolly and Larkin and fight for our members with the same determination that others fight for their class". Carolann is campaigning for:

- A special conference of SIPTU to discuss withdrawing from Partnership 2000;
- A national stoppage to enforce the demand for a £5 an hour minimum wage;
- All-out opposition to the Industrial Relations Act and public support for workers who have defied it;
- A major recruitment campaign to organise the multinationals and the sweatshops.

Carolann believes the time is right to build a serious fightback:

"In a booming economy, trade unions have a tremendous strength because employers need our labour.

"Instead of being tied up in knots, our shop stewards should have a free hand to pursue the wage increases and the improvements our members deserve."

■ The ballot for SIPTU General Secretary takes place between 9 March and 28 March. To get involved in Carolann Duggan's campaign, ring her on 051-70426 or 086-824 2319.

IJM Joinery

This is how to unionise

WORKERS at the IJM joinery in Monaghan have won a stunning victory in their fight for union recognition.

The firm is one of the oldest joinery shops in the town and has successfully resisted union drives in the past. But now BATU has organised the 90 carpenters there.

Some weeks ago the management tried to change the working conditions without consultation.

Workers originally agreed to work three days of twelve hour shifts with four days off. But management tried to change this to a four day shift cycle with three days off.

Joined

Immediately seventy of the ninety woodworkers involved joined up with BATU but the company refused to negotiate at first. A shop steward was sacked and union members immediately staged a sit down.

The key to winning union recognition was full scale solidarity and backing from the wider union.

"We have four hundred BATU members in the Monaghan area and the company were let know in no uncertain terms that we meant business," one BATU executive member told *Socialist Worker*.

After a heavy Garda presence turned up at the plant, BATU members in the neighbouring plant at John E Coyle Ltd helped stage a mass picket during their lunch break.

IJM have a showhouse in Lucan in Dublin which they use as an example of the wooden houses they sell.

BATU told the company that mass pickets were to be placed on the showhouse and a bus to bring striking workers from Monaghan was organised.

The union also warned that its members would engage in full scale blacking of the company.

Initially IJM adopted a macho management style. But within ten days, they caved in. They wrote a letter to BATU conceding exclusive rights to organise and agreeing to negotiate.

The victory came from old style organising.

Craft workers resist sellout

FOUR thousand craftworkers in local authority health boards and voluntary hospitals have reacted furiously to a Labour court recommendation.

But their union bureaucracy are trying to ram through the deal in a desperate bid to salvage Partnership 2,000.

The unions' initial claim was for a £27.69 increase under a 1979 analogue agreement. This was supposed to keep the craft workers in line with the average awards granted to 18 agreed private sector and public sector companies.

But the employers told the unions that any increase granted under the review could not exceed the 21% local bargaining "cap" provided in Partnership 2,000.

The offer from the Labour Court was for a phased increase of £12.87 but in a clumsy attempt to con the unions they added to this the six pounds local bargaining element of Partnership 2,000 which workers are already entitled to. They then presented the offer as £18.87.

A meeting of 40 shop stewards from the Eastern Region Shop Stewards Committee met union officials from the negotiating committee and totally rejected the recommendation.

The officials tried to divert the calls for strike action by claiming that they would seek "clarification".

But shop stewards insisted that the twenty to one mandate for all out action, which was deferred on November 28, be implemented.

The Labour Court was already used as a delaying tactic to defuse the national strike which threatened to involve 30,000 General Operatives who are entitled to 80% of the award. A member of the National Craft Group of SIPTU told *Socialist Worker*:

"The offer is scandalous. To accept it would be to sell our souls. We need to re-activate strike action and get out on the road on this one."

Achieving that will mean taking on the leadership of SIPTU and other unions who seem to care more about Partnership 2000 than their members interests.

Limerick Corporation

AN UNOFFICIAL strike in Limerick Corporation ended in a fantastic victory for the workers after nearly two weeks.

The strike started when management suspended a UCATT shop steward. All workers downed tools and stayed out on unofficial pickets.

The workers' strike committee put seven demands to Limerick Corporation management.

The manager conceded all seven demands, including the reinstatement of the shop steward, an investigation into bullying of union activists and a review of the wheelin bin issue.

During their two week campaign the workers held regular mass meetings. Over 250 workers also marched into an ICTU meeting in the city where ICTU and local union officials were discussing the minimum wage.

They protested at the lack of support and representation they had received from the unions. According to one striker, the ICTU looked "really rattled". He told *Socialist*

Worker: "They are not used to angry workers facing them down."

Limerick Corporation workers are angry with the behaviour of their union officials who stayed clear of the struggle and hid behind the Industrial Relations Act.

One of the shop stewards told *Socialist Worker*, "The union officials want shop stewards to nod their heads at everything.

"They want a docile workforce. But they should be a rank and file organisation instead of miles away from the grassroots."

SIPTU members in the Corporation have withdrawn their union subs from Liberty Hall until they get some answers. "We want Geraghty down here to explain to us what's going on. Is there a hidden agenda or are they going to stand up for us for a change?"

The lesson from Limerick is clear. Workers who stay united against their bosses can win and the law can do little or nothing about it.

But the question is when will the union leaders stand beside them instead of hiding behind the law.

No to Zoe Campaign

TWO HUNDRED and fifty people recently turned up at a public meeting to protest at Zoe development plans to build private apartments, a leisure centre and hotel on the old Gasworks site, on South Lotts Road in Ringsend.

The site was state-owned land but the government chose to sell to Zoe for £8

million. There are currently 100,000 families on the corporation waiting list for housing, and it is estimated that only 200 new houses will be built this year.

This would have been a perfect opportunity for the state to provide for public housing and to meet ordinary people's needs.

Instead, the property was sold for a private high rise development where some of the buildings will be 10 storeys.

Zoe intends to build on every inch of land, some of which is contaminated by gas.

Decontaminating this land will involve digging very deeply, removing the contaminated soil and dumping it somewhere in North Dublin.

An action group has been set up to protest against the development and another public meeting is being organised.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p

Inside:

'RUC watched thugs kill my brother'—Diane Hamill interviewed: Page 5

No blood for oil, No to War in the Gulf—PAGE 6/7

Solidarity price £1

He plans to bomb Iraq



So why throw SF out of talks?

THE ROW over the expulsion of Sinn Fein from the talks process highlights the double standards of the Unionist Party and the British government.

Blair is preparing to bomb Iraq and kill thousands of people.

But he is expelling Sinn Fein because of their links with the IRA.

Unionist leader David Trimble, rushed to demand Sinn Fein's expulsion after a suspected drug dealer and a leading UDA member were killed. But he was silent as the LVF and UDA/UFF murdered nine Catholics.

RUC Chief Constable, Ronnie Flanagan, released the forensic evidence from the shooting of UDA leader Robert Dougan within days, claiming that the men's clothing connected them with the killing.

But the RUC still have not been able to say anything

about who killed Bernadette Martin, Michael McGoldrick and other Catholics who were murdered by loyalists.

Assembly

And even though the peace process looks set to break down, Mo Mowlam did not rush to visit IRA prisoners in

the Maze as she did over Xmas with UDA leaders.

Socialist Worker has no knowledge over whether or not the IRA carried out the killings.

But the expulsion of Sinn Fein has been a long term goal of David Trimble who believes he can get a Stormont style assembly by

only having the SDLP in the talks.

The current crisis exposes the fallacy that the talks can deliver any change.

Refused

The British government has repeatedly refused to stand up to the Unionists.

The peace process will continue to stumble from one crisis to another, because it is based on irreconcilable demands.

The real hope for peace has to be forged on the ground.

The current peace process is built on the idea that Catholics and Protestants come

from different tribes with mutually exclusive interests.

Its architects want to maintain a form of economic sectarianism where Catholics and Protestants compete for low paid jobs from the multi-nationals.

The alternative that is needed is a united working class fight for real change.

Is return to war the only option?

SOME OF the media claim that the recent events were staged to give Sinn Fein a way out of the talks.

The reality is likely to be more complicated. The Sinn Fein leadership is committed to the peace talks, but it's a strategy that is failing.

This is why Adams said he is "pissed off" with the outcome.

The party argued that an alliance with Fianna Fail was necessary to pressurise the

British to bring in reform in the North.

But the Fianna Fail government has gone along with the demand for their expulsion.

Nothing could more clearly show the futility of working with such right wing "allies" really is.

There is now a deep frustration in Catholic working class areas which is adding to the pressure on Sinn Fein.

The talks have delivered nothing of substance to ordi-

nary people.

The RUC and British Army still patrol the areas and loyalist killers murdered nine Catholics in recent weeks.

Pressures

It is these pressures which led a crowd at a recent Sinn Fein rally to protest at loyalist killings to chant "retaliation".

But any return to armed

struggle would be a disaster. The resumption of conflict would be accompanied by even deeper levels of sectarianism. It would be massively unpopular with working people because they would bear the brunt of the suffering.

The lesson of the last few weeks is that no one should trust right wing politicians to make a deal for peace.

As the North drifts towards crisis, socialist politics are even more vital. Socialists ar-

gue against the sectarianism of the North state.

Socialists oppose the bigotry of loyalism and argue that republicanism is wrong to argue that Catholic workers should look to right wing groups like Fianna Fail or Bill Clinton.

The key thing is to see class as the main divide in Ireland. This is why we need to fight for a socialist Ireland by opposing both conservative states on this island.